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Planning Services

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Your Ref:
Our Ref: 22/02458/PREAPP

Date 26th October 2022

Dear Madam

Application No: 22/02458/PREAPP
Proposal: Pre-Application for proposed Solar PV Farm of approximately 75MW capacity and a Battery Energy Storage Facility of approximately 50MW capacity
Address: Land at Rankeilour Estate, Rankeilour, Bow of Fife, Fife

I refer to your request for pre-application advice which was registered on 19th July 2022.

The proposal is for the construction and operation of a renewable energy development with a Maximum Export Capacity (MEC) of greater than 50MW consisting of a Solar PV Farm of approximately 75MW and a Battery Energy Storage Facility of approximately 50MW capacity.

The site comprises agricultural farmland occupying an area of approximately 109 hectares (c. 269 acres) within the much larger Rankeilour Estate, although it is not intended that the proposed development would occupy all of this land. Rather it is proposed that a preferred area will be identified within the wider landholding through a process of baseline environmental studies, on-site analysis and consultation with Fife Council.

The site lies between the settlements of Springfield (located approximately 0.4km east), and Ladybank (located approximately 2.1km southwest), and is 1.2km south of the hamlet of Bow of Fife.

The development envisaged is as follows:

- Photovoltaic (PV) Solar Panels erected on steel frames in arrays of 24 or 48 panels;
- Battery Energy Storage Facility comprising approximately 50 No. storage units each typically measuring 12.2m (l) x 2.4m (w) x 3.4m (h); together with approximately 25 No. associated inverter units typically measuring 6.1m (l) x 2.4m (w) x 3.4m (h);
- 1 No. Primary Sub-station typically measuring 6m (l) x 3.2m (w) x 3.4m (h);

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- Approximately 25 No. Inverter Substation units, associated with the solar farm, typically measuring between 7.5m and 10m (l) x 2.2m and 3m (w) x 2.2m and 3m (h) to be located across the site;
- Perimeter post and wire "deer" fencing (c.2.45m high);
- A number of strategically located CCTV security cameras (c.3m high);
- Access will be off an unnamed road near Ladybank which is immediately west of the site, and off Main Street which is located to the east of the site; and
- Associated internal service tracks.

When operational the site will support a dual renewable/farming use and the overwhelming land area will remain agricultural. Sheep grazing will take place across the entire area and will not be impeded by the proposed infrastructure.

1.0 Hierarchy of Developments

1.1 This development would be considered a Major Development in terms of the Hierarchy of Developments. Per Section 36 of The Electricity Act 1989 (as amended), due to the scale of the proposed solar farm, which would be greater than 50MW, any future planning application would be submitted to (and determined by) the Scottish Government's Energy Consent Unit.

1.2 This pre-application response shall provide Fife Council's views on the proposed development as the Local Planning Authority, including how the proposed development accords with the Local Development Plan, FIFEplan 2017. The submission requirements detailed in each section of this response sets out the minimum level of information Fife Council would expect to be submitted as part of the planning application to the Energy Consent Unit.

2.0 The Development Plan

2.1 The statutory development plan consists of the approved TAYplan (2017) and the adopted FIFEplan Local Development Plan (2017). Overarching national planning policy guidance is provided in Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) (2014). On 10th November 2021 the Scottish Government published the Draft National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). When adopted (programmed for summer 2022), NPF4 will have the status of the development plan for planning purposes. It will replace the current National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) and Scottish Planning Policy (SPP). The Draft NPF4 will be considered in the assessment of planning applications but has limited weight or materiality until NPF4 is finalised and adopted. Whilst this pre-application response reflects the current policy position, it is reasonably likely that NPF4 will have replaced TAYplan by the time any forthcoming application is being assessed and determined.

2.2 All development must comply with the criteria outlined in FIFEplan Policy 1 Development Principles, which indicates that development proposals will be supported if they conform to relevant Development Plan policies and proposals, and address their

individual and cumulative impacts. Development proposals must comply with one of the criteria in Part A of Policy 1 Development Principles, and comply with all applicable criteria in Parts B and C of the Policy. In this instance, it is likely that the proposed development will be compliant with Part A 1(b) of Policy 1:

The principle of development will be supported if it is...in a location where it is supported by the Local Development Plan.

In relation to Parts B and C of FIFEplan Policy 1, this pre-application response looks at the various requirements of FIFEplan policies in detail in each of the sections below in order to ascertain whether the proposed development is consistent with the overall FIFEplan policy framework.

2.3 Part B of Policy 1 indicates that development proposals must mitigate their development impact by complying with relevant criteria and policies, whilst Part C of Policy 1 indicates that development proposals must be accompanied by information or assessments to demonstrate that they will comply with relevant criteria and supporting policies where relevant. The key policy issues that are examined in the various sections of this pre-application response, which are those particularly relevant to this proposal, are as follows:

Part B

- In the case of proposals in the countryside..., be a use appropriate for these locations (Policy 2 Homes, Policy 7 Development in the Countryside and Policy 11: Low Carbon Fife);
- Safeguard the character and qualities of the landscape (Policy 13 Natural Environment and Access);
- Avoid flooding and impacts on the water environment (Policy 12 Flooding and the Water Environment);
- Safeguard or avoid the loss of natural resources, including effects on internationally designated nature conservation sites (Policy 13 Natural Environment and Access);
- Safeguard the characteristics of the historic environment, including archaeology (Policy 14 Built and Historic Environment).

Part C

- Provide required on-site infrastructure or facilities, including transport measures to minimise and manage future levels of traffic generated by the proposal (Policy 3 Infrastructure and Services);
- Provide sustainable urban drainage systems in accordance with any relevant drainage strategies applying to the site or flood assessments (see Policy 3 Infrastructure and Services);

- Meet the requirements of any design briefs or development frameworks prepared or required for the site (Policy 13 Natural Environment and Access and Policy 14 Built and Historic Environment);
- Provide for energy conservation and generation in the layout and design (see Policy 3 Infrastructure and Services, Policy 11 Low Carbon Fife, Policy 13 Natural Heritage, Woodland, and Access, and Policy 14 Built and Historic Environment); and
- Contribute to achieving the area's full potential for electricity and heat from renewable sources, in line with national climate change targets, giving due regard to relevant environmental, community and cumulative impact considerations (Policy 11 Low Carbon Fife).

Application Submission Document: Supporting Planning Statement including clear justification of development in the context of SPP, the Development Plan and other relevant guidance. Should NPF4 be finalised or adopted, at the time of submission the Planning Statement should take into account the status of NPF4 as part of the development plan.

3.0 Assessment

3.1 Were an application for the proposed development to be submitted, the issues to be assessed against the Development Plan and other guidance would be as follows:

- Principle of Development
- Contribution to Renewable Energy Supply
- Landscape and Visual Impact
- Residential Amenity
- Historic Environment
- Ecology
- Road Safety
- Loss of Agricultural Land
- Flooding and Drainage
- Land Contamination
- CCTV and Privacy
- Core Paths/ Right of Way
- Community Contributions

4.0 Principle of Development

4.1 Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) (2014) (A Low Carbon Place - Delivering Heat and Electricity), Policy 10 of SESplan Strategic Development Plan (2013) and Policies 1, 7 and 11 of FIFEplan Local Development Plan (2017) shall be considered in the assessment of the principle of development. T

4.2 National Guidance on Renewable Energy contained within SPP (2014) (A Low Carbon Place - Delivering Heat and Electricity) supports the full range of renewable

energy technologies as the Scottish Government has set a target of achieving 100% of Scotland's electricity from renewable sources by 2020. The SPP advises that Development Plans with special emphasis on planning supplementary guidance are expected to set out the detail criteria by which energy farm proposals would be considered. The support for renewable energy schemes is tempered by the need to meet statutory obligations to protect local residential amenity, designated areas, species, habitats and historic environments from inappropriate forms of development; and also to ensure the impacts on local communities, aviation interests and broadcasting installations are addressed.

4.3 The Strategic Development Plan; SESplan (2013) Policy 10 seeks to promote sustainable energy sources setting a framework for the encouragement of renewable energy proposals that aim to contribute towards achieving a low carbon future.

4.4 The Adopted FIFEplan (2017) Policy 1 sets out the requirements for development principles. This policy supports development proposals providing they conform to relevant Development Plan policies and proposals and address their individual and cumulative impacts. It further states the development will only be supported if it is in a location where the proposed use is supported by the Local Development Plan. In the instance of development in the countryside, the proposed development must be appropriate for the location through compliance with the relevant policies; Policy 7.

4.5 Policy 7 of the Adopted Local Plan stipulates that development in the countryside will be supported where it (1) is required for agricultural, horticultural, woodland or forestry operations; or (2) will diversify or add to the above land-based businesses to bring economic support to the existing business; or (3) is for the extension of established businesses; or (4) is for small-scale employment land adjacent to settlement boundaries, excluding green belt areas, and no alternative site is available within the settlement boundary which contributes to the Council's employment land supply requirements; or (5) is for facilities for access to the countryside; or (6) is for facilities for outdoor recreation, tourism or other development which demonstrates a proven need for a countryside location; or (7) is for housing in line with Policy 8 (Houses in the Countryside). In all cases, development must be of a scale and nature compatible with surrounding uses; be well located in respect to available infrastructure and contribute to the need for any improved infrastructure; and not result in an overall reduction in the landscape and environmental quality of the area.

4.6 FIFEplan Policy 11: Low Carbon Fife provides the policy framework to assess new development for Low Carbon Energy Schemes such as wind turbines. Policy 11 requires a proposal to demonstrate that the development would not result in unacceptable significant adverse effects or impacts which cannot be satisfactorily mitigated. In assessing impacts, decision takers are required to consider relevant environmental, community and cumulative impact considerations. With regard to solar arrays/farms, visual impact will be an important consideration in assessing these schemes. Rural

brownfield land and land outwith green belts, Local Landscape Areas and environmentally sensitive areas are more likely to be suitable locations for such schemes.

4.7 There is a general acceptance that large commercial solar developments need to be located in the countryside, thus complying with the locational requirements of Policies 1 and 7 (criterion 6) of FIFEplan. Additionally, the need for the sustainable generating capacity is consistently identified in the SPP, Policy 10 of SESplan and 11 of FIFEplan to help to address climate change. The application site is not identified as a green belt or a Local Landscape Area, nor is it environmentally sensitive. Taking into account the relevant provisions of the Development Plan and National Guidance and advice, it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable in general land use terms.

4.8 The principle of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in general land use terms. The overall support for the principle of this development is however reliant on the applicant demonstrating compliance with the impact policies of the development plan and other material considerations; as set out in Parts B and C of Policy 1 of FIFEplan (2017), and the subject policies of FIFEplan (2017) and SPP (2014). Compliance with these additional policies and considerations are detailed in the subsequent sections of this response.

5.0 Contribution to Renewable Energy Supply

5.1 The SPP (Delivering Heat and Electricity), SESplan Policy 10, the FIFEplan Policies 1 and 11 and Low Carbon Supplementary Guidance all give support in principle to renewable energy developments provided that there is no significant adverse impact on local communities and/or the natural environment. This reflects the Scottish Government policy commitment to increasing the amount of electricity generated from renewable sources as set out in the SPP which also advises that a balance must be struck between the need for sustainable energy sources and their impact on the countryside.

5.2 Fife Council's Low Carbon Supplementary Guidance (2019) advises that consideration of the scale of contribution to renewable energy generation targets and the effect of proposals on greenhouse emissions shall form part of the assessment process. This document sets out the specific information the Planning Authority would expect to be submitted for all, large scale, solar farm developments, namely:

- Confirmation of the maximum capacity of the plant being proposed;
- Visualisations of the proposal within its context;
- Assessment of the potential impact on Fife's natural heritage including landscape;
- Assessment of the potential impact of the proposal on built heritage;
- Details of restoration and aftercare - decommissioning of the site;
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment;
- Detailed natural heritage surveys;
- A Controlled Activities Regulations (CAR) construction site licence – for the management of surface water run-off from a construction site, including access tracks (this licence is available from SEPA);

- A glint and glare assessment;
- A Noise Impact Assessment; and
- Assessment of the impact on prime agricultural land.

5.3 The proposed solar farm would have an output of around 75MW and would make a substantial contribution to the nation's electricity needs and the Government's energy objectives. The weight of these contributions shall be taken into consideration when assessing the impacts of the proposed development; these impacts shall be explored in the subsequent paragraphs of this response.

Application submission document - A report of the sustainability credentials of the whole development.

6.0 Landscape and Visual Impact

6.1 As the potential application site is located within the countryside, further consideration must be given to the potential visual impact of the proposal. SPP (2014), FIFEplan Local Development Plan (2017) Policies 1, 7, 10, 11, 13 and 14 and the Making Fife's Places Supplementary Guidance Document (2018) apply with regard to the design and visual impact of the proposal.

6.2 SPP paragraph 194 promotes positive change that maintains and enhances distinctive landscape character. In addition, SPP paragraph 202 states that development should be designed to take account of local landscape character and the potential effects on landscapes, including cumulative effects. The SPP directs Planning Authorities to adopt a precautionary approach when considering landscape impacts, but also to consider the ways in which modifications to a proposal could be made to mitigate the risk (paragraph 204).

6.3 Policy 1 of the Adopted FIFEplan Local Development Plan (2017) advises that development proposals will be supported if they conform to relevant Development Plan policies and proposals and address their individual and cumulative impacts. Additionally, Policy 10 of FIFEplan (2017) advises that development will only be supported if it does not have a significant detrimental impact with respect to visual amenity. Policy 13: Natural Environment and Access seeks to protect landscape character and views from inappropriate or insensitive development. Policy 14 of FIFEplan (2017) advises that development which protects or enhances buildings or other built heritage of special architectural or historic interest will be supported, whilst also setting out that developments are expected to achieve the six qualities of successful places; distinctive; welcoming; adaptable; resource efficient; safe and pleasant; and easy to move around and beyond.

6.4 As defined previously, Policy 7 of FIFEplan (2017) advises that development proposals must be of a scale and nature that is compatible with surrounding uses; be well-located in respect of available infrastructure; and be located and designed to protect

the overall landscape and environmental quality of the area. Policy 11 Low Carbon of the adopted FIFEplan applies to proposals for new solar schemes. Visual impact is an important consideration in assessing such schemes. Policy 11 recognises that rural brownfield land and land outwith green belts, Local Landscape Areas and environmentally sensitive areas are more likely to be suitable locations for such schemes. It will therefore be important for any future planning application to demonstrate through a landscape appraisal that proposals will not adversely impact upon this through built development, lighting or otherwise.

6.5 Making Fife's Places Supplementary Guidance (2018) sets out the expectation for developments with regard to design. This document encourages a design-led approach to development proposals through placing the focus on achieving high quality design. The document also illustrates how development proposals can be evaluated to ensure compliance with the six qualities of successful places - distinctive; welcoming; adaptable; resource efficient; safe and pleasant; and easy to move around and beyond.

6.6 Further to this, Appendix B and D of Making Fife's Places Supplementary Guidance (2018) set out site appraisal information in relation to landscape and identifies key actions and guidance that should be followed by developers. An appropriate site appraisal (including appropriate mitigation measures where required), following the identified actions within this policy document should be submitted for assessment as part of any planning application.

6.7 Views from private individual properties are not a material planning consideration. The degree of visual change to the landscape and the public's general perception about how dominant solar farms would appear in the landscape are however valid considerations. Internal and external relationships between houses and new developments and the dominance that they may have upon the quality or enjoyment of life of the residents of these buildings, individually and in groups or settlements, should be fully assessed. Distant impacts are likely to be more limited but dependent on localised circumstances it may be appropriate to consider properties and settlements beyond the immediate area, depending on sensitivity, to reach a balanced view on the extent and degree of likely impact. General assessment considerations include the magnitude, which are a combination of the relative scale in the landscape and the nature of the proposal and the distance between it and the receptor. While this can include basic physical measurements that affect visibility, the real issue is the receptors experience of the combined change, and that is not simply a function of size or distance.

6.6 Whilst the application site does not form part of any Local Landscape Area, Green Network or other designation, given the scale of the proposed development the potential visual impacts on the landscape must be carefully considered. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and details of the development's Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) shall be required to support any future planning application.

6.7 Making Fife's Places, Appendix B sets out the level of detail required to be submitted with an application in terms of an assessment of the impact that the proposals would have on the landscape area. The appraisal should be undertaken prior to the site layout being designed, as the appraisal should be used to inform the site layout. Consideration of the cumulative effect with the existing windfarm is needed. Photograph locations to inform the necessary assessment have already been agreed with Fife Council as Planning Authority (email correspondence with Ewen Campbell, Urban Design Officer, 3rd October 2022 refers). Furthermore, as detailed in the Low Carbon Supplementary Guidance (2019), a glint and glare assessment should be included with any future planning application submission.

6.8 Given its location, and existing natural screening, the application site is not highly visible from any nearby settlement, nor are prolonged views available from the road and rail network. It is anticipated, given the limited landscape value of the application site, providing appropriate screening can be provided, that the proposed solar farm development could be designed in such a way that would not have an adverse visual impact on the countryside setting. Furthermore, in this case there are a low number of third party residential properties within the vicinity of the site. These sporadic dwellinghouses are likely to have only limited ability to see the proposed development.

6.9 To aid in the Planning Authority's consideration of the proposed development, rendered visualisations of the development within its context should be provided. Additionally, due to the temporary nature of the development, details of restoration and aftercare of the site should be specified, with a site plan and sections provided as appropriate.

6.10 Hedgerows and natural heritage features - It is expected that the layout of the panel arrays will be designed in such a way as to minimise the visual impact through orientation and use of structure planting (whether that be retained existing features or new provision). The proposed layout should form an integrated network of native habitats, of sufficient width to form landscape features that help to break up the impact of the solar farm in the landscape. This will help to break up the development in views into the site, so that it is read as part of the wider landscape, in the way that fields containing polytunnels are associated with modern agriculture. The specifications of the landscape framework, including finalised boundary treatments, will be carefully considered as part of the detailed design. It is unlikely that Fife Council would welcome boundaries that are visually open - a hedgerow with hedgerow trees is likely to be the minimum accepted in terms of boundary treatments - this would still allow the solar panels to be seen but provide ecological corridors as well as some visual containment and enhancement.

6.11 Set-backs - There should be set-backs from any existing buildings, either on the site itself or adjacent at the site edges, particularly where they are occupied as residences.

6.12 Grazing - It is generally the case with solar farms of this nature that the land beneath the panels will be grazed by sheep, which is considered an appropriate and compatible use.

6.13 Security infrastructure - One of the main concerns associated with solar arrays is the potential presence of security cameras within the fenced areas, which are not a characteristic feature of a rural landscape but appear to be a standard requirement for insurance purposes. Again, whilst there is no layout indicating how many CCTV poles are proposed, or what their locations are, a clear indication of security infrastructure should be given in any forthcoming planning application submission. This issue requires careful consideration. In general terms, experience elsewhere suggests that the visual impact of security cameras can be reduced by hedgerow planting/ buffer strips and, if possible, by limiting cameras to changes of direction of the fence line, with cameras pointing in two directions on the same post. Increasing the distance between cameras, and using slimmer, galvanised metal posts with a light grey camera can render security cameras less visually prominent than they may otherwise be.

6.14 Substations - The location and colour of substations and the need to provide screen planting should be carefully considered to minimise their visual impact, particularly where they may be located beside a public route - i.e. core path or road.

6.15 In conclusion, the scale of the proposed development has the potential to alter the visual character of the landscape. Detailed assessments, including a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and details of the development's ZTV shall be required as part of any future planning application, with contextual visualisations also recommended. The appraisal should be used to inform the site layout. A glint and glare assessment should also be undertaken.

Application submission requirements – • Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, including photomontages, from agreed viewpoints, indicating fit of proposal within the landscape; • Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Assessment; • Glint and Glare Assessment; • Scaled elevations and sections of all buildings, solar panels and security infrastructure; • Scaled site plan; • Scaled site plan showing the site contours; • Manufacturer's brochure for proposed solar panels; and • Details of restoration and aftercare - decommissioning of the site.

7.0 Residential Amenity

7.1 Policies 1, 10 and 11 of Adopted FIFEplan Local Development Plan (2017), Planning Advice Note (PAN) 1/2011: Planning and Noise apply in terms of residential amenity.

7.2 The above FIFEplan policies and guidance set out the importance of encouraging appropriate forms of development in the interests of residential amenity. They generally advise that development proposals should be compatible with their surroundings in terms of their relationship to existing properties, and that they should not adversely affect the

privacy and amenity of neighbours with regard to the loss of privacy; sunlight and daylight; and noise, light and odour pollution.

7.3 PAN 1/2011 promotes the principle of how noise issues should be taken into consideration with determining an application. The PAN promotes the principles of good acoustic design and a sensitive approach to the location of new development. It is recommended that Environmental Health Officers and/or professional acousticians should be involved in development proposals which are likely to have significant adverse noise impacts or be affected by existing noisy developments. The PAN recommends that Noise Impact Assessments (NIAs)/acoustic reports are submitted to aid the planning authority in the consideration of planning applications that raise significant noise issues. The purpose of an NIA is to demonstrate whether any significant adverse noise impacts are likely to occur and if so, identify what effective measures could reduce, control and mitigate the noise impact.

7.4 In this particular case, the anticipated HGV deliveries and the construction phase of a solar farm could disrupt residential amenity to varying degrees depending on the size and extent of the works involved to prepare the site. These can include soil stripping noise and dust as part of the road construction or site levelling works and pile driving where the panel supporting posts are driven into the ground. Increased traffic can also impact on residential amenity. An NIA specifying the measures to be taken to protect the occupants of any nearby noise sensitive premises from noise during the construction, operational and de-commissioning stages of the development should be submitted. The report shall include:

- an assessment of noise emissions from the proposed development;
- details of background and predicted noise levels at the boundary of any noise-sensitive premises;
- a written scheme of how the occupants of any noise-sensitive premises will be protected from noise from the proposed development with noise attenuation measures as appropriate.

7.5 Some solar panels are stationary and others move to track the sun. You should include in your noise assessment any potential impact from tracking solar panels if appropriate. Noise produced by the proposed central inverter stations and substation control building should also be taken into consideration in the NIA.

7.6 The NIA must be appropriate for all times of day and night when the development will operate and include any supporting calculations. If levels predicted in the report are unacceptable, it may be necessary to refuse the application. Otherwise, it may be necessary to specify attenuation measures as conditions of consent. Any approved scheme must then be fully implemented and completed prior to the site's development. It is also expected that the noise assessment undertaken is appropriate to the type of development. A competent person should undertake any noise survey and developers may wish to contact, for a list of members, the Association of Noise Consultants -

www.association-of-noise-consultants.co.uk/ (01736 852958); or

the Institute of Acoustics -

www.ioa.org.uk/ (01727 848195).

7.7 In conclusion, the noise produced by the proposed development has the potential to negatively impact the amenity of any surrounding noise-sensitive properties. Therefore, an NIA should be prepared to confirm that no adverse noise impacts would arise (with details of mitigation provided if appropriate).

Application Submission Documents: Noise Impact Assessment.

8.0 Historic Environment

8.1 Historic environment considerations raise two principal considerations:

- Direct impacts: the extent to which sub-surface disturbance associated with development will impact upon known or suspected buried archaeological deposits, and
- Indirect impacts: the extent to which a solar farm would visually impact on the setting of surrounding historic environment assets.

8.2 A number of archaeological sites, features and deposits are known to exist across the estate and many more are likely to exist. However, the exact extent, date, character and significance of these features is hard to quantify without survey and sampling. The early medieval estate of Rankeilour was extensive, occupying the southernmost part of the parish of Monimail and a large area of Collessie Parish, but it was divided into two separate holdings, Over and Nether Rankeilour, before the mid-fifteenth century. The application site lies on the lands that historically constituted Nether (southerly or lesser) Rankeilour. These lands were remodelled in the mid-18th century to produce an impressive designed estate landscape. The original estate mansion house was demolished in the earlier 20th century and over the course of the rest of the 20th century the estate's designed landscape was given over to farming, but many relict elements of the 18th and 19th century designed landscape can still be traced.

8.3 Rankeilour Estate is not covered by any area-wide historic environment designations and no statutorily protected archaeological sites are recorded within the area proposed for development. However, the wider landscape is known to abound in archaeology; some prehistoric cropmark sites are recorded within the areas proposed for development, and many more, as yet unrecorded sites, are considered likely to exist across the area proposed for development.

8.4 The proposed development relates to a site with six listed buildings within 0.5km. These relate to two bridges, Rankeilour House, associated doocot and Mains and

Springfield Church. The development consequently has the potential to have an adverse impact on the special architectural and historic interest of the listed buildings therefore the impact on the settings of each of these heritage assets, including any mitigation, should be assessed and included in any planning application submitted. Historic Environment Scotland guidance, Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting (2016), is relevant.

8.5 You are advised to appoint a fully qualified historic environment professional to assess the impact of development on the historic environment. This assessment should include both a detailed strategy to test for the presence/absence of archaeological sites/deposits, and a strategy to mitigate the impact of development on these deposits. Note that details of all ancillary works including cables or pylons, access roads and substation should be included in order to assess any impacts.

Application Submission requirement - an assessment of the cultural heritage in the vicinity of the site and how the proposed development would impact upon that.

9.0 Ecology

9.1 Making Fife's Places Supplementary Guidance Document (2018), Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended), Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act (2011), Nature Conservation Scotland Act 2004 (as amended) and Bat Conservation Trust Publication on Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists (2016) apply in this instance with regard to natural heritage protection. FIFEplan Policies 1 (Part B - 7, 8 & 9); 10, 12 and 13 are particularly relevant to the assessment of the proposal in the context of considering the natural environment, which indicate the need to:

- Safeguard the character and qualities of the landscape.
- Avoid impacts on the water environment.
- Safeguard or avoid the loss of natural resources, including effects on internationally designated nature conservation sites.
- Development proposals will only be supported where they can demonstrate that they will not, individually or cumulatively, detrimentally impact on water quality and the water environment, including its natural characteristics, river engineering works, or recreational use.
- Development proposals will only be supported where they protect or enhance natural heritage and access assets. Where adverse impacts on existing assets are unavoidable we will only support proposals where these impacts will be satisfactorily mitigated.
- Development proposals must provide an assessment of the potential impact on natural heritage, biodiversity, trees and landscape and include proposals for the enhancement of natural heritage and access assets, as detailed in Making Fife's Places Supplementary Guidance.

9.2 Making Fife's Places Supplementary Guidance provides information on the site assessment which must be submitted for natural heritage and biodiversity. The following form part of this assessment.

9.3 A Phase 1 habitat survey should be undertaken. The habitat survey should identify habitats on or close to the site suitable for protected species where further surveys may be required. Any Protected Species (European and UK) found to be present should be assessed with appropriate surveys undertaken and impacts and mitigation identified. Also assessed should be any potential impact on biodiversity species (UK, Scottish and Local) and birds of conservation concern. All surveys should be carried out by suitably qualified professionals following recognised guidelines and methodologies. Surveys should be reported in full, with mapping provided as appropriate. Bat Conservation Trust Publication on Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists (2016) sets out a planning trigger list for development situations where bats are likely to be encountered and therefore where it is most likely that a bat survey will be required.

9.4 Existing natural heritage assets should be retained and protected. Annsmuir Golf Course Wildlife Site and Springfield Moor Wildlife Site both lie within 1km west and east, respectively, of the site. A suitable buffer must be maintained between existing assets and all development. This should be clearly identified on the plans submitted.

9.5 Any areas of invasive non-native species on the site should be reported and management/treatment identified to comply with relevant guidelines.

9.6 Care must be taken to protect the water environment and watercourses from damage, pollution and surface water run-off during and after construction. Compliance with SEPA requirements, guidelines and relevant best practise guidance are necessary.

9.7 Details must be provided about the management of the site, the area under the panels and along boundaries/fences. There is great potential to provide biodiversity enhancement through the creation of new species-rich native hedgerows, sowing native wildflower meadows etc. The RSPB provide guidance on this specifically for solar farms. Site management details, ideally in a site biodiversity plan, should be submitted explaining how the different areas are to be managed.

9.8 Details should be provided of where the construction compound, materials storage area etc. will be.

9.9 Details of lighting installed (e.g. for site security) should be submitted with any planning application. If lighting is required (including during construction), appropriate shades should be fitted to prevent light spillage onto trees or other linear features that could be used by wildlife to commute and forage.

9.10 For the application to be compatible with the aims of the natural environment and access and flooding and the water environment policies in FIFEplan, it must provide the

above and be supported by the assessments discussed and as detailed in Making Fife's Places Supplementary Guidance.

9.11 None of the trees within or adjacent to the site are protected by a Tree Preservation Order and none are located in a Conservation Area. At planning application stage, you would need to submit, for any tree removal or disturbance envisaged, an assessment of the quality of the trees or, if they can be retained in situ, details of how this will be achieved. Should it prove necessary to fell or disturb existing trees to accommodate your detailed proposal at planning application stage, the following surveys are recommended (all to comply with British Standard 2012 - Trees in relation to Design, Demolition and Construction Recommendations):

- Pre-development Tree Survey - In order to assess the quality of tree cover and establish which trees are suitable for retention.
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment - This evaluates information relating to the tree survey, tree retention/removal plan, tree loss, tree protection, & landscaping/ mitigation planting.
- Tree Protection Plan
- Protection Plan should be superimposed on the design & layout of the site Root Protection Areas (RPAs).
- Location of root protection barriers.
- Plan of other construction operations ie storage, parking, site huts, cement, scaffolding.
- Identify areas where RPAs to be breached.
- Arboricultural Method Statement - How the site will be developed and details relating to monitoring.
- Landscape Plan - Replacement planting will be required to mitigate the effects of tree removal; native species should be encouraged wherever possible.

Application Submission Documents - a Phase 1 habitat survey demonstrating how your development may impact on the known ecological interest and you should highlight any mitigation measures that may be required (please note that where there is risk that bats are present at the site a full bat survey covering the active season for these animals would be required confirming their presence or otherwise - Planning permissions cannot be granted subject to a bat report being submitted and the information must be submitted before any decision can be made); An assessment of the impact of the development on all trees and woodlands, including details of any compensatory planting proposed.

10.0 Road Safety

10.1 SPP, Policies 1, 3 and 10 of the Adopted FIFEplan Local Development Plan (2017), Fife Council Transportation Development Guidelines (contained within Making Fife's Places Supplementary Guidance) and Scottish Government Designing Streets (2010) apply with regard to this proposal.

10.2 The national context for the assessment of the impact of new developments on

transportation infrastructure is set out in SPP (A Connected Place). The SPP (Promoting Sustainable Transport and Active Travel) indicates that the planning system should support patterns of development which optimise the use of existing infrastructure and reduce the need to travel. The overarching aim of this document is to encourage a shift to more sustainable forms of transport and reduce the reliance on the car. Planning permission should also be resisted if the development would have a significant impact on the strategic road network. The design of all new development should follow the placemaking approach set out in the SPP and the principles of Designing Streets, to ensure the creation of places which are distinctive, welcoming, adaptable, resource efficient, safe and pleasant and easy to move around and beyond.

10.3 Policy 1 of FIFEplan states that development proposals must provide the required onsite infrastructure or facilities, including transport measures to minimise and manage future levels of traffic generated by the proposal. Policy 3 of FIFEplan advises that such infrastructure and services may include local transport and safe access routes which link with existing networks, including for walking and cycling. Transportation Development Guidelines set out the minimum parking standards for developments, as well as standards for roads developments.

10.4 The pre-application is for the installation of a 75MW capacity solar PV farm with battery storage facility, Rankeilour Estate, Springfield. The site lies within open countryside to the north of the east coast railway; south of the A91 and Rankeilour Hose; and west of Springfield. Vehicular access to the site is proposed from the derestricted Q64 at the west end of the site and within the 20mph speed limit on the C13 Main Street, Ladybank at the east end of the site.

10.5 In view of the size of the proposed development, the developer shall submit a Transport Statement in support of the proposed development. The TS shall follow the Transport Scotland "Transport Assessment Guidance". The TS shall concern itself with person trips, not car trips and cover access by all modes of transport - walking, cycling, public transport and private cars, to show how the site is being developed to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport. However, the significant vehicle trip generation would occur during the construction and eventual decommissioning of the proposed solar farm. I would assume that trip generation after the solar farm becomes operational would be minimal.

10.6 Visibility splays 6 metres x 210 metres shall be provided and maintained clear of all obstructions exceeding 600mm in height above the adjoining road channel level, at the junction of the vehicular access and the Q64, in accordance with the current Fife Council Transportation Development Guidelines. The visibility splays shall be retained through the lifetime of the development. Justification for a reduced visibility splay would have to be supported by a speed survey over one week to establish the 85th %ile speed on the Q64.

10.7 However, my Transportation Development management colleagues have concerns with the use of the Q64 as a construction traffic route. Between the proposed site access

and the A91 to the north, the road is subject to the national speed limit of 60mph; the carriageway is narrow with no passing places; and forward visibility is restricted. The Q64/A91 junction is within a 40mph speed limit but the junction visibility is restricted. There is a 7.5T weight restriction on the Q64 between its junctions with the A91 and the Q65 (which lies south of the proposed site access). Construction traffic meeting on the Q64 would result in the verges and carriageway edges being badly damaged as the vehicles pass each other.

10.8 The Q64 between its junctions with the Q65 and A914 would generally allow two vehicles to pass each other. However, the 7.5T weight restriction on the Q64 between its junctions with the proposed site access and the Q65. In addition, there is a level crossing of the railway to the south of the site access. Network Rail shall be consulted on the possible short-term increase in construction traffic crossing it. I am waiting for a response from Traffic Management colleagues to establish the reason for the 7.5T weight restriction.

10.9 Visibility splays 2.4 metres x 25 metres shall be provided and maintained clear of all obstructions exceeding 600mm in height above the adjoining road channel level, at the junction of the vehicular access and the C13 Main Street, in accordance with the current Fife Council Transportation Development Guidelines. The visibility splays shall be retained through the lifetime of the development.

10.10 The C13 between the proposed site access and the A91 has a carriageway width of some 6 metres and is suitable as a construction vehicle route. The C13/A91 junction is located within a 50mph speed limit. The junction visibility splay should be 4.5 metres x 180 metres. The actual visibility splay available shall be checked. The C13 between the proposed site access and the A914 would not be acceptable as the construction route as the route is through Springfield and there is a low bridge (4.1 metres) and tight S-bend to be negotiated.

10.11 The existing field access from the C13 Main Street shall be relocated northwards clear of the adjacent cul-de-sac junction bellmouth, which may require the build-out on Main Street to be relocated.

10.12 Off street parking, including visitor parking spaces, being provided in accordance with the current Fife Council Parking Standards contained within Making Fife's Places PPG and the current Fife Council Transportation Development Guidelines (Appendix G).

10.13 In conclusion, Transportation Development Management has no objections in principle to the proposed development subject to the above comments and concerns being satisfactorily addressed within a planning application submission.

Application Submission Documents: Transportation Statement; Scaled plans confirming visibility splays and location of parking spaces.

11.0 Loss of Agricultural Land

11.1 SPP (Promoting Rural Development); Policies 1 and 7 of FIFEplan Local Development Plan (2017); and Low Carbon Supplementary Guidance (2019) apply with regard to the loss of prime agricultural land.

11.2 SPP (Promoting Rural Development) recommends that development on prime agricultural land, or land of lesser quality that is locally important should not be permitted except where it is essential:

- as a component of the settlement strategy or necessary to meet an established need, for example for essential infrastructure, where no other suitable site is available; or
- for small-scale development directly linked to a rural business; or
- for the generation of energy from a renewable source or the extraction of minerals where this accords with other policy objectives and there is secure provision for restoration to return the land to its former status.

11.3 Policy 1 of FIFEplan sets out that in the case of proposals in the countryside or green belt, development must be a use appropriate for its location. Policy 7 sets out that development on prime agricultural land will not be supported except where it complies with the requirements of SPP.

11.4 Fife Council's Low Carbon Supplementary Guidance (2019) document sets out the level of information expected to be submitted where solar farm developments are proposed on prime agricultural land – the level of information varies depending on the designation. For the development of grade 2 agricultural land, the Supplementary Guidance advises that this should normally be avoided, with clear justification required to justify the benefits of the development and why the land should be taken out of full agriculture use. For the development of grade 3.1 agricultural land, the Supplementary Guidance sets the requirement for the following information to be provided (please note that information is also required for the development of grade 2 agricultural land);

1. Provide an explanation of why the development needs to be located on the site and not on land of a lesser agricultural classification within the area.
2. Provide information on the impact of the proposed development on the local area's supply of farming land within the same classification.
3. If the proposed development site makes up part of an existing farm, provide information on the viability of this farm to continue to function (as an agricultural unit) with the development in situ.
4. Consider the cumulative impact of the proposed development and other permitted large-scale solar PV developments on the supply of agricultural land within the same classification across the local area.

11.5 The application site is a mixture of grades 2 and 3.1 agricultural land (both prime agricultural land, per the James Hutton Institute); the majority of the land is grade 3.1. As solar panels would be raised, the opportunity would exist for sheep grazing to take place within the application site. Whilst the potential for sheep grazing has its benefits, crop

harvesting would not be possible for the lifetime of the development (between 25- 40 years). Fife Council would expect a detailed assessment of the impact on the prime agricultural land in this location – the applicant may wish to contact an independent agricultural consultant to prepare this information (SAC report). Compliance with SPP, Policies 1 and 7 of FIFEplan Local Development Plan (2017) and Low Carbon Supplementary Guidance (2019) will depend on the appropriate justification for the loss of the prime agricultural land.

11.6 In conclusion, the proposed development would result in the loss of large areas of prime agricultural land (including grade 2 land). Appropriate justification shall be required to support the loss of the use of the land.

Application Submission Document: A supporting planning statement/Scottish Agricultural College report to justify the loss of prime agricultural land, in accordance with the requirements of Fife Council's Low Carbon Supplementary Guidance (2019).

12.0 Flooding and Drainage

12.1 Flood risk is a key planning issue, and the Council must be satisfied that the development is not at risk of flooding and would not cause or aggravate flooding elsewhere in the watercourse regime before any favourable decision could be made. Your detailed application should consider surface water drainage arrangements associated with the development.

12.2 Policies 1, 3 and 12 of FIFEplan Local Development Plan (2017), the Council's 'Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) - Design Criteria Guidance Note' and the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (as amended) (CAR) are taken into consideration with regard to drainage and infrastructure of development proposals.

12.3 Policy 3 of the FIFEplan (2017) states that development proposals must incorporate measures to ensure that they would be served by adequate infrastructure and services; including foul and surface water drainage, and SuDS. Policy 12 of FIFEplan states that development proposals will only be supported where they can demonstrate compliance with a number of criteria, including that they will not individually or cumulatively increase flooding or flood risk from all sources (including surface water drainage measures) on the site or elsewhere. The Council's 'Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) - Design Criteria Guidance Note' sets out the Council's requirements for information to be submitted for full planning permission to ensure compliance. Finally, CAR requires that SuDS are installed for all new development, with the exception of runoff from a single dwellinghouse or discharge to coastal waters.

12.4 Fife Council's Flooding, Shoreline & Harbours Team has records of incidents of flooding on this site and there are areas of the site where potential fluvial water flood risk is identified on the SEPA Flood Map. Therefore, a Flood Risk Assessment will be

required with any future planning application. The Flooding Team also notes that, under CAR, the development is of a size that will require attenuation of storm water, a SuDS and forward flow restriction.

12.5 Fife Council considers that all developers should have considered Flood Risk to a detailed level prior to submission of their planning application. Sustainable Drainage Systems have been a legal requirement since 2007 and it is well established that the best designs for a SuDS will manage surface water above ground level. The detailed design of the drainage system should be considered at the planning application stage to ensure best practice in design by demonstrating that adequate land is provided for the SuDS and that it is designed to blend in with the proposed development while delivering a drainage solution to the agreed treatment volumes.

12.6 Please note that, since 1st February 2017 Fife Council has required detailed information (where applicable) on flood risk / SuDS to be submitted as part of all planning applications. If the information and the design and check certificates (Appendices 1 and 2 for SuDS design and Appendices 3 and 4 for Flood Risk Assessments) are not submitted with the application then the application will not be validated. The detailed guidance on our website outlines the level of information we need (https://www.fife.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0025/193255/DESIGN-CRITERIA-GUIDANCE-NOTE-ON-FLOODING-AND-SURFACE-WATER-MANAGEMENT-PLAN-REQUIREMENTS-valid-from-01.01.2021.pdf). This is in line with the requirements of many other Local Authorities in Scotland.

Application Submission Documents: Flood Risk Assessment; details of attenuation of storm water, a SuDS and forward flow restriction.

13.0 Land Contamination

13.1 PAN 33: Development of Contaminated Land (2000), PAN 51: Planning, Environmental Protection and Regulation (2006) and Policies 1 and 10 of FIFEplan Local Plan (2017) apply in this instance.

13.2 PAN 33 advises that suspected and actual contamination should be investigated and, if necessary, remediated to ensure that sites are suitable for the proposed end use. PAN 51 aims to support the existing policy on the role of the planning system in relation to the environmental protection regimes as set out in SPP. SPP (2014) states that in determining applications for new installations, planning authorities should determine whether proposed developments would constitute appropriate uses of the land, leaving the regulation of permitted installations to SEPA.

13.3 Policy 10 of FIFEplan advises development proposals involving sites where land instability or the presence of contamination is suspected, the developer is required to submit details of site investigation to assess the nature and extent of any risks presented by land stability or contamination which may be present and where risks are known to be

present, appropriate mitigation measures should be agreed with the Council.

13.1 Information held by Fife Council's Land & Air Quality team has no objection to the proposal. It is however advised that if any unexpected conditions are encountered during any development work at this site, e.g. made ground / gassing / odours / asbestos or hydrocarbon staining, the Planning Authority should be informed, as this may necessitate undertaking a suitable site-specific risk assessment for contaminated land, see -

www.fifedirect.org.uk/contaminatedland

13.2 If any forthcoming application for the site was to be approved, a suitable contaminated land condition may be applied to ensure the site is developed in accordance with the relevant technical guidance, including PAN 33 Development of Contaminated Land.

13.3 The site is not located within any Coal Authority defined Development High or Low Risk Area, therefore no specific Coal Mining Risk Assessment (CMRA) would be required for any planning application.

13.4 There are no significant underground high pressure pipelines known to Fife Council in close proximity to the site.

Application Submission requirement - none at this time.

14.0 CCTV and Privacy

14.1 Many solar farm developments include the installation of pole mounted infra-red CCTV cameras for security purposes. The law requires that systems must be designed such that they only record relevant images. The installation of CCTV cameras must meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Codes of Practice for operating CCTV Systems in a compliant manner therefore the fields of view of cameras must be set up correctly to ensure that they do not include unnecessary details or intrude into the privacy of any neighbouring areas. Compliance with the guidance and legislation is not a Planning matter, but the effect of lighting in terms of potential nuisance to amenity, and potential impact on wildlife activity, is a consideration in Planning terms.

Application Submission Document: A proposed lighting plan.

15.0 Core Paths/ Right of Way

15.1 SPP (2014) and Policies 1 and 13 of FIFEplan shall be taken into consideration when assessing impacts on the Core Path Network and rights of way.

15.2 The SPP in terms of sustainable development advocates the protection of enhancement and promotion of access to the natural heritage, including green

infrastructure, landscape and the wider environment. The part of the policy aimed at "Maximising the benefits of Green Infrastructure" sets out a set of policy principles to help guide the delivery of this. The planning system should ensure it is "an integral element of places", facilitate the long term, integrated management of green infrastructure and provide for easy and safe access to and within green infrastructure.

15.3 Policy 13 of FIFEplan sets out that development proposals will only be supported where they protect or enhance natural heritage and access assets including: core paths, cycleways, bridleways, existing rights of way, established footpaths and access to water based recreation.

15.4 Where adverse impacts on existing assets are unavoidable we will only support proposals where these impacts will be satisfactorily mitigated. The application of this policy will require to safeguard (keeps open and free from obstruction) core paths, existing rights of way, established footpaths, cycleways, bridleways and access to water based recreation. Where development affects a route, it must be suitably re-routed before the development commences, or before the existing route is removed from use. From previous discussions it is understood that these sites need to be designed to be secure and this may restrict access across the land for the lifetime of the development. If this were the case, given the extent of land involved, then alternative routes may need to be established.

15.5 The proposed development has a number of rights of way within the site area, In relation to the Core Path Network, whilst there are no core paths within the site itself, core paths run along the southern edge of the proposed development areas. In addition, a proposed future core path runs to the southern section of the proposed development area. Care should be taken when finalising the application site and layout of the development to ensure that these rights of way and core paths are not adversely impacted. As above, if these impacts are unavoidable, a suitable realignment of the rights of way should be incorporated into the development. It is recommended that early contact is made with Fife Council's Core Path Network team in advance of a planning application being submitted to discuss these matters.

15.6 In conclusion, dependent upon layout, the proposed development has the potential to have an impact on existing rights of way and core paths, therefore suitable mitigation (including through the form of an amendment route if required) should be proposed at planning application stage.

Application Submission Document: Details of any mitigation that may be required (including re-routing) for any core paths that may be affected by the proposed development.

16.0 Community Contributions

16.1 The SPP (A Low Carbon Place) paragraph 173 advises local authorities, that where a proposal is acceptable the local authority may wish to engage in negotiations to secure community benefit in- line with the Scottish Governments Good Practice for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments. Such agreements must be voluntary and not a determining factor in any decision making process.

16.2 Although not included in the Development Plan, the Council has previously encouraged contributions in local communities from developers of renewable energy schemes. Any contribution would be on a voluntary basis. Contributions could include for example lump sum payments or community investments such as public footpath improvements close to the site, additional woodland planting etc. The Council encourages community benefit negotiations to take place as early as possible and in parallel with the planning process. The Council's preferred option is for developers to discuss community benefit options directly with local community representatives, e.g. Community Councils or a local community trust. During recent correspondence, it has been advised that the applicant is willing to engage with local communities and potentially contribute towards a community project. Contact details for each surrounding Community Council have been passed on.

Application Submission Document: none.

17.0 Other Matters

17.1 I have no detailed information on how electricity generated from the solar arrays will be transferred to your preferred feed-in point to the Grid. Depending on the details of this, there are likely to be other considerations relevant to the submission of any forthcoming planning application that I cannot deal with here, such as the different implications of either overhead or underground power lines; crossing land outwith your ownership/control; and crossing main traffic routes. As well as the planning implications of these matters, there may be significant time-related impacts of gaining consents and permissions from landowners or statutory undertakers.

18.0 Conclusion

18.1 In conclusion, the principle of development, and the contribution it would make towards renewable energy supplies is supported by the Planning Authority. The proposed solar farm development is not considered to raise any adverse concerns with regard to visual impact, residential amenity, ecology, road safety, flooding and drainage, contamination, privacy concerns; as set out throughout this response, extensive supporting information would be required as part of any future planning application to confirm this.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Likely timescales and decision making

As the proposed development would be categorised as a 'Major' development, the Scottish Government advises that the Council should strive to determine the application within four months of receipt. This may not always be achievable where there are matters of a complex nature to consider, or if a legal agreement is needed to address financial or other requirements.

In accordance with the approved Scheme of Delegation, all Major applications must be determined by the relevant Planning Committee and this may also impact on the timescale for determination. The schedule of planned Committee meetings is available on the Council Website: [Planning Committees](#) Please note that in order for an application to be included on the agenda for a specific meeting the Committee Report must be completed 4 weeks in advance of the meeting date.

Administration of Your Application

All application information should be submitted using the Scottish Government e-planning portal: [e-Planning Portal](#) This allows your submitted information to be automatically sent to our case work system and allows relevant files to be published on our online 'Public Access' system. If you are able to also pay the application fee at the point of submission, this will assist us in avoiding potential delays in matching payments with applications.

Once the application has been submitted, any additional information or amendments should also be submitted using the e-planning portal: [e-Planning Portal](#) by using the 'Post Submission Additional Documents' process. This also applies once your application has been determined and you are submitting information needed to comply with conditions attached to the permission. Please avoid also sending an email to confirm that you have made a submission.

Should you need to contact the Council during the progress of your application please use our managed inbox address: development.central@fife.gov.uk. This email address is continually managed and monitored, and this avoids the risk of emails being missed when the case officer is on leave or otherwise unavailable.

Document Format and Size

All planning applications must be published online in order to support public involvement in the planning system. Wherever possible, applications should be submitted online as this reduces the time taken for documents to be uploaded to the public website. Where a submission is made in paper format the Council will apply an administrative charge in respect of the additional work involved in scanning and uploading the application information. Depending on the type of application being submitted, the additional fee can be up to £180 + VAT.

Electronic documents can be submitted in any of the following file formats:

DOC ▪ DOCX ▪ GIF ▪ JPG ▪ PDF ▪ PLT ▪ TIF ▪ TXT ▪ XLS ▪ XLSX ▪ XLW

All electronic documents must be less than 10MB in size, as anything above this cannot be loaded to the online system. Should a document need to be divided into smaller pieces it is preferred that this would be done logically, either by chapter or where obvious divisions exist.

Sensitive Information

Any information to be submitted which relates to protected species should be contained in a separate single document as this will not be published on the website as part of the application information.

Planning Fee

Your application will require a fee before it can be processed. The e-Planning portal includes a [Fee Calculator](#). This will allow you to calculate the statutory application fee and can be used independently of the application submission process. Details of the fees which may be applied by Fife Council for processing paper submissions or for any advertisements which may be required are available on the Fife Council Website: [Planning Charges](#)

How to Pay

Fife Council no longer accepts cash or cheques as payment methods. The application fee and any other fees applicable can be paid by any of the following methods:

- The Scottish Government e-planning portal
This is our preferred method of payment we will receive your application and fee at the same time. There is a facility for agents submitting applications to provide access for their client to make fee payments.
- Fife Council Online Payments
You can pay your fee via the Fife Council website [Make a Payment](#). Please ensure that you provided the correct application reference number when using this option to avoid delays in processing your application.
- Bank Transfer
Whilst we accept payment by bank transfer, using this method of payment is likely to delay the start of processing your application. Before making a payment by this method, please ask us for a copy of the form which we will need to allow us to match your fee with the correct planning application.

Whichever payment method you choose, please ensure that your payment reaches us no more than 5 days after the submission of your application.

Ordnance Survey Licence

All plans and drawings that use the Ordnance Survey map as a base map must be appropriately licensed and details of the date and licence number added to each plan.

Please ensure this is addressed in all your documents, including any plans inserted within reports and other supporting documents.

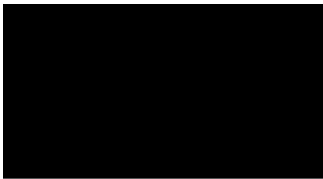
SUMMARY

STATUS OF ADVICE GIVEN

I trust you will find this information helpful in preparing your application for submission and look forward to receiving this in due course.

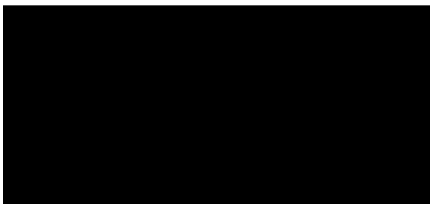
Please note that this information is given at officer level only and is made strictly without prejudice to the eventual decision of Fife Council as Planning Authority. Please also note that this advice does not take into account land ownership **and extra information may be required for any application**. To confirm the exact details required, please refer to our Validation Standards at [Validation-Checklist](#)

Yours faithfully



Martin McGroarty, Lead Professional

Response Reviewed by



Mary J Stewart, Service Manager