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**From:** [Redacted]  
**Sent:** 17 May 2018 09:16  
**To:** Claire McArthur  
**Subject:** FW: SDP - MIR Comments  
**Attachments:** Comments Mr and Mrs Grover.pdf

Claire McArthur  
Team Leader (Acting)  
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Working Days: Tuesday – Friday



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**From:** Cliff Grover [Redacted]  
**Sent:** 16 May 2018 17:42  
**To:** Team <team@aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** SDP - MIR Comments

Please find our comments attached

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Best Regards  
Cliff Grover

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

### Contact Details

<b>Name (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms)</b>	Mr. and Mrs Cliff and Sue Grover
<b>Organisation (if relevant)</b>	(none)
<b>Address</b>	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Please tick this box if you wish further correspondence to be directed to this address:

If you wish to be added to the SDPA distribution list to be kept informed of our progress in producing the next SDP, please tick this box and provide the email you wish to be added to our database (if different from above):

Email : \_\_ (as above) \_\_\_\_\_

## Your Views

Please use a separate box for each issue/question you wish to respond to. If you wish to continue on a separate sheet, please attach to the paper copy or email.

<b>Main Issue / Question Number:</b>	6. Housing / Qs. 10-14
<p>My comments cannot be exactly correlated with your question numbers, especially as I do not really understand the implications of the questions you ask, however, my comments probably apply generally across Questions 10 to 14.</p> <p>In recent years, and probably for a very long time (longer than I have been living here i.e. more than 11 years), the Strategic and Local Development Plans, and the implementation of these “on the ground” i.e. by developers, have produced a result woefully short of what has been required in the area of “smaller” housing requirements. This does not necessarily correlate with what you call “Affordable” housing, but may in some cases overlap. As against this, the supply of larger houses, whilst being in shortage for some time (e.g. ~2006 market conditions), has now, due to the local industry economic situation, now far outstripped demand and larger properties are remaining unsold in large numbers, both new and pre-owned.</p> <p>A key problem has been that developers have for their own economic reasons consistently built far too many large houses (4, 5, 6 bed “Executive” or “Luxury” detached houses) and far too few smaller houses. The smaller houses I refer to would be 2, 3, and smaller-4-bed properties for occupation by first-time buyers, young families, and people looking to downsize, particularly those in the 55 to 70+ age group, as well as those of any age who cannot afford an expensive house.</p> <p>As an example, we are now in the newly-retired bracket (coming up to age 65) and will be looking to downsize in a 5-10 year timescale. We are also members of our own local social groups comprised of many others of a similar age and stage who regularly get together, and universally the same complaint is made – that “there is nowhere appropriate (smaller) to move to”.</p> <p>We also have friends who work in the house-building industry who tell us that when they build houses, or look to build houses, even the smaller ones I refer to, they have had a fair degree of interest from potential buyers, but the story is often the same: “we can buy your house when we can sell our own (larger) house.” and nothing happens.</p> <p>Other examples are the Stuart Milne development at Crathes where the larger houses are moving slowly or not at all, and the Kirkwood development at Woodlands of Durriss where they have had to apply for a change in Planning Permission to adjust the size of properties downward. Our contacts say that developers are finding it easier to shift smaller houses,</p>	

and whilst we don't have any hard evidence, it would seem from external observation that the phase of smaller properties more recently being built by Bancon at Hill of Banchory are indeed being sold quite quickly. All of these factors were predictable beforehand.

Building of smaller houses for those wishing to downsize (which I am sure is now a significant market in much of Aberdeenshire, especially since the economic downturn of recent years) will also release an equal number of larger properties onto the market. A better balance of smaller houses will also facilitate a more fluid and flexible market for those wishing to upsize from the smallest houses, as their families and means grow.

Whilst it may not be the prerogative of Councils to intervene in the housing market at a level which would qualify as "interference" at a commercial level, it is nevertheless true that there has been a woeful and persistent imbalance in the numbers of large vs. small houses built, and this issue is something that should be:

(a) firstly included within the SDP/LDP methodologies for determining housing market requirements - it is no longer adequate to differentiate in the MIR and housing supply figures only between "Housing" and "Affordable Housing" numbers with no recognition of house sizes and leaving the house size mix entirely to developers.

(b) properly quantified (e.g. by survey) and

(c) corrected with a sufficient degree of influence and even enforcement by Councils according to the pre-determined requirements.

Councils must find a way of ensuring that the wrong mix of housing does not continue.

If there is proper recognition and action is taken to correct the balance of larger vs. smaller housing it is also likely that the instances of developments with unsold or unfinished housing will also reduce. Proper recognition of the correct balance of housing sizes may also mean the total amount of land required is reduced.