

Cameron Planning



Proposed Private Dwellinghouse

Letrualt Farm,
Letrualt Farm Lane,
Rhu

Planning Supporting Statement

December 2020

Contents

- 1. Introduction 3
- 2. Application Site 4
- 3. Proposed Development and Planning History 6
- 4. Planning Assessment 10
- 5. Summary 18

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Our client, Mrs G Black, has instructed Cameron Planning to submit an application for planning permission in respect of a single detached private family dwellinghouse on land within the curtilage of Letrualt Farmhouse, Letrualt Farm Lane, Rhu. The existing farmhouse is situated at the top of Letrualt Farm Lane and the application site is located immediately to the south of the existing dwelling and farm steading, located at a lower level on a gap site situated between the farm steading and the private property at Ardlarich.
- 1.2 The application site is garden ground associated with the farmhouse and is partially used as an enclosed vegetable plot area. The land south of Letrualt farmhouse has not been used for agricultural purposes associated with the farm. The proposed dwelling is a two-storey 3-bedroomed house set into sloping ground to ensure that the visual impact is kept to a minimum. There are a number of existing dwellings on Letrualt Farm Lane, including the recent (2005) development of Tor Beag directly across the road. The principle of residential development is consistent with the character of the area.
- 1.3 This planning statement supports the planning application and considers relevant planning history together with the current Local Development Plan policy framework which will inform the decision-making process.
- 1.4 The application is supported by the following plans and the statutory application fee of £401:
 - 0961-EX-200 Location Plan A
 - 0961-EX-201 Existing Site Plan
 - 0961-EX-203 Land in Ownership Plan A (note that the land ownership is extensive and covers much of the hillside to the rear of Letrualt Farm)
 - 0961-PL-202 Proposed Site Plan
 - 0961-PL-203 Proposed Site Access - visibility splays
 - 0961-PL-300 Proposed Floor Plans
 - 0961-PL-500 Proposed Elevations
 - 0961-PL-501 Proposed 3D Views & Site Section

2. Application Site

- 2.1 This section considers the characteristics of the application site, which comprises open garden ground and is essentially a gap site, sitting between Letrualt Farmhouse and Ardlarich. The site includes a fenced area that is being used as a vegetable garden, located to the south of the site, adjacent to the southern boundary. The land is fairly level at the southern end but rises in a fairly steep gradient to the north east corner.
- 2.2 There is a recently built house opposite the application site, named Tor Beag; the planning history for this property is discussed in more detail below. To the immediate south is the property known as Ardlarich; this is a Category B listed building. On the north side of the road there are two further dwellings, Highveld and another new dwelling, Waterside. On the south side of the road, south again from Ardlarich, is Ardwel and Ardenconnel Lodge. Tulach Ard also takes access from the road which connects to the A814 and is located in extensive grounds to the north of the properties on the north side of Letrualt Farm Lane.
- 2.3 The character of the area, on the boundary of the settlements of Rhu and Shandon, is essentially residential, the only non-residential buildings being barns associated with Letrualt Farm. There is a watercourse to the south-east which sits within a densely wooded valley and issues into the Gareloch to the south. East of this watercourse is the village of Rhu and Aros Road, including the modern Smugglers Way development.
- 2.4 Letrualt Farm Lane is an attractive hedge and tree lined road which provides access to Letrualt Farm and the other dwellings noted above. The old farmhouse sits in an elevated position and comprises a dwellinghouse and associated barns. Beyond the farmhouse, the farmland associated with Letrualt Farm occupies much of the surrounding hillside. The application site sits at a level between that of the farmhouse and Ardlarich. Figure 2.1 on the right, is centred on the application site; the orientation and relationship of the existing buildings or Letrualt Farm Lane is clearly seen in the image.
- 2.5 The residential density that is provided in the area is low, comprising detached dwellings in sizeable garden ground. The area benefits from mature tree cover, notably to the river valley to the east, but also more generally in the wider area.



Figure 2.1: Aerial View (Google)

- 2.6 Rhu village is a Conservation Area village and the application site is located to the immediate western edge of Rhu, on the boundary with the more scattered settlement of Shandon. The conservation area is centred on the centre of the village and is of sufficient distance from the application site to ensure that the character of the conservation area is not impacted by the new development.
- 2.7 The dwelling Ardlarich, to the immediate south, is a Category B listed detached dwelling. The proposed dwelling is sited sufficiently distant from Ardlarich and has its principal aspect looking to the west between Highveld and Ardlarich thereby avoiding any direct overlooking issues with Ardlarich. The ground to the rear is steep and the visual impact of the new build will be mitigated by building into the slope. The existing farmhouse is at a higher level than the application site and this existing property looks directly south-west down Letrualt Farm Lane, thereby avoiding any overlooking issues with the proposed development. It will be seen in the aerial view in figure 2.1 that there is a considerable gap between the existing farmhouse on the right and Ardlarich to the south of Letrualt Farm Lane.
- 2.8 The image in figure 2.2 on the right is just north of the proposed access point and shows the site relationship with Letrualt Farm Lane and the relationship with the existing farmhouse in the background. At the point of access, the ground is level, and it rises here towards the farmhouse. The existing house has an aspect down Letrualt Farm Lane, which avoids any potential overlooking or privacy issues with regards to the new dwelling. The existing house is at an elevated position and has an open aspect. Also seen in the image is a couple of mature trees, these mark the north-west corner of the application site; the other shrubs shown here are related to the garden setting of Letrualt Farmhouse. The image also depicts the character of the area and the site context of mature woodland in the valley to the east, shown here in the background, along with mature trees to the north of the farmhouse.



Figure 2.2: looking towards existing Letrualt Farmhouse

2.9 The image on the right in figure 2.3, shows the south of the site, where the vegetable plot is currently situated. This is fenced and gated. In the image, the plot has been freshly prepared for planting. The image also shows the Category B listed Ardlarich, which is located on the south side of the boundary hedge between the two properties of Letrualt Farm and Ardlarich. As will be noted in this image, the property has only one small attic window and sits at a lower level than the application site. There will be no overlooking or privacy issues relative to the new dwelling due to a combination of orientation, levels and distance. It is recognised that Ardlarich is a category B listed building and that any new development should not adversely impact on its setting. For the reasons set out above, it is maintained that the setting is not compromised.



Figure 2.3: view along southern boundary, Ardlarich on right

3. Proposed Development and Planning History

3.1 Proposed Development

3.2 The proposed development comprises of a single detached three bedroomed family dwellinghouse. Given the site topography and fairly steep gradient, sloping towards Letrualt Farmhouse, the new dwelling is designed to sit into the slope, as the section on the right in figure 3.1 shows. The section shows the extent to which the new dwelling will 'sit into' the sloping ground; much of the ground floor to the rear is set into the hillside. The section to the rear of the dwelling is the entrance porch. Although the roof of the new dwelling is higher than the break in the slope at the farmhouse, the farmhouse is further west and orientated down the farm lane, there are consequently no privacy or overlooking issues.



Figure 3.1: Proposed site cross section

- 3.3 The dwelling is split over two levels with the kitchen and living space, including a playroom for family visits, at the upper level and three bedrooms located on the ground floor, the master with en-suite. This arrangement maximises the exceptional views to the south west across the Gareloch towards Rosneath. The principal access to the dwelling is at the upper level with a new access, driveway and parking located to the west of the house, directly off the existing road. The site topography means that the access to the upper entrance is via steps; a step free access is provided to the ground of the property at ground floor level. The access and parking area were chosen in this location as this would have the least impact on the sloping ground and more particularly the least visual impact.
- 3.4 The site access is provided with visibility splays of 2.4 x 25m in both directions. Letrualt Farm Lane is a single-track road which serves the existing dwellings on the road, including the farmhouse. There is consequently little traffic that uses the road. The access width has been specifically designed to ensure that there is sufficient width to allow two cars to sit side by side, providing a passing place at the entrance should one be needed. Two incurtilage parking places are provided and the access is of sufficient width to allow turning and enabling vehicles to enter and leave in forward gear. The hardstanding area includes a dedicated bin storage area adjacent to the dwelling and also a refuse collection point at the roadside. Two paths run from the parking area, the stepped access to the main entrance porch to the rear of the dwelling and a step free route to the lower ground floor entrance.

3.5 Design

- 3.6 The proposed dwelling utilises a range of materials and will be finished in natural stone cladding on the ground floor with vertical larch timber finishing on the upper floor. The proposed roof covering is a metal profile roof finish in 'Winter Grey (RAL 7040)'. An external raised balcony wraps around the dwelling at the upper level with access from the side gable elevation and from the front. At the upper level, accommodation comprises a large kitchen/diner/living space with a shower room and playroom; an attached rear porch provides a sheltered entrance space. On the ground floor the accommodation comprises a secondary entrance with utility room, three bedrooms, one en-suite and an additional bathroom. The rendered image on the right shows the family dwelling sitting into the sloping ground as viewed from the access road.



Figure 3.2: rendered image of proposed dwelling

3.7 The existing dwellings in the area are of mixed design and age. The oldest building is the existing farmhouse, which can be seen in figure 2.2, above. Other dwellings on Letrualt Farm Lane are fairly recent in origin, Tor Beag (see figure 3.3, below) for example was granted planning permission in 2005. Ardlarich, which is located to the south of the application site, is Category B-listed and is unusual in that it has a thatched roof; the property dates from 1937 and is of Arts and Crafts design. There are however no overall design features that are common to the different dwellings in the area.

3.8 The proposed finishing materials for the dwelling are contemporary in nature and considered appropriate for this location

3.9 Planning History

3.10 The only relevant planning history is application reference 05/02412/DET in respect of a proposed new dwellinghouse on 'land south west of Letrualt Farm.' The application was approved, following a Planning Hearing process, and the dwelling has subsequently been built, named as Tor Beag. The Tor Beag site is a more level site and arguably one that would have been easier to develop. Looking at the aerial image in figure 2.1, it is evident that the fields in front of Letrualt Farmhouse were open ground, with mature tree cover both to the west and east, the central area around the Farm Lane being open in nature. The image in figure 3.3 shows the modern 1½ storey, double garage dwelling that has been built on the site.



Figure 3.3: New Build (2005) opposite application site

3.11 The dwelling Tor Beag secured planning permission following a Planning Hearing in 2005; the Hearing was necessary as at the time of the application, the proposed development was considered to be contrary to the then adopted Local Plan, Dumbaron District, District Wide Local Plan, and more specifically was against policy DC2, which presumed against development within the greenbelt.

3.12 At the time of the 2005 application, the Council was in the process of reviewing and progressing the new Argyll and Bute Local Plan. The plan that was emerging at that time (the Finalised Draft Local Plan) was a material consideration in the decision-making process and it was noted that the proposed plan intended a settlement boundary change that would bring the majority of the application site in 2005 into the settlement

boundary, whereby the principle of residential development would be considered acceptable. The planning authority at that time opted to hold a PAN 41 Planning Hearing due to there being a number of objections to the application and also given the fact that, although the application was contrary to adopted Development Plan policy, the Council was minded to approve the application by taking into account the emerging Local Plan, this being a significant material consideration in the decision-making process and one which gave support for the development. The officer recommendation at application stage was to approve the development as a minor departure to the adopted Development Plan, subject to a PAN 41 Hearing. The subsequent Hearing concluded that the application should be approved.

- 3.13 The Report of Handling for the 2005 planning application had noted that *'the existing houses within the locality are of a mix of design.'* It was also noted that the proposed dwelling *'would not have a detrimental impact on adjoining properties of the surrounding areas.'* It was also considered that the development would *'not affect the setting of the listed building, Ardlarich.'* The planning officer's assessment was taken into account at the Planning Hearing and carry some weight. The assessment recognises that there is no common vernacular design within the locality and concluded that the new dwelling would not have any detrimental effect on the character of the area in general but specifically the listed building. There are strong similarities in the 2005 application with the current application.
- 3.14 Since the 2005 application and decision there have been subsequent versions of the Local Development Plan adopted by the planning authority. The current adopted LDP is from 2015 and has been subject to recent review. Due to a number of delays, most notably the Covid-19 pandemic, the emerging Local Development Plan 2, which will replace the 2015 LDP, is now not due to be submitted to the Scottish Government for Examination until April 2021 and now has a potential adoption date of April 2022 (A&BC October 2020 Newsletter).
- 3.15 In addition to the development assessment similarities outlined above, there are also procedural similarities in so far as the application sits between two LDPs, the adopted 2015 LDP and the emerging 2020 LDP2. There is however another factor that is material to the case in that the Council's 2010 published Green Belt Landscape Review document produced by Ironside Farrar identified that the Inner Green Belt boundary here is weak and recommended that the boundary be pulled back to north of Letrualt Farmhouse, meaning the application site should have been included in the 2015 LDP in response to the Green Belt Review.

4. Planning Assessment

4.1 The decision-making process requires that decisions are made in accordance with the adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) taking into account all other material considerations. In this instance the adopted LDP is the 2015 version. Material considerations that will carry some weight in the process are the emerging LDP2 and the Council’s commissioned Gren Belt review from 2010 as noted above.

4.2 Planning Policy and Inner Green Belt Boundary

4.3 Whilst the current adopted Local Development Plan is the 2015 LDP, the emerging 2020 LDP2 is a material consideration in the decision-making process as this will make material changes to the policy framework that relates directly to this planning application.

4.4 With regards to the adopted LDP 2015, extract in figure 4.1 on the left, the application site is partially within the settlement area and partially within the designated green belt. As can be seen from the extract below, the new dwelling plot discussed above under the 2005 application, was similarly divided between settlement and green belt. The extract below in figure 4.1 post-dates construction of that house and the LDP designation hasn’t changed, although the new dwelling is located within the settlement part of its garden ground is still in green belt.



Figure 4.1 2015 Adopted LDP Extract



Figure 4.2 2020 Emerging LDP Extract

4.5 The emerging 2020 LDP2 extract in figure 4.2 proposes an amendment to the settlement boundary which would incorporate all of the application site within the settlement by delineating the settlement boundary along the top of the slope associated with Letrualt Farmhouse. The proposed settlement boundary is in effect a prolongation of the new build plot curtilage across the access road and then along the top of the slope. The

whole of the field, comprising the application site, will now be within the settlement boundary. The figure 4.2 also shows the vegetable garden delineated as a square within the application site.

4.6 The issue to be addressed is that as regards the adopted Local Development Plan, the application site is located part within the settlement and part within the green belt and the settlement, whereas the emerging LDP2 designates the whole site as settlement.

4.7 Green Belt Review

4.8 The Council had commissioned a review of the Argyll and Bute Green Belt from Ironside Farrar; this would inform future Local Development Plans. In 2010, Ironside Farrar published their Green Belt Landscape Study, which included consideration of the area at Letrualt, falling within their assessment of the 'Rhu North' area. One of the few changes that the Green Belt review recommended was with regards to the area that includes the application site. As shown on the extract below, with the red line dash, it was noted that the existing inner green belt boundary, solid blue line in this plan, 'is weak and undefined. A new robust boundary would be the track to the rear of Letrualt Farm.'



Figure 4.3, Extract from Green Belt Landscape Review, 2010

4.9 Despite the recommendation in the commissioned report, the Council did not amend the boundary of the green belt in the 2015 LDP. The current emerging Local Development Plan 2 does propose to adjust the green belt. However, rather than following the recommendation in the Council's independent report, the revised boundary is in front of Letrualt Farmhouse.

4.10 The 2010 Green Belt review found that in the area around Letrualt, the Inner Green Belt boundary was not robust. In their assessment, Ironside Farrar recommended the following boundary change, which fully incorporates the application site:

RN02 - The weakest boundaries are immediately to the south of Letrualt Farm which are not clearly defined as they do not tie in with existing features. We recommend moving the green belt boundary to follow the track and change in slope, to the rear of the farm buildings.

4.11 The application site has consequently been found to serve no green belt function and its development would have no impact on the function of the green belt.

4.12 Adopted LDP 2015 Policies

4.13 **LDP DM1– Development within the Development Management Zones**, advises that encouragement shall be given to sustainable forms of development as follows:-

(A) Within the Main Towns and Key Settlements up to and including large scale on appropriate sites.

(B) Within the Key Rural Settlements up to and including medium scale on appropriate sites.

(C) Within the Villages and Minor Settlements up to small scale on appropriate sites.

and, also relevant is the following section in relation to development within the green belt:

(G) Within the Greenbelt encouragement will only be given to very limited and specific categories of countryside based development. These comprise:

- i) Agricultural-related development.
- ii) Farm diversification – tourism and rural business related development (excluding dwelling houses)
- iii) Outdoor sport and recreational development.
- iv) Development required to manage and sustain the natural heritage and access resources of the Greenbelt.
- v) Demolition and replacement of buildings and alterations or extensions of such buildings, including dwelling-houses, subject to no change of use occurring.
- vi) Change of use of buildings to residential institutional use.

4.14 **Comment:** the Proposals Map designation means that part of the application site can be built upon, in principle, but part of the site requires justification for new development. The boundary split is through the field, following no physical feature. The development of a new dwellinghouse would be acceptable in principle to the south of the field, closer to Ardlarich. However, a new dwelling is not consistent with green belt policy, where the dwelling is located to the north of the field, unless it meets specific criteria as set out in the above policy. In the case of this application,

we contend that the Council has expressed its intention to bring the whole of the application site into the settlement boundary and significant weight should therefore be given to the emerging LDP2.

- 4.15 In addition to the principal 'Development Management Zone' policy, there are a number other adopted LDP policies which need to be addressed in any planning application, including the following. **Policy LDP 3 – Supporting the Protection, Conservation and Enhancement of our Environment:** advises that, in all development management zones, Argyll and Bute Council will assess applications for planning permission with the aim of protecting, conserving and, where possible enhancing, the built, human and natural environment.
- 4.16 More specifically, a development proposal will not be supported where it does not protect, conserve or where possible enhance biodiversity, geodiversity, soils and peat, woodland, green networks, wild land, water environment and the marine environment. In addition, the development should protect, conserve or where possible enhance the established character and local distinctiveness of the landscape in terms of its location, scale, form and design. Consideration will also be given to the cumulative impact of development.
- 4.17 **Comment:** the proposed development does not offend the aims and requirements of Policy LDP3. There is no adverse impact on the character of the area or in relation to existing residential amenity.
- 4.18 **Policy LDP 9 – Development Setting, Layout and Design,** states that the Council will require developers and their agents to produce and execute a high standard of appropriate design in accordance with defined criteria. For example, the development shall be sited and positioned so as to pay regard to the context within which it is located and, the development layout and density should effectively integrate with the urban, suburban or countryside setting of the development. In addition, the design of developments and structures shall be compatible with their surroundings.
- 4.19 **Comment:** the application is for a single two storey dwelling set into sloping ground to specifically reduce its overall impact on the landscape. The dwelling is set into its plot and set away from other buildings in the locality. Specific care has been taken to place and orientate the building, so as to have no impact on the nearby B listed Ardlarich. Existing density parameters are adhered to and the dwelling is of modest scale and massing, in keeping with other existing dwellings. The use of appropriate contemporary finishing materials is acceptable in this location and setting.
- 4.20 **Emerging LDP2**
- 4.21 As previously stated, the policies contained within the emerging LDP2 will carry significant weight and the following policies are of particular relevance, as any planning application will need to be considered against these requirements.

4.22 **Policy 01 – Settlement Areas.** Within the Settlement Areas as defined on the proposals’ maps, development will normally be acceptable where, for example:

- It is on a non-brownfield site, and the proposal is considered acceptable in relation to the overall land supply for the proposed use, and
- It is compatible with surrounding uses including but not exclusively; providing access, service areas, infrastructure for existing, proposed or potential future development, and
- It is of an appropriate scale and fit for the size of settlement in which it is proposed; and
- Respects the character and appearance of the surrounding townscape in terms of density, scale, massing, design, external finishes and access arrangements; and
- It complies with all relevant Local Development Plan 2 policies.

4.23 **Policy 04 – Sustainable Development:** In preparing new development proposals, developers should seek to demonstrate the following sustainable development principles, which the planning authority will also use in deciding whether or not to grant planning permission

- a) maximise the opportunity for local community benefit;
- b) Make efficient use of vacant and/or derelict land including appropriate buildings;
- c) Support existing communities and maximise the use of existing infrastructure and services;
- d) Maximise the opportunities for sustainable forms of design including minimising waste, reducing our carbon footprint and increasing energy efficiency;
- e) Avoid the use of locally important good quality agricultural land;
- f) Utilise public transport corridors and active travel networks;
- g) Avoid the loss of important recreational and amenity open space;

- h) Conserve and enhance the natural and built environment and avoid significant adverse impacts on biodiversity, natural and built heritage resources;
- i) Respect the landscape character of an area and the setting and character of settlements;
- j) Avoid places with significant risk of flooding, tidal inundation, coastal erosion or ground instability; and
- k) Avoid having significant adverse impacts on land, air and water environment.

4.24 **Policy 05 – Design and Placemaking:** To achieve good quality places proposals should, where possible, meet the following placemaking criteria:

- The proposed use should be compatible with surrounding land uses
- The proposal should, where practicable, be resource efficient by utilising existing infrastructure and facilities
- The design should respect site topography and any surrounding important landmarks or views.
- The design should create and improve connectivity within, and where practical, beyond the site.
- Green infrastructure should be an integral part of the design process from the outset.
- The design should develop the area’s sense of identity by understanding and embracing the existing distinctive characteristics, with the design respecting and complementing its surroundings in terms of density, appearance, height, scale, massing, materials and finishes
- Where the site contains existing buildings, structures and/or natural features that contribute to the character and identity of the wider area, these should be retained and sensitively integrated into the design unless it has been clearly demonstrated to the planning authority that it is not practicable.
- The siting and design should respond to the natural environment in a sustainable manner
- The proposal should consider the design of active frontages, and create welcoming, inclusive places with a coherent structure of streets, spaces and buildings which are easy to move around, prioritising the needs of pedestrians and cyclists above motor vehicles.

- The access to and orientation of buildings should reinforce the street or open space to create safe and pleasant places.

The design should be sustainable in terms of materials and construction and should consider future adaptability, and climate change mitigation measures

4.25 **Policy 08 – Sustainable Siting:** Each of the following will apply when assessing any proposal for development, including those for outbuildings and extensions:

- The development should integrate into the landscape or existing built form to minimise detrimental effects on the environment. Hilltop, skyline or ridge locations will be resisted.
- Development on a sloping site should be designed sensitively taking account of the topography in order to prevent significant excavation or under-building.
- The siting of a development should take into account the character of the area in terms of its settlement pattern, layout and density.
- All new residential developments are required to consider provision for Growing Spaces
- Any development should be carefully sited to avoid overshadowing or overlooking of itself or other properties.
- The development should be positioned within the landscape to make the best use of solar gain, natural ventilation and shelter from the elements and minimise adverse environmental effects – this need must be balanced with the restrictions and opportunities the topography places on the siting.
- The development should be sited within easy access of existing infrastructure and services
- Any ancillary development such as parking and service areas, should be sensitively designed and sited.

A co-ordinated approach is required to development in that it must not compromise the effective development of adjacent land or the comprehensive development and regeneration of a wider area as provided for in a masterplan, strategy or development brief approved by the council.

4.26 **Policy 10 – Design: All Development:** The design of any development must

- Demonstrate an understanding of and appropriate response to the proposed development site and wider context including consideration of character and, where applicable, urban grain; and
- Acknowledge the scale, mass and spirit of nearby buildings but steer clear of mimicry and pastiche; and
- Incorporate existing and enhancing features where applicable; and
- Avoid falsification of period details; and
- Use appropriate proportions for building elements and details including, where applicable, massing and fenestration; and
- Use materials that are harmonious with the context but embody honesty and legibility of contemporary design; and
- Consider the embodied energy and durability of proposed materials.

4.27 **Comment:** the proposed development is consistent with the emerging Local Development Plan 2, specifically in respect of the above policies. The key issue is that application site will be wholly within the settlement boundary where there is a presumption in support of the proposal. In terms of Policy 04, the proposal constitutes an acceptable form of sustainable development. The application site is an underused area of garden ground associated with Letrualt farmhouse. The area is essentially private given that Letrualt Farm Lane gives access as far as the farmhouse; there is no loss of public amenity space and no impact on any countryside access provision. Development of the site for a single dwelling respects the existing development density in the area. The site is a grass field, partially enclosed to provide a vegetable plot. Development of the site would have no environmental impact, there are no ecology or sensitive habitat matters that need to be taken into account and boundary trees will be retained where appropriate. There is no adverse impact arising with regards to the capacity of the existing landscape to accommodate an additional dwelling, the character of the area is maintained by the development.

4.28 In terms of Policy 05, the development is wholly compatible with the existing landscape character. The development utilises an existing access road and existing utilities are all on hand to service the new dwelling. The site will for example connect into the existing mains foul sewer. Surface water will discharge to the existing watercourse. With regards to Policy 08, The development response positively to the character of the area, being orientated south west the dwelling will maximise exposure to existing sun and light. In addition, by being set into the landscape on a

westerly facing slope, the new dwelling will benefit from shelter. The excavation required to develop the site is not considered to be excessive; the access and parking arrangements have been specifically designed and positioned to avoid extensive retention.

- 4.29 The proposed use is consistent with surrounding uses and the scale and massing of the new dwelling is in keeping with existing measures. With regard to Policy 10 it can be noted that the density of development locally is low and the development of the available plot for a single modest family two storey home ensures the density requirements are met. The building is modest in scale but remains in keeping with other existing dwellings in the area. It is recognised that there are no distinct or common design features in existing development however the design proposed here is considered acceptable in the extent to which contemporary finishing materials will be used. The design deliberately avoids any form of pastiche or falsification.
- 4.30 Overall, the proposed development does not offend the emerging LDP2 policy framework.

5. Summary

- 5.1 The proposed development is for a single family two storey, three bed roomed home. The application site is a gap site situated between two existing dwellings with a recently built (2005) dwelling directly across the access road. The site is to the front of Letrualt Farmhouse and is essentially garden ground associated with the farmhouse itself. Part of the site is used as a vegetable plot, otherwise the site has been allowed to grass over. The site is backed by mature trees which follow the valley route of a stream which can also accommodate surface water run off outfall. The site sits at a level between the adjoining properties and is designed to fit into the sloping ground it occupies. The design and siting ensure that the new dwelling will not be prominent in the existing landscape.
- 5.2 The property to the south is Category B Listed. The development however is of sufficient distance from the listed property so as not to have any adverse impact. Importantly, the orientation of both the proposed and existing houses is such that there are no issues with regards to privacy or overlooking. There is no impact on the setting of the listed building.
- 5.3 The application is not in accordance with the adopted LDP, in so far as part of the application site is situated in the designated green belt. The emerging LDP2 however is a significant material consideration, as this proposes to place the whole site within the settlement.

- 5.4 Recent planning history considered a similar issue in 2005 with the approval of the property across the road from the application site. The site was half in settlement and half in green belt. Following a hearing, the planning authority approved the application and found it was a minor departure from the adopted LDP. The Council subsequently commissioned a green belt review which was published by Ironside Farrar in 2010. This review confirmed that the inner green belt boundary locally was weak and should be redefined to the north of the farmhouse. The recommendation was that the application site, as it now is, served no green belt purpose and the field should be brought into the settlement. As the field is essentially garden ground associated with Letrualt farmhouse, the recommendation was to redraw the inner green belt boundary to follow the track north of the farmhouse.
- 5.5 In conclusion, although the proposal is in partly inconsistent with the adopted Local Development Plan, the 2010 green belt review found that the site served no green belt purpose and recommended its removal from the green belt. The 2015 adopted LDP failed to address that requirement although the current 2020 emerging LDP2 does to some extent now do so.
- 5.6 In the circumstances it is argued that there are grounds to support this application through approval of planning permission. The application is arguably a minor departure to the adopted LDP; however, the proposed LDP2 and recent green belt review both support a redrawing of green belt boundary at this location, bringing the application site into the settlement, which is likely to happen with adoption of the new LDP2 in due course. The proposed development is therefore consistent with the emerging LDP2 and reflects the findings of the Green Belt review.
- 5.7 It is requested that the Council supports the application as a minor departure.