

CLACKMANNANSHIRE COUNCIL

Report to Planning Committee of 15 March 2012

Subject: **Erection of 97 No Houses With Associated Roads and Footpaths, Play Area, Water Basin and Open Space at Former Alloa Academy, Claremont, Alloa, Clackmannanshire (Ref 11/00337/FULL)**

Applicant: **Bellway Homes Ltd, Bothwell House, Hamilton Business Park, Caird Street, Hamilton**

Agent: **EMA Architects, The Stables, Baileyfield Road, Edinburgh**

Prepared by: **Grant Baxter, Principal Planner**

Ward **Clackmannanshire South**

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. This report summarises a planning application for the above noted proposed development and makes a recommendation on the application to Members. The application is being reported to the Planning Committee for a decision as the site is owned by the Council and in addition, the proposal constitutes a Major development.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. The application is recommended for APPROVAL, subject to the conditions and reasons set out below.
- 2.2. Subject to the following Conditions
1. All tree works on and adjacent to the site shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Tree Survey and Plan prepared by Donald Roger Associates and dated November 2011.
 2. Before any works start on site, protective fencing shall have been erected around all trees to be retained as part of the development, in accordance with BS 5837(2005). The fencing shall be inspected by a representative of the Council, and shall remain in place for the duration of the construction work.

3. Before any works commence on site, a Site Waste Management Plan for the construction and post development phases, produced with reference to the Council's Supplementary Advice Note - Managing Waste in Housing and Commercial Developments shall have been submitted to and approved by the Council. The plan shall detail measures for waste minimisation, separation, re-use and recycling, identifying storage and collection requirements/facilities, and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan.
4. Before any works commence on site, a revised Proposed Plot Levels Plan shall have been submitted to and approved by the Council. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved levels.
5. Before any works commence on site, a Construction Method Plan that contains the arrangements to minimise the environmental and road safety impact of construction activity and all vehicle movements on the adjacent public road network, during the construction phase or phases of the development, shall have been submitted to and approved by the Council. The plan will specifically address any issues of potential conflict between site construction traffic and vehicle/pedestrian movements associated with the adjoining primary school. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with such approved details.
6. Before any works commence on site, a Phasing Plan, detailing the proposed phasing of house construction, completion of all areas of communal landscaping/planting, play area, detention basin, roads, footways, traffic calming, off-site path connections and boundary treatments shall have been submitted to and approved by the Council. The Phasing Plan shall also set out proposals for future maintenance of communal land, and any related phasing of handover to the Council for adoption. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with such approved phasing details, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Council.
7. Prior to first occupation of any house in the proposed development, details of the provision of a Travel Pack to be provided to all new residents of the proposed development, prepared in consultation with the Council's Roads and Transportation Section shall have been submitted to and approved by the Council.
8. Before any works commence on site, details of the play area shall have been submitted to and approved by the Council. The play area shall have a minimum of 8No. items of play equipment to cater for children aged 2 -14yrs, seating and litter bin, under-surfaced with appropriate and approved safety surfacing and enclosed with railings as shown on the approved Boundary Treatments Drawing.

9. The proposed reconstituted stone wall along the site's Claremont frontage, as shown on the approved Boundary Treatments drawing is not hereby approved. Before any works commence on site, the developer will bring forward alternative proposals for a rubble wall to match that bounding Braehead Golf Course' Claremont frontage, to the west of the site. Thereafter, final details of boundary treatment along the site's Claremont frontage shall be approved and completed in accordance with such approved details.
10. Before any works commence on site, the developer will confirm that the proposed surface water drainage scheme and detention basin are designed to deal with the 1 in 200 yr (0.5% probability of occurrence in any one year) storm event on the site, and the proposed maintenance arrangements for the detention basin.
11. No construction work shall take place and no construction vehicle or equipment shall operate outwith the hours of 0800-1800 hours Monday to Friday, 0800- 1300 hours on Saturday, and at no time on Sundays or local Bank Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Council.

2.3 Reasons for the Conditions

1. In the interests of visual amenity and local environmental quality.
2. In the interests of visual amenity and local environmental quality.
3. In the interests of residential amenity and local environmental quality.
4. In order to ensure level details are appropriate to the site and adjoining developments.
5. In the interests of residential amenity and local environmental quality.
6. In order to ensure appropriate phasing and completion of the approved development.
7. In the interests of residential amenity and local environmental quality.
8. In the interests of residential amenity and local environmental quality.
9. In the interests of visual amenity and local environmental quality.
10. In the interests of residential amenity and local environmental quality.
11. In the interests of residential amenity and local environmental quality.

2.4 Approved Plans

- Revised Site Location Plan

- Revised Site Layout
- Street Elevation to Claremont
- Revised Proposed Site Sections
- Boundary Treatments
- Tree Survey & Plan
- Proposed Plot Levels
- Detention Basin Layout
- Cameron Plans & Elevations
- Revised Landscape Sheets 1-6
- Revised Bannerman Plans & Elevations
- Revised Blair Plans & Elevations
- Revised Churchill Plans & Elevations
- Revised Devonshire Plans & Elevations
- Revised Eden Plans & Elevations
- Revised Newcastle Plans & Elevations
- Revised Portland Plans & Elevations
- Revised Portree Plans & Elevations
- Rockingham Plans & Elevations
- Revised Rosebery Plans & Elevations
- Revised Salisbury Plans & Elevations
- Revised Wellington Plans & Elevations

2.5 Reasons for Decision

- 2.6 The application involves a housing development on a vacant former secondary school site on Claremont, Alloa, which is now identified for housing in the adopted Clackmannanshire Local Plan. The application complies with the Council's Development Plan, and will allow for the positive redevelopment of the vacant former school site for a high quality housing development with associated open space, landscaping

and play provision. There are no other material considerations that indicate the application should not be supported, and it is recommended for approval subject to the conditions and reasons noted above.

3.0 Background to the Proposals

- 3.1. The site incorporates the grounds of the former Alloa Academy, on Claremont, Alloa. It extends to 4.55Ha of land including the solum of the recently demolished former academy buildings and associated playing fields and hardstandings. The site has its main frontage to the north onto Claremont, and detached houses lie opposite. It also adjoins the grounds of Claremont Primary School to the east. The site is bounded to the south by Arns Brae Pleasure Grounds, which slope steeply downwards towards Stirling Road. The western boundary is onto a footpath that separates the site from Braehead Golf Course, and a large house plot.
- 3.2. The site is identified as Housing Policy H7 in the Clackmannanshire Local Plan, First Alteration (Housing Land), Adopted October 2011
- 3.3. The applicant proposes to redevelop the entire site to form 97No. two storey detached houses, with associated roads and footpaths, play area, water detention basin and open space. The development would have two new vehicle accesses onto Claremont, with additional pedestrian access to the west and south.

4.0 Consultations

- 4.1 Roads: No objections. Detailed comments are made on the need for a safe route to school link through Arns Brae, consideration of traffic volumes of Claremont, design of the detention basin, SUDs, control of any potential flood risk from surface water and other detailed design matters within the site layout. The proposed traffic management arrangements shown for the site frontage to Claremont are generally welcomed. The attempt to reflect the Government's policy on residential developments, Designing Streets is acknowledged.
Comment: Discussions have taken place between Roads and Development Quality officers and the applicant to address issues raised. These have resulted in internal layout changes to satisfy Roads comments, where required, and any outstanding detailed issues are addressed in planning conditions and through the Roads Construction Consent process.
- 4.2 SEPA: No objections to the surface water scheme, although two levels of treatment are normally required for such a development, however, subsequent confirmation from SEPA that as the detention basin would discharge to a combined sewer, then the one level of treatment proposed is adequate.

- 4.3 Scottish Water: No objections, however final approval for connection requires to be sought from Scottish Water. Connection may require the developer to carry out works to ensure no loss of service to existing customers. SUDs required to deal with surface water run-off. *Comment: Confirmation of approval from Scottish Water of the drainage and SUDs arrangement will require to be in place before works commence on site, in case any revisions are required to the layout and/or drainage scheme.*
- 4.4 Regional Archaeologist: The previously undeveloped nature of part of the site (playing fields) may contain archaeological remains, and a 5% ground excavation should take place prior to development to ascertain if any remains exist. *Comment: Since this advice, an archaeologist has carried out the required investigation, and has concluded that there is no evidence of any remains.*
- 4.5 Environmental Health: No objections. Construction works will require to be carried out in a manner to ensure no nuisance caused to adjoining residents or Claremont Primary School, therefore, conditions proposed on construction hours and practices.
- 4.6 Waste Management: Adequate waste storage and collection points for each house should be provided in the site. Access is required for a 26 tonne 3 axle refuse vehicle, and should ensure minimal reversing is required. Road design should eliminate closed right angles to facilitate street cleansing. The applicant should produce a waste management plan to reduce waste during construction. *Comment: The layout is well designed to ensure these requirements are met, including minimal use of cul-de-sacs, to reduce the need for vehicle reversing. A waste management plan can be required by condition.*
- 4.7 Alloa Centre Community Council: No comments on the planning application, but attended pre-application meeting with the applicant and provided comments as summarised under 5.0 below.

5.0 Representations

- 5.1 Under new planning legislation, all applications for Major and National Developments require to carry out a pre-application consultation exercise, in order to seek the community's views on the proposals at least 3 months before a planning application is submitted. As this application falls into the "Major" category, by virtue of the size of the site development, these procedures apply.
- 5.2 To this end, the applicant submitted a Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) to the Council on 25 August 2011. This set out the applicant's proposals for public consultation, including direct consultation with Alloa Centre Community Council, Braehead Golf Club, Claremont and St. Johns Primary Schools, notification of neighbours and hosting of a public drop-in exhibition, which took place on 21st September 2011 at Inglewood House. This event was advertised in the local press on 14th

September 2011. The event was attended by 74No. people, 35 of whom provided feedback forms.

- 5.3 As required by legislation, this planning application is submitted with a pre-application consultation (PAC) report which summarises the public consultation exercise, provides analysis on feedback and how this has been taken into account in the application submission. The report summarises the key elements of the consultation as follows:
- Thirty five feedback forms received from 74No. attendees (47% response rate).
 - Of the responses received, 29No. were wholly positive, nine were positive with appropriate conditions being in place and six were negative.
 - Key issues raised by those who were positive with conditions included traffic speed and volumes on Claremont and surrounding roads; concern at a lack of play facilities in the layout; comments on the proposed housing mix not including smaller units, and a desire to see trees on Claremont retained and Arns Brae enhanced.
 - Negative comments included concern at too many houses, a lack of open space, increased road safety risk, and concern on impact on infrastructure as well as comments on housing design.
 - Alloa Centre Community Council acknowledged that they had no formal role in representing the area, however provided comments to the developer. The PAC report summarises the Community Council's comments as largely positive about the development, but included an expressed desire to see enhancement of Arns Brae Pleasure Grounds, provision of play facilities, given the loss of open space, and a comment on traffic congestion at Kellie Place, at the other end of Claremont.
 - The applicant has summarised their response to the community consultation in the PAC report. The report identifies site design changes, including changes to include smaller house types, an additional point of access onto Claremont to spread traffic, the addition of traffic calming on Claremont, and the provision of open space and a play area.
 - A future footpath link to Arns Brae is also shown on the layout plan.
- 5.4 The planning application, when submitted, was advertised in the local press and a total of 28No. neighbouring properties were notified of the application. In response a total of five representations were received from the following parties:

- Lorraine Alexander, 126 Claremont, Alloa
- Robert & Alison Mathers, 146 Claremont, Alloa
- Robert & Elizabeth Snaddon, Arnside, Claremont
- Robert & Jennifer McIntyre, 144 Claremont, Alloa
- Robert Snaddon, 19 Grange Road, Alloa

and are summarised below:

- Concern regarding increased traffic volumes/speed and construction traffic on Claremont and surrounding roads. *Comment: Traffic volume and speed analysis data has been provided by the applicant's transport engineer in a Transport Statement, in consultation with Roads and Transportation. The statement concludes that the residential development will generate less traffic than the previous school use of the site, with peak flows between 21% and 26% of those generated by the former school use. In addition, traffic speed monitoring indicates that the majority of vehicles on Claremont travel within the speed limit, but that for the small number that exceeded the limit, the traffic calming measures proposed by the developer would be appropriate. The proposals include speed tables at the two proposed accesses onto Claremont.*
- Lack of green space and play areas in the area and those proposed in the site are too small. *Comment: The site previously included a secondary school with associated playing fields and the school and playing fields have been re-provided in the new Alloa Academy campus at Bowhouse Road. In addition:*
 1. *The layout plan shows an informal recreation area and an equipped play area as part of a larger piece of open space close to the Claremont frontage.*
 2. *Additional details provided by the developer show a possible future redevelopment of the adjoining Claremont Primary School site, which the Council has decided to relocate as part of a merged primary School along with St Johns, on a new site at Redwells. An indicative layout plan including the Claremont PS site, shows additional kickabout space adjoining the proposed play area to make one new park of around 5000sqm. Whilst the redevelopment of the Claremont Primary School site is not part of this current application, it is important that consideration is given at this stage to the manner in which any future housing layout on the adjoining site would integrate with this current application. The provision of such an area of combined open space and play provision is one way in which successful integration of new developments with each other and with existing communities can be achieved.*

3. The development will also deliver enhancement of passive recreation space in the form of Arns Brae Pleasure Grounds, adjoining the site.

- As such, the development complies with the relevant Development Plan policies, and goes beyond the Development Brief in the provision of open space and play facilities.
- Concern regarding impact on the privacy and amenity of adjacent residents. *Comment:* Claremont, including road verges and footway is typically 14 metres wide as it passes the site. Houses in the proposed layout will sit around a further 10m back from the street. In addition, existing houses opposite the site are typically set well back from the road frontage. The combined effect of these factors is that all proposed houses are set well back from existing houses such that they would not affect their privacy and amenity.
- Concern regarding design, density and layout of the development and the water storage area in the NE corner. *Comment:* The development density is around 21 houses per hectare, which is relatively low and sits comfortably with surrounding densities around the site, such as in Claremont, Arns Grove, Carse Terrace and Norwood Avenue. The layout and design is described in more detail under Section 6.0 of this report, and is considered to be of a high standard, taking account of the site characteristics, the Claremont frontage, and incorporating a number of elements of good placemaking and design as set out in Government policy.
- Comments that the land is protected for educational use only. *Comment:* Whilst not a material planning consideration, this question has been addressed to the Council's Legal Services, who have advised that such a restriction no longer exists on the Title to the land, as a result of an Order made by the Lands Tribunal in 2008, allowing the Council to deal with the land in such a manner as it considered appropriate.
- Support for the proposals as it will be an improvement to an existing eyesore and will generate less traffic than the previous school use.

6.0 Planning Considerations

- 6.1 The application requires to be determined in accordance with the Council's Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.2 The site is allocated for housing in the Clackmannanshire Local Plan, First Alteration (Housing Land), Adopted October 2011 as Housing Policy H7. The guidance in the Alteration refers to the site being subject

to a Brief, a protected species survey, provision of open space, flooding assessment a SUDs scheme and public art contribution.

- 6.3 A Brief has been previously prepared for the site on behalf of the Council prior to it preparing to dispose of the site. A survey of protected species (in this case bats) took place prior to demolition of the former school buildings. Issues in relation to open space, flooding and drainage are addressed in Sections 3 and 4 above, and public art is referred to below.
- 6.4 The relevant policies of the Clackmannanshire Local Plan in relation to the application are as follows:
1. Policy RES 2 Brownfield Development: Supports residential development on previously developed sites including vacant and underused land and property. This policy supports the application which would redevelop the site of the former School, which is currently lying vacant.
 2. Policy RES 5 Affordable and Particular Needs Housing: This policy sets out a requirement for developments of 30 or more houses to provide for affordable and particular needs housing, up to a target of 25%, dependant on an assessment of local needs and circumstances, and taking account of all other material considerations. The Development Brief for the site indicates that there is no affordable housing requirement arising from the proposed development.
 3. Policy RES 7 The Layout and Form of Development, Policy RES 8 Amenity Standards and Policy RES 11 Development Principles for Large Housing Developments: These policies sets out design criteria for all housing developments, including larger developments such as this, and seek to provide high standards of residential design, layout and amenity. The applicant has submitted a Design and Access Statement, and the detailed layout set out in the plans and described in the Statement have emerged from discussions between the developer and Council officers. The resulting proposals have been significantly informed by the site and area characteristics, with a strong emphasis on place making and creating a high quality living environment that sits well with the established communities in the area. The layout includes Homezone areas, feature public squares and new landscaping and boundary treatment on the site's Claremont frontage. It is also worth noting that some of the provisions of Policies RES 7 and RES 11 are perhaps somewhat outdated and have been superseded by the provisions of the Government Policy, Designing Streets, which is a significant material consideration, and has guided much of the developer's thinking on the proposals. Since the original application submission, additional efforts have been made to further enhance the layout and design of the development, and

the result is a well considered development informed by place making rather than the needs of the car, that will compliment the site and surroundings well.

4. Policy RES 9 Open Space Principles and Policy RES 10 Open Space Standards: These policies seek to ensure provision of adequate open space and recreation to serve new developments. The proposed layout plan shows an informal recreation area in the central part of the housing development and an equipped play area within open space in the north east corner, close to the Claremont frontage. In addition, and as mentioned in Paragraph 5.4, above, an indicative layout plan shows that additional future kickabout space adjoining the proposed play area can be provided on land currently part of the Claremont Primary School site, to make one new park of around 5000sqm. The site also benefits from adjoining the Arns Brae Pleasure Grounds and extensive walks around Braehead Golf Course to the west.
5. Policy INF 2 Integration of Transport and Development Proposals: The proposals are considered to comply with this policy which seeks to locate new developments where they are conveniently served by public transport, and can be easily accessed on foot or by bicycle. A bus route (C64) runs immediately to the east of the site from Alloa town centre, and a stop is located at the junction of Claremont and Gean Road close to the site's north east corner. The Council is keen to promote new and enhanced active travel routes associated with the development. To this end, the Council will seek to ensure improvements to Arns Brae paths as a result of the development, including a new Safe Route to School, to be completed in advance of the new primary school being completed at Redwells.
6. Policy INF 4 Development Standards: This policy requires new developments to comply with the Council's Roads Development Guidelines. The Council's Roads and Transportation Section have indicated that the Government Policy Designing Streets provides an overarching ethos to their approach to roads and street design. The applicant has sought to adopt a Designing Streets approach in the detailed layout of the development, in consultation with Roads and Planning officers, and the layout as amended largely reflects this advice. Roads and Transportation have also indicated that they are comfortable with the Transport Statement regarding traffic volumes and speeds on the surrounding road network.
7. Policy INF 14 Existing Public Parks, Amenity Open Spaces, Allotment Gardens, Playing Fields and Sports Pitches: This policy seeks to resist the loss of such facilities to development unless particular circumstances apply. The site contains former

playing fields of the school that have now been re-provided at the new campus at Bowhouse Road. The site is also now identified for residential development in the Clackmannanshire Local Plan, and in this respect, the Council has already taken a decision to develop the site, including pitches, for housing on the basis that such facilities were re-provided along with the new school. Nonetheless, the proposals involve the provision of a new informal recreation space and play area, as described under policies RES 9 & 10, above. The application does not therefore conflict with this policy.

8. Policy EN11 Enhancing Environmental Quality: This policy sets out criteria which new developments should address in order to positively contribute to their immediate environment. The details of the applicant's design and access statement and the site layout that has emerged from the design process is likely to result in a development that enhances its surroundings and complies with this policy.

- 6.5 In light of this summary, the proposed development is considered to be in accordance with the adopted Clackmannanshire Local Plan.
- 6.6 Development Brief: As noted in paragraph, a Development Brief was prepared for the site. The brief set out the planning and urban design context for the development of the site. In doing so the brief considered the site context and development plan policies and set out design principles for the site. Such principles have been considered and reflected in the planning application, however, the site layout has also sought to incorporate the Government's Designing Streets Policy Statement which was not in place at the time the brief was written. Such changes have largely affected the internal site layout, whilst the requirement for a high quality built and landscaped frontage onto Claremont as set out in the brief remains an important priority which the proposals adequately address.
- 6.7 Developer Contributions: The brief also states that there are no developer contributions over and above the usual site requirements as the Council, as land owner, will be undertaking other works (as detailed in Para 6.8). The development of the site for 97No. houses requires to address the provision of community infrastructure commensurate with the scale and nature of the proposals. In this respect, the developer will provide:
- Amenity open space within the site
 - A play area within the site
 - Traffic calming on Claremont
- 6.8 The Council itself would, as a result of the development, provide:

- An appropriately sized kickabout area adjoining the proposed play area, which the Council would provide of in considering future redevelopment of the Claremont Primary School site.
- A fully surfaced and lit Safe Route to School through Arns Brae Pleasure Grounds in advance of the new school opening, which will also benefit secondary school children walking/cycling to Alloa Academy.
- Contribution towards the enhancement of the landscape within Arns Brae Pleasure Grounds.
- Sufficient new education capacity within the proposed new primary school to accommodate the new development.

6.9 Summary: The application complies with the Council's Development Plan, and will allow for the positive redevelopment of a vacant former school site for a high quality housing development with associated open space, landscaping and play provision. There are no other material considerations that indicate the application should not be supported.

7.0 Sustainability Implications

7.1 The application proposes to redevelop a vacant former school site for housing, in accordance with the Development Plan.

8.0 Resource Implications

8.1 Financial Details

8.2 The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report. This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate.

Yes ☐

9.0 Exempt Reports - Reasons for Exemption

9.1 This is not an exempt report.

10.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) **Our Priorities 2008 - 2011** (Please double click on the check box ☒)

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| The area has a positive image and attracts people and businesses | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Our communities are more cohesive and inclusive | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| People are better skilled, trained and ready for learning and employment | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Our communities are safer | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Vulnerable people and families are supported | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Substance misuse and its effects are reduced | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Health is improving and health inequalities are reducing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The environment is protected and enhanced for all | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| The Council is effective, efficient and recognised for excellence | <input type="checkbox"/> |

(2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

Policies contained within the Clackmannanshire Local Plan

11.0 Equalities Impact

- 11.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?

Yes ☐ No ☒

12.0 Legality

- 12.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers.

Yes ☒

13.0 Appendices

- 13.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

None

14.0 Background Papers

14.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)


Yes ☒ (please list the documents below) No ☐

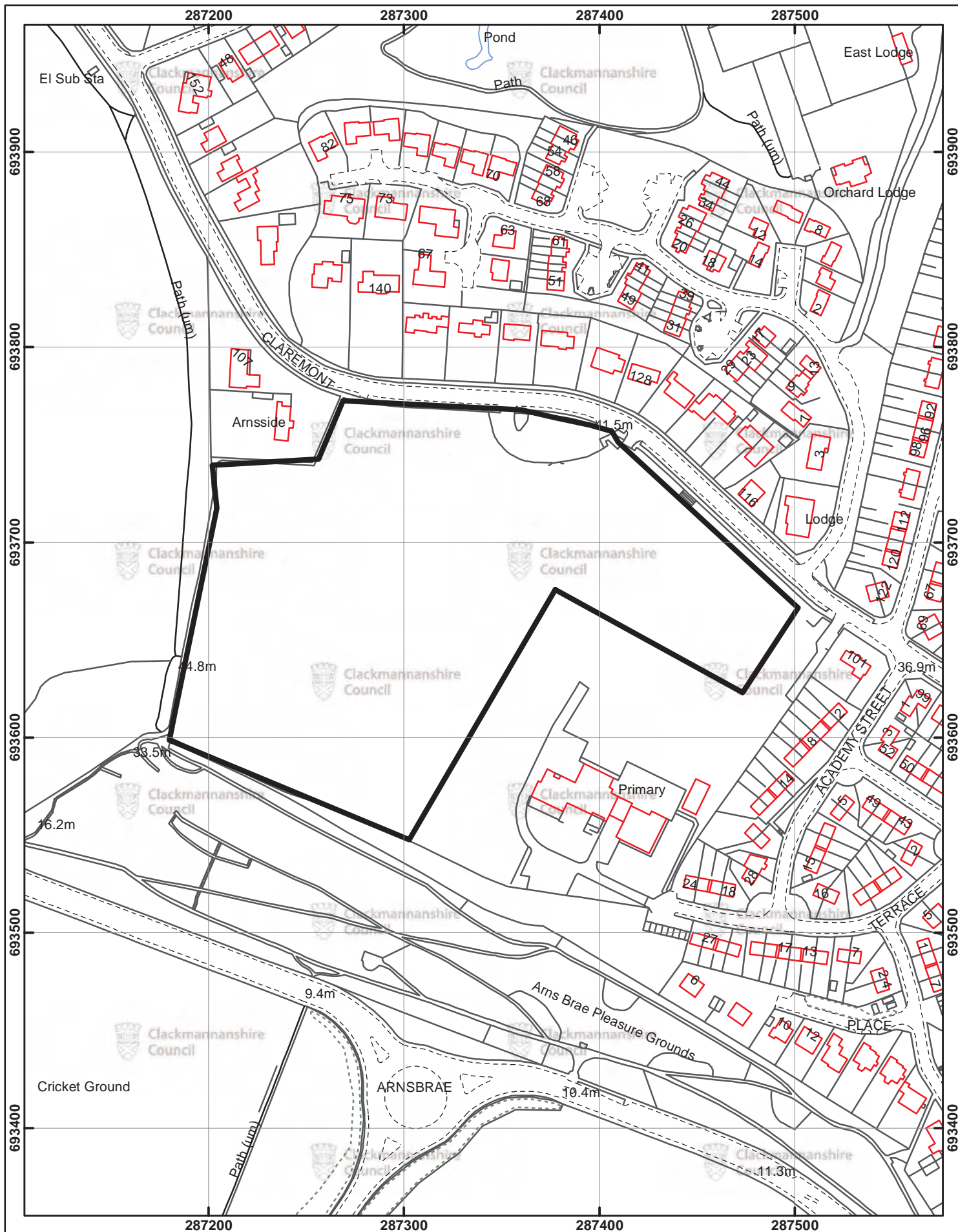
Clackmannanshire Local Plan

Author(s)

NAME	DESIGNATION	TEL NO / EXTENSION
Grant Baxter	Principal Planner	2615

Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
Julie Hamilton	Development Services Manager	
John Gillespie	Head of Community and Regulatory	



11/00337/FULL - Former Alloa Academy, Claremont, Alloa
Erection of 97 No Houses With Associated Roads and
Footpaths, Play Area, Water Basin and Open Space

Ward: Clackmannanshire South
 0 20 40 60 80 100
 Meters

OS Grid Ref: NS 87 93

Scale: 1:2,500

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 **Clackmannanshire Council**
www.clacksweb.org.uk

Services to Communities
 Kinraigs
 Greenside Street
 Alloa
 FK10 1EB

Tel: 01259 450 000 Fax: 01259 727 452
development_services@clacks.gov.uk

