

Sandown Development Brief Brath-leasachaidh Sandown





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1. Background & Consultation

Cùl-fhiosrachadh & Co-chomhairleachadh

1.1. This Brief represents the result of a Charrette - an intensive and inclusive design workshop held from 30th January to 2nd February 2012. The Charrette was open to all and attended by members of the community and other interested parties. These parties included representatives for the owners of the adjacent Delnies site, the development of which is to be coordinated with that of Sandown.

1.2. The Brief content incorporates those areas of consensus achieved at the Charrette and leaves flexible those matters which could not be agreed. Accordingly, it carries less detail than a typical Highland Council brief. However, the Brief is only a precursor to a masterplan or masterplans for the site which would most likely be prepared in conjunction with future planning applications.

2. Policy

Poileasaidh

2.1. The principle of the site's development has been established through the Highland wide Local Development Plan process. This Plan was adopted on 5 April 2012. Its Sandown- specific policy wording is as follows.

Policy 16 - Sandown

The Council will support development at Sandown (as shown on Map 9) in the short term subject to a suitable development masterplan, to be adopted as supplementary guidance, and a Recreational Access Management Plan which should ensure that there is no adverse effect on the integrity of the Inner Moray Firth SPA/Ramsar site.

Issues addressed by the masterplan will include:

- site layout;
- design of buildings and open areas;
- housing density;
- provision of affordable housing;
- provision of employment-generating uses;
- phasing;
- flood risk;
- an access solution that provides unfettered links to the Delnies development area to the west and shared arrangements wherever possible;
- infrastructure provision; and
- delivery of the development.

The recreational access management plan will contain provisions that ensure that there is no adverse effect on the integrity of the Inner Moray Firth SPA/Ramsar site.

The design for development of Sandown shall be based on the masterplan and the recreational access management plan. The design for development of Sandown and Delnies shall be progressed side-by-side and shall:

- show an overall coherence, attractiveness and local character;
- be efficient in terms of movement of people and vehicles; and
- enhance the town.

In preparing proposals for the site, consideration must be given to the extent to which tourism-related development and business development might be attracted to the site. If potential, either in the short term or in the longer term, is identified for one or both of these kinds of development, land must be reserved accordingly.

Connections to the public water and waste water systems will be required.

3. Zoning Concept

Bun-bheachd Sònaidh

3.1. The figure below shows the broad arrangement of land use that should be developed across the site. The proposed uses are colour outlined as follows:

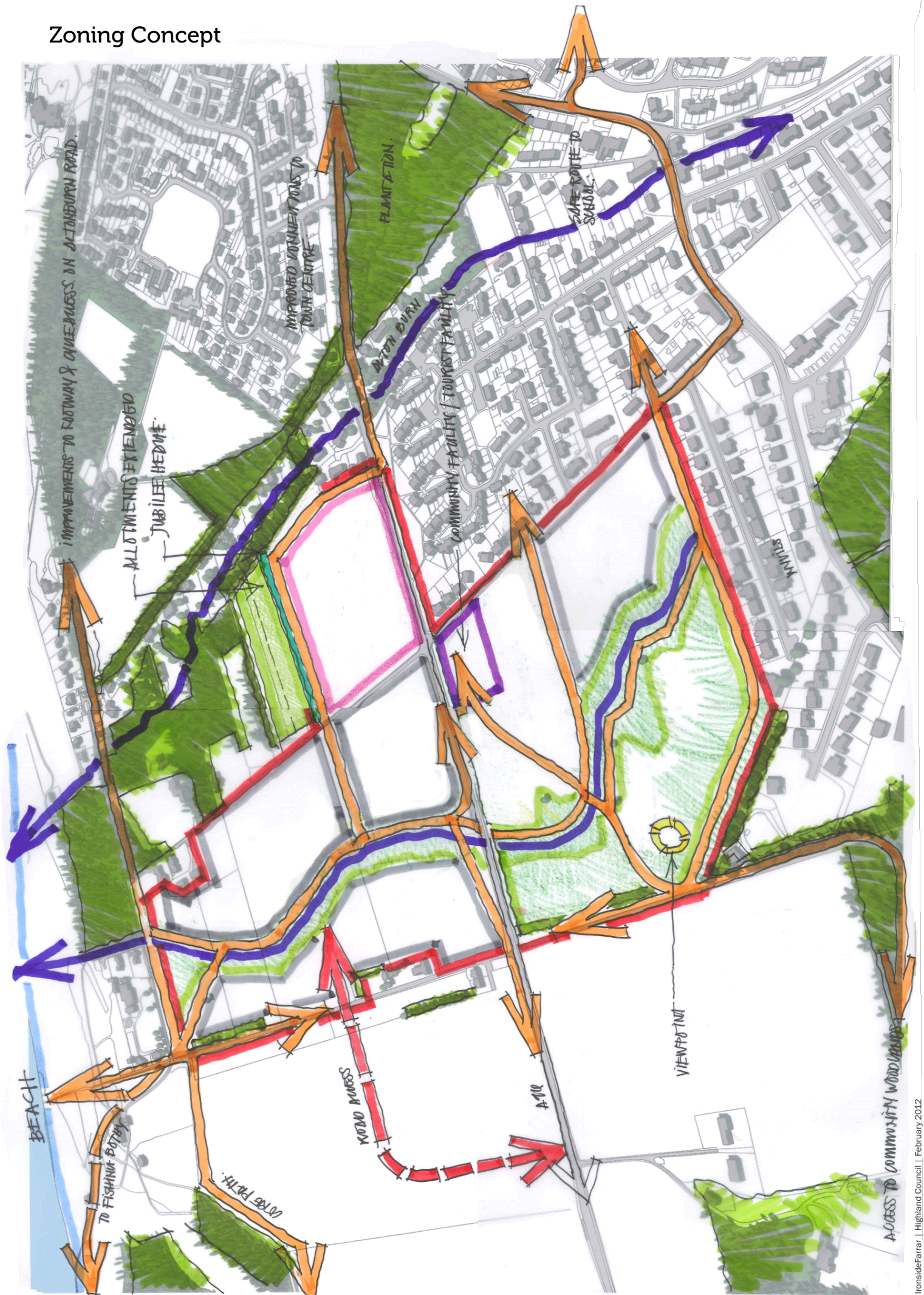
- the grey areas represent housing (and live/work unit) compartments;
- the pink and white areas are of undecided future use;
- the purple area is to accommodate a multi-purpose complex including a mixture of the following uses – a wetlands interpretative centre, café, other small retail space(s), restaurant, licensed premises, community meeting space, small business spaces, tertiary education, children's playspace;
- the green area is to comprise wetlands, public open space and expanded allotments provision.



Zoning Concept

3.2. A maximum of 350 houses should be built across the whole site. Housing clusters should be designed with security, safety and environmental quality paramount. Non-essential penetration into and through such areas by traffic should be avoided and shared surface and other techniques employed to give priority to pedestrians. 20mph speed restrictions should be a design objective within clusters. There should be a balance of housing development both north and south of A96.

Zoning Concept



- 3.3. The Council will expect the site to deliver 25% of its capacity as affordable housing provision in line with its Interim Supplementary Guidance on the issue. Full details are available via the Council's web-site at www.highland.gov.uk.
- 3.4. Buildings should have a maximum height of three storeys and these only as one off landmark buildings rather than concentrated in any particular part of the site. Generally buildings should be one or one and a half storey. However, the lowest part of the site, adjacent to Altonburn Road, may have potential for taller structures to take advantage of views across the Firth.
- 3.5. Densities should vary across the site but be higher closest to any community, commercial or bus stop facilities in order to offer better opportunities for active travel (walking and cycling). However, higher densities should generally be achieved by terracing of housing units not by an increase in height.
- 3.6. The Charrette achieved a consensus that a new, formal business park is not required for Nairn. Instead, the Brief supports the inclusion of flexible home/work units within the housing areas and a business meeting space provided in the multi-purpose complex.
- 3.7. A Design Code will be required as part of the masterplan submission. This should ensure an overall consistency of design across the site and compatibility with Delnies but still allow scope for innovation and variety.
- 3.8. Any "gateway" to Nairn within the site should be defined as much by a landscape feature (for example a stand of pine trees) as buildings and this gateway should be no more than a pinch point rather than a "tunnel" of development.
- 3.9. Subject to the pace of expansion at Delnies and Sandown a new primary school may be required to serve the west side of Nairn. Both areas are currently within the catchment of Rosebank Primary School which is located on the edge of the town centre. If a new primary school is required, it and its playing field should be provided on the common boundary with the Delnies development area. If the school is developed then compensatory housing provision will require to be found elsewhere across the wider site. Developer contributions towards education provision may be applicable and if so would be required in line with the Council's Interim Supplementary Guidance on the issue. Full details are available via the Council's web-site at www.highland.gov.uk.

4. Constraints

Cuingealachdan

- 4.1. The site has physical constraints in terms of gradient, flood risk and poor ground conditions. The figures below (added for published Brief) show the areas that are not suitable for built development as a result of these factors. The 1 in 200 year flood risk area associated with the Alton Burn doesn't have a direct effect on the Brief site but lies adjacent to it. The poorest ground conditions are caused by a perched high water table and the site's contours which divert surface water to a boggy area that is concentrated south of the A96. The extreme south-west corner of the site is difficult to develop in terms of its gradient (greater than 1 in 7).
- 4.2. These constraints were discussed during the Charrette process and it was agreed that these areas should form the major part of the site's greenspace.

5. Public Open Space Àrainn Fhosgailte Phoblach

- 5.1. The Council will expect the site to deliver public open space including play park provision in line with its Interim Supplementary Guidance on the issue. Full details available via the Council's web-site: www.highland.gov.uk.
- 5.2. The Brief supports the expansion of the allotments onto land immediately to the south of its existing site. A detailed proposal has been worked by a local community group and is likely to be implemented in the short term. Two way access to the site will need to be maintained post any adjoining development.
- 5.3. The constrained areas south of the A96 and the continuation of the poorer drained area north of the road should form the green spine of the site. The reasoning for this is partly because they are difficult to develop but also because they align with the best views across the site and offer attractive footpath linkages. The wetland area provides an opportunity for habitat creation.
- 5.4. If a school site is required it should be located on the common boundary of Delnies and Sandown but not compromise the footpath route that runs along that boundary. It would require a playing field integral to the school site but available to the wider community.

6. Landscape & Planting Dealbh-tìre & Cur

- 6.1. New planting should include a mix of native species designed and managed to give opportunities for recreation and wildlife. The woodland framework should enhance the landscape character of the approach to Nairn. This could be achieved by strengthening the existing north-south planting strips and adding to the existing planted areas particularly on the south west corner of the site at Tradespark.
- 6.2. Planting should be used to increase the shelterbelt function of the trees whilst retaining the best views. Planting could also be used in the creation of any gateway pinchpoint perhaps creating a stand of pine trees similar to those at Achareidh and Tradespark.

7. Access & Servicing Cothrom & Seirbheiseadh

- 7.1. The site and its development present an opportunity to retain and extend the network of access routes in this part of Nairn. Detailed provision will need to be determined through a Recreational Access Management Plan which will be prepared at masterplanning stage. Most existing routes run north south and the central green spine presents an opportunity to add another attractive linkage. Similarly, new and improved routes around the wetlands area could provide shorter circuit routes. The principal access management issue relates to the sensitive natural heritage interests along the adjoining coast. The solution is providing as many local access alternatives as possible to manage the additional pressure that comes with more local residents and potentially more tourists. Access through the golf course was also debated through the Charrette process. The recreational access management plan will need to seek to balance the needs of walkers and golfers by establishing (a) safe route(s) through and/or round the course. Similarly, safe pedestrian crossing points across the A96 will be required most sensibly at the Delnies access and at an improved Sandown Farm Lane / Sandown Road junction.

7.2. Road access to the site is constrained by the restrictions on new or intensified existing accesses on to the A96 trunk road. The adjoining development at Delnies is proposing a new roundabout west of Sandown and will provide a distributor road connection to the western boundary of Sandown on completion of the first phase (100 houses). If this roundabout and road connection happens in early course then the optimum access arrangement would be to extend this distributor loop road through the Sandown area to connect back on to the A96 at the Sandown Farm Lane / Sandown Road junction, which will require improvement (most probably as a lights controlled junction). This loop road would become the principal site access and function as a bus route allowing sufficient penetration into the site to allow all housing areas to have reasonable walking distance (400m) access to a bus stop. A combined foot/cycleway should be provided along this loop road and also on the northern side of the A96 frontage. If the Delnies development doesn't happen in the short term then the loop road connection should be made "in reverse" starting with an improved junction at Sandown Farm Lane / Sandown Road.

7.3. In terms of local access, the Charrette revealed local concern about "rat-running" of Sandown Farm Lane and Altonburn Road as a short cut into Nairn town centre. This should be addressed by a short, one way (out (south west) only) connection from Sandown Farm Lane within the development area and an emergency vehicle only access to Altonburn Road.

7.4. All foul water will require connection to the public sewer. Nairn's existing sewerage network has limited capacity both in terms of its network and the receiving sewage works at the east beach. Later phases are likely to require new sewer connection to the new sewage works north of Ardersier. The central green spine should act as the principal surface water drainage area within the site because its levels allow for gravity-based drainage and this could assist in wetland creation / retention. Adequate long term maintenance of the area as a surface water drainage device will be required.

8. Phasing

Toirt A-Steach Mean air Mhean

8.1. Phasing of the site should be integrated with the development of that of Delnies which lies to the west of the site. However, if Delnies does not proceed in the short term then an alternative phasing strategy should apply.

8.2. Land accessed direct from Sandown Road offers an early development opportunity because it does not trigger a direct trunk road capacity concern and Sandown Road has adequate capacity in terms of its alignment and width, already functions as the principal local bus route and has a sewer running along it. Accordingly, this area is suggested for first phase development. If Delnies happens in the short term then its proposed first phase of 100 houses could proceed in parallel with the Sandown Road development. Thereafter phasing would be from either end of the loop road described in the access section above.

8.3. However, if Delnies doesn't proceed in early course then the phasing of Sandown should proceed from south to north west including an earlier improvement to the Sandown Farm Lane / Sandown Road junction.

8.4. The open space allotments and wetland area proposals can proceed earlier and independently of the development areas since they do not require significant servicing improvements. Their timing will be driven by the availability of funding.



Getting Involved

If you would like more information or to get involved in the production of future plans please contact us in one of the following ways:

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