Design Statement

JWD 2899

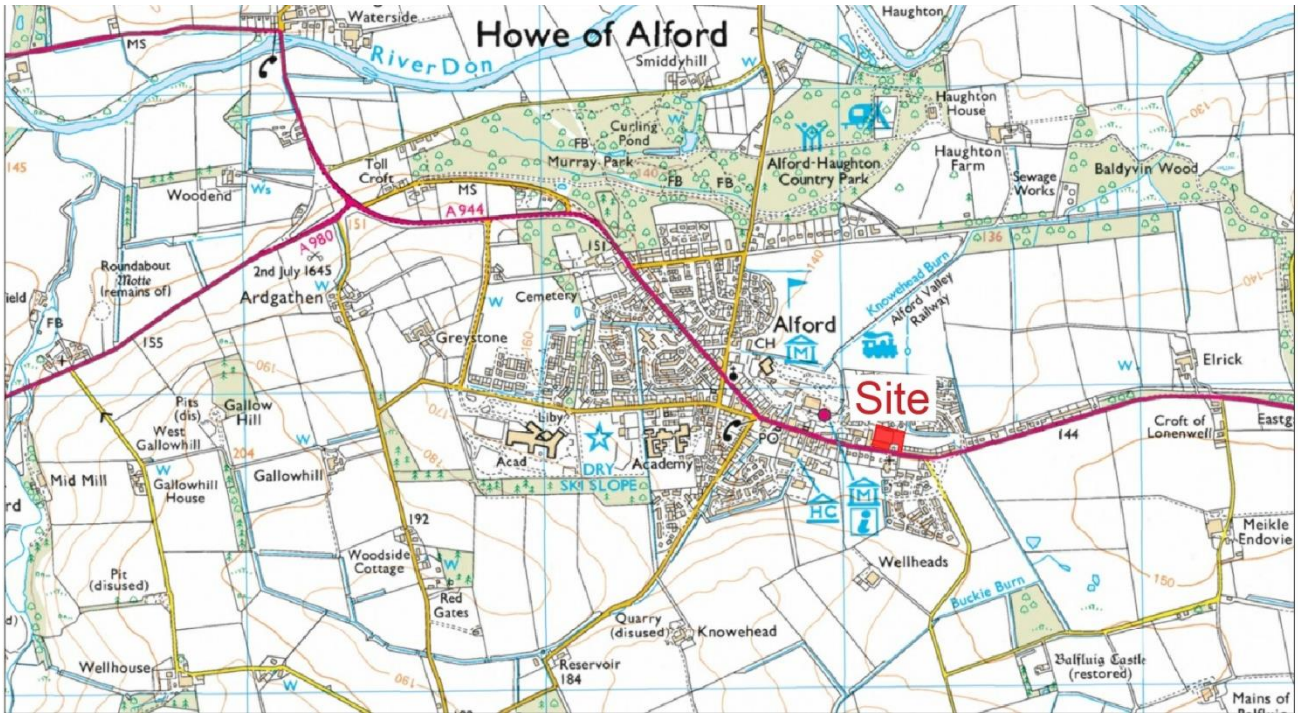
Proposed New Automotive Service Centre

At:

91-93 Main Street,
Alford,
Aberdeenshire
AB33 8AD

1.0 EXISTING SITE

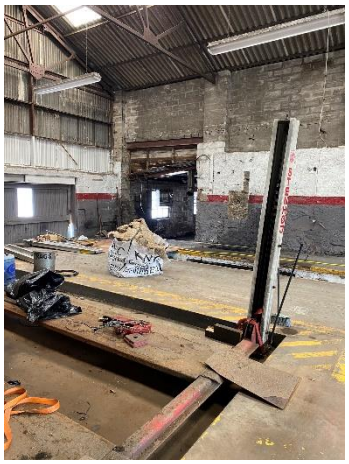
The proposed site is located on the outskirts of Alford, a large village in rural Aberdeenshire. It is about half a mile from the centre of Alford and well within walking distance of anywhere in the village. Alford itself is 12 miles to the west of Inverurie and about 25 miles from the centre of Aberdeen. The site is currently occupied by a disused commercial garage.



1.1 SITE ANALYSIS

1.2 EXISTING SITE PHOTOGRAPHS – PRIOR TO DEMOLITION






2.1 DETAILS OF PROPOSALS

The proposal is for the demolition of the existing disused commercial garage and the erection of a new commercial automotive garage and adjunct offices on the same site. It will consist of a single large steel frame shed and a smaller steel frame office building constructed as a lean-to against the main shed. The larger of the sheds will serve as the main workshop. The workshop is a large, (600m^2) flexible open space with additional storage space above the office wing.

The office building consists of a reception with a small shop and waiting room, a personnel office, staff room with kitchenette and separate male and female toilets. A shower room is also included for staff use. The total floor area of the office / shop is 156m^2. At the end of the office building is a further 65m^2 of workshop space, with an emergency exit out to the car park, and a smaller roller door into the secure storage yard. An additional roller door into the reception area will allow the applicant to bring display cars and heavier goods into the shop.

The reception is at the south-west corner of the building, facing the car park and creating a clear and welcoming entrance to the building. The main workshop can be accessed via the office, the personnel doors on the north, south and east elevations and through any of the large roller doors on the north and east elevations.

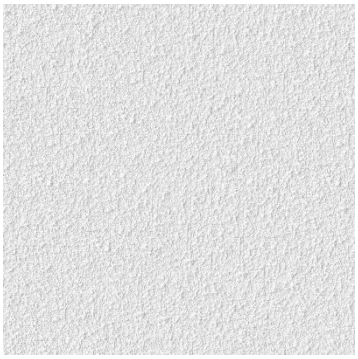
To the south of the building, near to the main entrance of the site and sheltered from the elements by the surrounding buildings, is the main customer car park. It will provide 20 parking spaces, including two accessible parking spaces right next to the main entrance. Further parking for the garage and workshop is provided along the west elevation of the workshop and along the north boundary of the site.

The area to west of the site is fenced off to form a container storage yard. This is accessed via a lockable gate near the front of the site. To the east of the workshop building there is another secure storage area which will be fenced off from the rest of the compound. An additional service road runs through the storage area and connects to the existing entrance on Main Street.

The total floor area of the proposed development will be 821m^2, much smaller than the former 1150m^2 development.

The exterior of the development will be clad in a combination of composite insulated trapezoidal wall and roof panels, translucent trapezoidal roof panels, grey rendered blockwork and grey aluminium Rockpanel Metals panels. The main shed will be clad with the composite panels and the office building will be clad with the Rockpanel cladding. Both roofs will be composite panels.

Trapezoidal Profile
Composite Insulated Panel



Grey Rendered Blockwork

Rockpanel Metals Grey
Aluminium Cladding

The landscape details, which are shown indicatively at this stage, include a five-year maintenance plan for all trees, shrubs, amenity grass and wildflower grasses. It is agreed, as standard, that all planting, seeding and turfing will be carried out in the first planting season following completion of the development. Any tree or shrub which dies or becomes seriously damaged/diseased within the five-year period will be replaced in the next planting with trees/shrubs of a similar size and species.

The development will be connected to the public water supply. Foul and surface water will discharge to the existing foul and surface water system, amended to suit the new development.

4.0 ABERDEENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (ALDP) 2023

4.1 Policy R2 Development Proposals Elsewhere in the Countryside

R2.1 *"The reuse of brownfield land will always be preferred over greenfield land."*

The proposed development is looking to re-instate the historic use of the site and would be considered re-use of brownfield land. The existing dilapidated buildings on the site will be demolished to make way for the replacement garage development. The proposed development will have a total footprint of 886m^2 which is significantly less than the existing building footprint of 1150m^2. This is supported by policy R2.1.

R2.4 *"Appropriate development will be welcomed on brownfield sites that bring an environmental and visual improvement."*

The existing disused garage buildings are in an advanced state of disrepair, presenting a danger to anyone who enters them. Additionally, the run-down street facing of the garage is currently a major eyesore and has a serious negative impact on the appearance of local area. The proposal will clean up the area as well as reinstating the former use of the site and providing local residents with additional utility.

4.1 Policy P1: Layout, Siting and Design

The proposed development meets the six qualities of successful places as set out in Policy P1 as demonstrated below:

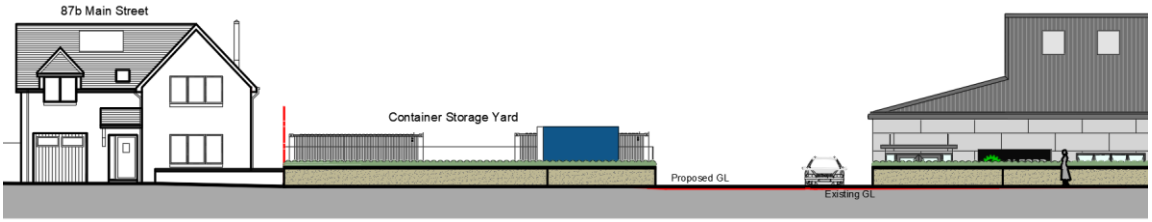
(1) distinctive with a sense of local identity through the creation of a sense of place and the aesthetics of the design features and elements.

The proposal fits well within the immediate context of the surrounding industrial estate. The proportions and material choice of the main workshop are designed to be characteristic of a typical industrial unit and the street facing office building is designed to a smaller scale more reflective of the houses on Main Street. Both are finished in metal cladding in keeping with the industrial nature of the development.

Entrance Visual

(2) *safe and pleasant, encouraging both activity and privacy, providing security and protecting amenity*

The proposed development will be set back from the road with a large, open parking and turning space in front of the main entrance and the public face of the business is at the front of the site, creating a positive visual connection with the street. Additionally, the office building is heavily glazed on the corner and clad in a more premium looking metal cladding to distinguish it from the more basic, industrial workshop behind it. The larger workshop building has been positioned to the rear of the development to reduce the impact on the street and prevent overshadowing. The site slopes down to the north, reducing the height of the development as seen from the street. A street elevation is provided below for clarity.



Street Elevation

Exterior security lighting will be provided along the perimeter of the building. Additional flood lighting will be provided to the secure storage enclosure to the east of the workshop, but care will be taken to ensure it is directed away from neighbouring houses.

(3) *welcoming through visual appeal, style and the creation of a welcoming environment*

The front of the office and shop building has substantial glazing, with large windows around the corner of the reception ensuring the space is always well lit and welcoming to customers. Internally,

the public part of the building is framed out and clad with plasterboard for a cleaner, more professional appearance. The workshop building is more industrial in style, but will be well lit by the translucent panels in the roof and is fully closed in and insulated, providing garage employees protection from the elements.

A strip of planting is proposed along the front of the site, sitting behind but visible above a rendered blockwork wall which has been designed to match the existing wall to the properties at the west of the site, 87a and 87b. There will be a small grass area with additional planting around the site entrance to further soften the boundary between the site and Main Street.

Site Overview

(4) adaptable to future needs

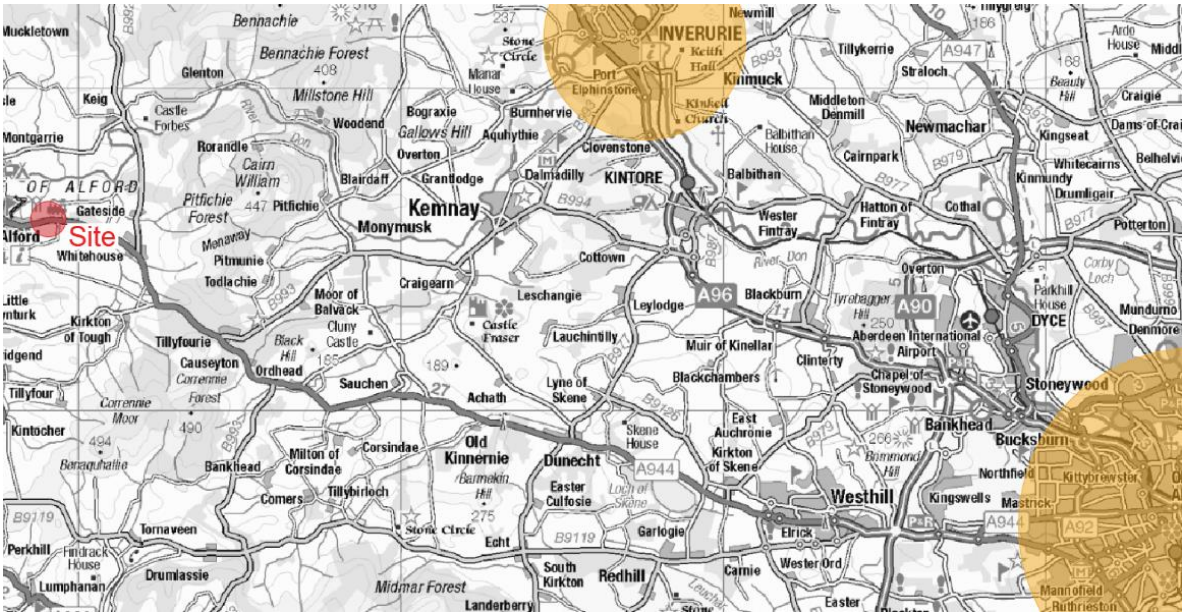
The office, shop and all forward facing areas will be designed to be fully accessible to all visitors, with a dropped kerb to the pavement in front of the main entrance facilitating disabled access and the workshop to the rear is entirely on one level and will be suitable for most able-bodied people. The proposal site contains an additional area marked out for future development as the applicant is keen to maximise the potential of the site.

(5) efficient resource management

The building will be sustainably heated by Air Source Heat Pumps and an underfloor heating system. This will be supported by PV panels on the south facing roof the building which will provide sustainable energy while also reducing energy bills. The public areas of the development will be provided with large windows, allowing direct sunlight and solar gain to contribute to the heating of the building during the day. All lighting will be with low energy fittings and bulbs.

(6) well connected to create well connected places that promote active travel

The site is located in the village of Alford in rural Aberdeenshire. It is about half a mile from the centre of Alford where there are buses available and well within walking distance of anywhere in the village. Alford itself is 12 miles to the west of Inverurie and about 25 miles west from the centre of Aberdeen.



Policy RD1: Providing Suitable Services

The proposed site will be accessed off Main Street, a major street which runs right through Alford and becomes the A944 when it leaves the village. Public transport is available from within the village and the A944 runs as far as Aberdeen to the east and joins the A97 near Lumsden to the north-west, providing good transport links with the city and the rest of the shire.

Visibility splays are shown on the site plan to indicate that suitable visibility can be provided at the entrance to the site.

The proposed development will be connected to the public water supply. Foul water will discharge to the existing foul water system, which will be amended to suit the new development. Surface water will also discharge to an amended system.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we hope that Aberdeenshire Council will support the proposed Automotive Service Centre for the reasons provided in the document above.