

NEWTONHILL, MUCHALLS and CAMMACHMORE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Planning Department
Aberdeenshire Council

11 July 2017

Dear Ms Ash,

Re: Planning Application APP/2017/1592 for erection of Workshop and 4No. 8m High Flood Lights, Formation of Yard, and Landscaped Bunds and Alterations to Access | Land Adjacent To West Monduff, Newtonhill, Aberdeenshire AB39 3PQ.

The Community Council welcomes proposals to provide employment close to Newtonhill and notes that the land is zoned for employment purposes in the Local Development Plan 2017. However, there are a number of issues that must be raised.

1. Planning Policy

One of the key Planning outcomes of the National Planning Framework for Scotland is to create a successful sustainable place – supporting economic growth, regeneration and the creation of well-designed places. This application represents the ‘gatehouse’ to what could be a larger business park that will provide employment opportunities for local residents. The proposed workshop is nothing more than a very large metal clad shed that will do nothing to attract other businesses, that can offer much needed employment, to this location.

Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan (LDP) policy B1 **Shaping Business Development** emphasises that approval will be given for new employment uses on land allocated or identified in the plan. The applicant’s Design & Planning Statement implies that this facility is a relocation of an existing facility, resulting from the downturn in the Oil & Gas sectors. This is unlikely to result in any new employment opportunities for local residents given an anticipated workforce of about six staff.

LDP policy P1 **Layout, siting and design** says that applications will only be approved if development designs demonstrate the six qualities of successful places, which are to be:

- distinctive with a sense of local identity through creation of a sense of place and the aesthetics of the design features and elements;
- safe and pleasant, encouraging both activity and privacy, providing security and protecting amenity;
- welcoming through visual appeal, style and the creation of a welcoming environment;
- adaptable to future needs through the balance of land uses, building types, density, sizes and tenures (including housing for people on modest incomes), and the flexibility to adapt to the changing circumstances of occupants;
- efficient in terms of resources used in terms of waste management, water use, heating and electricity, the use of recycled materials and materials with low

- embodied energy, and responding to local climatic factors associated with cold winds, rain, snow and solar gain; and
- well connected to create well connected places that promote intermodal shifts and active travel.

Although the size of the development is given as two hectares, it forms part of a much bigger area within the settlement plan for Newtonhill and therefore, requires a development framework or masterplan, using a process that includes appropriate public consultation to create a business park that is as well designed as the one at Badentoy, Portlethen.

The settlement plan for Newtonhill in appendix 8e of the LDP states: “There is a record of flooding close to the BUS site. A Flood Risk Assessment may be required”. The applicant answered No to the question ‘Is the site within an area of known risk of flooding?’ on the application form.

2. Site Location Plan

The site location plan, drawing number 2390/100A, is out-of-date and does not show the most recent developments in the Cairnhill area of Newtonhill. There are a number of existing and new homes that will be directly affected by the proposed development, especially by the flood-lighting.

3. Traffic

The proposed access road meets the A90 slip road very close to its junction with the A90. This is a very busy slip road as it takes all the traffic entering and leaving Newtonhill and Chapelton using the northbound carriageway of the A90. Proposed developments at Newtonhill and Chapelton will see these levels of traffic increase significantly over the next few years. The proposed access is also situated on a bend with poor visibility. There will be the need for traffic to turn right, when entering or leaving the proposed site, across the flow of traffic on the slip road with the potential for accidents and the resulting major congestion. This access road will be very unsuitable to allow future development of the business park; an alternative route is required.

The applicant’s Transport Statement is out-of-date as it does not consider Chapelton.

Planning must be about creating solutions and not about creating problems to be solved in the future. An alternative access road is required and this planning application should be rejected because of the potential for serious injury that this design may cause.

4. The building

The building is 42 m long by 25 m wide and more than 12 m high. This will be a very large building that will be overbearing and dominate the landscape. The UK standard for bridge clearance is 5.03 m and therefore the proposed building will be approximately twice the height of the Newtonhill flyover. This is also a very prominent location when approaching Newtonhill from the south and a merlin grey clad building with blue shutters will not be a very attractive addition to the landscape. This building falls a long way short of the qualities set out in LDP policy P1 **Layout, siting and design**.

We note the use of a package sewerage treatment plant that ultimately discharges into the Pheppie Burn. If SEPA reject the design or an approved maintenance schedule for the treatment plant is not enforceable, then the application should be refused.

The Community Council would like the opportunity to comment on anticipated noise levels before this application is decided. At present, we have not been supplied with any information.

5. Parking

Eleven parking spaces for six employees seems quite reasonable, but the Community Council is concerned about what may happen if more parking is required in the future. If drivers do not find places to park, on-site, then they will park off-site on grass verges, the Park & Choose and in the TESCO car park. If the TESCO car park is used as an overflow car park for this development, then this retail business will suffer and Newtonhill may lose a valuable asset that is much used by the local community and which gives support and funding to many local groups within the community.

6. Flood-lighting

The proposed flood-lighting could result in the loss of amenity to local residents, some of whom live adjacent to the site. As the site is on higher ground than all of Newtonhill, the light nuisance could extend a considerable distance.

7. Digital television

Digital television uses UHF transmission which requires line-of-sight between the transmitter and the receiving aerial. It is possible that this building may block line-of-sight from some homes in Newtonhill and television reception may be degraded or lost altogether. This potential loss of amenity by local residents will need to be addressed. The Community Council recommends that a condition be placed on the developer to make good any loss of television reception with all costs being met by the developer.

8. Pipeline

The Stonehaven Waste Water Transfer pipeline is located close to this site. It is not clear from the application that the proposed building and hard-standing are sufficiently clear of this pipeline.

9. Lack of information in the planning application

The planning application does not provide any detail regarding what sort of work will be carried out. Class 5 **General Industry** implies that the application would fail the **residential amenity test** applied to Class 4 and would make it unsuitable to be sited so close to residential homes adjacent to the site and across the A90, in Newtonhill.

There is no information about working hours or hours when the flood-lights will be on.

Will hazardous material be stored on the site?

10. Conclusion

This submission outlines a number of major concerns, especially regarding the size of the building, parking and the impact on traffic using the existing slip road to and from the A90. The six qualities specified in LDP policy P1 **Layout, siting and design** have not been met. The Community Council request that planning application APP/2107/1592 be rejected.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Morgan".

Michael Morgan
Chairman and Planning Officer
Newtonhill, Muchalls and Cammachmore Community Council
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