

CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	PAGE 4
2.0	POLICY REVIEW	PAGE 5
3.0	CONCLUSION	PAGE 16

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This supporting Statement has been prepared to supplement the Planning application as submitted 8th July 2019 proposing a new dwellinghouse on an area of ground in the ward of Urquhart.

1.2 The Planning officer has noted that

In determining this application, the location close to the Urquhart settlement boundary requires this proposal to be assessed against policy E9 in the Moray Local Development Plan. Policy E9 presumes against development immediately outwith settlement boundaries, in order to ensure there is a clear distinction between settlements and their surrounding countryside. Given the sites close proximity to the Urquhart, the proposal would be contrary to policy E9.

As the house comprises a house in the countryside, policy H7 is also applicable. This has a number of siting requirements - any new houses must be sensitively sited within the surrounding landform using natural backdrops, whilst also ensuring at least 50% of the boundaries are long established (per the definitions in the associated supplementary guidance).

The also notes that this *"is located on a rising land form which has no immediate backdrop and the dwelling would constitute a prominent feature in the landscape"*

Due to the undulating nature of the adjacent fields and the levels of the site in question which are lower than the adjacent area, it would be appropriate that a site visit is undertaken.

When standing on the actual plot this provides a completely different perspective and could provide a differing view.

2.1 Planning policies E9 noted below

Policy E9 Settlement Boundaries

Settlement boundaries are drawn around each of the towns, villages and rural communities representing the limit to which these settlements can expand during the Local Development Plan period. Development proposals immediately outwith the boundaries of these settlements will not be acceptable, unless the proposal is a designated "LONG" term development site which is being released for development under the terms of Policy H2.

(In accordance with policy H11, for proposals involving Gypsy/Traveller sites, a distance of 1km will be applied as being "immediately outwith")

Justification

Settlement boundaries are defined on the Proposals Maps for the purpose of guiding development to the towns and villages, preventing ribbon development and maintaining a clear distinction between the built up area and the countryside.

The five main towns also have a Countryside Around Town (CAT) designation which further restricts development in the vicinity of the settlement boundary.

extract from Local Plan 2015



The site in question is some distance from the settlement boundary which is clear from the plan above and has no direct connection with the settlement. This would not have a detrimental effect on the distinction of the village to the Countryside.

Policy E9 is not overly prescriptive and is open to individual interpretations as there is no distinction of what is or what is not acceptable as a separating distance between the existing village.

The policy notes "proposals immediately outwith the boundaries will not be acceptable" This is not immediately to the village.

You could claim that physical features could provide an actual location of what the policy is aiming to indicate and propose in terms of the actual northern edge would have been more likely the line of the railway line which our site sits well outside this location.

It is our position that this site is not contrary to the policy.

When you review the various villages in & around Moray there is numerous similar examples that have been approved in close proximity, refer to item 2.4 below. As some examples we note, though could provide further evidence.

2.2 Planning policies H7 noted below

Policy H7 New Housing in the Open Countryside

This policy assumes in favour of an application for a new house in the open countryside provided all of the following requirements are met:

Siting

- a) It reflects the traditional pattern of settlement in the locality and is sensitively integrated with the surrounding landform using natural backdrops, particularly where the site is clearly visible in the landscape. Obtrusive development (i.e. on a skyline, artificially elevated ground or in open settings such as the central area of a field) will not be acceptable;
- b) It does not detract from the character or setting of existing buildings or their surrounding area when added to an existing grouping or create inappropriate ribbon development;
- c) It does not contribute to a build-up of development where the number of houses has the effect of changing the rural character of the area. Particular attention will be given to proposals in the open countryside where there has been a significant growth in the number of new house applications; and,
- d) At least 50% of the site boundaries are long established and are capable of distinguishing the site from surrounding land (e.g. dykes, hedgerows, fences, watercourses, woodlands, tracks and roadways)

Justification

The Plan aims to allow housing in the open countryside that can be easily absorbed into the landscape. New development should be low impact and reflect the character of the surrounding area in terms of the traditional pattern of settlement and the scale and design of housing. The introduction of suburban layouts and house styles and the incremental build up of new houses have the potential to alter the rural character and detrimentally impact on the area's high quality rural environment.

Proposals that add to an existing grouping, such as an established re-use or rehabilitation scheme, will be more satisfactorily integrated where they connect through built form, layout and landscape features. Development that adds to an existing suburban layout should be avoided. Infill development along a road or landscape feature may be appropriate where this does not detract from the character or setting of existing houses.

Innovative modern design and energy efficiency measures are encouraged to promote sustainable development.

From discussions with the Planner officer, the house design is in accordance with Policy H7

In terms of the house location

- The house is located in the lowest point within the overall field with a "hillock" between the house and the main road to the west of the plot.
- The settlement of Urquhart is at a much higher level than the site
- The fields to the North are at a higher level.

All these aspects provides a natural backdrop to the proposed dwellinghouse and would enable the house to be sensitively sited within its surroundings.

A cross section is enclosed to indicate same.



photo taken from the C18E looking East towards the site. This shows the "hillock" and an existing farm building which will provide cover to the proposed new house which the house is in a lower section of the field.



photo taken from the C18E looking East to site as you exit Urquhart. There is hedgerow along the full distance bar the area of the field gates. This shows the site in the distance and details the undulating nature of the adjacent fields.



photo taken from the site looking towards Urquhart. This shows that the site is at a lower level than the village.

More important this shows the distance separating the proposed site from the settlement.



photo is taken from the house location facing West towards the C18E. This shows the farm building sitting upon the "hillock" which both will provide the backdrop to the site.

When you travel North along the C18E towards Urquhart the levels from the fields to the north and the farm building will block any views of the new house.

At least 50% of the boundaries are well established, in fact concrete posts are utilised in this section of the boundary fields.

The map from 1970 identifies that the field boundaries which are at least 50 years and this therefore provides evidence the "boundaries are long established and are capable of distinguishing the site from surrounding land"



2.3 Planning Policy IMP1

Policy IMP1 Developer Requirements

New development will require to be sensitively sited, designed and serviced appropriate to the amenity of the surrounding area. It should comply with the following criteria

- a) The scale, density and character must be appropriate to the surrounding area.
- b) The development must be integrated into the surrounding landscape
- c) Road, cycling, footpath and public transport must be provided at a level appropriate to the development. Core paths, long distance footpaths, national cycle routes must not be adversely affected.
- d) Acceptable water and drainage provision must be made, including the use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) for dealing with surface water.
- e) Where of an appropriate scale, developments should demonstrate how they will incorporate renewable energy systems, and sustainable design and construction. Supplementary Guidance will be produced to expand upon some of these criteria.
- f) Make provision for additional areas of open space within developments.
- g) Details of arrangements for the long term maintenance of landscape areas and amenity open spaces must be provided along with Planning applications.
- h) Conservation and where possible enhancement of natural and built environmental resources must be achieved, including details of any impacts arising from the disturbance of carbon rich soil.
- i) Avoid areas at risk of flooding, and where necessary carry out flood management measures.

Justification

The quality of development in terms of its siting, design and servicing is a priority consideration within the Plan. In the first instance, development needs to be suitable to the surrounding built and natural environment. Development should be adequately serviced in terms of transport, water, drainage, with particular emphasis on providing pedestrian and cycle access, and any necessary public transport facilities/connections. The use of SUDS and incorporation of renewable energy techniques and sustainable design and construction methods will all help promote sustainability in Moray. Most of the serious flood risks have been addressed by flood alleviation schemes, but there are still areas that are susceptible and these should be avoided. Similarly, pollution issues in relation to air, noise, groundwater and ground contamination, must be adequately addressed to provide proper development standards.

As noted by the Planning officer the house design is acceptable therefore item no a) is in compliance.

item b) as outlined above with the various photos shows the site sits well into the landscape and provides no visual intrusion to the views associated.

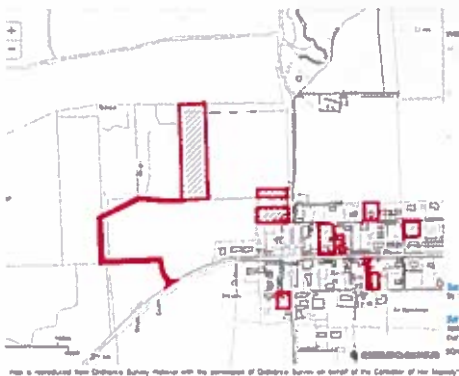
Item d), i) is in compliance as per submitted drainage statement and approved by Moray Council Flood team.

Item c), e), f), g), h) are not applicable to single house proposals

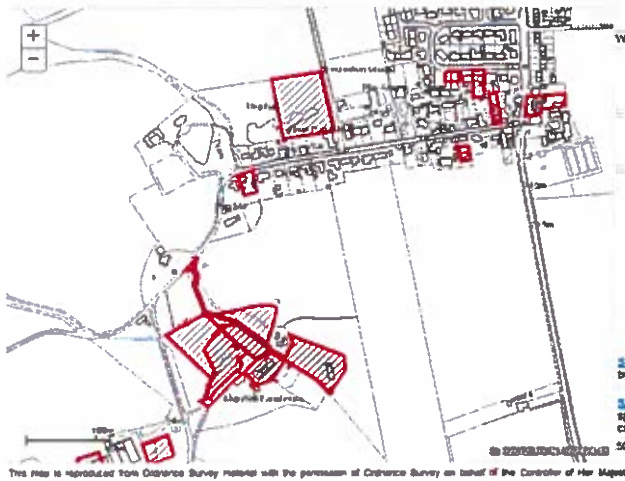
The siting and impact on surrounding property (IMP1) require new development to be sensitively sited, designed and serviced. In terms of scale, proportion, material and design, the proposal is in keeping with the character of the existing houses and it will not, in visual terms, have a significant adverse impact or the appearance and amenities of either the existing building or the surrounding area.

This is no different to many approved Houses in the Countryside throughout Moray and examples could be provided as comparisons. As noted earlier a site visit looking outwards from the site would provide a greater perspective of how sensitive this site.

2.4 Direct comparisons with approved houses adjacent to settlement



Planning approval 19/00280 notes that this is in close proximity to Archiestown and in fact is much closer to the settlement boundary than our application.



Although the redevelopment at Muiryhall is the removal of farm buildings, these extend beyond what was the original footprint.

The main point is that these houses are extremely close to the settlement boundary and this was not an issue on the officer handling report



These plots at Thomshill are in close proximity to the settlement boundary and the extended Amenity site and was approved.

2.5 No formal objection has been submitted from adjoining neighbours.

3.0 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 In concluding, based on all of the above, we believe that our proposal represents an acceptable form of development and, as such, respectfully asks that a positive recommendation can be provided.
- 3.2 To enable this aspect the applicant owns the adjacent farm fields and this property will enable them to function their farming of livestock in close proximity.