

037. Bancon

From: Harry McNab (Bancon) xxxx  
Sent: 14 June 2013 12:52  
To: LDP  
Cc: xxxxx  
Subject: LDP Review 2016  
Attachments: S28C-613061412290.pdf

Dear Sirs,

The Aberdeen Local Development Plan Review : Green Belt Policy

Following your recent LDP Newsletter, in which you request ideas for inclusion in the review, we are writing to suggest that in this review of the LDP, a full review of both the green belt boundaries and the policy should be undertaken. Historically, the Aberdeen GB has never been so extensive as it is now. Less than 10 years ago there were large areas of 'countryside' which did not have a GB designation within the City boundary, particularly to the north and west of the City. The change from this approach was consolidated at the time of the last Structure Plan review, when large land releases were identified as being necessary to facilitate the growth of the City's population and economy. At that time we recall the view was taken that the extent of the GB would be the land remaining within the City boundary following the identification of the development land. That approach was understandable at the time, as the major land releases had to be balanced with a measure of certainty that important green areas would be retained. However, we suggest it is now time to review the boundaries more critically, and in particular to ensure that all the areas now included have the same import from a safeguarding perspective, so that the quality of the GB is not undermined.

In undertaking such a review it is suggested that the main considerations should be the primary GB aims of protecting the landscape setting of the city (including its major landscape assets) and preventing coalescence.

Dealing firstly with the landscape setting of the City, it is suggested that the most important areas to protect should be along the main approaches to the City (A90 (north and south), A93, A944, A96, and A947) along with, the coast, the river valleys and the most attractive higher ground.

As regards coalescence, GB was originally intended to maintain separation between major conurbations, but in the Aberdeen context it has come to mean preserving the identity of the individual suburban settlements. Obvious examples are the separation of the Lower Deeside communities of Cults, Milltimber and Culter, or Cove from Portlethen.

I attach a map (extract from LDP : Figure 1 Masterplan Zones) overlain with text showing these main areas which should be protected. This plan identifies the scale of development which the City has to absorb, and considering this in detail, several issues emerge.

A90 North : One can see the need to prevent coalescence with Blackdog and to protect the coast and the approaches to the City, but there is a whole swathe of GB between the A90 and the A947 (Banff Road) corridor which is performing neither of the main functions of GB.

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A90 South : Again one can see the clear need to protect the coast and the approaches to the City, along with the need to prevent coalescence with Portlethen.

A93 : There are obvious gaps between Culter, Milltimber and Cults, and the approach along the A93

which should be safeguarded, but is there a need for any protection west of Culter ? There is an

extensive gap before one arrives at Drumoak. Similarly, it must be questioned whether there is an

identifiable gap remaining between Cults and Mannofield. It is largely infilled at Pitfodels, with the new

International School and other sanctioned developments.

The new Countesswells community also fills a large area between Cults, and Kingswells, and it may be

necessary to prevent their coalescence, but the area thus encircled seems to perform no discernible GB

function.

Between the A93 and A944 corridors there are again large swathes of land classed as GB (although

formerly classed as Countryside) which perform no GB function, and certainly do not enhance the

landscape setting of the City. In this area the proposed AWPR might be a more defensible GB boundary.

A944 : Again one can see the need to prevent coalescence between Maidencraig, and

Kingswells. However, with the AWPR passing between Kingswells and Westhill, is there a need for GB

here, and does it need to stretch so far north and south of the A944 ?

Between the A944 and A96 corridors There is a need to prevent coalescence between Kingswells and

Newhills, as well as safeguarding Brimmond Hill, and the Bucksburn valley. But the function of the land

as GB west of Brimmond Hill seems questionable. It plays no obvious role in safeguarding the landscape

setting of the City. Again in this stretch it seems that a combination of the AWPR and Brimmond Hill are

more defensible boundaries.

There is a similar situation north of the A96, where Tyrebagger Hill would be a logical boundary, in

combination with the AWPR, round to the A947 corridor.

A947 : There is an obvious need to prevent coalescence between Dyce and Newmachar, as well as this

approach to the City.

However, east of here and over to the A90 north corridor there is no obvious strategic GB function.

We hope this analysis provides a flavour of our concerns as to the extent of GB, which we believe

actually undermines its quality and accordingly its robustness as a policy base. As noted at the outset,

we also believe that the detailed wording of the GB policy could be refreshed, particularly to align it

more squarely with the Policy in Aberdeenshire.

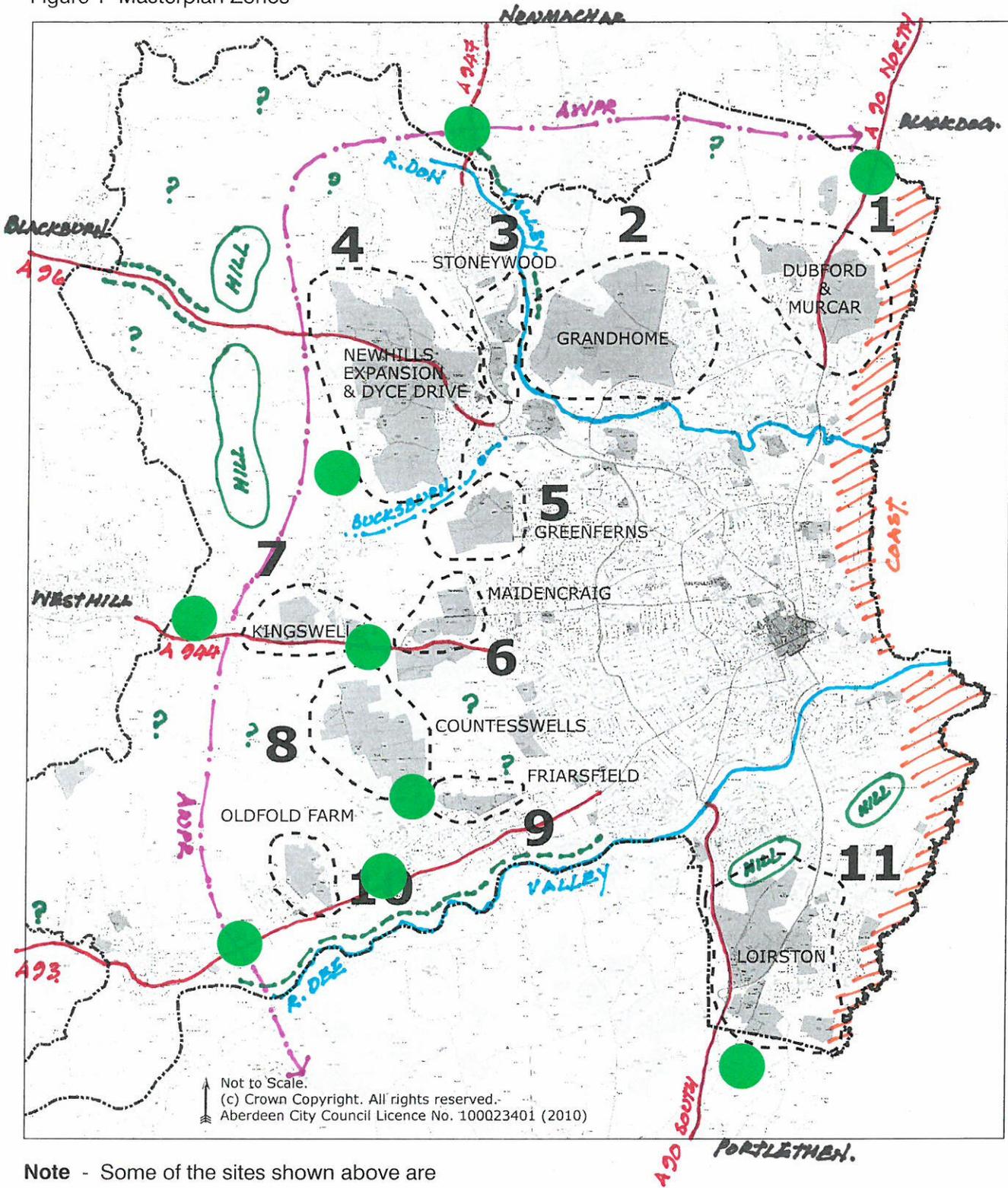
We look forward to hearing your response in due course.

Regards,

Harry McNab,

[Redacted signature block]

Figure 1 Masterplan Zones



**Note** - Some of the sites shown above are proposed for uses other than residential and employment land, for example sports facilities, mineral extraction and cemeteries. It also shows the allocations yet to be implemented from the 2008 Local Plan. The large site shown in the City Centre relates to the Bon Accord Masterplan area.

- KEY GREEN BELT LOCATIONS
- ? QUESTIONABLE GB ALLOCATIONS.