



SUPPORTING STATEMENT

PROPOSED BROWNFIELD HOUSING
DEVELOPMENT AT:
TULLOCH HOUSE, BY OLDMELDRUM



Fig. A: Aerial View of Tulloch House © Bing Maps 2021

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Proposed Brownfield Housing Development at: Tulloch House, By Oldmeldrum

Site Location

The site, known as ‘Tulloch House’ is located just off the A947 public road, approximately 2 miles north of Oldmeldrum, Aberdeenshire. A concreted shared private access road (of unknown ownership) lies to the west of the public road. The site lies to the south of this, taking existing gated access approximately 140m from the junction with the public road.

Just 2 miles from the village of Oldmeldrum, a feasible walking/cycling distance or short vehicle access away, a wide range of local amenities and services including primary and secondary schools, shops, etc. are available nearby. Extended amenities, services and travel options are available from the town of Inverurie and city of Aberdeen, which are approximately a 15-minute / 40-minute drive away, 8.5 miles south-west and 21 miles south-east respectively.

Covering approximately 1 hectare of land (excluding the shared access road down to the public road), this large site is almost surrounded by woodland and is well screened from the public road and neighbouring properties. A number of existing, non-vernacular, redundant buildings on the site are proposed for demolition to make way for the proposed brownfield development.

A pre-application enquiry was made to the Planning Dept. (ENQ/2021/0095). We have taken on board the advice given and hereby submit an application for Full Planning Permission for the erection of 3 new dwelling houses on the site. Topographical and tree surveys have informed the proposed layout and accompany this application. A bat survey is not believed to be necessary.

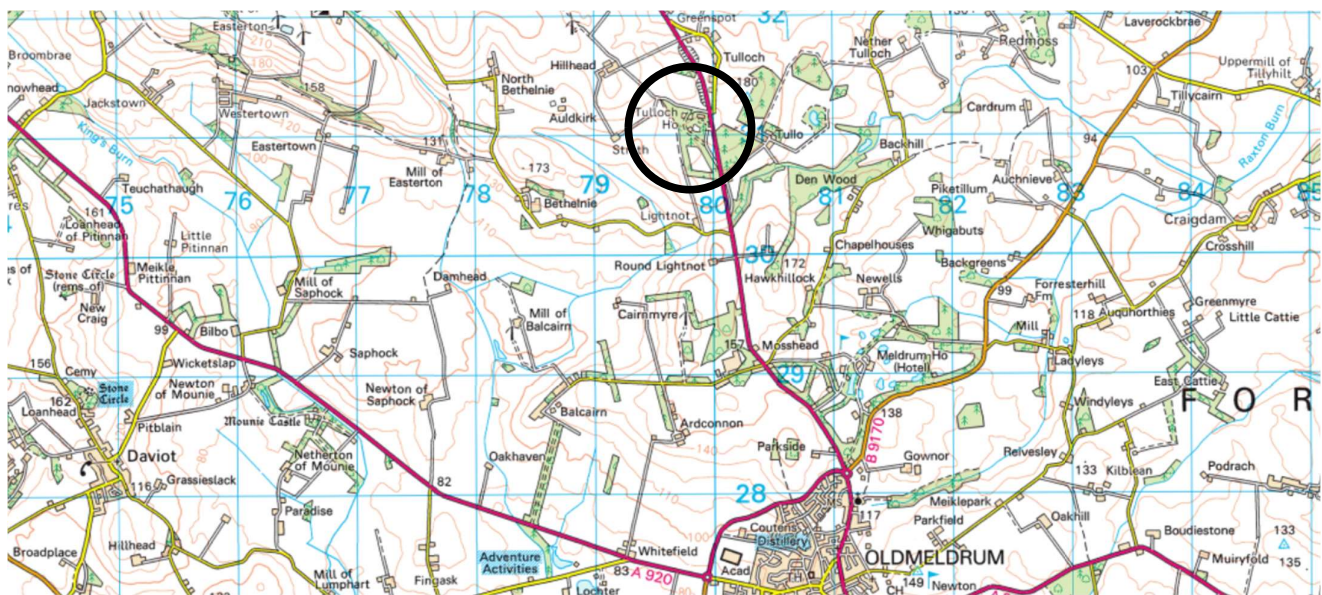


Fig. B: Site Location Plan (NTS) © Bing Maps 2023

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Site Description

The site is surrounded to the west, south and south-east by ancient woodland with a long-established use as plantation woodland. The application site is purposefully out with the designated ancient woodland zone. Note that a large area of commercial forestry to the immediate west of the site has recently been felled. This is due to be replanted as commercial forest soon.

There is also dense woodland to the east of the site, amongst which (beyond an existing fenced boundary) is a dilapidated house and a neighbouring dwelling known as Tulloch Lodge beyond that.

Although much more open than the woodland surrounding it, the application site also has a considerable number of trees on it, remnants of a historical designed landscape. The trees are documented in the tree survey which accompanies this application. All these trees and woodland provide substantial visual screening to the site. Note that only the 7 trees identified in the tree report for felling, on the grounds of tree management and/or health & safety are to be removed. All other trees are to be retained as natural screening.

Along the northern boundary of the site is an earth bund approx. 2m high (with some tree planting within it), screening the site considerably from the public road. Beyond this is a private access road, and thereafter, agricultural fields.

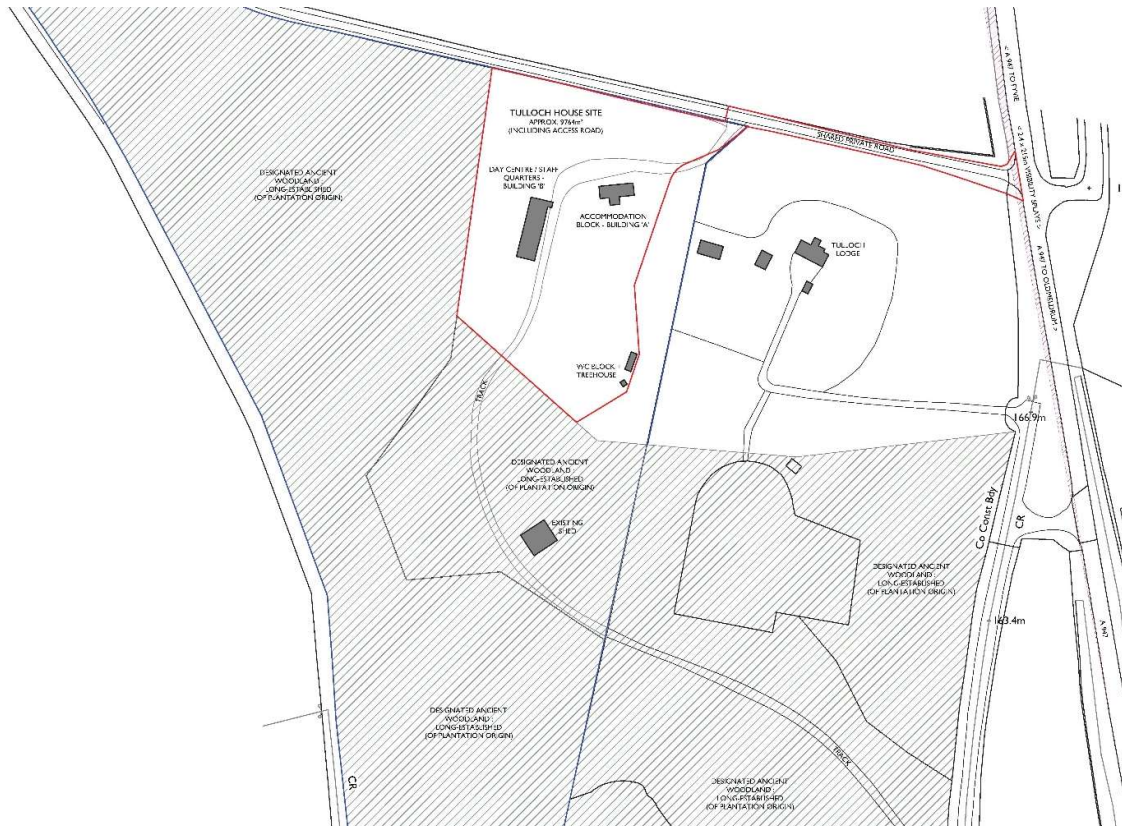


Fig. C: Site Location Plan (NTS)

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The topographical survey information submitted with the application shows the levels of the site in detail. The site slopes down gently by approximately 10m from its highest point in the north-west to its lowest point in the south-east, with various flatter areas or plateaus in-between. The slope of the land will allow the proposed new housing to nestle down into the site, screened by the natural topography.

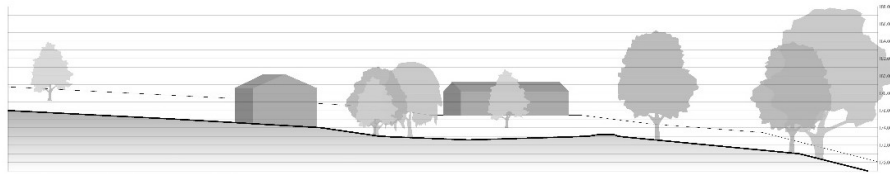


Fig. D: Existing site section X-X (NTS)

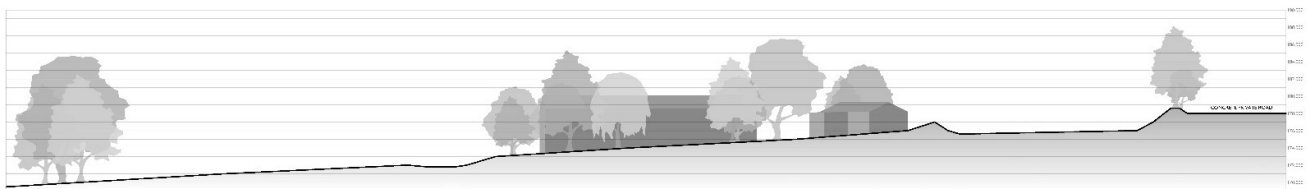


Fig. E: Existing site section Y-Y (NTS)

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Site History

During the 17th to 19th centuries, and giving the site its name, the site was occupied by a mansion house and associated designed landscape called Tulloch House. No visible structures remain on the application site of this, although the site of the historical walled garden is believed to still lie to the south-east of the application site, the outline of which can be seen on our site location plan.



Fig. F: First Edition OS Map showing Tulloch House as established along with a number of auxiliary buildings.
(extract taken from Aberdeenshire Sheet XXXVII 1868-69 / 1971)

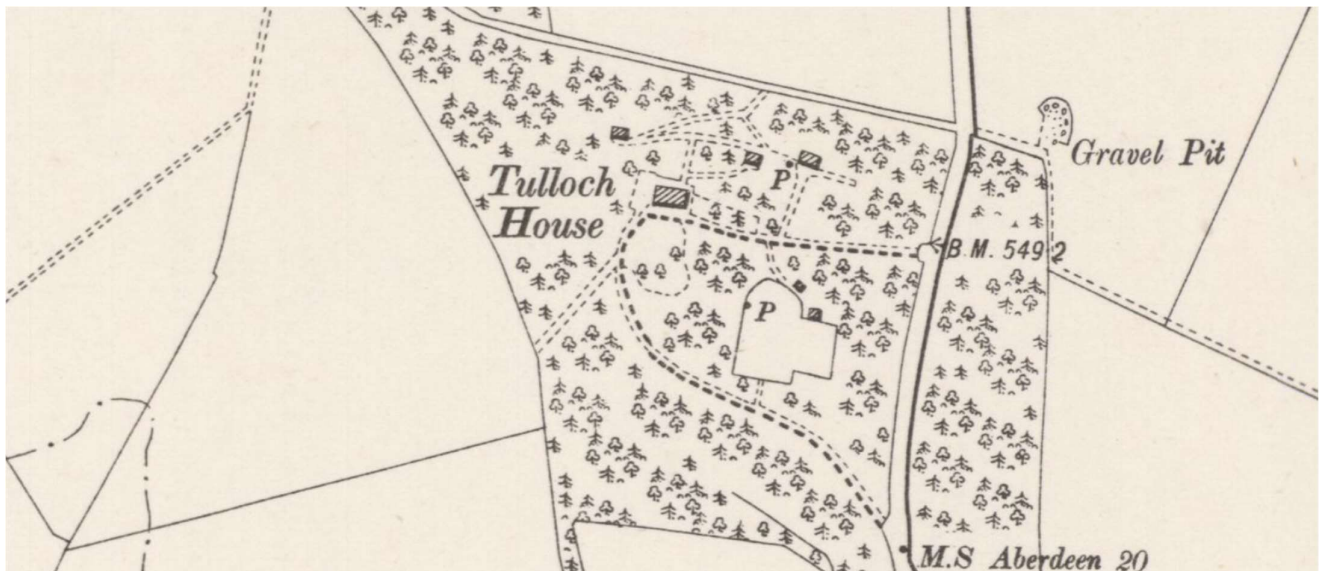


Fig. G: Little change can be seen to the site
(extract taken from Aberdeenshire Sheet XXXVII.SW 1899 / 1901)

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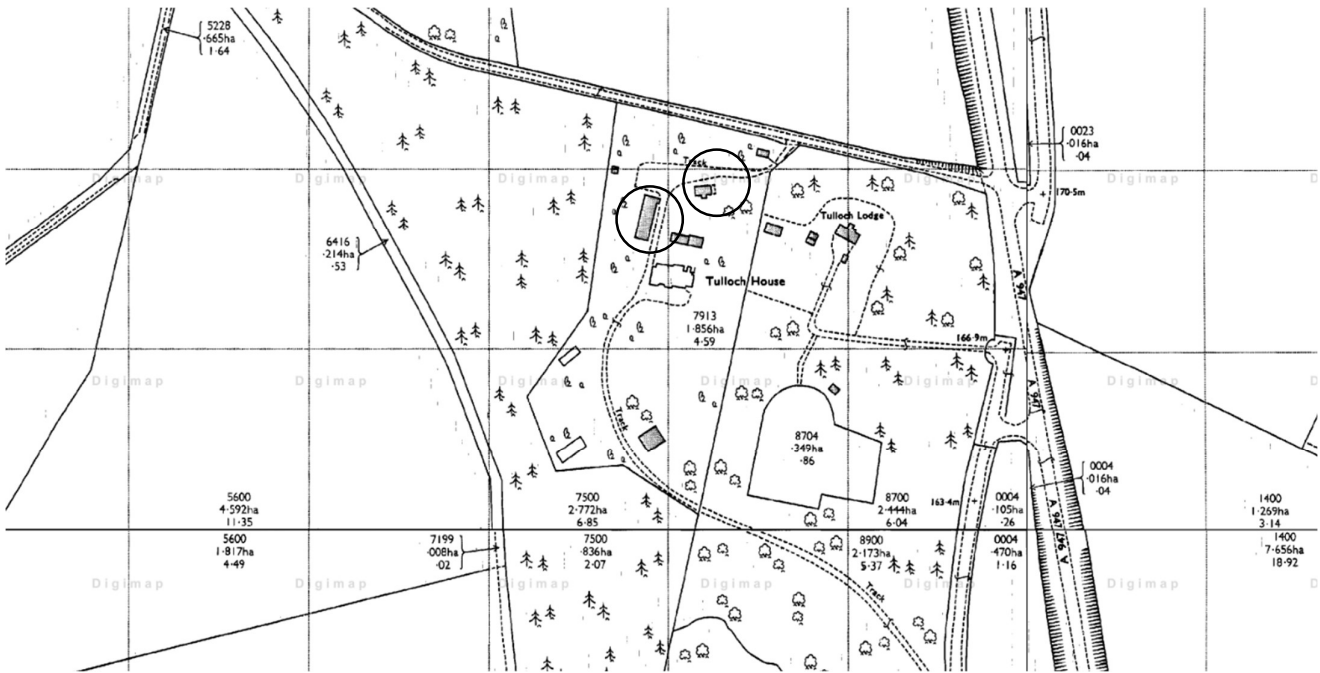


Fig. H: Tulloch House shown as a ruin. Formation of the two buildings now found on site (circled) (OS Data c. 1971)



Fig. I: Tulloch House (date unknown) © University of St. Andrews Library

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The historical map extracts above shows Tulloch House on the site in the 1868 and 1900 maps. However, by 1971 it is thought that only the foundations of the house remained on site. Of the other buildings shown on the 1971 map, either the full buildings or the concrete hard standings on which they once stood remain on site today. These buildings are believed to have been erected by the previous owners and used by the local authority Social Work Department to provide intermediate care/treatment facilities for young people/children.



Fig. J: Old signage found on site

The Tulloch House site has been owned by the applicant, a private owner, for a number of years. During that time, although used periodically for private recreation and storage, it has remained generally vacant and the buildings redundant. It is understood the current land use of the site is officially noted as agricultural (<https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/smrpub/master/detail.aspx?tab=spatial&refno=NJ73SE0019>), however, this is not accurate.

The site map today looks largely unchanged from the 1971 map. The buildings are now in poor/derelict condition. The two main buildings remaining on site are believed to have once been a day centre/staff facility (annotated as building 'A' on our site plan drawing) and an accommodation block (annotated as building 'B' on our site plan drawing) when used by the Social Work Dept. There are also several concrete hard standings where other smaller buildings are likely to have once stood. A small toilet block and tree house are hidden amongst the trees in the south-east of the site. Beyond these, further south, is a large, dilapidated shed.

None of the existing buildings are vernacular, nor do they hold any architectural merit or historical significance. Vacant, redundant and in poor condition, the existing buildings are proposed for demolition. The erection of 3no. new houses is proposed in place of the existing buildings as a brownfield development.

A selection of photographs over the next few pages shows the existing buildings on the site and some general overviews to give a sense of the place. The two main buildings are single storey with timber clad walls and corrugated sheet roofs.

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Figs. K, L: Former day centre / staff quarters / building 'A'



Figs. M, N: Accommodation block / building 'B'



Figs. O, P: Dilapidated shed south of the site (left), Treehouse at south-east of the site.

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Figs. Q, R: Overview from mid-site looking north (left), overview from mid-site looking south (right)



Figs. S, T: Overview from north-east of site, looking south-west (left), overview from south-east of site looking north (right)

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Relevant Planning Consultation and Policies

Oldmeldrum is identified in the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2023 as a settlement which is largely characterised by its prior role as the main market town for the surrounding. As such, the settlement has a natural demand for quality new residential development. The proposal aims to contribute to this vision by establishing a residential development within an easy cycling distance of the settlement.

Overall, the Local Development Plan for Aberdeenshire encourages the redevelopment of brownfield sites providing the development brings an environmental / visual improvement to the area and the relevant policies and supplementary guidance is adhered to. Policy R2 permits the small-scale development of rural brownfield sites that involve the replacement of redundant / derelict non-domestic buildings.

As evidence demonstrates, the building group has experienced significant deterioration to the point where conversion would be unsustainable and uneconomic. Under policy R2, the applicant therefore wishes to replace the building group with three individual house plots. It is hoped that through the accompanying drawings and preceding design analysis, the proposal is seen as having the potential to create a hugely positive impact on both the sociability of the development and the surrounding area, in addition the local natural and built environment.

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Proposal



Fig. U: Proposed Site Plan (NTS)

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As demonstrated above, the building group at Tulloch House would be unsuitable and uneconomic to develop as a tradition conversion. The applicant therefore seeks to demolish the buildings on site to create 3 new house plots within the existing curtilage of the Tulloch House building group.

The sites are generously sized. This is deliberate. Rather than squeeze 3 detached houses into a smaller area of the site, it seems more in keeping with the historically scattered development pattern on the site to spread the buildings out across a larger area. It also allows the buildings to sit more sensitively within the given topography and take advantage of existing tree screening within the site to form secluded plots within the existing landscape. Larger sized plots (like those proposed) are something the current housing market seems to be lacking, and it is expected that they will be highly sought after.

It is noted that only one of the three proposed new houses sits on the footprint of a building to be removed, although each plot does contain some existing footprint of building proposed for demolition. The proposed layout has been largely informed by the existing topography and tree planting rather than the existing collection of quite random structures, which have no historical or architectural significance. To avoid major/unnatural ground/landscaping works, the new buildings are to be sited in the naturally flatter areas of the site. In addition to working within the given topography, the existing clearings within the trees have been chosen for the location of new buildings, this avoids all root protection areas and the need for any tree removal to make way for the proposed development.

The buildings shown in a brown hatch are the existing structures to be removed. The existing access to the site in the north-east corner is to be retained and give access to a shared access track as shown. From here, each plot can have its own private drive with emergency vehicle turning provided through a hammerhead on the shared access road.

Each of the proposed plots offers the opportunity for a secluded new dwelling house which can sit sensitively within its generous surroundings; with existing mature trees softening the context of the new buildings. Each house has been orientated to take advantage of views towards Bennachie in the south-west (this view will close up as the new tree planting to the west of the site grows), whilst maintaining seclusion from the other plots and beyond the Tulloch House site boundaries.

The proposed internal arrangement of the new dwellings has been designed to ensure key living spaces are orientated towards this key view to the south-west. This has resulted in a T-shaped arrangement of space where primary areas are focused on the rear elevations. The open plan kitchen, dining and family room has been designed as the key living area of the house. This has been established through the creation of a large volume, airy space where larger areas of glazing frame the view towards Bennachie. During warmer months, sliding doors allow this space to open up to the rear patio and private garden areas. This will allow this space to function as a semi-external element; where residents can take full advantage of the garden space. In addition to this, a separate and more intimate space is provided to the rear of each dwelling to full cater to the various needs of residents.

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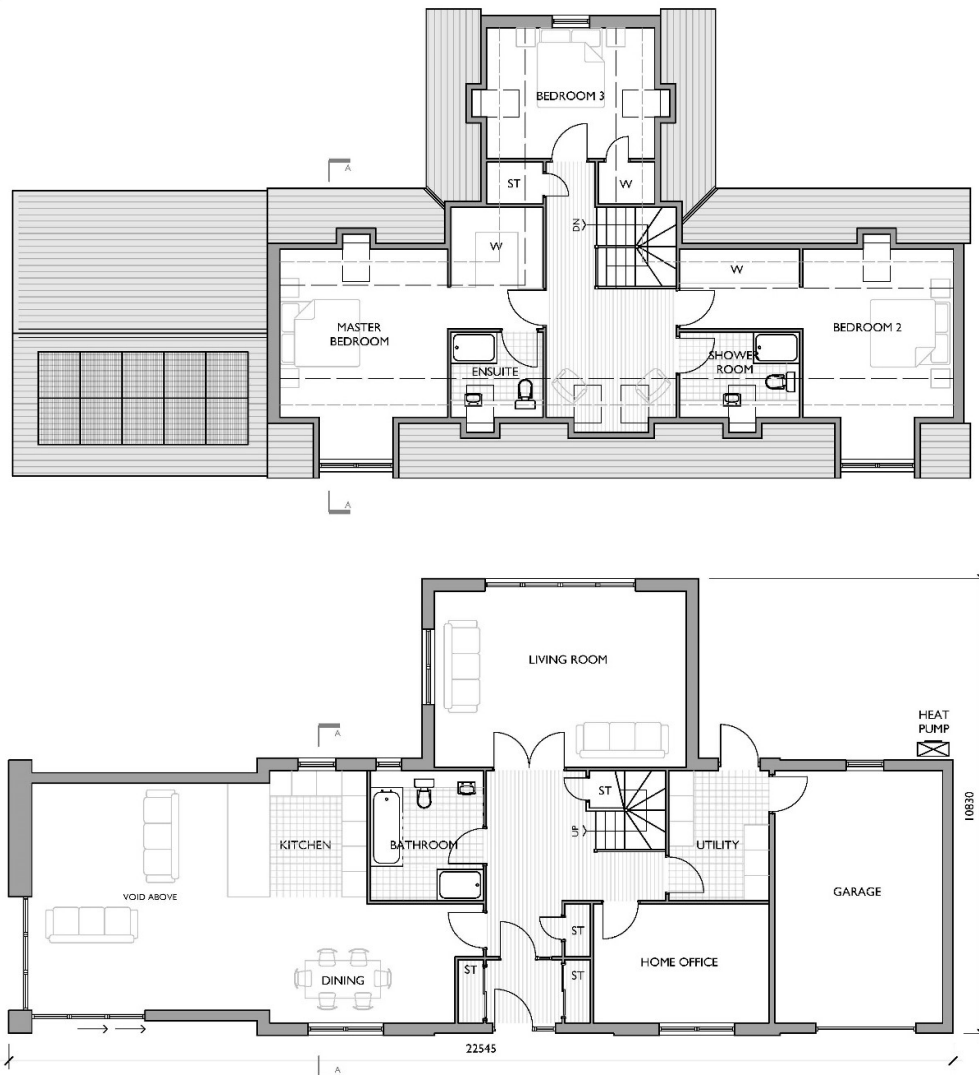


Fig. V: Ground floor + first floor plans (Plot 1) (NTS)

Each dwelling takes account of the general shift towards home working / studying through the provision of a Home Office. This space could alternatively be used as an accessible bedroom or children’s play room, dependant on the needs and requirements of the future occupants.

At first floor level, 3no. generously size bedrooms consist of the residential accommodation. The space at first floor level is realistically large enough to accommodate an additional bedroom. However, this was conscious design decision to make provision for larger rooms. In the future, should an additional bedroom be required, this can easily be accommodated through minor and non-structural alterations. Overall, the dwellings have been designed to be fully adaptable to the needs of their occupiers; future-proofing the design for years to come.

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Fig. W: Elevations (Plot 1) (NTS)

The dwellings are to be simple in design. This has come through simplifying the massing arrangement to two separate forms: the principal dwelling along with the large open volume of the kitchen / dining and family room. This variation in massing provides a break in the ridge line of the house, helping provide a sense of scale and proportion to the design. Similarly, variations in the material properties of the principal façade, break the surface area into smaller parts. Fenestration patterns and proportions are typically in keeping with surrounding vernacular, while larger areas of glazing and rooflights (in place of dormers), are to bring an appealing contemporary aesthetic and appeal to the design.

The new dwellings are to be serviced by mains water, electricity and telecoms all located within the local vicinity. Each plot will be heated through individual air source heat pumps located to the rear of each property. Each dwelling will also be provided with a series of PV panels orientated and located to optimise the production of operational energy. Overall, the development will adopt a fabric-first approach; where a high level of airtightness, excellent u-values and opportunities for solar gain is provided to minimising the environment impact of the development through a reduction in CO2 emissions. The retention of the existing trees within the private garden spaces, is ensure local biodiversity is preserved while also providing an opportunity for carbon capture.

The impact of the development in terms of surface water is to be mitigated through individual surface water soakaways located within the private garden spaces. Foul drainage is to come through individual treatment tanks with outfall to foul water soakaways within the garden spaces. Please see the accompanying drainage report for full details of the proposal.

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It is hoped the preceding analysis demonstrates the potential for the site at Tulloch House to provide quality, well-designed rural homes to Oldmeldrum. The site at Tulloch House is large enough to accommodate 3 large, well-proportioned plots where each dwelling is afforded a good level of privacy and external space to allow residents to take advantage of rural living. The development presents the opportunity to help conserve the heritage and sense of place of rural Aberdeenshire through careful development siting and design. It is hoped the regeneration of the site from its current derelict state will bring a welcome visual improvement to the local area. Overall, the applicant hopes to bring the site back into use through the creation of an attractive, distinctive and sustainable development within rural Aberdeenshire.