

Local Development Planning

in

Newtonhill, Muchalls & Cammachmore

A report of the Planning For Real® event

held during May 2009

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## Summary

It was very clear at the Planning for Real event that there is a very strong sense of community within the three settlements of Newtonhill, Muchalls and Cammachmore and that several of the development proposals were seen as a direct threat to that sense of community. The residents of Cammachmore expressed that they felt particularly vulnerable. Some small development was seen as acceptable, but the three settlements should remain separate and be protected by a *Green Belt*.

The proposed development on the Elsie Estate was seen as a major threat to Cammachmore and would also contribute significantly to the traffic on the A90. There was no perceived gain for Newtonhill.

## Introduction

The Newtonhill, Muchalls & Cammachmore Community Council held a public consultation exercise during May 2009. The consultation was organised and conducted by a sub-group of two members of the Community Council. The main event of this consultation was a Drop-In held on the 9<sup>th</sup> May at the Bettridge Centre, Newtonhill. Other information was gathered at community group events, by visits to residents and by casual meetings.

The purpose of this document is to report on the outcome of that exercise and to provide input into a formal response to the Main Issues Report.

## Planning for Real® Event

Planning for Real® is a registered trademark of The Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation.

The Drop-In event was based on the Planning for Real® model and it was agreed with the Community Council to call it **Planning for Real**.

The Drop-In event was publicised in several issues of the Mearns Leader, on notice boards in the villages and by flyer. Flyers were delivered to every property in the Community Council area. Most were delivered with a copy of the Newsey, but some separately. Different, child-friendly flyers were also given to pupils of Newtonhill Primary School to take home to their parents.

Several developers were present at the Planning for Real event to enable residents to make informed decisions about the development proposals. Residents were asked to submit comments into a box and to indicate on a map where they would or would not like to see development take place. They were also asked what type of housing (flats, houses, affordable houses, terraced, detached, 1-bed, 2-bed, etc) they would like to see developed.

## Population Demographic

Residents attending the event were asked to indicate which village they live in and the age band they belong to. The number of residents recorded was 276; it was assumed that this figure probably represented approximately 85% of the true figure, giving a total of 325. This data was compared to Aberdeenshire Council's statistics on population demographic (see Appendix 1 for the full set of figures). Generally most age groups were well represented, with the exception of the 16-29 age band.

## Main Issues Report

The Main Issues Report, published by Aberdeenshire Council's Local Development Plan team, is a document to promote public consultation prior to the Local Development Plan (LDP) being published. The deadline for response from the public is 6<sup>th</sup> July 2009 and from Community Councils it is 20<sup>th</sup> July 2009.

The Local Development Plan should reflect the strategies and objectives of the Finalised Structure Plan. Spatial strategy 3.13 states: *Levels of growth in individual settlements should relate to local needs, although the scale of this growth will vary from place to place. While we should aim to provide a mix of housing opportunities for everyone, we need to focus on providing smaller homes to buy or rent, and a significant amount of affordable housing. We need to give priority to mixed-use developments which respect the character of the landscape and local identity.*

## Development Proposals

The LDP web site identifies ten development proposals that fall totally or partially within the Newtonhill, Muchalls and Cammachmore Community Council Boundary.

The identified development proposals are:

- K47 East Cammachmore, North of Newtonhill
- K59 Muchalls
- K71 Newtonhill
- K90 North of West Cammachmore
- K100 Newtonhill
- K105 North of West Cammachmore
- K119 Newtonhill Farm
- K123 East & West Cammachmore, North of Newtonhill
- K142 Elsie Estate
- K157 Site of Twentieth Century Classics Ltd.

## Comments received at Planning for Real

The Planning for Real event provided residents the opportunity to question some of the developers regarding the proposals put forward for the LDP. Not all the developers were present at the event. The majority of the comments received fall into three main categories:

- Concern that settlements would lose their identities
- Concern for the impact on infrastructure
- Concern for the environment.

Not all comments were totally against development. Some saw the need for small, but carefully managed development as long as community facilities improved.

### Settlement Identity

The residents of each of the three settlements of Newtonhill, Muchalls and Cammachmore expressed a very strong sense of pride and community in their respective villages. There is also a very strong opinion that these settlements should not be allowed to join up so that one community completely loses its identity. These opinions were made time and time again in the submissions to Planning for Real. Many submissions spoke of a *Green Belt* surrounding each of the settlements

### Impact on Infrastructure

#### A90

Section 4.4 of the Finalised Structure Plan says *Future development should not be allowed to limit the growth of the economy by making the region less attractive to business, particularly in relation to congestion and access to roads...* To ensure that this objective is met, it will be necessary to substantially improve traffic flow on the A90 before any major development in the Laurencekirk – Portlethen corridor is undertaken.

The A90 is the main road from the south through to Aberdeen and as such is very busy, especially at morning and evening rush hours. The Bridge of Dee is already a substantial bottleneck to commuters and this needs to be addressed before any further development south of Aberdeen. The Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) will do nothing to improve the flow of traffic through the Stonehaven – Portlethen corridor. However, the proposed fastlink from Stonehaven to the AWPR at Milltimber Brae may take some traffic flow from the A90.

### Environment

#### Causey Mounth

Causey Mounth was the most easterly route over the Mounth or Grampian mountains, which probably existed in the twelfth century. It formed the main highway between Stonehaven and Aberdeen until the arrival of the turnpike roads. It was originally known as the Cowie Mounth after the village of Cowie where it started, but

acquired the name Causey Mounth from the elevated sections or causeways (or calsties) which were built to carry the road over boggy ground. This ancient roadway, that passes through Cammachmore, should not be allowed to disappear under a new development, but be protected for future generations. If it does not have some formal protection similar to ancient monuments, then it should have.

## **Elsick Burn**

Newtonhill is bounded to the north by a steep hill and the Elsieck Burn. The Elsieck Burn has been known to flood and burst its banks to cover the adjacent road from time to time. Development on the adjacent fields and the Elsieck Estate will increase the potential for flooding as rainwater runoff will be much more rapid.

## **Safe Routes to School**

The road alongside the Elsieck Burn is used as a safe route to Newtonhill Primary School by children living in the part of Newtonhill east of the railway line.

## **Leisure**

Several of the areas covered by the development proposals are used for leisure purposes by the residents of the settlements, especially for walking, dog walking, running and cycling. A large number of residents expressed concern that these facilities may be lost. Several people expressed the need to keep roads in the countryside for running and cycling.

## **Comments relating to the type of housing required**

Residents attending the Planning for Real event were asked what type of housing (flats, houses, affordable houses, terraced, detached, 1-bed, 2-bed, etc) they would like to see developed. There were no specific answers to this question, but it was stated that design and position of new houses must be sympathetic to the existing homes.

## **Comments relating to specific development proposals**

Refer to Appendix 2 for a map of the development proposals.

Refer to Appendix 3 for a photograph of the map used at the planning for Real event to gather the response of residents to the question:

- Place a green dot on the map where you think land **SHOULD** be made available for housing development
- Place a red dot on the map where you think land **SHOULD NOT** be made available for housing development

## **K47 & K123 East & West Cammachmore, North of Newtonhill**

These two proposals were presented as one at the Planning for Real event. These two developments are adjacent to the northern boundary of Newtonhill and only linked to Newtonhill by two footpaths. The original proposal showed one footpath

being made into a road by demolishing two homes in St. Anne's Wynd; thereby turning the quiet cul-de-sac into a main road. The developer has since written to the residents to confirm that they have abandoned this idea.

These two developments combined would increase the size of Cammachmore by a factor of ten or more.

The building of another grade separated junction on the A90 under a mile from the existing Newtonhill flyover is a totally disproportionate development for this area.

### **K59 Muchalls**

No specific comments received from this area, but one resident of Newtonhill said Muchalls should be protected.

27% of dots on the map were in favour of development in the Muchalls area in general but only 14% were in favour of development within the proposed area.

### **K71 Newtonhill**

It was felt that the proposed access route via Cairnhill Road should not be used for access as too many houses are in close proximity. One opinion was that the path is currently used by walkers and cyclists and should be kept that way as it is too narrow to use as a road with a pedestrian footpath.

### **K90 North of West Cammachmore**

No specific comments received for this area.

### **K100 Newtonhill**

There were a couple of comments to say that development should not take place in this area. The map showed a mix of red and green dots to indicate that development on the southern margin of Newtonhill was not totally excluded, but at the same time there was a very strong opinion that the development should not be allowed to progress too far towards Muchalls neither should it be developed east of the railway line. See Appendix 3 for details of the dots on the map.

### **K105 North of West Cammachmore**

No specific comments received regarding this area, but the map shows only red dots in this area.

### **K119 Newtonhill Farm**

Objections were made about development next to the farm, but not specifically about the development proposal.

### **K142 Elsie Estate**

This development received a complete mix of comments. Most residents from Cammachmore were extremely concerned that West Cammachmore would be completely swallowed up by the development. There was a lot of concern that the extra traffic could not be accommodated by the A90.

**K157 Site of Twentieth Century Classics Ltd.**

No comments received for this area.

**Banchory Leggart**

Considered to be a much better option as it would not impact the A90 as far as the Charleston flyover. Also it was stated that the area will soon be cleared of forestry trees which are of age.

## Appendix 1 Population Demographic

Aberdeenshire Council provided statistics on the populations of the three settlements of Newtonhill, Muchalls and Cammachmore.

The estimated population for the Newtonhill, Muchalls and Cammachmore area in Mid 2006 was 3,463.

The Small Area Population Forecasts for 2006 estimate Newtonhill at 3,066. It is estimated that the current population of Muchalls and Cammachmore, based on household numbers, to be:

Muchalls	314
Cammachmore	98

The population numbers are estimates and are only published as a guide. Do not expect the numbers for each village to add up to the total.

The numbers of residents recorded at the Planning for Real event was:

Newtonhill	208
Muchalls	18
Cammachmore	34

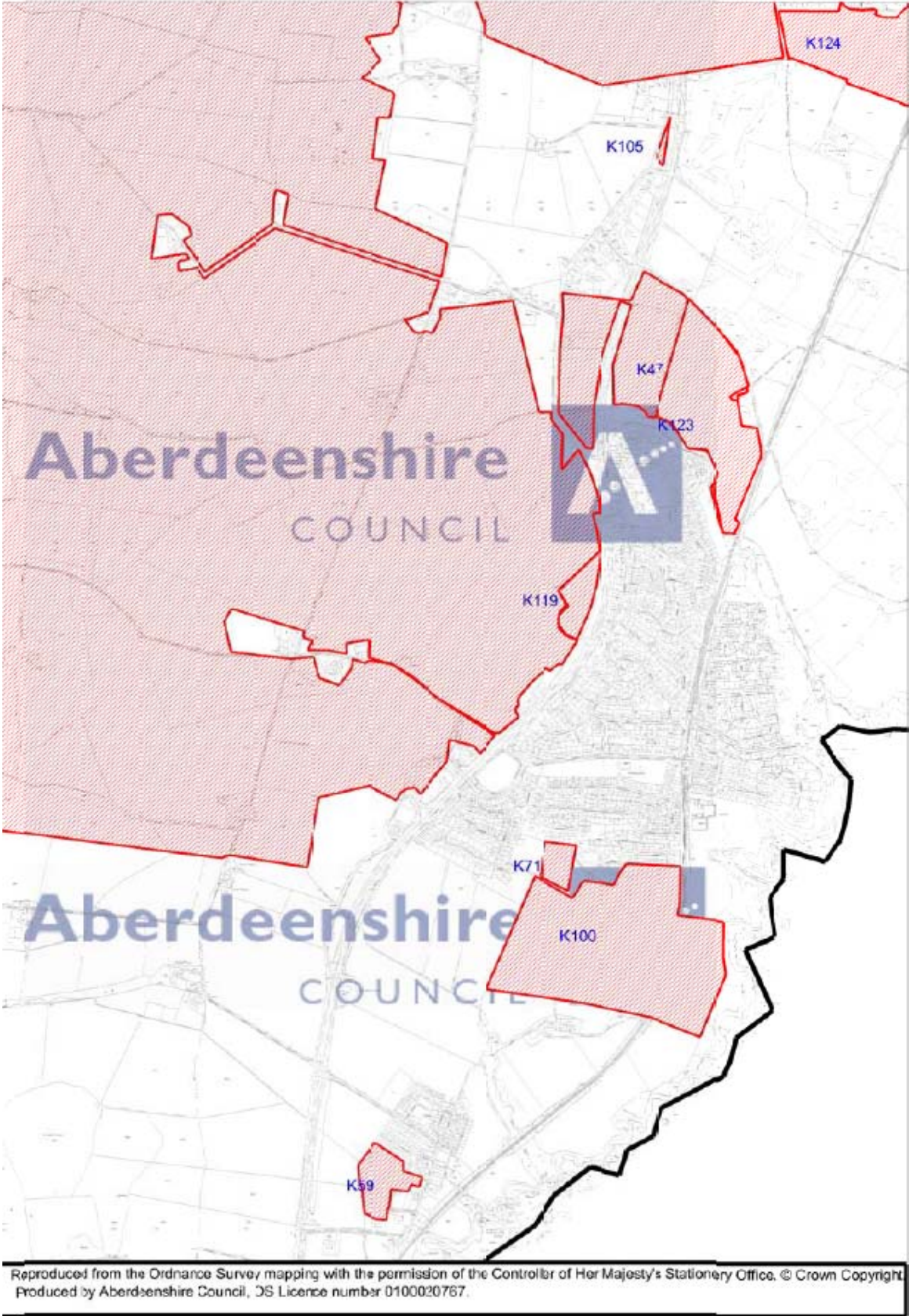
16 people attended from outside of the Community Council boundary. One gave the reason that they worked in Newtonhill. Several people were from Cammachmore, but to the west of the Community Council boundary.

Table 1 shows the demographic recorded at the Planning for Real event. Figures based on the 2001 Census are shown in brackets

%Age Bands	Newtonhill	Muchalls	Cammachmore	Outside
0-15	32.2 (25.0)	11.1 (19.7)	11.8 (22.6)	12.5
16-29	4.3 (13.6)	0.0 (10.8)	0.0 ( 8.8)	12.5
30-44	23.6 (27.4)	5.6 (25.1)	23.5 (24.8)	18.8
45-59	21.6 (22.3)	11.1 (28.6)	17.6 (24.1)	12.5
60-74	14.9 ( 9.0)	44.4 (12.3)	32.4 (15.3)	43.7
75+	1.9 ( 2.7)	22.2 ( 3.5)	14.7 ( 4.4)	0.0
undisclosed	1.4	5.6	0.0	0.0

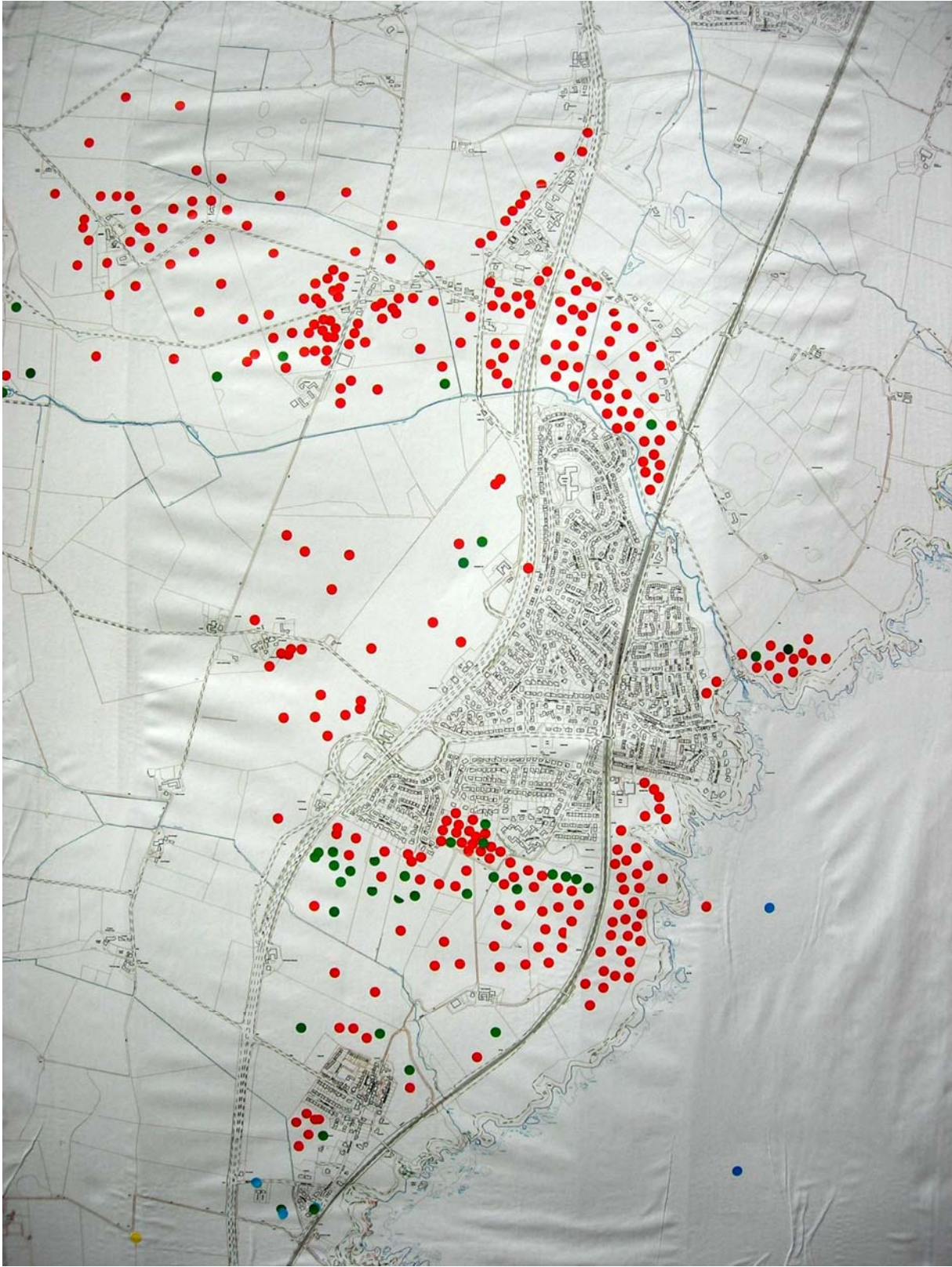
**Table 1: Percentage population demographic of residents attending Planning for Real.**

Appendix 2 Map of planning proposals from LDP web site



n.b. K157 is missing from this map, it is just to the south-west of K119

### Appendix 3 Map of residents' feedback on development proposals



Key: Red dots indicate that land **SHOULD NOT** be made available for housing development.  
Green dots indicate that land **SHOULD** be made available for housing development  
Other coloured dots have no meaning.