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Market Street
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Miss Fiona Reid
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13th May, 2013

Dear Mr Scott,

Redevelopment of Former Hospital Site to include New Build and Conversion to Residential and Community Use and Creche, Associated Access, Landscape and Infrastructure Works (13/00268/EIAM)

We wish to object to this application as it far exceeds the designation in the local plan and is contrary to TAYplan Strategic Development Plan 2012-2032.

The current local plan designates the site for 40 units including conversion which we believe is more appropriate for the site and its overall position within Strathmartine. The 198 units proposed is contrary to TAYplan which is guiding the new local development plan, and the current Angus Local Plan Review:

Large development of this site would not accord with the TAYplan strategy of prioritising development within principal settlements. The build rate of 80 units in South Angus (TAYplan Proposal 2, p17) should be in line with TAYplan Policy 1(B)- using the sequential approach of land release around principle settlements those being Monifieth and Birkhill/Muirhead in South Angus. Bridgefoot or the Strathmartine area is not included. The Angus Local Plan Review Policy ER5 (d) also states that new development should be located within villages in preference to isolated development (which we believe it constitutes).

Large Development of the site could prejudice the delivery of the Western Gateway Strategic Development Area in Dundee in TAYplan's Policy 4 and Policy 5 (C) - "ensure there is presumption against land release in areas surrounding the Dundee and Perth Core Areas... where it would prejudice the delivery of Strategic Development Areas..."

We believe it is a significant over-development of the site and far exceeds suitability for the location. With Bridgefoot being the core settlement in Strathmartine, the proposal triples the total house number of Bridgefoot (approximately 62) and at minimum doubles the total number of houses of the whole of Strathmartine. The development of Strathmartine was because of the mills along the Dighty and farming which attracted development of Bridgefoot. This historic background and rural character of Bridgefoot and Craigmill Road will be lost with overdevelopment of the site due to the low density nature of the area.

Our specific concerns are as follows:

Infrastructure, Access and Safety

We feel that the traffic volume increase on Craigmill Road, Baldovan Road, Pittempton Road and the linking roads within Dundee's boundaries is significant with such a high number of new households proposed and safety is a great concern. The rural roads

accessing the site are narrow and twisting, with intermittent pavements therefore significant traffic increase will not only pose a risk to safety, it will detract from future sustainable transport methods in the area. As in TAYplan's Policy 2(c) it encourages development proposals to reduce the need to travel and improve accessibility by foot, cycle and public transport on and offsite. With Craigmill Road and Pitempton Road being popular with walkers, joggers and cyclists from the Strathmartine area and within Dundee, the proposal will discourage these activities due to the impact of car use.

Access points to the site will increase the risk of accidents due the main driveway entrance being on a bend in the road. In addition the proposed access point east of Ashton Terrace is hidden increasing the chances of an accident.

Car use will be the dominant mode of transport for new residents because of limited public transport in the area and long distances from areas of interest in Dundee. Specific concern is had over the 'bottlenecking' of the road along parts of Craigmill Road particularly between Grant's Craigmill Caravans and the main driveway into the site. This currently causes issues between buses and cars and the lack of pavement is of great concern to the safety of pedestrians. This problem will only be exacerbated with further development.

Pedestrian's safety is of great concern. There is not a full stretch of pavement on Craigmill Road leading to the local primary school. Any children going to and from Strathmartine Primary School would be at serious risk. The alternative is for transport to be used – again increasing the traffic volume.

Schooling

The primary school itself does not have the capacity for the potential number of families who will move to the area. There are no plans to extend the school. Currently there is limited nursery provision at the school again with no resources to extend this. With the school role currently at 28 and the maximum capacity being 50, this scale of development would breach the capacity. Children moving to the area who already attend schools elsewhere will be reliant on car transportation to and fro which again increases the traffic volume in the area, posing a risk to children walking to the local school.

Design

There is also concern about the layout of the site proposed. The arrangement, layout, design and density of the proposal is insensitive to the current nature of the site and the historical buildings (Angus Local Plan Review, Policy ER5 (b) and TAYplan Policy 2(f)). The current low density of the site and large areas of open greenspace is important to the setting of the listed building both within and outwith its curtilage (Angus Local Plan Review Policy ER16).

It also does not meet Scottish Government's standards for reducing carbon emissions and energy consumption. TAYplan's Policy 2 (e) states high resource efficiency should be incorporated within development through the orientation and design of buildings, choice of materials and use of low and zero carbon energy generating technologies. The new units of housing do not meet these standards, specifically the east/west facing houses and are contrary to Angus Local Plan Review Policy ER33.

We also wish to see protection of mature trees and older boundary walls for the character of the Listed Buildings. Any new build therefore needs to carefully consider the environment

and the materials historically used on the site and remain sympathetic and in keeping (encouraged by Angus Local Plan Review Policy ER33 with the reuse of building materials and local sourcing of materials). We do not feel that the proposal considers these aspects enough. There should also be a reflection of any building style, character and landscape that may be lost due to this proposal.

Other Issues

The environmental impact of an over development this size would be huge. SNH have confirmed to the Community Council under Freedom of Information that bat colonies roosted on the site in 2002, and that a report commissioned by the developer in relation to roof repairs in 2008 also notes significant bat activity. With bats a common sight along Craigmill Road, we believe there should be a more in-depth investigation to ensure any demolition and development on the site will not have a detrimental effect on the bat population.

The site itself is important for bats and also supports many other species of indigenous birds and animals encouraged by the mature trees, shrubs and scrubland and we wish these to be retained as much as possible (Local Plan Review 2009 Policy ER6). New replacement plantings would not be of as great of biodiversity value as the site has had many years of undisturbed growth of mosses, and other vegetation. The level of retention and protection of trees and hedges proposed is minimal compared to what is currently present and this will adversely affect the amenity and integration of the new development into the environment (Local Plan Review 2009 Policy ER7).

The proposal of the Chapel of Rest conversion has had mixed response from our community questionnaire with 47% agreeing over 30% disagreeing with the change to community use. We believe its need is dependent on the proposed new households and their needs, rather than the entire Strathmartine community, but we think the size of the building is of concern. It is very small so therefore could be an impractical space for community use resulting in it being more of a burden than of value.

While our community questionnaire resulted in 67% agreeing over 21% disagreeing to the conversion of the listed building to 24 flats, it is clear that the overall feeling of the community on the 198 units total is that it is inappropriate for the area (only 5% agreeing with it to 95% disagreeing) for the reasons discussed above. The demolition work of the listed laundry building has also received 23% agreeing with it compared to 51% disagreeing. We feel that the main administrative listed building should most importantly be retained because of its character, unique architectural style and history, but it is also important not to remove what adds to that uniqueness. We feel that demolition of almost everything else on the site is taking away some of its significance and destroying part of our community's heritage.

Yours sincerely,

Fiona Reid [Planning Contact, Strathmartine Community Council]