

KEMNAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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18th May 2015

Mr Robert Gray,
Head of Planning
Gordon House
Blackhall Road
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AB51 3WA

Dear Mr Gray,

Barratt Housing Proposed Development, Kemnay

Further to my letter dated 8th May, 2015, Kemnay Community Council wish to make a number of significant and important comments about the Masterplan dated August 2014 which is for the proposed 65 house development at Bogbeth Road, Kemnay, identified as Site OP1 in the present Local Development Plan.

Footpaths

The Masterplan states in 3.5 Transportation & Roads *“It is intended to enhance the movement along Bogbeth Road by providing additional passing places along and adjacent to the site frontage.”*

This is totally unacceptable and will be opposed by Kemnay Community Council. It is a cost driven and inadequate proposal that will not enhance, integrate with or improve connectivity and will only serve to exacerbate existing safety issues associated with Bogbeth Road. The road must be widened and adequate and safe footpaths provided. Justification for such is as follows:

1. The Masterplan indicates 28 houses in the lower south westerly portion of the site. Pedestrians, particularly school children, will be more inclined to walk or cycle downhill to Bogbeth Road to travel to the village or village schools, rather than walk or cycle uphill to the pedestrian link to the existing adjacent development. In this respect we would like to see a wide footpath along Bogbeth Road to link up with the Bogbeth Road footpath, and also a safe crossing to the footpath adjacent to the Skatepark which traverses the western boundary of the Park and egresses on to Victoria Terrace close to Kemnay Primary School and virtually opposite High Street.
2. Bogbeth Road is a popular recreational walk to Leschangie Woods. Walking along the road can be somewhat hazardous at times and pedestrians are forced to stand on the verge when vehicular traffic approaches and farm machinery can come within inches of pedestrians, as well as causing cyclists to dismount. A footpath is essential

for safety reasons and to promote and establish a safe core footpath to Leschangie Woods. A recent well attended site meeting with residents at Bogbeth has confirmed these anxieties.

3. The section of Bogbeth Road from the bend at the Skatepark to Leschangie Woods is a narrow single-track road. An additional 65 house development will result in approximately an additional 150 people. Masterplan 3.5 para' 3 Transportation & Roads states:

The design will attempt to keep to a minimum the use of private cars and maximise the use of public transport systems, walking and cycling

There is NO public transport along Bogbeth Road, (and poor public transport in Kemnay in general) and if cycling is to be encouraged then a sufficiently wide road or separate cycle path should be created. If the Developer is sincere in this statement, then adequate footpaths must be provided.

Parking Problems

To access the site, vehicles have to travel along a section of Bogbeth Road that runs adjacent to Bogbeth Park. This section of road has its own existing parking problems, especially when football matches, bowling matches or tennis matches are being played at weekends. On 05 June 2007, Kemnay Community Council wrote to Aberdeenshire Council highlighting these problems when commenting on the planning application APP/2006/0143, which was for the present Parklands estate, which is the adjacent estate to the proposed site for 65 houses. It was pointed out that cars park along Bogbeth Road during football matches making it difficult for other vehicles to pass safely, especially lorries and farm machinery. Bogbeth Road leads to Leschangie and Horner Roads along which there are a number of Farms, the road is a dead end so the only means of access / egress is via Bogbeth Road. Furthermore, Leschangie Woods are ready for harvesting, which would mean heavy articulated transport lorries using the road on a regular basis.

In our above mentioned letter, we requested the provision of a layby along the length of Bogbeth Road where it runs adjacent to Bogbeth Park. This was not provided and in consequence the parking problem still exists. Currently residents in the now completed Parklands development are complaining about these parking problems and lobbying Kemnay Community Council and Aberdeenshire Council demanding a solution. A small public car park opposite the Skatepark was provided by the Developer to ease parking / congestion problems but as suspected, it did not and has not solved the problem.

The layby alongside Bogbeth Park was the best practical solution and we suggest that consideration should now be given to constructing that layby, perhaps by way of Planning Gain. The opportunity to do so in 2007 was missed but we now have an opportunity to correct that error. It is the same Developer, so we would hope they are well aware of these problems, and our solution.

Conclusion

In Masterplan 1.2 Opportunity, the Developer states:

A Masterplan for the development presents an opportunity to draw existing and proposed areas together and take a holistic approach to the extension of the neighbourhood.

If the Developer is truly sincere in this statement then surely all of our above points should be accepted as valid requirements for this proposed development.

It will not be accepted that road widening and adequate footpaths will be too expensive. The increased cost can easily be covered by recognising the **true** development land value of the site given topography / location issues. Any such additional costs can be met by adjusting / reducing the amount of money paid to the landowner thereby reflecting the true cost of developing the site in a responsible and environmentally acceptable way. We have an opportunity to develop this site correctly and eliminate any future pedestrian access problems; if this is not achieved at the outset then current problems – which we and the residents of the Parklands development regard as significant – can only be exacerbated to a critical degree. We feel that this will inevitably lead to future problems for Aberdeenshire Council and, as importantly, the villagers of Kemnay.

Final Comment on the Masterplan August 2014

Finally, we would reiterate that it was regrettable that Halliday Fraser Munro / Barratt North Scotland Ltd. failed to provide adequate publicity for the “Public Consultation” event at the Village Hall on 18 February 2014. As stated in the Masterplan, “*the turnout for the event was low*”. Actual numbers are not revealed. Halliday Fraser Munro only advertised the event in one weekly newspaper which was published less than a week prior to the event; they did not reveal the reason for hiring the room at the Village Hall which might have alerted the Village Hall Committee and the Community Council; they did not publicise the event in the Kemnay Newsletter (which is free and delivered to every house in Kemnay) and they did not notify Kemnay Community Council. The booking by Halliday Fraser Munro was 4 ½ hours in the late afternoon and early evening. In addition, it appears they did not write to the householders of the current Bogbeth Estate that borders their proposed development. This was NOT a “Public Consultation” and we consider it to be a breach of faith in our community. The Masterplan dated August 2014 does not reflect the views of the community and should be amended accordingly with an acknowledgement and an apology to our community of Kemnay.

Future Consideration

Aberdeenshire Council need to support communities by insisting that Developers have an **obligation** to **formally** consult the Community Council at all stages of the Pre-application and Public Consultation processes, including the agreement and publication of the Masterplan, a copy of which should be provided to Community Councils so that they can concur with or dispute Masterplan statements.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Sheila A Simpson FRCP
Chair, Kemnay Community Council