

DATE: 24 JULY 2018

PLANNING STATEMENT

for

TRUMP INTERNATIONAL GOLF LINKS SCOTLAND

in respect of

**DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING UP TO 550 DWELLINGS (UP TO 500 RESIDENTIAL
UNITS AND A MINIMUM OF 50 LEISURE/RESORT UNITS) , COMMUNITY FACILITIES,
DEVELOPMENT FALLING WITHIN CLASS 1 (SHOPS), CLASS 2 (FINANCIAL,
PROFESSIONAL AND OTHER SERVICES) AND CLASS 3 (FOOD AND DRINK),
LANDSCAPING AND SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE**

CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang LLP
1 West Regent Street
Glasgow
G2 1AP
T +44 141 222 2200
F +44 141 222 2201
cms.law

UK - 601777925.8

PX-1317

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Trump International Golf Links Scotland (“**TIGLS**”) is delighted to bring forward proposals for the development of its world-class golf and leisure resort at the Trump Estate. A lot has changed since the Scottish Ministers granted outline planning permission in 2008 (the “**OPP**”)¹, but TIGLS’ development strategy remains the same: to maximise the economic and social benefits of its award winning Championship Golf Course, five start facilities and spectacular grounds. In doing so, it will deliver national, regional and local benefits by

- a) securing further **inward investment** in Scotland;
- b) supporting national and local government objectives to promote **tourism**, in particular, the enhancement of the North East as a global golf destination;
- c) supporting the Council’s LDP objectives for the Aberdeen to Peterhead **Strategic Growth Area**;
- d) stimulating **economic growth** in a period of economic risk and uncertainty;
- e) delivering a range of **high quality houses** to support the local housing market; and
- f) contributing to the **economic benefits** flowing from public sector investment in AWPR.

1.2 Since the initial grant of the OPP in 2008, TIGLS has consistently pursued the vision to create the world’s best golf course on the Trump Estate. The Championship Golf Course opened to play in 2012 with the new clubhouse opening in 2015. This development was the culmination of almost fifteen years’ inward investment in the Scottish planning process. That period straddled the global banking crisis and the more recent downturn in the oil and gas sector, both of which had a significant adverse effect on the local, regional and national economy. Despite that, TIGLS has continued to invest in Scotland: including the extensive and ongoing planning process and the development of the Championship Golf Course and its supporting infrastructure, including the refurbishment of MacLeod House and lodges as five star hotel accommodation.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The Development is the next phase of the continued investment in, and development of, the Trump Estate. It represents a revision to the phasing originally proposed in terms of the OPP which is no longer economically viable, and is the only opportunity for continued investment in and development of the Trump Estate which is important to the Strategic Growth Area as set out in the Strategic Development Plan and the Local Development Plan. TIGLS has continued to invest in the Estate despite some challenging economic conditions and with the Development, TIGLS remains on course to deliver the investment originally proposed in the OPP.

2.2 All of the elements of the Development are within the OPP and the LDP allocation OP3: Menie. There can therefore be no objection to the principal and nature of the Development. There is also strong policy support for the Application within the terms of the development plan as the Development is consistent with the vision and aims of the SDP and LDP as well as policies relating to housing provision, design, public access, community facilities, natural heritage, climate change, services provision and developer obligations. The only aspects of the development plan with which the Development is not consistent is the link to the original phasing in the OP3 allocation and policy relating to cultural heritage due to the impact on the setting of MacLeod House. On this basis, the Development is considered to be in accordance with the

¹ APP/2006/4605 and CIN-ABS-001

development plan when taken as a whole, as is required. In the event of the Council reaching a different conclusion, it cannot reasonably be said that the Development is “significantly contrary to the development plan”.

- 2.3 In the event of the Council concluding that the Development is not in accordance with the development plan, there are material considerations that significantly and demonstrably outweigh any limited adverse impacts and would overwhelmingly indicate that planning permission should be granted notwithstanding that conclusion. Both the SDP and the LDP recognise the importance of the continued development and investment at the Trump Estate to the SGA. The Development is also development which contributes to sustainable development and will achieve the four outcomes set out in SPP.
- 2.4 The initial phase of development of the Trump Estate has already brought economic and tourism benefits to the area with a significant increase in employment and a significant expansion of tourism activities. The Application offers the only opportunity to capitalise on these benefits and deliver further significant economic and tourism benefits for Scotland and the north east. These economic benefits are also not theoretical. TIGLS has engaged Aberdeen Considine, a business with significant history and presence in Aberdeenshire and Scotland, to market the Development to prospective residents. At and following an initial exhibition on the Development, TIGLS has been able to attract reservations on a number of large properties forming part of Chapter 1A together with expressions of interest on many others. It is rare for a development to attract such interest prior to the submission of a planning application but it gives just a small taste of the economic potential of the Development and the exciting opportunity for Aberdeenshire and Scotland.
- 2.5 The Development will also support the delivery of the Regional Economic Strategy by broadening the economy of the area and is consistent with initiatives by Opportunity North East and VisitAberdeenshire to broaden the economy of the area by building on the region’s cultural assets including its coastline and golf courses.
- 2.6 In light of the above, it is submitted that there is no good planning reason to refuse the Application. The Application will deliver elements of the development approved in terms of the OPP, is consistent with the vast majority of the development plan policies, is development which contributes to sustainable development and will deliver further significant benefits to the economy and tourism, building on those already achieved. Failure to support the continued investment in the Trump Estate could limit the regional economy’s ability to diversify and grow tourism over the longer term.

3. PRINCIPAL PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 As noted above, in 2008, the Scottish Ministers granted the OPP for the Championship Golf Course and resort development on the Trump Estate. Before any development commenced, Aberdeenshire Council approved a Masterplan, which reflected the scope of the development approved in the OPP.
- 3.2 In 2015, TIGLS lodged a Proposal of Application Notice² (“**PoAN**”) with the Council.³ The description of the proposed development was:

“850 residential units, 1,900 leisure accommodation units with ancillary commercial development falling within Class 1 (shops), Class 2 (Financial,

² AC Ref: F/ENQ/2015/0526

³ Public exhibition held on 4 May 2015.

Professional and Other Services) and Class 3 (food and drink) and supporting infrastructure”.

- 3.3 This application for planning permission in principle (the “**Application**”) relates to that PoAN. The proposed development, although modified, remains recognisably linked to the scope of the development description contained in the PoAN. The description of the development is now as follows:

*“550 dwellings (up to 500 residential units and a minimum of 50 leisure/resort units), community facilities, development falling within class 1 (shops), class 2 (financial, professional and other services) and class 3 (food and drink), landscaping and supporting infrastructure” (the “**Development**”).*

- 3.4 The reduction in the number of residential units from 850 to 500 is to ensure compliance with the housing allocation within the development plan. The Application also brings forward the first detailed tranche of development for 85 dwellings (within Chapter 1A) and 27 affordable key worker apartments, 540m² of retail space, 350m² of office space, a 350m² gym & fitness Centre, a 480m² townhall and two 8 suite lodges providing additional accommodation for the hotel (all within Chapter 1B).

4. THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan 2014

- 4.1 Part of the vision of the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan 2014 (the “**SDP**”) is that:

“Aberdeen City and Shire will be an even more attractive, prosperous and sustainable European city region and an excellent place to live, visit and do business.

- 4.2 It is also envisioned that the authorities:

“will have acted confidently and taken the courageous decisions necessary to further develop a robust and resilient economy and to lead the way towards development being sustainable, including dealing with climate change and creating a more inclusive society.”

- 4.3 In order to achieve the stated vision and make a contribution towards the Scottish Government’s aim of increasing sustainable economic growth, the SDP contains a number of aims. The following are the aims set out in the SDP:

- To provide a strong framework for investment decisions which help to grow and diversify the regional economy, supported by promoting the need to use resources more efficiently and effectively.
- To take on the urgent challenges of sustainable development and climate change.
- To make sure the area has enough people, homes and jobs to support the level of services and facilities needed to maintain and improve the quality of life.
- To protect and improve our valued assets and resources, including the built and natural environment and our cultural heritage.
- To help create sustainable mixed communities, and the associated infrastructure, which meet the highest standards of urban and rural design and cater for the needs of the whole population.

- To make the most efficient use of the transport network, reducing the need for people to travel and making sure that walking, cycling and public transport are attractive choices

4.4 Within the SDP area, the main focus for development up to 2035 is within the four strategic growth areas. The Application site is situated within the Aberdeen to Peterhead Strategic Growth Area (the “SGA”). In respect of the SGA, the SDP states that “*realising the economic potential of the Menie Estate golf resort will be important*” and “*the focus in the whole area needs to be on developing and diversifying the economy with a strong focus on the quality of development*” (emphasis added).

The Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017

4.5 The Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017 (the “LDP”) allocates the site for the development approved in the OPP as site OP3: Menie. The supporting text states:

“The outline consent... was granted for exceptional reasons based on the predicted social and economic benefits of the proposed development. This allocation does not offer or imply any support for alternative development proposals that would deviate away from the consented scheme, including the conditions and section 75 agreement that form part of the outline consent”

4.6 It should be borne in mind that, despite the statement that it was granted for “exceptional reasons”, the OPP was simply granted by the application of the standard statutory test in section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (the “1997 Act”), i.e by considering the development plan and material considerations. The OPP is no different to any other planning permission in that respect.

4.7 Further, this LDP statement represents a fundamental misunderstanding of the planning balance and judgement applied by the Reporters and endorsed by the Scottish Ministers in granting the OPP. The Reporters’ planning judgement involved balancing the environmental impact of development in a small part of the SSSI against the wider economic benefits of the golf resort. They found that the economic benefits outweighed any environmental impacts. It was no part of the Council’s case that the commercial/residential development was unacceptable.

4.8 The LDP adopts the vision and aims of the SDP and above all seeks to deliver “*the right development in the right place*”. The LDP also notes that “*achieving economic growth through the continued development of the Trump International Golf Resort*” is important to the SGA.

4.9 Policy H1 of the LDP provides the following:

“We will support the development of housing on sites allocated for that purpose within the local development plan and as shown in the settlement statements. We will not allow other types of development on designated housing land unless it is linked to the housing use and still allows the site to be developed to approximately the housing numbers shown in the settlement statements”.

4.10 Policy H2 also sets out the requirement for 25% of the residential units to be affordable housing units. In relation to design, Policy P1 requires consistency with previously agreed statements on design and the following six qualities of successful places:

- (i) Distinctive with a sense of local identity through creation of a sense of place and the aesthetics of the design features and elements.
- (ii) Safe and pleasant, encouraging both activity and privacy, providing security and protecting amenity.

- (iii) Welcoming through visual appeal, style and the creation of a welcoming environment.
 - (iv) Adaptable to future needs through the balance of land uses, building types, density, sizes and tenures (including housing for people on modest incomes), and the flexibility to adapt to the changing circumstances of occupants.
 - (v) Efficient in terms of resources used in terms of waste management, water use, heating and electricity, the use of recycled materials and materials with low embodied energy, and responding to local climatic factors associated with cold winds, rain, snow and solar gain.
 - (vi) Well connected to create well connected places that promote intermodal shifts and active travel.
- 4.11 Policy P2 requires developments to be accompanied by adequate and appropriate public open space while Policy P6 notes that the Council will support the provision of new community infrastructure. Policy E1 provides protection for habitats, species and geology while Policy E2 notes that the Council will “*refuse development that causes unacceptable effects through its scale, location or design on key natural landscape elements, historic features or the composition or quality of the landscape character*”.
- 4.12 Relevant in relation to MacLeod House, Policy HE1 provides that the Council “*will not allow development that would have a negative effect on the character, integrity or setting of listed buildings*”.

Development Plan Assessment

- 4.13 The starting point for any assessment of whether or not the Application is in accordance with the development plan is the fact that the Development forms part of the OP3: Menie allocation contained in the LDP, as it is within the parameters of the OPP. The only difference relates to the matter of phasing. While the supporting text for OP3 states that support is not offered for proposals which deviate away from the consented scheme, this fails to acknowledge that this Application must be determined in accordance with the development plan policies and material considerations as they apply at the time of determination.
- 4.14 The nature of the Development is acceptable for this site, as evidenced by the OPP and the LDP allocation. The change proposed by the Application will involve bringing forward the later phases of the development consisting of residential units and holiday accommodation before the completion of phase 1, particularly the hotel and golf villas. Even where the Application and Development is not entirely consistent with the OP3 allocation, that is not the end of the matter for assessing whether or not the proposal is in accordance with the development plan. It is well established that the decision maker’s role can be summarised as follows:

“There may be some points in the plan which support the proposal but there may be some considerations pointing in the opposite direction. He will require to assess all of these and then decide whether in light of the whole plan the proposal does or does not accord with it.”⁴

- 4.15 Both the SDP and the LDP recognise that the continued development, and realising the economic potential, of the Trump Estate golf resort is important to the SGA which, in itself, is important for developing and diversifying the economy of Aberdeen City and Shire. The “consented scheme” as referred to in OP3 is no longer economically viable and will not be delivered in the phasing originally anticipated. Like many other projects in Scotland and Aberdeenshire that have been

⁴ *City of Edinburgh Council v Secretary of State for Scotland* 1998 SC(HL) 33

reviewed following the global banking crisis and decline in the oil and gas sector, TIGLS has reviewed its development proposals to ensure that the development of the Trump Estate and its economic potential can be realised in accordance with the development plan. The Development and the Application is the only proposal which is going to achieve this important aspect of the development plan.

- 4.16 The Application is consistent with Policy H1 and H2 of the LDP as it will enable the development of housing on a site allocated for that purpose as shown in the settlement statements and will deliver affordable housing in accordance with the Council's requirements. In relation to the design of the Development, the proposals are consistent with Policy P1 of the LDP because every aspect of The Trump Estate has been developed with an understanding of the great natural heritage and architectural vernacular of the region, giving The Trump Estate a distinct identity. The housing has been laid out in a traditional way, bringing the dwellings closer to the street front and placing an emphasis on walkable neighbourhoods. Private parking will be accessed by cohabited rear lanes, where pedestrians will feel safe and take priority. There will be ample public amenity space provided by way of formalised parks and walking routes through the existing mature woodland. The proposals also recognise that housing in the countryside is not sustainable without the provision of community facilities. In addition to the already established championship golf course, clubhouse and MacLeod House hotel, Chapter 1A and 1B will bring forward housing, retail, hotel, commercial and community facilities simultaneously, providing unparalleled country living. As Chapters 2 to 8 are developed, more facilities will be provided to further support the growing community including retail and an equestrian centre. The development will be sustainable by way of well insulated building envelopes and the use of low energy heating systems.
- 4.17 Upon completion of the Development, there will be public access paths that will connect the Development to the paths proposed and existing as part of the development of the Championship Golf Course and MacLeod Course. This will ensure that the development is connected to the Aberdeenshire Coastal Path, which is a core path, and Balmedie Country Park to the south, as well as the paths within the Trump Estate itself. Residents and visitors will be able to enjoy the tranquil and picturesque environment provided by the mature landscape of the Trump Estate and its surroundings. The Development will therefore comply with Policy P2 of the LDP. Community infrastructure, by way of a town hall facility, will be provided in accordance with Policy P6 of the LDP as part of the Development vision to create a sustainable community and exceptional country-living.
- 4.18 In respect of Policies E1 and E2 of the LDP, a summary of the key findings is provided for:
- landscape and visual impacts;
 - trees and woodland management; and
 - ecology.

Landscape and Visual

- 4.19 The Development will lead to adverse effects on local landscape character and visual amenity, including:
- The policy landscape surrounding MacLeod House and the open farmland to south, due to loss of areas of mature trees and open ground to housing, resort development and associated infrastructure.

- Some characteristics of the North East Aberdeenshire Coast SLA, a local landscape designation covered by LDP policy E2.
- Views from nearby visual receptors including residents and road users.

4.20 The effects will be in proportion to the scale of the development, similar to the effects of other existing and proposed settlements within Formartine. Effects are capable of mitigation through design, integration and screening of proposed development areas with existing tree belts and new structure planting.

Trees and Woodland Management

4.21 An initial tree survey was undertaken as part of the OPP (Condition 14 – Ironside Farrar and Struan Dalgleish Arboriculture, 2009) to address a series of conditions relating to trees and woodland.

4.22 Condition 16 of the OPP relates to the Ancient Woodland Inventory (“AWI”) site at Menie House Wood and creation of a suitable buffer. There will be some impacts on the Menie House Wood AWI arising from the development proposals in Chapter 1A although the masterplan team have worked to reduce the overall impacts through design which maintains a line of trees as a visual screen from MacLeod House and have adjusted the northerly access to meander its way through the existing trees in a way that again minimises the impact.

4.23 Overall, the Development utilises existing open space where possible. Tree removal is limited to a semi-mature area of planting. The significant areas of mature trees are to be retained. There is opportunity within the wider site for re-placement landscape planting to be undertaken to mitigate for tree loss due to development as shown by the landscape framework. Once details are available for each of the Chapters, a detailed Arboricultural Impact and Tree Protection Plan can be produced.

4.24 Within Chapter 1B, 175 tagged trees / small groups of trees will require to be removed to accommodate the proposals. This includes trees, although beyond the proposed construction areas, that would be left unviable following the required removal of their neighbours. The potential exists to retain 15 trees / small groups of trees. These nearly all occur to the west of the water course within the northern part of the site.

Ecology

4.25 In relation to protection and enhancement of natural heritage and ecological interest, an updating desk-top study was completed prior to undertaking a suite of surveys in 2018. Surveys included a phase 1 habitat survey, two-visit breeding bird, invasive non-native species, European and & UK protected species surveys and spring goose counts to supplement previous knowledge of the site.

4.26 There are no known statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations within or adjacent to the site boundary. At a distance of approximately 500m or more there lies the boundary of Foveran Links SSSI and Newburgh-Balmedie Local Nature Conservation Site. There are no known likely adverse impacts.

4.27 A total of 29 habitats were surveyed, on and adjacent to the site, all man-made and dominated by intensive agriculture and forestry.

4.28 Otter frequent the ornamental ponds to the south of Macleod House, whilst signs of badger have been noted, both foraging signs and latrines, but no setts. No signs of red squirrel or water vole

have been recorded and at the time of survey they are both considered to be absent. A specialist bat survey is underway and due for reporting at the end of July 2018.

- 4.29 A typical farm and woodland breeding bird assemblage has been recorded with no rare or scarce species. Breeding Red List Species of Conservation Concern are present and include a song thrush and yellowhammer. Goose surveys in 2018, suggest a recent change in behaviour, with the cereal fields to the north east of Horseshoe Cottage, that lie within the red line boundary, no longer used by significant numbers of feeding or roosting geese, nor are the Blairton flight ponds used for night-time roosting or day-time bathing and drinking. The main goose activity in 2018 centred on feeding and resting opportunities afforded by improved and semi-improved pasture 500m to the south of residential development, on Blairton Farm. The resource on Blairton Farm included seasonal pools used by the geese. A small number of pink-footed geese were recorded feeding on rank grassland at Pettens Links (peak 118 birds), although it seems this location provides a temporary refuge when farm activities disturbed the improved grassland. The conclusion of the updating goose surveys was that there were no significant night-time roosts and the overall level of use of local foraging resources was low. The latter based on SNH methodology applied to goose monitoring at Loch Strathbeg.
- 4.30 The main impact will be the loss of 2.04ha of a listed AWI site to Chapters 2 and 4 and the potential loss of a nationally scarce associated lichen *Arthonia anomorphila* (Aa). The status of the latter species and its presence amongst trees to be removed is being investigated because it is a possible species for which the UK may hold international responsibilities. The AWI (Site 31/11467) is long-established of plantation origin and development will reduce the overall area of the AWI by over 50%. The masterplan has been amended to retain a greater number of trees in this area. There are potential losses of a further five notable woodland lichens, three are nationally scarce, one nationally rare, and two were new to Aberdeenshire when recorded in September 2006. All five were associated with the wooded northern sectors of Menie woodland, where (Aa) was also recorded. Detailed assessment of the likely impacts on these lichen species will follow final detailed tree survey based on architectural layouts and micro-sighting.
- 4.31 The location of the Development in proximity to MacLeod House requires consideration of Policy HE1 of the LDP.
- 4.32 The proposed development site occupies much of the extent of a former garden and designed landscape that forms the setting for the Category B Listed Menie House. The western part of the proposed development site also overlies an area where cropmarks, visible on aerial photographs, suggest the possibility of buried archaeological remains. Evidence from finds in the wider landscape immediately around the proposed development site also indicates activity in the locality in the prehistoric period, from the Mesolithic to the Bronze Age.
- 4.33 Taking into account the known archaeological sites and features within and in the vicinity of the proposed development site, it has been assessed that there is a moderate to high probability of discovering buried archaeological remains within the proposed development site. A scheme of mitigation works, to offset the predicted effect on the archaeological resource would need to be approved by the Council. A draft Written Scheme of Investigation accompanies the Application.
- 4.34 If significant discoveries were made during archaeological investigations, and preservation in situ of any sites or features was not possible provision would be made for the excavation, where necessary, of any archaeological remains. This provision would include the consequent production of written reports on the findings, with post-excavation analyses and publication of the results of the work, where appropriate.

- 4.35 Within 1km of the proposed development there are eight listed buildings: one Category A listed building, five Category B Listed Buildings, and one Category C Listed Building. There are no Scheduled Monuments, Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes or Inventory Historic Battlefields within 1km of the proposed development site. The assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development on the settings of these listed buildings has resulted in the identification of a moderate adverse effect on the setting of Category B Listed Menie House.
- 4.36 The Council's Policy C1 requires developments to be designed to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and the standards established through current building regulations to be met, as a minimum. The Trump Estate will meet the requirements of the current building regulations using a fabric first approach. This involves building well insulated buildings which significantly reduce demand on heating systems and subsequently reduce CO2 emissions. The primary heating systems for the buildings will also be supplemented by low carbon generating technologies such as wood burning stoves.
- 4.37 Policy RD1 of the LPD requires suitable services to be provided as part of the Development. The Council's Transportation & Roads team has been consulted on the principles of road hierarchy as well as the main access arrangements and connectivity to the wider network. The Roads Standards Group has advised on acceptable requirements, which are incorporated into the Development. Scottish Water advises that the Strategic Water Study for the Balmedie – Ellon corridor will reach a Stage 1 report around the year end. Stage 2, which details any necessary network mitigations, is scheduled for July 2019. On waste water, Balmedie WWTW has some capacity but insufficient for the whole development. The waste water pipeline from Newburgh to Balmedie, which passes through Menie Estate will require a Development Impact Assessment, which will be advised upon as part of the Planning response. TIGLS has been in consultation with the relevant utilities providers and suitable services will be provided as part of the Development.
- 4.38 TIGLS has also held discussions with the Council's developer obligations team and will enter into a planning obligation in connection with the Development in accordance with Policy RD2 of the LDP. Draft heads of terms have been submitted as part of the Application and TIGLS will progress discussions further alongside the consideration of the Application with a view to having an agreed form of planning obligation at the time that the Application is determined.
- 4.39 When the development plan is considered as a whole, it is submitted that the Application and Development is in accordance with the development plan. It is acknowledged that the assessment of whether or not a proposal is in accordance with the development plan involves a difficult balancing exercise. In this case, substantial support can be drawn from the fact that all of the elements of the Development are supported by the OP3 allocation and it is the only proposal which will enable the continued development of the Trump Estate and its economic potential to be realised, which is important to the SGA.
- 4.40 The Development is also consistent with Policies H1, H2, P1, P2, P6, E1, E2, C1, RD1 and RD2 of the LDP. As a result, the Development is also consistent with the vision and aims of the SDP and LDP. The only aspects of the development plan with which the Development is not consistent is the part of the supporting text for OP3 which links the allocation to phasing which is no longer economically viable and Policy HE1 in relation to the impact on the setting of MacLeod House.
- 4.41 Even if the Council places significantly greater weight on the supporting text for OP3 and reaches a conclusion that the Development is not in accordance with the development plan, it is submitted that when the plan is considered as a whole it cannot reasonably be said that the Development is

“significantly contrary to the development plan” within the meaning of regulation 27 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013.

5. MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 A wide range of material considerations are relevant to the consideration of the Application. This section discusses the principal material considerations which will be relevant to the Council’s determination of the Application.

National Planning Framework

5.2 Scotland’s Third National Planning Framework (“**NPF**”) identifies tourism as a key sector for Aberdeen and the north east city region. It also recognises that much of the new housing development in the city region will be in a number of SGAs, including the corridor northwards from Aberdeen to Peterhead. NPF also acknowledges the ‘Energetica’ corridor from Aberdeen to Peterhead which seeks to provide a hub for investment in the energy, engineering and technology sectors. The housing provided by Development will help support the growth being sought through Energetica.

Scottish Planning Policy

5.3 One of the overarching parts of Scottish Planning Policy (“**SPP**”) is the presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development. Essentially, this policy is aimed at achieving the right development in the right place. The question of whether or not development contributes to sustainable development is usually assessed by reference to the extent to which the development is consistent with the following principles:

- (i) Giving due weight to net economic benefit.
- (ii) Responding to economic issues, challenges and opportunities, as outlined in local economic strategies.
- (iii) Supporting good design and the six qualities of successful places.
- (iv) Making efficient use of existing capacities of land, buildings and infrastructure including supporting town centre and regeneration priorities.
- (v) Supporting delivery of accessible housing, business, retailing and leisure development.
- (vi) Supporting delivery of infrastructure, for example transport, education, energy, digital and water.
- (vii) Supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation including taking account of flood risk.
- (viii) Improving health and well-being by offering opportunities for social interaction and physical activity, including sport and recreation.
- (ix) Having regard to the principles for sustainable land use set out in the Land Use Strategy.
- (x) Protecting, enhancing and promoting access to cultural heritage, including the historic environment.
- (xi) Protecting, enhancing and promoting access to natural heritage, including green infrastructure, landscape and the wider environment.
- (xii) Reducing waste, facilitating its management and promoting resource recovery.

(xiii) Avoiding over-development, protecting the amenity of new and existing development and considering the implications of development for water, air and soil quality.

5.4 This assessment is similar to the assessment of whether or not a Development accords with the development plan. There may be some principles with which the Development is consistent, and others which the Development is inconsistent, but the conclusion should be based on the principles as a whole. It should be borne in mind that not all principles will be relevant to all proposals.

5.5 The Development will deliver significant economic benefits⁵ and has responded to economic issues, not least the need to diversify the economy in the city region and by supporting tourism as a key sector. It is clear that the Development is consistent with the principles set out at (i) and (ii) above.

5.6 For the reasons set out at 4.16 above, the design of the Development is consistent with the principle at paragraph (iii). Consistent with paragraphs (v) and (vi), the Development will also support the delivery of accessible housing, business, retailing and leisure development as well as infrastructure.

5.7 The Development will also:

- support climate change mitigation and adaptation through well insulated buildings which significantly reduce demand on heating systems and subsequently reduce CO2 emissions;
- improve health and well-being by offering opportunities for social interaction and physical activity through the community facilities provided, the public access paths, gym facilities and also the access to the golfing facilities;
- protect, enhance and promote access to natural heritage, including green infrastructure, landscape and the wider environment through the public access provision and the mitigation of landscape and visual impacts through design; and
- avoid over-development.

The Development is therefore also consistent with paragraphs (vii), (viii), (xi) and (xiii) above.

5.8 Having regard to the principles as a whole, the Development is clearly development which contributes to sustainable development. Furthermore, there are no *“adverse impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits [of the Development] when assessed against the wider policies”* in terms of paragraph 33 of SPP. Quite the opposite is true. There are positive impacts, particular in relation to the economy and tourism as described below, which significantly and demonstrably outweigh any limited adverse impacts of the Development

5.9 The Development also contributes to achieving the four outcomes set out in SPP:

1. A successful, sustainable place – supporting sustainable economic growth and regeneration, and the creation of well-designed, sustainable places.
2. A low carbon place – reducing our carbon emissions and adapting to climate change.
3. A natural, resilient place – helping to protect and enhance our natural and cultural assets, and facilitating their sustainable use.
4. A more connected place – supporting better transport and digital connectivity.

Economic Growth

⁵ Discussed further below

5.10 The Scottish Economy has changed significantly since the submission of the application for the OPP and it faces further significant change as the UK prepares to leave the European Union. The Scottish Government's State of the Economy report from March 2017, November 2017 and June 2018 stated respectively:

"There is considerable uncertainty about the outlook for the UK and Scottish economies following the EU referendum. Current forecasts tend to project that output growth will remain below trend in 2017".⁶

"Brexit remains the key risk to Scotland's economy which continues to present a significant risk to business and consumer sentiment in Scotland with investment sensitive to changing market signals".⁷

"[I]ndependent forecasts continue to expect the uncertainty from Brexit to weigh on business investment decisions and consequently on economic growth".⁸

5.11 TIGLS' investment in the Trump Estate started before the global banking crisis but continued throughout that period, despite difficult market conditions that saw many projects stall. Any criticism of a lack of investment in the Trump Estate is therefore misplaced. TIGLS has completed many aspects of phase 1 of the OPP development. The Championship Golf Course, clubhouse, short game practice area, driving range and maintenance facility have been constructed and are operational. MacLeod House and lodges have also been refurbished into five star hotel accommodation. TIGLS has also delivered roads, parking and other infrastructure as part of phase 1 of the overall development. This initial phase of development has already brought economic benefits to the area with a significant increase in employment and a significant expansion of tourism activities.

5.12 A greater proportion of TIGLS' spending on goods and services is with Scottish suppliers, compared to the Scottish industry averages. TIGLS is therefore committed to contributing to the Scottish economy and is more embedded into the Scottish economy than other businesses in the same sector. Data also suggests that TIGLS' investment and development has been important in encouraging overseas visitors to stay longer in the north east and to spend more money in the area.

5.13 TIGLS remains fully committed to pursuing its vision for a global golf resort of international renown, building on the success of the investment to date.

5.14 The Economic Impact Assessment⁹ of the Development concludes that the level of investment associated with the Development is in line with that originally anticipated for the OPP development. TIGLS is therefore on track to deliver the investment originally reported. In respect of the construction of the Development alone, it *"will support nearly 2,000 full-time equivalent jobs across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire and stimulate nearly £250 million of output across the region"*.

5.15 The Economic Impact Assessment further concludes that *"[o]ver the longer term, the proposed development will add 268 jobs and £29 million of output to the Scottish economy. Most of this*

⁶<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/state-of-the-economy-march-2017/State%20of%20the%20Economy%20-%20Publication%20-%20March%202017.pdf?inline=true>

⁷<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/state-of-the-economy-november-2017/State%20of%20the%20Economy%20-%20publication%20-%2010%20November%202017.pdf?inline=true>

⁸ <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0053/00537705.pdf>

⁹ An economic impact assessment of the Development has been undertaken by 4-consulting, led by Richard Marsh. Quotes from the economic impact assessment are used throughout this Statement where relevant, with extracts of the economic impact assessment set out in the Appendix to this Statement.

will be captured within Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire where an additional 244 jobs and £25 million of output will be sustained”.

- 5.16 This application is the only opportunity to realise the economic potential of the Trump Estate, which has already made a valuable contribution to the economy since the grant of the OPP, and support the delivery of the Regional Economic Strategy by broadening the economy of the area.

Tourism

- 5.17 Tourism is a vital part of the Scottish economy. The Scottish Government has said the following on tourism:

“Tourism and events is one of Scotland's most important industries, helping to create wealth and jobs and build upon our strong international reputation. We aim to help our tourism and events industry to grow further and to attract more visitors to Scotland.”

- 5.18 Tourism is also recognised as a growth sector in the Scottish Government’s economic strategy. In addition, the Tourism Strategy Annual Report 2018 highlights that the economic value of golf tourism and events to Scotland has increased by 30% since 2008.

- 5.19 The development vision for the Golf Resort is to enhance the existing, award winning reputation for the Championship Golf Course by creating a sustainable community and resort which will offer a tranquil setting with the highest quality accommodation and world-class golf and leisure facilities. TIGLS will also continue in its objective of increasing national and international tourists and securing national and international competitions for the resort. This can be achieved by:

- creating a global golf destination of a world-class standard;
- contributing a world class championship course to the existing cluster of leading golf courses within the north east, thereby competing with other Scottish ‘clusters’, such as in East Lothian;
- co-operating with Trump Turnberry and the wider Trump International global portfolio to promote the Trump Scotland brand at home and abroad.

- 5.20 Opportunity North East and VisitAberdeenshire are working on an initiative to broaden the economy of the area by building on the region’s cultural assets including its coastline and golf courses. As set out in the Economic Impact Assessment, there has been a significant benefit to tourism. The following quotes highlight just some of the key conclusions:

- *“Since the opening of Trump International Golf Links there has been a significant expansion of local tourism activities around The Trump Estate”.*
- *“Trump International Golf Links has created a halo effect providing a fillip to the promotion, marketing and image of the region”.*
- *“Trump International Golf Links has provided fertile ground for other tourism businesses to grow and Northern Aberdeenshire now stands alongside Scotland’s leading tourism areas”.*
- *“This suggests that The Trump Estate has played an important role in encouraging overseas visitors to stay longer within the region and spend more money in the local area”.*

- *“Golfers visiting Aberdeenshire are now more likely to stay overnight in the region due to the wider choice of world-class golf courses in the North East. Prior to the opening of The Trump Estate, visitors were more likely to play a single course in the North East and travel elsewhere without staying overnight”.*

5.21 The Development offers an important opportunity to capitalise on these initial benefits and deliver further economic and tourism benefits.

Inward Investment

5.22 During the 2017 general election hustings, the First Minister promoted Scotland’s recent successful performance in attracting inward investment. The EY Report published on 22 May 2017 confirmed record numbers of inward investment in Scotland, although average job creation had declined and Scotland’s perceived attractiveness to international investors had decreased. The authors recommended “Time to Act” citing a short window in which to address concerns of international investors and the need for a clear strategy with trade, skills and infrastructure at its core.

5.23 The Trump Estate is and will continue to be funded by inward investment. This project will therefore support the Scottish Government’s aspiration to work “to attract new investors to Scotland and to support existing investors to develop, grow and continue investing in Scotland far into the future.”¹⁰

¹⁰ <https://beta.gov.scot/policies/international-trade-and-investment/attracting-and-supporting-investors/>

APPENDIX

Extracts from Economic Impact Assessment by 4-consulting

“Construction expenditure associated with the overall development of The Trump Estate was originally estimated to be £720 million. Capital investment associated with the phase one development was around £100 million and the masterplan is still on track to secure the original investment.”

“The total development cost of phase two is £147.2 million. In terms of construction impacts alone, building the next phase of development will support nearly 2,000 full-time equivalent jobs across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire and stimulate nearly £250 million of output across the region.”

“The total development cost of phase two is £147.2 million. In terms of construction impacts alone, building the next phase of development will support nearly 2,000 full-time equivalent jobs across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire and stimulate nearly £250 million of output across the region.”

“Over the longer term, the proposed development will add 268 jobs and £29 million of output to the Scottish economy. Most of this will be captured within Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire where an additional 244 jobs and £25 million of output will be sustained.”

“Trump International Golf Links has created a halo effect providing a fillip to the promotion, marketing and image of the region. Trump International Golf Links has provided fertile ground for other tourism businesses to grow, Northern Aberdeenshire now stands alongside Scotland’s leading tourism areas. If the rest of Aberdeenshire could match, and build upon, the world class benchmark set by The Trump Estate, then the region would benefit from several thousand additional tourism jobs.”

“The Regional Economic Strategy seeks to support the diversification of the North East’s economy. The strategy describes tourism as a key sector, with significant opportunities to grow by converting business visitors to leisure visitors. In particular, golf is identified as an outstanding regional asset.

VisitAberdeenshire are seeking to increase the visits from both holiday golfers and luxury golfers and find ways to increase overnight stays and off course spending. Opportunity North East (ONE) are working with VisitAberdeenshire to broaden the economy by building on the region’s cultural assets including its coastline and golf courses.

The proposed development also falls within Energetica, Scotland’s Energy Corridor. This is a long-term programme, cited in the National Planning Framework, aiming to make the most of the stunning coastal setting, improve infrastructure and target growth in the tourism industry.

The proposed development of The Trump Estate will help support the vision underpinning each of the above strategies. It will allow further development of a key regional industry by further leveraging a world-class asset and helping to further diversify and broaden the economy.”

“The proposed development delivers a significant net economic benefit and responds to the economic challenges facing Aberdeenshire.”

“Employment within 10km of The Trump Estate area increased significantly in 2012, at the same time when The Trump Estate course opened. Employment continued to grow with 200 jobs added between 2012 and 2016.

Employment within 20km of The Trump Estate also increased significantly since the course opened in 2012. An additional 120 jobs were added to the area within 20km of The Trump Estate between 2012 and 2016. The number of jobs added within 10km is higher as other job losses in the surrounding area were offset by job creation at The Trump Estate.”

“This suggests The Trump Estate network is more strongly embedded into the Scottish economy, compared to Scottish Industry averages.”

“Our consultations indicated that The Trump Estate has a positive impact on other golf courses and tourism businesses within the region. Golfers visiting Aberdeenshire are now more likely to stay overnight in the region due to the wider choice of world-class golf courses in the North East. Prior to the opening of The Trump Estate, visitors were more likely to play a single course in the North East and travel elsewhere without staying overnight.”