

<b>PLANNING PROPOSAL</b>	
<b>Local Planning Authority: Aberdeen City Council</b>	
<b>Proposal: Proposed Community and Sports Facilities, Football Academy, (comprising outdoor pitches, pavilion, ancillary buildings), Stadium (20,000 capacity), ancillary uses, formation of access roads, parking and associated landscaping and engineering works   Land At West Kingsford (North Of The A944 Road) Skene Road Aberdeen AB15 8QR (Re-consultation)</b>	
<b>Reference No: 170021/DPP</b>	<b>Date received: 24 May 2017</b>
<b>Case Officer: Garfield Prentice</b>	<b>Target date: 20 June 2017</b>

<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING OBSERVATIONS</b>
<p><b>Context</b> Aberdeen City Council has re-consulted the SDPA on the above application following the submission of a substantial quantity of additional information by the applicant. While some of the information relates to the justification for the scheme, other aspects change the detail of the proposed development. The application seeks approval for a football stadium and campus development on an unallocated site forming part of the Aberdeen City Greenbelt to the west of the AWPR junction between Kingswells and Westhill. The revisions to the original development would primarily comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reduction in on site car parking from 1,600 to 1,350 (-250) as requested by Aberdeen City Council in order to conform with parking standards;</li> <li>• The stadium's façade has been altered to soften its appearance.</li> <li>• The applicant has proposed a bus route plan with city centre pick-ups to transport fans to the stadium.</li> </ul> <p><b>Site selection and justification</b> The application is clearly a high footfall generating use. This appears to be accepted by some components of the applicant's supplementary documents but rejected by others. The sequential approach to site selection and associated policy framework are therefore key to determination of the application. The SDPA's original response didn't claim that the proposed uses required a city centre location, only that the sequential approach should be followed.</p> <p>The attempt at justifying the absolute necessity of co-location of the stadium with the training pitches and academy are particularly weak, based on assertions rather than justification and based in some cases on information a decade old. We are unaware of an up-to-date viability appraisal of the project.</p> <p>No attempt has been made in the economic impact assessment to assess the impact of relocating the stadium away from a regeneration priority area as would be required in line with draft Scottish Government advice on assessing net economic benefit.</p> <p>If the Community Trust are trying to target the city's most disadvantaged young people, the evidence presented in the economic impact assessment suggests it would be difficult to propose a less suitable location.</p>

### **Greenbelt site comparisons**

In relation to the greenbelt, the Bellfield Farm site was approved under policy at that time which explicitly allowed an exception to the greenbelt policy (if there were to be a successful Scottish bid to co-host the Euro 2008 football tournament), while the Loirston site was approved in the context of an allocation in a proposed LDP as a material consideration.

### **Sustainable transport**

It is not the role of the SDPA to conduct a detailed review of the Transport Assessment and its addendum. However, a detailed examination of this will be required given some of the changes between the two versions. The revised information (including a revision to the application as summarised above) reduces the number of parking spaces by 250 with no reduction in the number of cars accessing the site (now 2.1 cars per available space, or 1,542 cars with no identified parking).

No attempt has been made to justify 4,500 fans using shuttle buses. It must be reasonable to expect that a proportion of these would resort to accessing the site by car.

Fundamentally the site does not contribute to reducing the need to travel by car or encourage people to walk, cycle or use public transport by making these attractive choices, as required by the SDP.

## **OTHER OBSERVATIONS AND POLICY CONCLUSION**

The applicant has provided additional information and amended the application in some respects following its original submission. However the revised information does not address in a satisfactory way any of the issues raised in the SDPA's original submission.

As a consequence the original submission continues to be the position of the SDPA, supplemented by this response.

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**Date:** 17 July 2017

Note: This is a consultation response provided by the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) to inform Aberdeen City Council in the exercise of its functions under the Town and Country Planning Act 1997. The SDPA does not (and cannot) form a view as to whether the application should be granted or refused. The weight to be attached to this response is a matter for Aberdeen City Council.

