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**REPORT TO: PLANNING AND REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 18  
JANUARY 2022**

**SUBJECT: DRAFT BUCKIE SOUTH MASTERPLAN**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND  
FINANCE)**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 This report asks the Committee to agree the draft Buckie South Masterplan for public consultation.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (E) (2) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the Review and Preparation of Strategic and Local Plans.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Committee;**

- (i) **agree the draft Buckie South Masterplan for public consultation for an 8-week period;**
- (ii) **notes that the comments received to the consultation and the Council's response to these, along with the final Masterplan will be reported back to a future meeting of this Committee for approval.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Buckie South expansion is a strategic long term planned growth area to the south west of the town. The Buckie South Masterplan includes the sites R8 and LONG1 in the Moray Local Development Plan 2020 (LDP 2020) which have an indicative capacity of 500 houses. The draft Masterplan includes a 2.5ha site for a primary school/community facility, neighbourhood and pocket parks, and makes provision for local shops and services.
- 3.2 A Masterplan covering both R8 and LONG1 is a requirement of the LDP 2020. This is to ensure that a high quality design, reflective of Buckie, is delivered on the ground and that a strategic approach is taken to the delivery of

infrastructure. The key design principles for the sites are set out in the LDP 2020 and have been reflected in the draft Masterplan. The draft Masterplan is included as **Appendix 1**.

- 3.3 The draft Masterplan has been prepared by the developer, Springfield Properties Ltd, in discussion with Council officers. A planning application for the first phase of development on site R8 is currently pending for 102 residential units and one retail unit.

#### **4. DRAFT BUCKIE SOUTH MASTERPLAN**

- 4.1 The vision for the draft Masterplan is to create a sustainable, high quality neighbourhood with a strong sense of place that promotes opportunities for active healthy living. To achieve this, the draft Masterplan incorporates the following elements:

- Aspirations to achieve a 20-minute neighbourhood which reflects draft National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) which seeks to create liveable places where people can meet the majority of their daily needs within a reasonable walk, cycle or wheel (approx. 800m) of their home. The draft Masterplan includes mixed use buildings at Summerton Square designed to include ground floor space for shops/services, a 2.5ha site for a primary school/community facility, networked greenspaces and active travel connections.
- A new neighbourhood designed to take reference from Buckie's historic context incorporating views to civic buildings within the town and outwards towards the Bin of Cullen. 6 character areas are proposed with variation provided through materials, landscaping and building form. Key buildings and vista stoppers have been identified. These include varying materials, architectural details and height so these buildings stand out from the remainder of the development and aid navigation.
- Barhill Road and Summerton Square are designed to be focal points within the new neighbourhood. The proposed design and landscaping will change the nature of Barhill Road helping to slow traffic and influence driver behaviour as well as creating an attractive entrance to the town.
- A neighbourhood park and two pocket parks are to be provided together with sites for allotments and community orchards. These are connected via a series of green and blue networks incorporating swales and rain gardens. Proposals to enhance biodiversity through planting and other mechanisms, such as bird boxes and amphibian friendly gullies are set out in the draft Masterplan.
- Structural planting at a minimum width of 20m will contain the site within the landscape to the east and west. The structural planting will include a recreational trail, seating and way marking to create a circular 'green outer ring network' around the Masterplan area. Planting along the southern edge of the development will allow views of the key buildings designed to reflect the architecture of the Buckie boatyards and pagoda style roofs and gables of the nearby distillery to reinforce the southern gateway.

- A network of on-street and segregated footways/cycleways are to be provided throughout with connections to the existing development to the north and east. Opportunities to improve east-west connectivity beyond the Buckie South Masterplan area are currently being explored by the Council.
- Phasing – Phases 1 and 2 will take place on the east side of Barhill and are anticipated to be complete by 2028. Phases 3, 4 and 5 will take place on the west side of Barhill Road with an anticipated completion date of 2042.

4.2 Further discussion is taking place with the developer to ensure the Masterplan accords with the LDP 2020, and provides sufficient clarity to deliver the vision and speed up the planning application stage. The key issues to be discussed are outlined in **Appendix 2**. These do not prevent the consultation of the draft Masterplan as they can be progressed whilst this is ongoing and reflected along with responses to the consultation in the final Masterplan.

## **5. PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

5.1 Given the Covid-19 restrictions, the draft Masterplan will be subject to an online virtual consultation for 8 weeks and 1-2-1 sessions will be bookable with Council officers during the consultation period. Key stakeholders, including the Community Council, will be consulted for their views. The draft Masterplan consultation will be advertised via social media, press releases, letters and emails.

5.2 Following the consultation, responses will be reported back to a future meeting of this Committee to consider, along with the final Masterplan for approval. If approved, the final Masterplan will then be submitted to the Scottish Government with a request to adopt it as Supplementary Guidance forming part of the Moray Local Development Plan 2020.

## **6. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

### **(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

The draft Buckie South Masterplan provides a framework for a new neighbourhood, with associated infrastructure and in doing so providing employment and affordable housing which are priorities for the Council.

### **(b) Policy and Legal**

The preparation of a Masterplan is required for large scale development sites such as Buckie South. Once approved the Masterplan will become Supplementary Guidance forming part of the statutory Local Development Plan which planning applications will be determined against.

### **(c) Financial implications**

The provision of a primary school and, as a minimum to provide additional secondary school roll capacity, an extension to Buckie High School, is being considered as part of the Learning Estate Review and future Asset Management Planning. Should a primary school be progressed within the Buckie South Masterplan area ground investigations will need to be carried out at an estimated cost of £40,000. Options are currently being appraised for the School Estate in Buckie, including future options for Buckie High School, and a report by Education Resources and Communities Services is anticipated in early 2022 on the outcome of this appraisal.

**(d) Risk Implications**

Should ground investigations not be carried out for the school site in advance of the adoption of the Masterplan there is a risk that the proposed location may be unsuitable and an alternative found which will have financial implications for the Council.

**(e) Staffing Implications**

Work on the draft Buckie South Masterplan has been carried out within existing workloads of the Strategic Planning and Development section. However it has created additional pressures for the Transportation service. The Head of Direct Services is aware of these pressures and is seeking to fill a vacancy in Transportation and to support the team to do this work.

**(f) Property**

The provision for an additional primary school and secondary school capacity is being considered as part of the Learning Estate Review and future Asset Management Planning.

**(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**

None at this stage.

**(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

The draft Buckie South Masterplan seeks to reduce carbon emissions and enhance biodiversity through the creation of a 20 minute neighbourhood with local services and a potential school/community facility, active travel connections, landscaping, green and blue networks and biodiversity mechanisms such as bird boxes and amphibian friendly gullies.

The draft NPF4, specifically policy 2 (Climate Emergency) gives significant weight to the Global Climate Emergency in the determination of planning applications. The draft NPF4 states that all proposals should be designed to minimise emissions over their lifecycle and major developments will need to be accompanied by a whole life assessment of greenhouse gas emissions. Similarly, policy 3 (Nature Crisis) requires development to contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity whereby

the design should reverse biodiversity loss, safeguard the services that the natural environment provide and build in the resilience of nature. Whilst policy 7 (Local Living) supports the principle of 20 minute neighbourhoods.

The draft Buckie South Masterplan seeks to achieve some of the aspirations of the draft NPF4 in terms of providing opportunities for local services and active travel connections to create a 20-minute neighbourhood. However, future applications will have to go significantly further to achieve the aspirations of the policies set out in the draft NPF4 assuming these are in the final version.

The future national policy direction is likely to require significant changes to volume house builds in terms of the transport hierarchy, materials, density, re-development of brownfield over greenfield sites, local energy systems, biodiversity solutions tailored to the address the nature crisis and nature based solutions, incorporation of non-residential uses to support local living, and high quality designs that contribute positively to the character and sense of place in which they are located.

#### **(i) Consultations**

Consultation has taken place with the Depute Chief Executive Economy, Environment and Finance, the Head of Economic Growth and Development, the Head of Education Resources and Communities, the acting Head of Housing and Property, the Legal Services Manager, the Senior Engineer Transportation, the Principal Climate Change Officer, the Equal Opportunities Officer, the Development Management and Building Standards Manager and Paul Connor (Principal Accountant) and their comments incorporated into the report.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 The draft Masterplan provides a strategic framework for a new neighbourhood to the south west of Buckie. The draft Masterplan aspires to achieve a 20-minute neighbourhood with a mix of uses, a network of green and blue spaces, and active travel connections. The draft Masterplan references the historic context of Buckie and seeks to promote good health and well-being.**
- 6.2 Draft NPF4 sets out future national policy. Whilst the draft Buckie South Masterplan seeks to incorporate many of the draft NPF4 policy aspirations, future planning applications may have to go further to deliver the Government's policy requirements, specifically for climate change, biodiversity, local living and placemaking.**
- 6.3 The draft masterplan will be subject to public consultation using virtual methods. The responses will be reported to a future meeting of this Committee for consideration along with the final Masterplan for approval. If approved, the final Masterplan would be submitted to the**

**Scottish Government with a request to adopt as Supplementary  
Guidance to the LDP 2020.**

Author of Report: Eily Webster, Principal Planning Officer  
Background Papers:

Ref: