

Dunnottar

Stonehaven

Design Statement

DUNNOTTAR

- Site
- Project
- Self Build
- Proposals



DUNNOTTAR

A self build family home within the vacant land to the west of the developed Dunnottar Square.

Site Address

Dunnottar Square

Stonehaven

AB39 3UJ

Applicant

Mr Dale Williamson

dalew@live.co.uk



Site Photographs

Site

The site is located on land within the overall feu of Dunnottar Square which was previously developed by Churchill Homes in the late 1990s. The site is accessed from Dunnottar Church off of the A957 and benefits from direct pedestrian footpath links to Stonehaven and also the close proximity to the A90 and A92 for transport links to both north and south of Stonehaven.

The proposal is for a self-build family home on the vacant land to the west of Dunnottar Square. This land formed part of the original feu of the development and was the location of the site compound for the original development.

The Building and Setting

The proposed site sits adjacent to the existing Dunnottar Square. To the north are existing domestic properties accessed from the Dunnottar Church and open field space. To the west is an area of woodland and a burn that runs between the site and the woodland, while the site itself is anonymous and unkept.

The new proposal has been developed with the following key principles in mind:

To have minimum impact on the amenity of adjacent properties

To ensure high performance in terms of minimising energy use

To acknowledge and have respect for the wider context and landscape

To create a sense of place

Project

We have been looking for a suitable plot for a self-provided home within Stonehaven and approached Churchill Homes early in 2020 to enquire about the vacant land at Dunnottar Square. We are from, and currently live in Stonehaven. We have strong connections to the area and we are looking for a home to make our own without having to move away from our hometown, family and friends.

The self-build option allows us to design and build a home that suits our lifestyle and family needs both now and into the future. Additionally, the self-build route provides us with full control over the specifications and decisions on budget, where to spend and where to save, which will result in a more bespoke and lifelong home.

A Self-Provided Home

Government and local authorities encourage and proactively support self-build proposals and have indicated that they would like to “scale-up opportunities for self-provided housing”¹ and also that they “want to see numbers of self-provided homes increasing year-on-year.”¹

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“Self-provided housing is an important element of future housing supply – one we have been told through the Housing Exhibition is particularly desired by young people. (...)

Self-provided housing produces homes tailored to people’s long-term needs, helping to create and deliver homes which offer people greater choice, flexibility and quality in terms of both their home and its location, with affordability and energy efficiency embedded.”¹

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We have created a proposal that brings together our aspirations and ideas, to create a bespoke home that suits our lifestyle and needs.

The plot itself, whilst noted as within the protected area of Stonehaven, is not within any area of the Dunnottar woodland and is an area of vacant, anonymous land. The burn to the site boundary, as defined on the SEPA flood maps, is not considered to cause any issues with flooding on this particular site.

There is an increasing demand for development in Stonehaven and there are little to no opportunities for a self-build home within the settlement boundary. This location offers the opportunity of a unique and sizeable plot within the greater Stonehaven area whilst maintaining key links to the amenities of the town.

Self-provided homes are often cheaper to build than buying the equivalent existing home, they allow potential home owners to tailor their homes to meet their needs and they support community empowerment and development as well as greening and place making agendas.

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“National Planning Framework 4 – the new approach to planning set out in the NPF4 Position Statement⁷⁴ will support the development of quality homes by private developers that meet people’s needs. The planning system will help to make more accessible homes available by helping to deliver all-tenure wheelchair housing targets, supporting sites for self-provided homes and homes in accessible locations reducing the need to travel, as well as promoting the development of homes that can adapt as people’s needs change.”¹

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¹ Scottish Government 2020/2021. ‘Housing to 2040’ [online]. July 2021. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/housing-2040-2/>



Site Plan

Design

The proposal is a contemporary design complimentary to the local architectural vernacular of 19th century Stonehaven and informed by the massing of the existing Dunnottar Square. The home is a mix of storey heights (single/1 ½/1 ¾) to tie in with the original square, with the intention that they sit comfortably together and cohesively within the wider site context.

The design aims to incorporate the aesthetic of the surrounding landscape and materials, one of simple forms using robust, locally sourced materials to create a visual interest and connection with the surroundings.

The internal flow of the design suits contemporary family living with a combination of open plan and private living areas and a designated working from home space.

The proposed dwelling will benefit from modern construction methods and materials and will be constructed to the highest standards exceeding those of the current building standards, which is often more achievable in the context of a self-build home.

The proposal will include suitable renewable systems such as air source heating and incorporate high performance insulation and underfloor heating systems for energy conservation.

The site is accessed from an existing road used by Dunnottar Square which is already amply serviced. Waste and recycling is collected at the junction of the existing access road and Dunnottar Church.

An unused septic/treatment plant is located on the site which the proposal will utilise.



Sketch Image

Proposal

The proposed dwelling has an axis from northeast to southwest, running parallel to the existing Dunnottar Square. This orientation allows for minimal openings to the north elevations offering a level of privacy for the new and existing residents and also aids in thermal performance. By contrast, a larger expanse of glazing will be used to the south and west elevations to utilise solar gain, whilst the narrow footprint will allow for good levels of natural daylighting.

Low-energy design solutions will be addressed further at the next design stage.

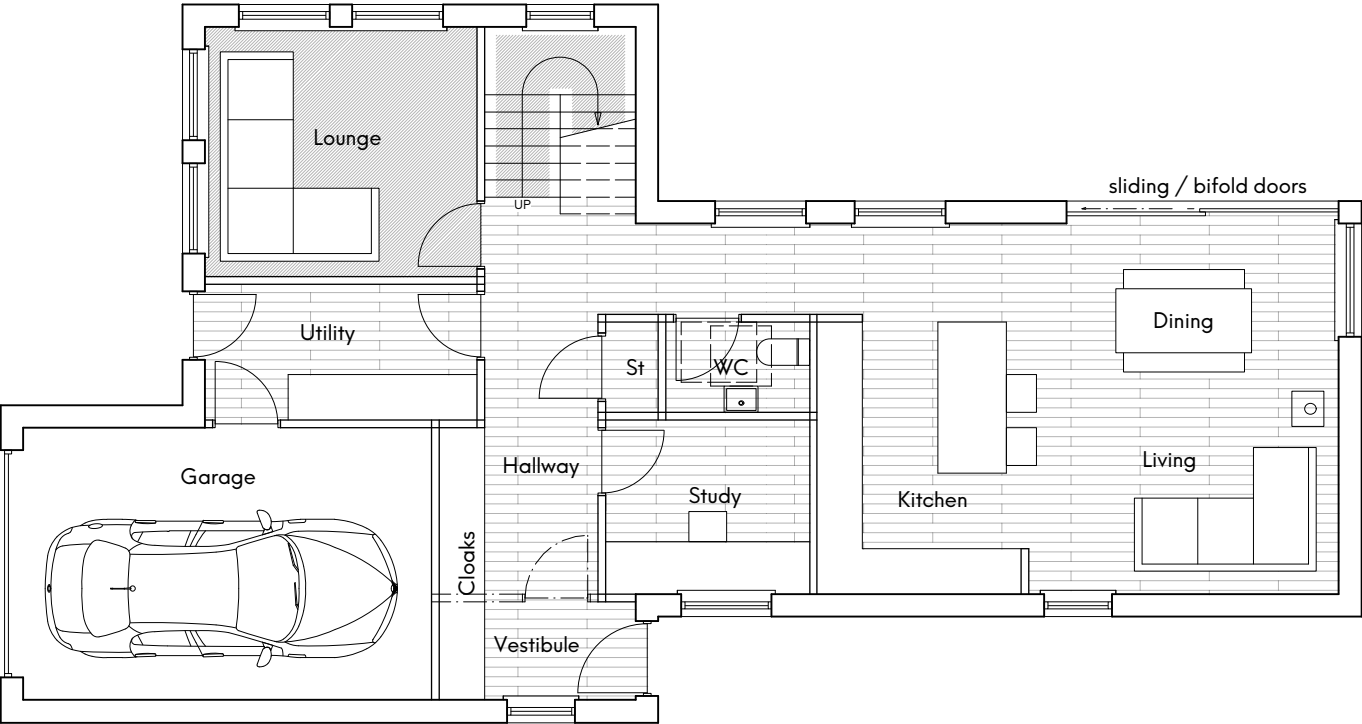
The internal layout has been designed with the ability for the home to adapt and change into the future. An open plan kitchen, dining and living space suits modern living styles, creating a flow and of ease of movement to the ground floor. The proposal includes a dedicated home office for working at home whilst a secondary living area provides a cosier living space that could be used as a playroom or additional bedroom should accessibility to the first floor become an issue for any reason in the future. Additionally, the ground floor WC incorporates space for a future shower for this reason.

An integral garage provides level and sheltered access directly from the vehicle into the home and a utility space provides ample storage space often lacking in modern developments. A generous entrance hallway provides an additional area for storage which can be sectioned off to create an enclosed entrance vestibule.

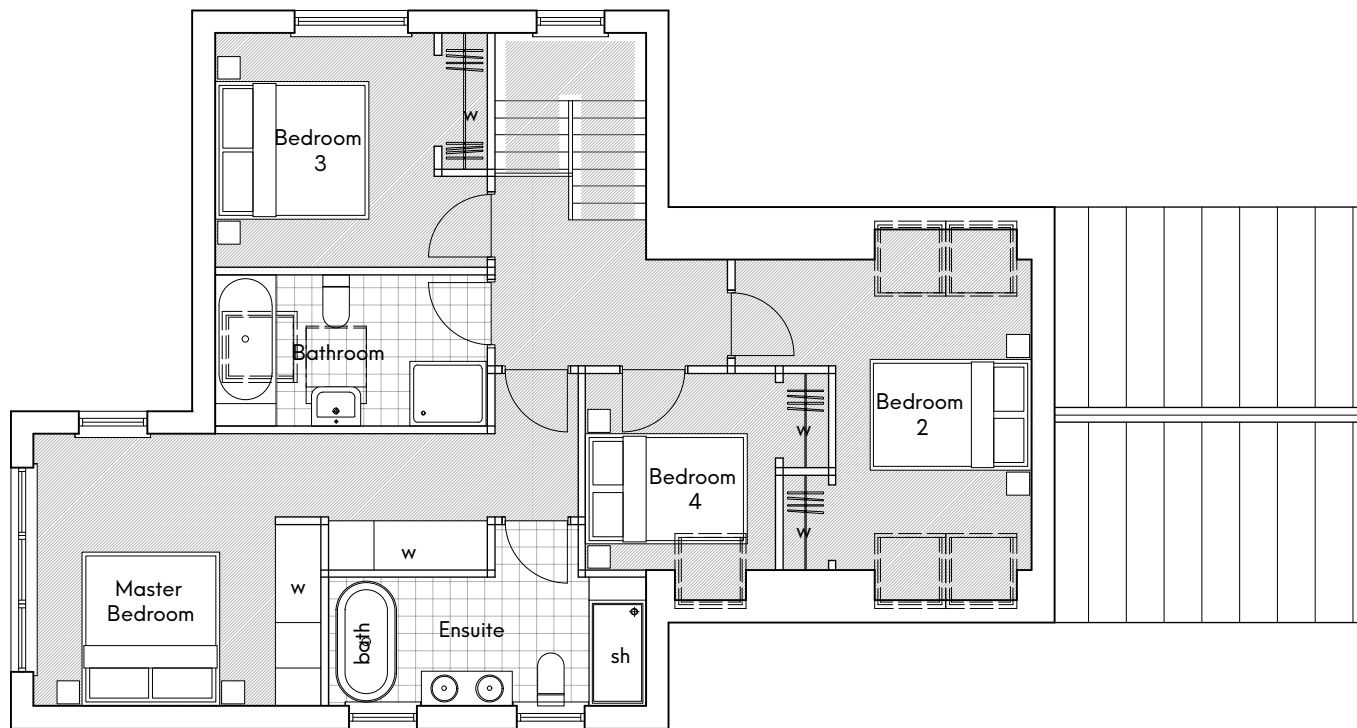
The design has elements of flexibility and an allowance for modifications in the future, meaning the home can suit any stage of life.

The primary living spaces have been arranged so that they are not looking out over, or being over looked by, any surrounding property.

The sensitive siting of the home minimises the impact of over shadowing from the existing woodland and creates a large area of garden ground to the west. The site will be landscaped with seeded lawn, existing trees will be retained where possible, and new planting will consist of predominantly native tree and shrub species to match the surrounding grass and woodland. Post-and-wire fences will be used to site boundaries to match the existing properties and a drystone wall is proposed to the southwest boundary to positively encourage flora and fauna.



Indicative ground floor layout



Indicative first floor layout