

Fochabers

Hierarchy Status/Objectives Issues

Fochabers is a third tier settlement, but has a secondary school and a good range of shops and services

- Completion of the by-pass improves attractiveness for additional development
- Provide for additional residential development.

Infrastructure

Water and Drainage

Developers are advised to contact Scottish Water as early as possible in order to confirm that there is sufficient drainage capacity and water supply available to accommodate proposals.

Scottish Water has advised that they will work with developers to ensure that new development can be accommodated.

Roads

A number of potential roads improvements have been identified for each settlement. The most significant of these are shown on the settlement map as TSP and the full extent is shown in the pages following the map. Comments on road access arrangements are provided in site designation texts. These are intended to be of assistance to developers and advise generally of improvements that are likely to be needed to service the site, along with the need for any off-site improvements. These requirements are not exhaustive, and do not pre-empt anything that might result through the Transport Assessment process. It is essential that developers contact Transportation at an early stage, especially where there is a requirement for a Transport Assessment identified in the site text.

Developer Contributions

Contributions may be sought towards some public facilities (eg core paths; library; schools; sports/leisure facilities; transportation) and this will be confirmed at application stage. Developments over 4 houses will be required to make an affordable housing contribution.

Layout and Design

High quality design and layouts in new development is an important aspect for “placemaking”, in order to achieve an attractive and interesting living environment. This is a priority objective of the Scottish Government (see Primary Policy 3).

Pre-application discussions and community consultation are only requirements for Major Applications (50 or more houses; or on sites exceeding 2 hectares). The Council would encourage early discussion pre-application on ALL proposals, and is willing to engage with developers to identify any aspects of site development that should be taken into consideration from the outset.

Some sites being proposed for development have had some “key design principles” identified for them, highlighting the key design elements that should be observed when layouts are being drafted.

Housing

R1Ordiquish Road (2.6ha) Indicative Capacity 50 houses

Access into this site will be from Ordiquish Road, and the internal layout should bear in mind the allocation of the land to the West (R2). In light of the combined capacity, 2 points of access should be provided. Consideration should also be taken of the LONG designation on the east side of Ordiquish Road, where further development is anticipated in the longer term.

Road widening of Ordiquish Road will be necessary along with consideration of the need for improvements at the bridge over Fochabers Burn. Potential improvements at various junctions with High Street may be required due to the extent of housing land being released in this area, to be confirmed by a Transport Assessment. Footpath and cycleway connections should be made into the existing network to the centre of Fochabers, and in particular into the adjacent school.

Development of the site must include the provision for boundary landscaping, and integral landscaping to create visually discrete groupings. Development of this site should be significantly completed (75%) before a start is made on R2.

Due to proximity to River Spey SAC information should be submitted to support proposals demonstrating that adequate protection measures can be put in place to avoid impact on water quality.

R2 Ordiquish Road West (2.2 ha) Indicative Capacity 50 houses.

Development of this site should be considered in conjunction with R1 to the east, and should not commence until that site is 75% complete. Provision of road improvements (widening of Ordiquish Road; consideration of need for improvements at the bridge over Fochabers Burn; High Street junction improvements) will be required if these have not already been provided through development of R1.

Footpath and cycle path provision should be made to connect with local network into Fochabers town centre, and the School. As with R1, boundary landscaping should be carried out, and internal provision should be used to break the layout into discrete groupings.

Due to proximity to River Spey SAC information should be submitted to support proposals demonstrating that adequate protection measures can be put in place to avoid impact on water quality.

R3 East of Duncan Avenue (3.4ha)

Indicative capacity 30 houses.

This site has come forward following completion of the by-pass, which has the effect of enclosing the site. It is a large site but the capacity has been reduced due to several environmental constraints, and the wish to have structure planting on parts nearest the by-pass.

Access should be from a priority junction with High Street. This will pass through a wooded area, which shall not be developed other than for the new road access. The wooded area and stone wall frontage should be retained to provide an attractive entrance. A pedestrian/cycle link with Gordon Castle Farm road should be provided, and contributions towards core path enhancements, routes to school and public transport may be sought. No more than 50% of the field area should be given over to development, with the balance given over to structure planting to assist with integration and provide a buffer with the by-pass.

There is a small watercourse on site, and some flood risk/drainage assessments may be sought at application stage. No modifications to this should be proposed (other than for access crossing), and a buffer provided for in the layout for the site.

Due to proximity to River Spey SAC information should be submitted to support proposals demonstrating that adequate protection measures can be put in place to avoid impact on water quality.

As a wooded area it may be advisable to check for presence of bats or squirrels, and if found to be present, provide mitigation measures.

Although within the Gordon Castle Historic Gardens and Designed Landscape, the by-pass has effectively severed this, and there are no objections from Historic Scotland. An archaeological watching brief would be required given recorded evidence nearby.

LONG

In order to indicate the longer term direction of growth and provide a reserve housing land supply, a LONG site has been identified on the settlement statement map. This site is not proposed to be developed during the currency of this Local Development Plan, but should any of the “triggers” for early release apply, the site can be brought forward, under the terms of Policy H2.

Ordiquish Road East : A continuation of the release of land in this area. A contribution to the road improvements sought for R1 and R2 may be sought, along with footpath and cycle connections. A habitat assessment may be required given the proximity of the River Spey Special Area of Conservation.

Development of this site is likely to represent the ultimate extent of development off Ordiquish Road, and it would not be proposed to allow for further development to the east through this site.

Opportunity Sites (Policy ED5 applies)

OPP1 High Street

The buildings on this former garage site have been re-occupied, but the site itself could be re-developed, with residential use possible. This must be of a scale, design and material finish which is sympathetic to the location within an Outstanding Conservation Area. Prior to any development commencing on the site a ground contamination investigation will be required. This together, with any remedial action that may be required to address matters arising, shall all be undertaken by the developer to the satisfaction (in writing) of the council. Car parking requirements associated with any re-development must be provided within the curtilage of the site unless otherwise agreed with the Council.

Due to proximity to River Spey SAC information should be submitted to support proposals demonstrating that adequate protection measures can be put in place to avoid impact on water quality.

OPP2 Institution Road

This vacant premises presents an opportunity for residential development. This must be of a scale, design and material finish which is sympathetic to the location within an Outstanding Conservation Area. Car parking requirements associated with any re-development must be provided within the curtilage of the site unless otherwise agreed with the Council.

Due to proximity to River Spey SAC information should be submitted to support proposals demonstrating that adequate protection measures can be put in place to avoid impact on water quality.

OPP3 Lennox Crescent

Part of the garden centre lands, which is surplus to requirement, could be redeveloped. Proximity to the by-pass might support continued business/commercial use, but housing would also be considered. A new access should be provided from Lennox Crescent, and contributions towards core path; footpath/cycleway/routes to school; public transport may be sought. A flood risk assessment may be required, and water resilient measures considered as part of this.

Due to proximity to River Spey SAC information should be submitted to support proposals demonstrating that adequate protection measures can be put in place to avoid impact on water quality.

OPP4 Garden Centre

Planning consent has already been granted for a petrol filling station and car sales on this area. Access should be from the old A98. Should this not proceed, then alternative developments can be considered on their compatibility with surroundings in accordance with policy IMP1.

Due to proximity to River Spey SAC information should be submitted to support proposals demonstrating that adequate protection measures can be put in place to avoid impact on water quality.

An archaeological evaluation should be carried out prior to development commencing.

Transportation Improvements (TSP)

A number of potential road improvements have been identified in association with the development of sites. In addition to individual site requirements, these take account of the cumulative impact on the road network. The most significant of these are shown as TSP on the settlement plan. Details of these, along with a list of all potential improvements, and other transportation related sites to be safeguarded, are contained in the attached TSP schedule.

Environment

The following sites are identified as open spaces which contribute to the environment and amenity of Fochabers. The over-riding policy E5 applies to each of these sites.

ENV3 Amenity Greenspace

A96 verges/edges; Woodside Road

ENV5 Sports Areas

School playing fields; cricket pitch; Burnside Road

ENV6 Green Corridors/Natural/Semi Natural Greenspaces

Fochabers Burn; Speyside Way; West Street.

ENV7 Civic Space

The Square

Wider Environmental Designations

There are wider environmental designations relating to areas of scientific importance or to areas of high scenic and landscape quality, outside of the settlement boundary. These are:

SAC Special Area of Conservation

River Spey and Burn of Fochabers, Special area of Conservation (policy E1)

HGDL Historic Garden and Designed Landscape

Gordon Castle Historic Garden and Designed Landscape (policy BE5)

SSSI Site of Special Scientific Interest

Sites of Special Scientific Interest : River Spey (policy E1)

CA Conservation Area

The historic central core of the village is an outstanding Conservation Area. (policy BE3)

Tourism

T1 Caravan Site

The caravan site will be retained as such as part of the area's tourism infrastructure. Any surplus land after the closing off of the old A96, could be incorporated to provide for an extension. The existing cycle track should be retained. A flood risk assessment will be required for any planning application that is submitted.

Between the development and the watercourse a buffer strip, with a minimum 6 metres width, will be required.

T2 Speyside Way

The route of the Speyside Way passes through the village, following the line of the River Spey, then into the Oldmills area and the Fochabers burn before heading south via West Street to rejoin with the river. The route will be protected and enhanced where opportunities arise.

FOCHABERS

Population: 1728
Households: 797

2011 Census

FOCHABERS TSP

FOCHABERS TSP

1 High Street

Potential junction improvements at West Street/High Street associated with developments to the south of Fochabers

2/3 Ordiquish Road

New junctions on Ordiquish Road (U14E) to serve the R1 and R2 sites. Consideration should be taken for the eventual development of LONG site opposite

4 High Street

Potential junction improvements at Charlotte Street/High Street associated with developments to the south of Fochabers

5 High Street

Potential junction improvements at East Street/High Street associated with developments to the south of Fochabers

6 High Street

New junction required for access to R3 site

