

2001 Population.....4597*(Source 2001 Census)***Households.....2038**

Objectives

- To promote economic activity and retain town centre vitality.
- To provide more easily accessed and prominently located land for business use.
- To reserve a line for a future by-pass.
- To identify new housing sites.

Proposals

Water and Drainage

Scottish Water is currently investing in the water and waste water assets that serve the settlement. 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

R1 Nelson Terrace (0.51 ha)

There are approximately 5 plots available here within this development which was commenced in 1970's.

R2 Dufftown Road South (1.12 ha)

This is the balance of a site previously developed by a housing association. Access should be via Nelson Brae. Noise emissions from the adjacent distillery may affect the site and applicants will have to take appropriate mitigation measures. A maximum of 20 houses will be permitted.

R3 Dufftown Road West (1.98 ha)

Access to this site should be taken from the mid boundary point on Dufftown Road, and the internal layout should link into the adjacent Nelson Circle development, where provision for a connection has been made. Play area provision should extend upon that on the adjacent site. Landscaping on the South and East boundaries will require to be provided, as will footways along Dufftown Road. Parts of the site may be affected by noise emissions from the grain store, and Strathmill Distillery, and appropriate mitigation measures will be required. These requirements will mean that a maximum of 35 houses will be permitted.

R4 Alexandra Road (1.8 ha)

To respect the character and density of neighbouring housing, development of this site should be at a lower density than the standard average of 20 per hectare. At 1.8 hectares, and allowing for some boundary planting this suggests a maximum of 25 houses being appropriate. Development of this site will require to take account of potential noise from adjacent commercial/industrial uses. The provision of a Noise Impact Assessment may therefore be required.

R5 Edindiach Road (West) (3.22 ha)

Although in 2 ownerships, this site could be developed jointly, and any proposal for either site must indicate how it relates with the other, particularly in respect of road layout. Ground conditions may require consolidation and electricity cables crossing the corner of the site will restrict the developable area. Taking this into consideration the number of houses on site should not exceed 40. No individual houses will be approved until an overall, comprehensive layout for the site has been submitted and approved. This will allow the full extent of developer contributions to be established. If a part-site proposal comes forward, this can be considered, but it must demonstrate that it will not prejudice development of the balance. In the ultimate development of the site, road access should be provided from both Edindiach and Dunnyduff Roads. Houses fronting Edindiach Road should be serviced internally, with no individual accesses onto Edindiach Road itself. This will reduce vehicle movements and reduce on-street parking, and contribute to road safety. Footways should be provided along site boundaries where these do not already exist.

R6 Balloch Road (0.26 ha)

The disused buildings currently on site can be demolished and the site re-developed. No more than 6 houses will be permitted. If renovation of the buildings is practical, conversion to flats would be acceptable.

R7 Seafield Walk (0.78 ha)

Taking access via an upgrading of the track serving Cuthill Park, this site now has consent for 11 house plots. This is considered to be the maximum number of dwellings that can be accommodated due to the constraints on road access. Footpath/cycleway links should be provided into the park.

R8 Banff Road (North) (8.52 ha)

The presence of overhead cables restricts the extent of the developable area, and are not a particularly attractive "neighbour" for residential properties. The site does however offer potential for some infill between the current town boundary and the cemetery. The cables on the wooden poles must be diverted or undergrounded but this is unlikely to be feasible for the pylons and any layout will have to take safeguarding requirements into account. Road access would be outwith the current 30mph limit and the repositioning of this would have to be promoted by the developer. In selecting the position of this access, account will require to be taken of the longer term potential development of the site to the south, which may require the ultimate provision of a roundabout. As an edge of town site, on a rising slope, a significant amount of structural landscaping/tree planting would be required in association with its development. This would comprise an area, at the crest of the slope, and along the A95 frontage where hedging and feature tree planting should be provided, to create an attractive road verge incorporating cycle path and footways. These requirements will restrict the capacity of the site to 60 houses. It will also be a requirement to carry out a badger survey to confirm there is no presence of badgers on site.

R9 Edindiach Road (East) (5.38 ha)

The development of this site will have the effect of incorporating the Den more into the body of the town.

Road access would be via Edindiach Road, around the mid point of the site, which lies within the 30pmh limits. Links should be made off-site to the footpath network which exists in the vicinity of the site. The "Green Roadie" to the north of the site would benefit from some feature tree planting within the road verge along this boundary and this will be a requirement of the site's development. A maximum of 80 houses should be permitted. A noise impact assessment must be carried out to confirm whether houses nearest the car body repair works will be affected.

R10 Jessimans Brae (0.4 ha)

Although within the Isla Valley ENV designation, this small paddock could accommodate a small housing development without detracting from the special features of the ENV designation. The site is steeply sloping which may affect access into the site, and the internal layout. To maintain the character of the area, a low density development of up to 6 1-11/2 storey houses is appropriate. Stone wall boundaries around the site should be retained and off site links provided to the surrounding footpath network. A noise impact assessment will be required in order to confirm whether houses will be affected by any noise from the distillery below the site with mitigation measures as appropriate. Due to the site's location within the historic core, an archaeological evaluation of the site should be carried out during development.

R11 Broomhill Road

No more than 2 houses will be permitted utilising the existing track in its existing condition. It would appear difficult to provide road access to an adoptable standard.

R12 Old Military Road (1.57 ha)

This is a low lying site between the A96 and the Old Military Road. Given its shape, and location at the edge of the town, a low density development with a maximum of 20 houses, can be accommodated. Access should be from the Old Military Road, which will require to be upgraded, including footways and the provision of street lights. Drainage may require to be pumped, given that the site is below the level of adjoining roads. The row of poplar trees along the A96 frontage must be retained within any proposals, and there may be scope for utilising undeveloped parts of the site as a wetland amenity area, in association with SUDS measures.

It will be necessary to conduct a badger survey to confirm the possible badger presence on site, and appropriate mitigation measures 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:

Banff Road, South: Following the designation of land to the North of Banff Road, this area looks like a natural long term extension of the town.

Edindiach Road: As a further consolidation of housing in this area, in order to balance the direction of growth.

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 Westerton Road North

A serviced site with land available for small sized plots.

I2 Westerton Road South

Effectively fully taken up, this site is suitable for redevelopment/change of use only.

I3 Bridge Street

With access via Bridge Street giving a more direct connection with the A96, this should become the principal location for new business/industrial development. Outright retailing will not be permitted, but other more 'commercial' activities can be allowed, including Class 2 uses (financial, professional and other services). To enhance the setting for such developments, boundary planting should be provided, and a feature entrance created.

I4 Edindiach Road

This area is fully occupied by the lorry park and a car body repair business.

I5 Newmill Road

This small estate is fully developed and only the re-use of existing properties is possible.

I6 Isla Bank Mills

Although not an "industrial estate" in the accepted sense, the Mills have been converted into a range of units, and a number of businesses accommodated. It represents Moray Council's main property asset in Keith. The flat land to the rear is liable to flooding but may be possible for storage use. Any stored materials must not cause a potential pollution hazard should flooding occur. A detailed Flood Risk Assessment will be required for any planning application that is submitted for this site.

Existing Business Areas

I7 Grain Store, Dufftown Road

The site of a long established grain merchant is retained for that use. Any future commercial or industrial development, whether for the established use or another use, must take into account the potential for excessive noise nuisance likely to affect residential properties in the vicinity. Applicants should have regard to noise measurement criteria where appropriate.

I8 Burn of Haughs Bonded Warehouse

Chivas Brothers warehousing adjacent to the railway. A detailed Flood Risk Assessment will be required for any planning application that is submitted for this site.

I9 Railway Land and Blending Works

Railway sidings and associated land (including the whisky blending works) are to be retained for freight/transport uses including the bulk shipping of whisky, in line with policy T4. A detailed Flood Risk Assessment will be required for any planning application that is submitted for this site.

I10 Newmill Road (South)

Fully utilised at present as a builders merchants, but with housing around the perimeter, classes 4, 5 and 6 (as per ED/2) would be suitable alternatives given the presence of neighbouring housing. Redevelopment to housing could be favourably considered if a relocation was proposed.

Business Parks

Research by consultants assessing market demand does not support the provision of a large scale business park for Keith. Public sector agencies are reluctant to invest in advance infrastructure for such a facility, which would in any event require a large area with good prominent frontage and good access to main roads. The only sites offering this are located well outwith the settlement boundary; would not form part of Keith; would involve significant travel to work distances for residents.

In order that some provision is made for new inward investment type potential (e.g. high tech/high amenity uses; or Government office relocations) a smaller site is put forward for this purpose.

BP1 Mulben Road

This site is identified should there be a demand for development requiring a high amenity/high quality environmental setting. As a green field site, with a backdrop of Cottage Woods and trunk road access, these basic essentials are available here. The site will not be released for general industrial business use, and shall be reserved only for high amenity end users (Class 2 and 4 uses).

In order to qualify for release of this site, such high amenity uses would still require to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, that the proposal

- necessitates such a high quality gateway site
- requires trunk road location and a quality environment
- complements the site and its environs.

Opportunity Sites

The following sites are underused, vacant or derelict and have potential for redevelopment for alternative uses.

OPP1 The Tannery

The former tannery building has now been demolished and the site is available for redevelopment. Access onto the A96, with poor visibility to the south, is a constraint on possible uses, and activities with low traffic movement will be most suitable. A detailed Flood Risk Assessment will be required for any planning application that is submitted for this site.

OPP2 Reidhaven Square

The site of the former Masonic Hall has already received planning consent for redevelopment to flats and re-use of these buildings would enhance the appearance of the Square.

OPP3 Mansefield Hotel, Land Street

The hotel lies vacant and derelict and is suitable for redevelopment. The site's location at the edge of a conservation area will mean that design of new development will have to respect townscape features.

OPP4 Keith Primary School, Church Road

With the PPP proposals for Moray schools involving the relocation of these premises, they are likely to become available once the new school is provided. Access onto the A96 may restrict possible uses/activities but in land use terms housing or business use would be appropriate.

OPP5 Mid Street

These buildings were for a long time in the ownership of Moray Council, but have now been sold and are privately owned. Any redevelopment/conversion will require to retain the building line, and no "gaps" to the street's frontage will be permitted given the position of the site within the Keith Conservation Area. Given the location within the "core" shopping area of Keith, non-retail uses at ground floor level will not normally be permitted (see policy R2).

OPP6 Seafield Mills

In the ownership of Moray Council the former mill comprises a mix of land and buildings that would be suitable for re-development. Retail use would be close to, but outwith the identified town centre. A retail impact study would require to demonstrate there would be no adverse impact upon the existing shopping core area, in order for this to become an acceptable "off centre" site. Road access issues would also require to be resolved. Any future industrial or commercial development must consider the potential for excessive noise affecting residential development in the vicinity. Applicants should have regard to noise measurement criteria where appropriate.

Tourism

To enhance the role of tourism within the local economy the following designations are made.

T1 Caravan Site

The caravan site will remain in use as a holiday accommodation site, in order to retain some tourism infrastructure. Proposals for alternative uses will not be permitted.

T2 Keith Dufftown Railway

The presence of the railway provides a strong visitor attraction. The line between Keith Town Station and Dufftown will be safeguarded from development, and the extension of the line to re-connect with the main Inverness/Aberdeen route will be supported. Use of the rebuilt town station in an enhanced tourism/visitor centre role will be acceptable.

Shopping

Previous policy sought to contain new shopping proposals to the Town Centre (effectively Mid Street), in order to protect the prime retail area from off centre or out of town developments.

Whilst this is a worthy principle, the defined boundary excluded areas where shops would have been appropriate (Reidhaven Square; Fife Keith; north end of Mid Street). The new boundary has been extended to address this. However this would still not provide any medium-large scale sites that might be required from a retail operator (e.g. supermarket; DIY, etc), should this level of demand arise. In such circumstances it may be necessary to consider off centre locations, in accordance with the sequential approach.

TC Town Centre

In accordance with policy R1, proposals for retail use will be expected to locate within the areas defined as Town Centre in the Keith Town Map. Proposals for retail developments outwith this area, will have to comply with the sequential approach, and applicants may be asked to submit a retail impact assessment in support of off centre locations. Only where the impact is regarded as acceptable will a departure from this policy be supported.

Within the “core” section of Mid Street non retail use of ground floor premises is unlikely to be permitted in accordance with policy R2.

Environment

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

ENV1 Public Parks and Gardens

St Rufus Park; St Rufus Gardens

ENV3 Amenity Greenspace

Town entrance at Bridge of Haughs,

ENV5 Sports Areas

Golf Course; Fife Keith Park; Simpson Park; Seafield Park; Keith Grammar and Primary Schools; St Thomas Primary School; Bowling Green; Kynoch Park; Dunnyduff Road; Cuthill Park

ENV6 Green Corridors/Natural/Semi Natural Greenspaces

Isla Valley*; Cottage Woods; The Den

ENV7 Civic Space

War memorial gardens

ENV9 Other Functional Greenspaces

Alexandra Road; Newmill Road; Seafield Terrace; Keith Showgrounds (all agricultural land which provides separation/sense of space), Cemetery

** Given the existence of several different activities within this site and the scale and extent of the designation, “non-ENV” proposals may be possible, without compromising the character and integrity of the area. Development proposals will be considered on their merits and the impact on trees, shrubs and other features will be integral factors in considering the impact of development.*

CA Conservation Areas

The boundaries of the Conservation Areas in Keith and Fife Keith remain unchanged. New development proposals within these areas will have to respect the character and features of the surrounding townscape.

Roads

The previous local plan reserved a line for a by-pass, but the Scottish Executive has since removed this proposal from their approved road building schemes. Notwithstanding this, the line continues to be reserved in order to ensure it is safeguarded from development and the re-introduction of the by-pass to the programme is not prejudiced.

CAT The area immediately outwith the settlement boundary is designated as “Countryside Around Towns” which will act as a form of green belt around the town. Development within the CAT will be restricted in order to maintain a clear town/countryside distinction