

**Report Title:** Balmedie Golf + Leisure Resort, Aberdeenshire  
**Issue Date:** 29<sup>th</sup> May 2007  
**Client/Developer:** Trump International Golf Links Scotland  
**Lead Designer:**  
**Local Authority:** Aberdeenshire Council  
**Location:** Menie Estate, Balmedie, Aberdeenshire  
**Planning Ref.:** F/APP/2006/4605  
**Details:** Proposals for a golf and leisure resort, incorporating a 5 star hotel and conference facility and up to 1000 holiday residential units, to be formed in natural dunes on the Menie Estate, Balmedie.

29<sup>th</sup> May 2007

Letter to:  
Development Control and Building Standards  
Aberdeenshire Council



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Dear Sir

### **Balmedie – Outline application for Golf Course and Resort Development – F/APP/2006/4605**

Thank you for sending us details of the Environmental Impact Assessment, submitted in connection with the above application, which we received on the 10<sup>th</sup> April 2007.

We acknowledge that such a proposal may represent a significant economic opportunity for the north-east of Scotland. This should not, however, be viewed in isolation, and we encourage the Council to consider whether and how such a development would contribute to a sustainable future for the region in the broadest sense.

On the basis of the limited information available, we have serious concerns with regard to the design approach as demonstrated by the indicative illustrations. Should a world-class golf facility be located in such a sensitive landscape, it needs to be realised through an exemplary design process to secure a built development and reformed landscape of exceptionally high quality. We do not see such an aspiration in the designs as currently submitted. They do not demonstrate an understanding of local tradition or the potential of this unique location. Were they to be realised in the form suggested they would not only have a negative impact on an area of high landscape value but would also devalue the Scottish architectural tradition that they attempt to emulate. We consider that an outline planning application should not be approved on the basis of the information submitted as it would limit the ability to comment on and control the design and achieve the quality that the situation deserves. We therefore suggest that, before

any decision is made on the principle of development, the designs should be revisited and more information provided to demonstrate:

- A creative approach to landscape design, sympathetic to the coastal location.
- An exemplary, and contemporary, approach to the design of the built environment, based on a response to landscape and environmental issues.
- The appointment of a team of consultants with a commitment to high quality design.
- An exemplary approach to sustainable design.
- A commitment to the interests of the local community and non golf playing visitors.
- The avoidance of a gratuitous response to local tradition, in the context of a development that will be unlike anything built before in the north-east.
- A development that represents Scotland as a modern and vibrant nation.
- Compliance with Scottish Executive design related policies, including the Architecture Policy; Designing Places; PAN68 on Design Statements; PAN 67 on Housing and PAN72 Housing in the Countryside etc.

We do not believe that the designs submitted are of sufficiently high quality for this unique location, for a project with such an international profile, or for Scotland as a whole. We trust the above comments are of assistance, and that due regard be paid to our observations in the progress of this application. In the development of a modern and dynamic Scotland, issues of identity, quality of place, climate change and the need to build for sustainable future must take their place alongside economic considerations. We would wish to be consulted on the proposals again once some of our concerns have been addressed, and before any decision on the application is made.

Yours sincerely

Angela Williams  
Head of Design Review