



## PLANNING STATEMENT

SUPPORTING STATEMENT IN RESPECT OF A MAJOR PLANNING APPLICATION

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF 86 HOUSES WITH ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE AND LANDSCAPING; AND THE RELOCATION AND PROVISION OF 2NO. NEW RUGBY PITCHES PLUS 1NO. COVERED TRAINING PITCH WITH ASSOCIATED DRAINAGE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

LAND TO THE SOUTH OF FORTH CRESCENT, ALLOA,  
CLACKMANNANSHIRE

APRIL 2021

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## 1. Introduction

This planning statement examines a number of the significant planning policies relevant to the development proposals at land to the south of Forth Crescent, Alloa, Clackmannanshire submitted by Allanwater Homes (*the Applicant*). This is referred to hereafter as **Phase 9** within the **Alloa Park** housing development area. The first section summaries the proposals, following on from which planning policies at a national, regional level and local level have been assessed. This supporting statement covers the proposals submitted in the full planning application alongside it.

At a national level Scottish Planning Policy is expressed through a series of policies and guidance which seek to promote sustainable economic growth whilst protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment. The Scottish Government's central purpose is to create a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth.

At a local level the Local Development Plan (LDP), set out both the broad strategic objective for the Local Authority area and a series of planning policies and proposals are detailed for local areas.

*Section 25 (1) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997* as amended states, "Where in making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise".

The following plans and polices are relevant to the proposals for Phase 9:

- National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3)
- Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)
- Clackmannanshire LDP & Supplementary Guidance

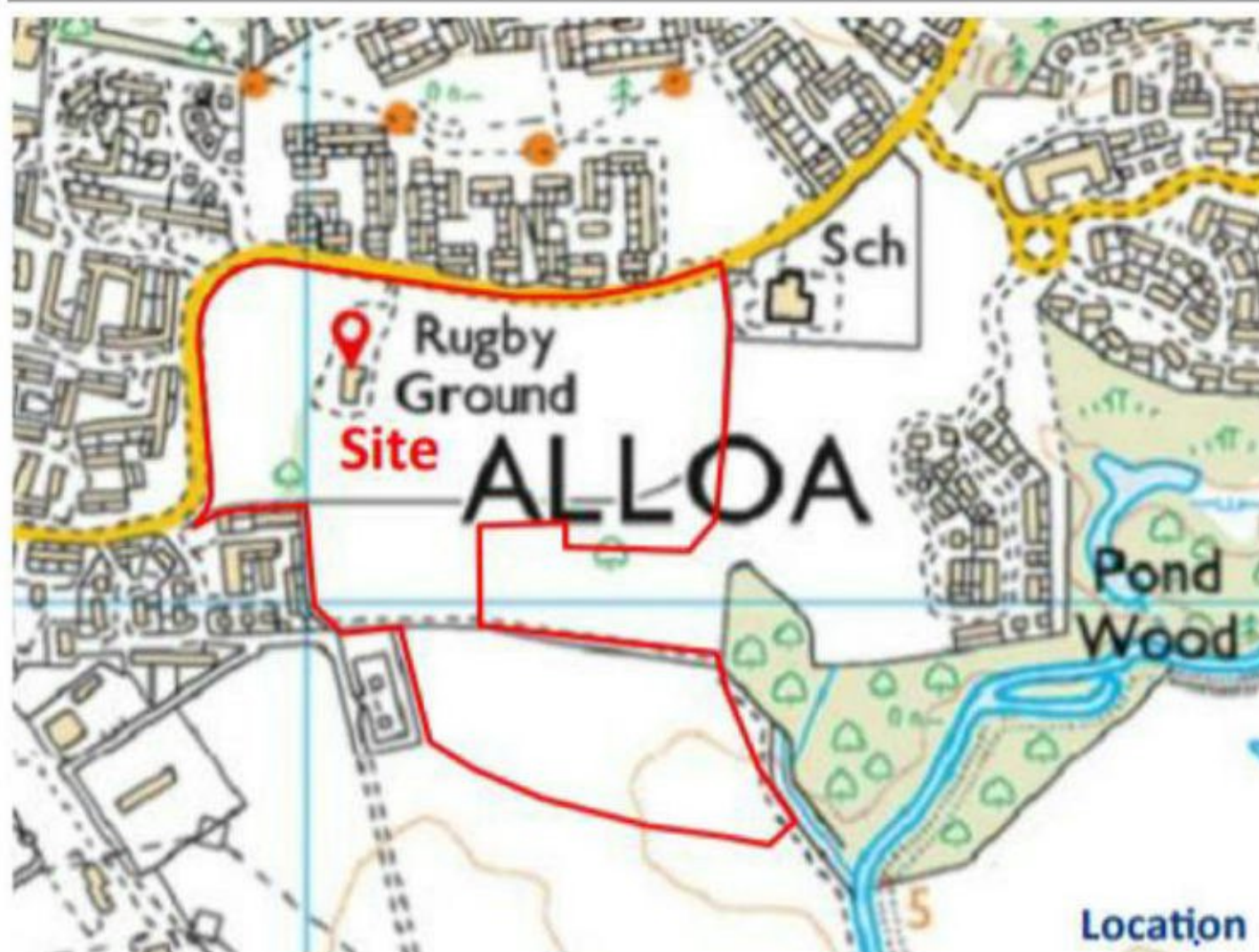
This Statement should be read in conjunction with the full suite of technical documentation submitted in support of this full planning application, further details of which are included in the following sections.

## 2. Summary of Proposals

It is proposed that a residential development of 86 houses with associated infrastructure and landscaping; and the relocation and provision of 2no. full size rugby pitches plus 1no. covered training pitch with associated drainage works and infrastructure be undertaken on the site referred to as H08 and the existing rugby pitches.

The residential proposal has a mix of house types including 3 and 4 bedroom properties, including semi detached and detached house styles.





Picture 1: Location Plan - Land South of Forth Crescent, Alloa

The site shown on the Location Plan above is vacant open land, including the rugby pitches leased by Alloa Rugby Football Club (ARFC), and forms a part of the approved Alloa Park Masterplan. Allanwater Homes has had a long involvement since the early 2000s in the area through the continued development and implementation of the Alloa Park Masterplan.

Most recently the Applicant applied and was granted planning permission for Alloa Phase 8b for a residential development of 49 houses (ref: 18/00059/FUL); a separate application was previously approved for Phase 8a for 15 houses (ref: 18/00196/FUL) which was referred to Scottish Ministers due to an objection from SEPA which the Council did not agree with. Following subsequent detailed discussions between the Council, SEPA and the Applicant the objection was retracted by SEPA and the application ref: 20/00035/FULL 'Formation of Surface Water Drainage Swale' was approved and allowed the construction of Phase 8b.

The proposed residential development and relocation and upgrading of the ARFC facilities will be the final phase of development to complete the Alloa Park Masterplan, and this includes the final works involved in the overall drainage strategy.

The aerial photograph following clearly shows the redline boundary of the site as set out in Pre Application Notice (PAN) received by the Council on 09 January 2020, with the reference: 20/00007/PAN.





Picture 2: Aerial Photo - Land South of Forth Crescent, Alloa (Phase 9)

This full planning application for Phase 9 covers the land remaining to be developed in the Alloa Park Masterplan as shown on the previous site location and aerial photos (Pictures 1 and 2). Also highlighted are the adjacent Phase 8 residential development area west of the former primary school, the SUDS, and all the land south of Forth Crescent. The applicant proposes in this planning application to exchange the proposed housing from the allocated site H08 onto the existing rugby pitch area (and vice versa); replacing these facilities with new and improved pitches, and related drainage, on the site H08.

The reasoning behind the swap is to allow the completion of the masterplan area drainage and overland flow flooding strategy to maximise the benefits of this on the most suitable area of land. This addresses the issues highlighted by SEPA and agreed with the Council in the strategy for Phase 8. It also ensures an effective housing site is not constrained and therefore lost from the Council's Housing Land Supply by swapping it across onto the existing rugby club site. It safeguards the continuation of the community sports facilities provided by ARFC on the adjacent site, retaining and improving the facilities within the area for the local community.

This proposal is supported fully by the ARFC (see letter of support in Appendix 1). Once Phase 8 is completed ARFC will lose their remaining 2 existing pitches in a relatively short period due to the difficulties with drainage. The earlier phases of housing development have already led to the historic third pitch being unusable for a number of years, and now the existing rugby pitch site requires new field drainage and the pumping of water to Forth Crescent to continue. The ARFC is not able to fund these works.



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Without the proposed land use swap residential development could occur on the allocated H08 area, however, this would lead to the loss of ARFC and sport facilities. It is our opinion that the proposals are the most pragmatic and practical land use allocation which allow the completion of the last phase of housing numbers at Alloa Park. This will ensure completions to help the Council meet its housing targets, plus the retention and improvement of the ARFC facilities for community use.

### Hierarchy of Developments

This development is considered a Major Development in terms of *The Town and Country (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009* given that the site area is more than 2 hectares and more than 50 residential units are proposed. The Regulations include a requirement for developers of a 'major development' site to undertake formal Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) with the local community before submitting a planning application to the Local Authority for determination.

A *PAC Report* and a *Design Statement* are submitted with the application.

Public consultation has been undertaken by the applicant with public consultation material having been submitted with the pre-application enquiry. A Pre Application Notice (PAN) was submitted in January 2020 (ref: 20/00007/PAN) with the community engagement event held on Thursday 06 February 2020 between 3.30pm – 7.30pm at the Bowmar Community Centre in Alloa.

Feedback and response is covered in the PAC Report submitted with this full planning application.

### 3. National Planning Policy

The National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) was published by the Scottish Government in June 2014. It sets the context for development planning in Scotland and provides the spatial strategy for the development of Scotland as a whole. It sets out the Scottish Government's development priorities over the next 20-30 years and identifies national developments which support the development strategy. NPF3 sets out the vision as follows:

- a successful, sustainable place
- a low carbon place
- a natural resilient place
- a connected place

NPF3 notes the need to provide new housing development in areas with continuing pressure for growth and recognises the importance of housebuilding to the economy.

Development plans must have regard to NPF3 and Scottish Ministers expect development management decisions to support its delivery. NPF3 comments on the reduced amount of housing built in recent years and states at paragraph 2.5, "*in the coming years we want to see a significant increase in house building to ensure housing requirements are met across the country*".

Paragraph 2.18 also states that, "*there will be a need to ensure a generous supply of housing land in sustainable places where people want to live, providing enough homes and supporting economic growth*".

### 4. Scottish Planning Policy

The revised Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) was published in June 2014, it is a material consideration that carries significant weight in the determination of planning applications. SPP (Paragraph 4) sets out the core values of the Scottish Planning System which includes the following:

- Focus on outcomes, maximising benefits and balancing competing interests;
- Play a key role in facilitating sustainable economic growth, particularly the creation of new jobs and the strengthening of economic capacity and resilience within communities;
- Be plan-led, with plans being up-to-date and relevant;
- Make decisions in a timely, transparent and fair way to provide a supportive business environment and engender public confidence in the system;
- Be inclusive, engaging all interests as early and effectively as possible;
- Be proportionate, only imposing conditions and obligations where necessary; and
- Uphold the law and enforce the terms of decisions made.

SPP introduces a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 28 explains that the planning system should support economically, environmentally and socially sustainable places by enabling development that balances the costs and benefits of a proposal over the longer term. It continues in paragraph 29 setting out a number of principles by which policies and decisions should be guided:

- *Giving due weight to net economic benefit;*
- *Responding to economic issues, challenges and opportunities, as outline in local economic strategies;*
- *Supporting good design and the six qualities of successful places;*
- *Making efficient use of existing capacities of land, buildings and infrastructure including supporting town centre and regeneration principles;*
- *Supporting delivery of accessible housing, business, retailing and leisure development;*
- *Supporting delivery of infrastructure, for example transport, education, energy, digital and water;*
- *Supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation including taking account of flood risk*
- *Improving health and well-being by offering opportunities for social interaction and physical activity, including sport and recreation;*
- *Having regard to the principles for sustainable land use set out in the Land Use Strategy;*
- *Protecting, enhancing and promoting access to cultural heritage, including the historic environment;*
- *Protecting, enhancing and promoting access to natural heritage, including green infrastructure, landscape and the wider environment;*
- *Reducing waste, facilitating its management and promoting resource recovery; and*
- *Avoiding over development, protecting the amenity of new and existing development and considering the implications of development for water, air and soil quality.*

It is the Applicant's opinion that the proposed residential development on this site meets these principles.

With respect to **place making** SPP's purpose is to create better places. The outcome should be sustainable, well-designed places and homes which meet people's needs. Planning should direct

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development to the right place. This is also replicated in the design led approach to the development process, as documented in the Scottish Government's *Creating Places (June 2013)* and *Designing Streets (March 2010)*. SPP also states that development should be designed to a high standard which demonstrates the six qualities of a successful place and the value that high quality design can deliver and the role that buildings and places play in promotion of healthy sustainable lifestyles which are addressed in detail in this statement within the Design Principles as set out in *Placemaking Supplementary Guidance (SG3)*

Paragraph 123 of SPP requires planning authorities to “ensure a generous supply of land for house building is maintained and there is always enough effective land for at least five years”.

### 5. Local Development Plan

Clackmannanshire Council adopted the Clackmannanshire Local Development Plan (LDP) in August 2015. It contains the policy base against which this full planning application should be considered. The adopted Clackmannanshire LDP replaced the previous structure and local plan.

The LDP notes that development in accordance with the Spatial Strategy will be supported. The LDP splits the Council area with the settlement of Alloa being within the Forth area. Due to its range of services and transport links the Forth area is where the majority of housing and employment is to be located in the Spatial Strategy. This site is located within the existing urban area of Alloa, it is part of the Alloa Park housing development, and although the housing site proposed is not allocated the justification for the swap of H08, which is allocated, for the adjacent rugby pitch area has been made earlier.

As set out in the LDP Alloa has the highest number of housing units allocated of all the 4 main settlements in the Forth area at 1,494 units to the end of the Plan period (2025).

The Council's Education Service have confirmed through the Pre Application Enquiry process that there are no developer contributions relating to education required for development of this site.

The LDP seeks to promote cycling and walking and the Applicant has submitted a *Transportation Note* (prepared by DBA, February 2021) to accompany this application which sets out the layout of the proposed development could reduce car usage for short trips and encourage cycling and walking as an alternative.

It is not proposed to go through all the relevant LDP policies relevant to this proposal. However, there are a number of issues which require further detail as to the Applicant's position and justification for their implementation. These are set out in detail in the following section.

#### Clackmannanshire LDP 2015

##### Housing

As noted earlier in this supporting statement the proposed residential development site is not allocated for housing in the LDP. However, we believe the justification for relatively insignificant (in terms of the overall site masterplan) swap between the allocation from H08 to the existing pitch site (and vice versa) is key to its determination.



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To recap the applicant proposes in this planning application to swap the housing from the allocated site H08 onto the existing rugby pitch area (and vice versa); replacing these facilities with new and improved pitches, and related drainage, on the site of H08.

This will allow the completion of the masterplan area drainage and overland flow flooding strategy to maximise the benefits of this on the most suitable area of land; thereby addressing the issues highlighted by SEPA and agreed with the Council in the strategy for Phase 8.

It also ensures an effective housing site is not constrained and therefore lost from the Council's Housing Land Supply by swapping it across onto the existing rugby club site. It safeguards the continuation of the community sports facilities provided by ARFC on the adjacent site, retaining and improving the facilities within the area for the local community.

### **Affordable Housing**

In line with the **Affordable Housing SG5** (August 2015) and LDP **Policy SC2**, Clackmannanshire Council require that 25% of the total units be made available as affordable therefore, on the basis of a development comprising up to 85 units this would equate to 21.25 affordable units. The pre-application response (ref: PREAPP\_2020-027) sets out that Clackmannanshire Council Housing Services affordable requirement will be sought in the form of a commuted sum. Their reasoning set out that due to the higher than average proportion of social rented properties in the Bowmar area, rather than provide more homes on or off site, a commuted sum payment would be better utilised contributing to repair and renovation project of current local stock.

Whilst the Applicant would prefer to comply with the Council's policy for the affordable housing contribution, however, it is set out here that the development is not viable with this associated cost. The planning application requires to be viewed as an exception to the policy SC2. The policy wording within the LDP and in SG5 (para 8.1) provides the mechanism for the economic viability in developing this site to be taken into consideration to enable a balanced planning decision. Flexibility on the 25% level of provision is required in this exceptional case and the Applicant seeks the affordable housing requirement be reduced to nil.

A confidential *Development Viability Report and appraisal* has been prepared by the Applicant and is submitted directly to the Planning Officer for consideration alongside this application. It sets out the detail of gross development value, land price, total costs and profit. This is a particular site with it being the potential last phase of the overall outline masterplan consent (noted granted at appeal) for the Alloa Park development. As such it requires to be considered as a legacy site with the land allocated as H08 having been purchased by the Applicant over a decade ago. There was no planning gain obtained here by the land owner at that time, and the development margins are now reduced heavily to make the whole scheme deliverable.

With the related costs associated with the new and improved facilities for the ARFC, and the drainage works required, the project shows a margin of under 10%. At this level the applicant has been able to take a commercial view on the site and the associated risk in developing it for housing. However, should the margin reduce any further it will render the proposed development unviable and it will not proceed. At this level of development margin it is very unusual for banks or lending institutions to be prepared to fund a development proposal, however, a company can use internal resources as a commercial decision.

Should the proposal not proceed it is likely this will lead to the closure and loss of the ARFC in a short period of time as the pitches become unusable due to the loss of drainage with the completion of the

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consented housing in Phase 8. Hence the joint support from ARFC to the submission and proposed future development as described.

To be clear with the proposed scheme including the relocation and improvement of the ARFC facilities, thereby ensuring its retention in the area, there is no planning gain to be shared and no ability to deliver an affordable housing commuted sum to the Council.

Within the restrictive margins of this proposal it is argued that the new sporting facilities are as important to the community in the Bowmar area as the need for affordable housing improvements; and in this case the rationalisation for retaining and improving the ARFC facilities can justify the reduction of the affordable housing requirement to nil in this exceptional case.

### **Design Principles**

#### **Placemaking Supplementary Guidance 3 (August 2015)**

A *Design Statement* has been submitted to accompany this full planning application. This examines aspects of design in accordance with the *Placemaking SG3*.

### **Transportation**

#### **Policy SC12 – Development Proposals – Access and Transport Requirements**

The LDP sets out as a Developer Requirement for site H08 under the heading ‘Creating Sustainable Communities’ that a road link will be required from Bowhouse Road/Forth Crescent to Alloa Park Road.

During the Pre Application stage discussions regarding the proposed development and land use swap the Planning Authority have highlighted a preference for the road link to Forth Crescent. The Applicant cannot comply due to a land ownership constraint; the Council own the land between the proposed site boundary and the road and, therefore, a connection to Forth Crescent is not within our control. However, should the Council seek to implement this we have made a future connection possible at the ARFC end and have costed the proposed works to install a road of the length required at circa £46,600.

The Applicant proposes that should the Council seek this road connection Allanwater Homes would undertake and pay for these works if the Council makes the land available (either at nil value or by some other form of agreement). Otherwise, it is proposed this is left to the Council to take forward at a later stage, at their own cost, should they seek to prioritise investment here. A *Transport Note* prepared by consultants Dougal Baillie Associates (dated February 2021) is submitted with this planning application. The Transport Note sets out that the proposals comply with national guidance with the single access and the emergency access; it is therefore the Applicant’s opinion there is a compliant development proposal as it stands. As noted above the Applicant understands the Council’s desire in the LDP to have a connection to Forth Crescent and is willing to put one in place at their own cost should the Council make the land available at nil value.

### **Environmental Assets / Natural Heritage**

The SNHi mapping indicates that there are no SAC’s, SPA’s, SSSI’s, Ramsar Sites or other features of environmental or ecological sensitivity that would be affected by the proposal.

A full *Tree Survey and Report* (Acorna Ecology, updated March 2021) has been undertaken and is submitted for consideration as part of this application. The proposed site layout takes cognisance of



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the trees in situ, removing those which are considered dangerous, and promoting new planting in areas.

With the *Design Statement* submitted there are also landscaping drawings which set out a comprehensive design strategy for the landscape proposals. The detail provided for the landscaping and new planting shows some associated biodiversity improvements through the development.

### **Flooding and Drainage**

#### **Policy SC20 – Water and Drainage Infrastructure and Capacity, Water SG**

#### **Policy EA9 – Managing Flood Risk**

A *Drainage Strategy* (Dougal Baillie Associates, March 2021) is submitted with the application providing details of the SUDS for surface water management. The SUDS have a role in the flood alleviation here. The proposed development can be drained in a sustainable manner to meet the requirements of Scottish Water, Clackmannanshire Council and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and has been designed in accordance with the strategic drainage principles of the wider development.

A Pre-Development Enquiry was sent to Scottish Water to allow them to assess whether there is sufficient capacity in the network to support the development. At the time of writing we are still awaiting a response from Scottish Water to the PDE application.

A *Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)* (March 2021) has been completed by professional consultants Dougal Baillie Associates and is also submitted for consideration. They have undertaken the full review and design of the drainage which has informed the final site layout proposed. This takes into account the significant flooding issue raised during the determination of the Phase 8 Alloa Park planning permission. The FRA has modelled the current situation and evidences the proposals, which in a brief summary show, by implementing the mitigation works will improve the overland flow and flood resilience both on the Alloa Park development and off site in the surrounding area.

### **Sports Pitch Provision**

In accordance with **Policy SC10 – Education, Community Facilities and Open Spaces** this proposed development would result in the provision of alternative facilities of an enhanced value and function for the community based Alloa Rugby Football Club (ARFC).

There is no loss of facilities but a relocation and improvement planned which will ensure the ARFC can train in all weather, and have two playing pitches delivered for them as per their specified requirements. The specification requested and letter of support from the ARFC for the proposed relocation and adjacent housing is provided in Appendix 1.

It is the Applicant's opinion the proposals comply with the policy through points 3 and 4a as written in the adopted LDP.

The accompanying *Drainage Strategy* report and drainage drawings submitted, plus mitigation set out in the FRA, with this planning application set out the particular drainage relevant to the new pitch provision.

### 6. Conclusion

The proposed land use swap resulting in the use of the existing pitches for residential development and associated works, and vice versa, is in our opinion wholly appropriate. It will provide the completion to the Alloa Park masterplan site, delivering new housing in line with the LDP and Spatial Strategy, and improving community facilities through the new replacement pitches.

The development has been designed in a manner that ensures it delivers the required level of infrastructure and will function in a sustainable manner. The proposed development will contribute to improvements to infrastructure that are considered necessary and that result as a direct consequence of the proposed development in accordance with established policy.

Where there is an exception to the Affordable Housing policy this will be decided by the Planning Authority through review of the confidential *Development Viability Report* and associated development appraisal during the planning application process. We seek to establish the balance of permitting sustainable development to meet known housing need and demand alongside the improvement and retention of the ARFC with no affordable housing commuted sum; against not delivering any housing on an effective housing site and the loss of the existing pitches within a relatively short period. It is highlighted throughout the housing proposals are inextricably linked to the retention and improvement of the sporting facility, and noted that these additional linked costs are significant and have a negative impact on the viability of developing the site with any associated developer contributions.

This application for Full Planning Permission is accompanied by a *Design Statement* that sets out the design considerations taken into account and how these accord with the Local Development Plan and Supplementary Guidance requirements.

The proposed residential development has been the subject of a clear, logical and well considered design process. This process started from first principles, prioritising the interests of context, landscape and setting, and then incorporated the functional requirements of the development in an integrated and cohesive way. The proposals will not have any significant detrimental impact in respect of overlooking, privacy, overshadowing or loss of daylight/sunlight. It is not anticipated that there would be any significant construction impacts or any permanent noise, light or odour pollution arising from the development.

The design of the development makes best use of the characteristics of the site and it both respects and enhances the character of the surrounding area. The site will also be safely accessible from its surroundings by a variety of modes of transport, including on foot and by bicycle, by private car and public transport.

The proposed development has been designed to take account of the physical characteristics and constraints of the site as well as the wider character of the area. The proposals have taken into consideration the six qualities of successful places set out in SPP in that it will be distinctive, welcoming, adaptable, resource efficient, safe and pleasant and easy to move around and beyond.

It is considered the proposed development will contribute positively to the quality of the surrounding built and natural environment; and that it is an appropriate and sustainable use of this site within the settlement boundary.



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We are of the view that the proposed development will help satisfy demand in the area for a variety of housing to cater for families, young and older age groups, and would not result in any additional pressure on existing infrastructure and resources in the area.

It is considered that this application for planning permission should be examined favourably for determination. We believe it accords in terms of the pertinent planning policy, and will result in the positive completion of the Alloa Park housing site as the final phase, whilst relocating and improving the ARFC pitch and training provision whilst enabling it to be retained in the Alloa Park area. It is thereby improving the amenity of the local area as well as meeting a housing need through the supply of new homes. The latter undertaking of the completion of the flood and drainage works for this area are also of wider benefit to the area.

Prepared by **Allanwater Homes Ltd**  
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**APPENDIX 1**

**ARFC Specification & Letter of Support to Council (see pdf)**

**Copy of signature on letter**



**Proposed New Facilities**

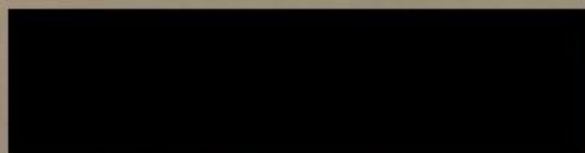
To meet the requirements set out by ARFC the proposed pitches are:

- Pitch 1 (Main Pitch) 68m x 100m +10m In goal areas;
- Pitch 2 (Training Pitch) 90m x 100m + 10m In goal areas; and
- Pitch 3 (Covered Pitch) 25m x 50m

The situation and location of the new pitches in relation to the new build housing proposed, and that under construction, is not considered to be an issue nor will it affect their use by ARFC for either training or match fixtures.

Should the Planning Department require to discuss our requirements or any aspect related to the ARFC part of the planning application we would be pleased to communicate with you.

Yours faithfully,



**Gary McPhail**  
Vice President Alloa Rugby Football Club