

2001 Population.....8172*(Source: 2001 Census)***Households.....3469**

Objectives

- Develop a masterplan for the harbour and its hinterland, which re-assesses the 'harbour related only' requirement
- Provide for new employment opportunities with the allocation of land for a business park
- To identify more land for development without encouraging a spread along the coastline and threatening coalescence with Portgordon and Findochty
- To try and soften the edge of the built up area and the introduction of landscaped belts/corridors, or establishing community woodlands
- To retain the vibrancy of the town centre by ensuring that any interests in retail developments will not be harmful to the traditional heart of the town

Proposals

Water and Drainage

There is adequate waste water capacity to accommodate the level of development, but limited water capacity. It is essential that developers should contact Scottish Water at an early stage.

Foul drainage must be connected to the public sewer.

Roads

All comments on road infrastructure requirements are intended to be of assistance to developers and advise them generally of improvements that are likely to be needed in order to service the site. These requirements are not exhaustive and do not pre-empt anything that might result from a Transport Assessment.

Housing

The following sites are designated for housing. Existing allocations are continued, and four new sites (at Barhill Road East and West; High Street and Rathburn) have been identified. These have been selected in order to promote new building across the town.

R1 Burnbank (3.04 ha)

Over 30 house sites remain available in development which was commenced in the 1960's.

R2 Parklands (3.21 ha)

The proposed designation of the site to the south (BP1) should assist with road access into this site, which must be linked to the roundabout on High Street, and not taken from Munro Way. A 3 metre wide emergency access onto Munro Way must be provided within the layout, with a knock down bollard to prevent use by vehicular traffic. A maximum of 50 houses will be permitted, representing an average density on site. Screen planting should be carried out on the boundary with the nursing home, and along the southern boundary in order to provide some separation from the site to the south.

R3 Whispering Meadows

A small number of plots remain on this site. A planning application to extend the site to the east was previously refused, and it is not proposed to allocate the site in this Plan.

R4 Archibald Grove (0.75 ha)

This small area of land could be developed for up to 5 house plots, but it is also considered suitable for affordable and special needs housing under the terms of Policy H9 (Affordable and Special Needs Housing) should the Council decide to promote this.

R5 Steinbeck Road (1.47 ha)

The release of this site has always been held back to try and promote a quicker take up of sites at Burnbank (R1). There are still over 30 plots available at Burnbank, and so this site (R5) will remain constrained until there are only 10 remaining. Footpath and cycle links into Linzee Gordon Park should be formed as part of the layout of this site. To continue the density and character of the Highfield area, no more than 30 houses will be permitted.

R6 Rathburn (N) (2.44 ha)

Access to this site must be taken from March Road, utilising the route of the old railway. The addition of site R7 to the south will have implications for the design of this new access road, which will require to accommodate traffic from both sites. This will require road widening improvements at the crossing of Rathven Burn and junction improvements at the connection with March Road. A slightly higher than average density can be permitted, but no more than 60 houses will be allowed. The site layout should allow for a footway/cycle path to continue the existing cycle path from March Road to the old railway. Links to this, and to the former railway line to the North should also be provided. Due to the presence of industrial activity to the west (including fish processing, overnight transport and refrigeration) there is a high risk of noise and odours affecting the nearest part of this site. A noise impact assessment will be necessary with houses set back and other mitigating measures taken as appropriate. A badger survey will require to be carried out to confirm the presence of badgers on site, with mitigation measures as appropriate.

R7 Rathburn (S) (5.88 ha)

In order to make the required road access improvements at R6 more economically viable, this site is a new allocation for a further phase of housing. It should only be developed when site R6 is substantially developed (80%). Access should be as per site R6, including footway/cycle path arrangements. Links into the path network within the Rathven Burn valley should be provided. Development will be restricted to the lower, more level part of the site, with the sloped area to the south to be planted up possibly as an eventual community woodland. In addition to providing a recreational facility this planting will help contain the built development within the land form and create a natural edge of town barrier. In light of this requirement and as a balance to the higher density development to the north, this site should have a medium to low density and not exceed 60 houses on site.

Due to the presence of industrial activity to the west (including fish processing, overnight transport and refrigeration) there is a high risk of noise and odours affecting the nearest part of this site. A noise impact assessment will be required, with houses set back, and other mitigating measures implemented as necessary.

An archaeological evaluation should be carried out prior to development, and a badger survey will be required to confirm the presence of badgers, with mitigation measures as appropriate.

R8 Barhill Road (E) (7.43 ha)

This is a large new site which is expected to serve the Buckpool area for at least the duration of the Local Plan period. It should accommodate no more than 150 houses. A Transport Assessment will be required. This should examine the requirement for off site road improvements resulting from the development of this site and the adjacent R9 and 'LONG' sites to the west. Access will be from Barhill Road, where a new roundabout may need to be constructed. An emergency access onto the Mill of Buckie track shall be provided. The developer should contact the Council's Public Transportation Unit regarding bus bays and the provision of bus services. Footpath and cycle links should be provided off site at the North-east corner.

The developer will be required to promote the extension of the 30mph speed restriction on Barhill Road, beyond the new access point.

Structure woodland planting should be provided along the Northern boundary, to provide a physical separation with the rather densely built up area of Buckpool to the North. Feature tree planting should be provided along the east and west frontages. In association with this development, the area of unmanaged land between the eastern boundary and the Burn of Buckie should remain as a public open space, creating an informal recreational and amenity facility.

An archaeological evaluation should be carried out prior to development, and a badger survey carried out to confirm the presence of badgers on site, with mitigation measures as appropriate.

R9 Barhill Road West : 2.66 ha

Part of this site is to be released for development for affordable housing, with an allowance for 50 units. Road access and other transportation requirements must be considered in association with the servicing arrangements for the R8 housing site to the east.

Boundary planting will be required incorporating feature tree provision along the east and south boundaries, and a contribution may be sought towards the proposals to establish a Community Woodland around the periphery of Buckie.

R10 High Street (8.28 ha)

This is a new land release, which is capable of accommodating up to 135 houses. As an edge of town site, a 15 m wide landscape strip must be provided along the southern boundary, with some feature tree or hedge planting along the west/north west edge as part of a long term proposal to enhance the entrance to Buckie. Access arrangements will be subject to a transport assessment, and must take into account the proposals to service the BP1 business park opposite. A contribution towards the provision of a bus shelter and lay-by will be necessary.

In order that the release of this land takes place in a planned and co-ordinated manner, a masterplan approach will require to be taken, particularly in respect of road infrastructure provision. This is likely to involve the provision of a new roundabout to serve this site (and BP1). A transport assessment for the whole area will be required.

'LONG'

In order to indicate the general long term direction for housing development, areas have been identified (LONG) on the settlement statement maps. These are at:

Barhill Road West: This would be a natural area to investigate following the designation of sites R8 and R9, the infrastructure for which should allow for future potential development in this area.

High Street: The continued expansion of the town Southwards towards the A98 would utilise the good road access into the town. Advance structural planting would be of benefit, to assist in the long term integration of new development sites.

These sites are not designated during the currency of this Local Plan, but will be considered for inclusion in future Reviews, depending upon take up of those sites which are formally designated, in line with Policy H2.

Business Land

Industrial Estates

I1 March Road (NW)

Fully occupied. New development will comprise redevelopment; extension or change of use.

I2 March Road (NE)

A limited amount of undeveloped land exists here, and this estate will shortly be fully occupied.

I3 March Road (SE)

This site represents the 'follow on' from I1/I2 for new employment land provision. It would be desirable to leave some additional distance around the Waste Water Treatment Works, otherwise the layout should accord with policy ED2. Continued landscaping/planting should be provided along the March Road frontage and along the eastern boundaries. Industrial development at this site will require to take account of potential noise impact emissions affecting the adjacent village of Rathven. Development may therefore require to be subject of a Noise Impact Assessment, with appropriate mitigation measures.

Existing Business Areas

I4 Maltings

The undeveloped area around the Maltings has in the past been reserved for expansion purposes but has never been required, and as such, there may be scope for alternative business activities to be introduced. Any such proposals must be compatible with the operation of the Maltings, and the impact of any noise from the Maltings must be taken into account. Similar consideration must also be given to any potential noise impact from new developments on the housing areas to the west of the site.

I5 Grampian Country Park

This is the site of the former Grampian Country Park factory. The site's location in a residential area had given rise to traffic issues, and this may restrict the suitability of any new proposals. Whilst 'established use' rights would allow continued industrial/business use, this should be restricted to low impact/low activity, with redevelopment to housing being the preferred option. There may be some contamination/ground treatment necessary before residential use can take place.

I6 The Harbour Area

Changes within the fishing industry and ancillary trades have meant that there is no longer a requirement to restrict activities within the harbour area to harbour related uses only. The operational needs of the harbour will still have priority and there will be a presumption in favour of proposals with a requirement to be located within the area. However, there is scope to redevelop and regenerate the area with the introduction of a wider range of alternative uses. Proposals for retail; residential; tourist related developments can be considered on their merits.

A masterplan for the area will be drawn up identifying areas with redevelopment potential; transport and pedestrian circulation; environmental enhancement.

Business Parks

BP1 High Street

A site for a high quality Business Park is allocated at High Street (w) This edge of town site provides a good location for Class 2 (financial/professional services) or Class 4 (Business) uses which require a higher environmental setting than that on conventional industrial estates. A high degree of on site and boundary landscaping will be required in order to achieve this, including structure and feature tree planting. A contribution towards the establishment of a proposed Community Woodland around the periphery of the town may also be sought.

Retail use may also be considered acceptable subject to compliance with Policy R3 in respect of sequential test and town centre impact. Where there is considered to be an impact, only after agreement with the Council of appropriate mitigation measures will consent be granted.

In order that the release of this land takes place in a planned and co-ordinated manner, a masterplan approach will require to be taken, particularly in respect of road infrastructure provision. This is likely to involve the provision of a roundabout to serve this site and site R10. A transport assessment for the whole area will be required.

A badger survey will be required in order to confirm the presence of badgers on site, with mitigation measures as appropriate.

Opportunity Sites

These are vacant, derelict or under-used sites which would lend themselves to redevelopment, and have been identified as 'opportunity sites' where a range of alternative uses may be appropriate.

OPP1 Highland Yards

Subject to road access arrangements, the site is suited to several alternative uses. Any retail use should be restricted to the northern half of the site, fronting on to East Cathcart Street, given the proximity to the town centre.

Freuchny Lane should not be used to gain vehicular access to the site. Any new access via a new connection with Well Road, may necessitate improvements at the Well Road/High Street junction, depending upon the use proposed.

Any new layout should provide for a footpath/cycle path link from north/site through the site.

OPP2 Blairdaff Street

The site of the old lemonade factory is considered suitable for redevelopment. Any new use should be compatible with the primarily residential character of the surrounding area.

OPP3 Barron Street

As a former gas works, this site will have contamination issues to resolve. Once this has been overcome, the most obvious uses would seem to be class 4 business or residential, which could include flats. Any redevelopment of the site will need to safeguard the amenity of surrounding properties. To respect the scale of adjoining properties, taller buildings should be located to the south of the site.

OPP4 Bank Street

The site of the former Thomsons Boatyard has been cleared and is available for redevelopment. Vehicular access into the site is constrained which may restrict potential uses. Business use; storage; residential use would all be appropriate. There may still be a need to address contamination from the site's former use depending on the activity proposed. An archaeological structural recording or photographic record may be sought prior to any redevelopment.

OPP5 Former Jones Shipyard

The former Jones Shipyard is no longer operational and is available for redevelopment to some other activity. Despite a previous outline planning consent for residential development, satisfactory road access into the site will be extremely difficult to achieve, and will be a significant factor determining the feasibility of any alternative use. Given the sites previous use as a shipyard, there may also be contamination issues to be addressed.

Whilst the site is identified for potential redevelopment, any future proposals will still have some matters to resolve. Implications for the marine environment will have to be taken into account, as well as the implications from climate change and rising sea levels/coastal flooding.

Update: Planning consent for a residential development of 120 flats, with access from a new road to the North of Ianstown Terrace, was granted at appeal in August 2008.

Shopping

The retention of Buckie's shopping centre is of primary importance to the town. Within the area identified as Town Centre (TC), existing premises may be redeveloped for retail purposes, and within core areas existing ground floor properties must remain as class 1, 2 or 3 uses (policy R2).

There is concern about the impact that out of centre sites may have on the integrity of the retail centre of Buckie. Accordingly, new retail developments will require in the first instance to locate within the defined Town Centre (see policy R1), which now includes the northern part of Highland Yards. Proposals for retail uses outwith this area will be subject to policies R3 (which requires the sequential approach to be observed, and have no adverse impact on town centre vitality/viability) and R4, (neighbourhood shops).

Tourism

A number of sites have been identified which support the contribution of tourism to the local economy, and will be safeguarded.

T1 Strathlene Caravan Site

This will be retained for holiday accommodation use, and ancillary developments associated with this will be permitted within the site boundary.

T2 Coastal Strip, Strathlene

The foreshore area will be retained as an open space, popular with visitors. Visitor improvements including picnic sites and the removal of the former outdoor swimming pool have been carried out in order to enhance this role. Only developments which will further add to its tourist potential will be permitted within this area.

T3 Speyside Way

The long distance footpath now starts/terminates at Buckpool Harbour. No development will be permitted to compromise this route.

T4 Coastal Footpath

This route continues from the Speyside Way terminus at Buckpool, along the coast to Cullen. The route of this footpath will be safeguarded from inappropriate development.

T5 Sustrans Cycle Route

The national cycle route passes through Buckie and will be safeguarded from inappropriate development.

Environment

The following sites are identified as open spaces which contribute to the environment and amenity of Buckie. The over-riding policy E4 applies to each of these sites.

ENV1 Public Parks and Gardens

Queen Street Gardens

ENV2 Private Gardens or Grounds

Seafeld Hospital

ENV3 Amenity Greenspace

Lady Road Buckpool; Cliff Terrace; Linn of Freuchny; March Road

ENV4 Playspace for Children and Teenagers

Letterfourie Road, Bruce Avenue, Well Road

ENV5 Sports Areas

Merson Park; Victoria Park; Linzee Gordon Park; Ian Johnston Park, Millbank, Cluny, Portessie Primary Schools; Buckie High School, Bowling Greens

ENV6 Green Corridors/Natural/Semi Natural Greenspaces

Coastal Braes/slopes; Valleys of Buckie; Freuchny and Rathven burns; old railway lines; Portessie Station

ENV7 Civic Space

Cluny Square*

ENV8 Foreshore Areas

Coastal Strips; Buckpool Harbour

ENV9 Other Functional Greenspace

Buckie and Rathven cemeteries; small agricultural field at Highfield Road

ENV10 Regeneration Proposals

It is proposed to promote the planting of a woodland area around the boundary of the town. This will involve significant amounts of new, peripheral tree planting, and will help to provide a softer edge to the town, and assist in integrating the development of new sites into the landscape. In addition it will provide a facility for public recreation and link into existing woodland areas, and circular walking routes in and around other parts of the town. Some of this planting will require to be provided by landowners/developers as an aspect of their proposals; other areas will be negotiated by private agreement.

** Environmental improvements have been carried out in Cluny Square, to enhance its role as a public civic space, and create a focal point in Buckie Town centre. To expand this role, no further parking/public transport developments will be permitted, and opportunities to reduce the impact of vehicular traffic will be taken whenever they arise.*

Immediately outside the settlement boundary are some wider environmental designations.

CAT The Countryside Around towns area protects the area around the town from development

CPZ Coastal Protection Zone

SINS Site of Interest to Natural Science (Buckpool and Portessie)

CA Conservation Area

The boundary of the Yardie Conservation Area has been retained.