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ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL
PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

21 APR 2011

RECEIVED

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Our ref: AMN/16/GB HG
Our Case ID: 201007938
Your ref: ENQ /2011/0525

18 April 2011

Dear Mr Scott,

Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999
New settlement incorporating 4045 dwellinghouses (mixed house types), business land (Classes 4, 5 and 6) and associated infrastructure, Land West of Newtonhill, Stonehaven
Scoping Opinion

I refer to your letter of 29 March 2011 seeking relevant information and comments on the above proposal. For information we received the consultation request via the Scottish Government Planning Division for our role as a consultee under the above regulations through the Scottish Ministers.

My comments here concentrate on our statutory remit for scheduled monuments and their settings, category A listed buildings and their settings and gardens and designed landscapes appearing on the Inventory. Your archaeological advisors will be able to provide details of potential impacts on archaeology including unscheduled and unrecorded archaeology and advice on built heritage issues including potential impacts on B and C(S) listed buildings and conservation areas can be sought from your planning authority.

Screening

It is not clear from your letter whether you have already issued a screening opinion for this proposal. As you will be aware the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999 state that it is for the local authority to decide whether a development requires an EIA and as such I have no further comments to offer on this matter. However if you have decided that an EIA is required or should you find it helpful in coming to a view, I have provided some information below on the potential impacts of the development for our historic environment interests.

Our view on the principle of the proposals

I note that the proposed development site is allocated for mixed use development in the emerging Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan with further information provided in

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the accompanying Kincardine and Mearns Settlement Statements Supplementary Guidance. Given that we have not raised any objections to the allocation through the Local Development Plan process, we are broadly content with the principle of the proposal. However, impacts for the historic environment may still arise as a result of the specific design parameters and layout that are adopted for the site.

Potential impacts to be considered

In this case I can confirm that there are no sites for which we have a statutory interest located within the development site boundary. There are however sites in the vicinity of the development which may be affected by the proposals. In particular there are a number of scheduled stone circles to the north of the proposed site; two of which, Old Boutreebush, stone circle and cairn 250m W of (Index no. 980) and Aquhorthies, stone circle, cairn and platform 200m NNE of (Index no. 971), are located only 150m and 400m from the site respectively. It will be important when considering the design and layout of the site to use sensitive design and, where suitable, screening to maintain these monuments within an appropriate setting. The category A-listed Muchalls Castle (HB Num 9352) is also located 1.3 km to the south of the development. The developer should take account of the building's setting when laying out the development, particularly any key views from the Castle to the north or views of the Castle from the south.

If an ES is to be produced for this development it should consider impacts upon these assets and any other sites in the wider area which the developer believes may experience significant impacts. It would be helpful if such an analysis contained appropriate visualisations such as photomontage and wireframe views of the development in relation to the sites and their settings, illustrating views both towards and from the proposed development. The ES should also consider the cumulative impacts of this development in combination with others of a similar type in the vicinity.

Other relevant information

I note that the category B-listed Newhall House (HB Num 9356) is located within the development boundary. Although outwith our locus for EIA consultations listed buildings are protected under the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. This establishes that any work which affects the character of a listed building will require listed building consent. The Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) contains four policy tests which the developer will need to meet where substantial or total demolition of a listed building is proposed. If relevant, we are happy to discuss this further with the developer as the project develops.

I hope you find these comments helpful. Please contact me if you would like to discuss this response or if the developer requires any further help in determining what information to provide in support of detailed proposals.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted Signature]

Hannah Garrow
Senior Development Assessment (SEA) Officer



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