

# **Halcrow Group Limited**

A96 Corridor Masterplan : Stage 2

Interim Report - Phase 2

Assessment of Development Framework  
Options

November 2006

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1

### *Context*

In July 2006 *Interim Report – Phase 1: Options for Development and Green Frameworks* for the A96 Corridor Masterplan: Stage 2 was published<sup>1</sup>. This outlined the policy framework for the project, set out objectives and established the Smart Growth philosophy underpinning the planning approach. Stakeholder options for accommodating growth at Nairn South and East Inverness were presented. A draft Green Framework for the Corridor as a whole was also offered.

In particular, development frameworks were to be assessed through considerations related to technical aspects<sup>2</sup>, stakeholder preferences through application of Collaboration for Success, Framework Planning Group views and public/agency comment. The Green Framework was to be developed collaboratively with key stakeholders (although any broader views would be considered).

This report draws together the considerations and makes recommendations for the development of the frameworks at Nairn South and East Inverness.

## 1.2

### *Report Structure*

The report will outline the relevant considerations pertaining to Nairn South and draw some conclusions and recommendations in these regards. This approach will be adopted for Inverness East. The final section of the report will provide a summary.

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.highland.gov.uk/businessinformation/economicdevelopment/regeneration/A96+Corridor.htm>

<sup>2</sup> These were in respect of deliverability, marketability, planning, traffic and urban form.

## 2 Nairn South Considerations

### 2.1

#### *Technical*

A full report *Technical Options Appraisal – Nairn South* (October 2006) provides a comprehensive overview of technical considerations of the options presented for Nairn South. These consider marketability, delivery, urban form, traffic and planning aspects which are outlined in the following paragraphs.

#### *Marketability*

FG Burnet's consideration of the Nairn South options provided the following key aspects of commentary:

- Generally around 25%-35% of housing allocation should be low density with the remaining allocation being evenly split between medium and higher density.
- A clear balance between employment land and population needs to be established.
- The provision of comparative regional retail needs to be appropriate over the long term.

This lead to Option A as a market preference



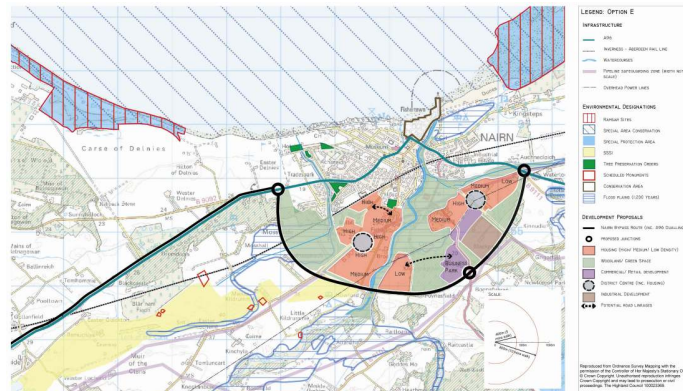
Figure 1: Nairn South Option A – Market Preference



Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Large open space provision	East-west spread to wide	Accessibility to services	Land use segregation
Environmental assets integration	Limited focus.	Commercial growth (over the long term)	Elongated by-pass
Compact development		Improve local connectivity	Achieving critical mass
Legible green structure			Focus on by-pass as corridor for development.
			Overwhelm town's character.

**Table 1: Key Aspects from Urban Form SWOT**

On balance, urban form considerations pointed to a preference toward Option E.



**Figure 3: Nairn South Option E – Urban Form Preference**

*Traffic*

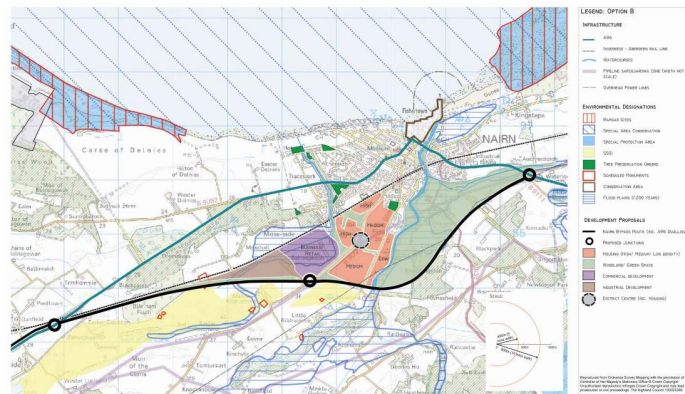
Halcrow Group inquired into the traffic implications emerging from the five options from Nairn South. Key conclusions from these considerations were:

- Higher density allocations to the south will promote cycling and walking. It will also have good linkages to existing communities/services (incl. rail).
- Low density areas are peripheral and would encourage private car use.



- Good access to the by-pass is required for southern extension to work.
- School access across the railway required.
- Dispersing uses along by-pass will promote car dominance.
- By-pass should be as short as possible.

Traffic considerations indicated that Option B was preferable as it promotes a compact southern extension, provides good multi-modal accessibility and alleviates adverse impacts on the existing road network.



**Figure 4: Nairn South Option B – Traffic Preference**

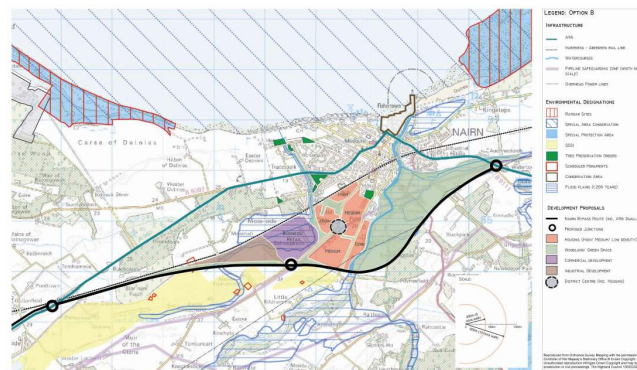
### *Planning*

Halcrow Group undertook a planning assessment of each option related to viable and vital places, environment, land use and landscape considerations. This highlighted:

- In respect of viable and vital places
  - There is need to balance accessibility to the town centre with access to a by-pass.
  - A compact southern extension would create a successful place.
  - Low density development to the west could be isolated.
  - Too much focus on by-pass for development would mitigate against addressing regeneration of Nairn town centre.

- In respect of the environment
  - Development in the floodplain was inappropriate.
  - Denser development may distract from the environmental qualities of Nairn; a balance is required.
  - The environmental assets of River Nairn (and its floodplain) afford real opportunity for uniqueness and should be integrated.
  
- In respect of land use
  - Any new southern district centre should bring benefits for existing communities by locating close to existing built areas.
  - Promotes integration of employment uses.
  - Proposals should compliment town centre; not compete..
  
- In respect of landscape
  - Opportunities to facilitate development of Nairn’s landscape setting should be grasped.
  - Eastern approaches should be enhanced.
  - Integrate landscape with development.

Planning considerations led to a conclusion that Option B offered the most appropriate solution as it focused on an extension to the south that could create a sustainable place and contribute toward the regeneration of the town centre. However, it was recognised that employment uses promoted in this option within the floodplain would need reallocation.



**Figure 5: Nairn South Option B – Planning Preference**

Technical considerations have established that some common themes for the growth of Nairn. These suggest a balanced mix of housing densities, clear integration with existing communities (to assist the regeneration of the town centre), a balance between population and employment growth and the selection of a by-pass route that integrates expansion into the existing town.

This establishes some key features for growth that are technically attractive including:

- A by-pass route from Drumdivan in the east crossing at Howford and rejoining the A96 at Auchnacloch
- A compact southern extension to the east of the River Nairn with a district centre toward its northern end. Access to the by-pass would be required. Business allocation should be incorporated.
- A compact place to the west incorporating modest regional retail in the long term. Business allocation should be incorporated. This should be within the by-pass alignment.
- Industrial uses focused in the east.
- Integrated green space and environmental assets to the west of the River Nairn (incl. the river) and builds on the golf course allocation and landscape quality to the west. This should respond to and develop the town's existing landscape setting.

## 2.2

### ***Collaboration for Success***

Stakeholder considerations through Collaboration for Success (CfS) allowed over 40 stakeholders in seven workshops to identify a consensual approach to accommodate growth at Nairn<sup>3</sup>. Key observations that emerged including:

- Low density development to the west was inappropriate; although higher density could be considered.

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<sup>3</sup> A full report is available – *Nairn South CfS2 Assessment* (September 2006)

- A by-pass commencing at Drumdivan was most appropriate as it avoided an elongated route that bore little relationship to Nairn.
- Significant environmental assets were recognised to the east of the River Nairn and the western golf course proposal.
- Floodplain development was inappropriate.
- Retail development should be focused to the west (in the long term)
- Development should support the vitality and viability of the town centre.

These considerations generally resulted in similar recommended features for the growth of Nairn as outlined above.

### 2.3

#### ***Framework Planning Group***

Through the Nairn South Framework Planning Group a range of submissions were made in respect of Nairn's character, the development opportunity presented, wider benefits that could accrue to Nairn generally and the town centre specifically, by-pass routing, placemaking characteristics, environmental integration and employment<sup>4</sup>. Key conclusions that emerged from these submissions were that the growth of Nairn should respond to:

- The coastal tradition of Nairn and the asset that is the Moray Firth.
- The town's river based market town tradition serving a rural hinterland – a landward tradition.
- The need to bring wider benefit to Nairn; particularly supporting the viability of the town centre.
- The by-pass route should seek to support growth across the town whilst ensuring integration with it.
- Development in the floodplain should be avoided.

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<sup>4</sup> A full report is available - *Submission Assessment – Nairn South* (September 2006)

- Employment provision should meet population growth.

These conclusions have led to a set of recommendations for the growth of Nairn that respond to technical and CfS conclusions outlined above.

## 2.4

### ***Public/Agency Comment***

The Highland Council undertook general consultation with a range of interests during September/October 2006. These interests were community councils, partner agencies (and other groups) and the general public. Outcomes from these consultations are discussed below. A report of consultation is available.

Nairn Suburban Community Council's comments supported a by-pass option south of the railway commencing at Gollanfield. Support was expressed for compact places to accommodate growth. Proposals must integrate employment uses and support primary industries. Well planned and resourced green space was supported.

Agency and other group comment had little to say about Nairn other than Network Rail who recognised that demand for increased service frequency would result from growth of Nairn. This would necessitate signalling upgrade and passing loop provision. The station would require upgrading.

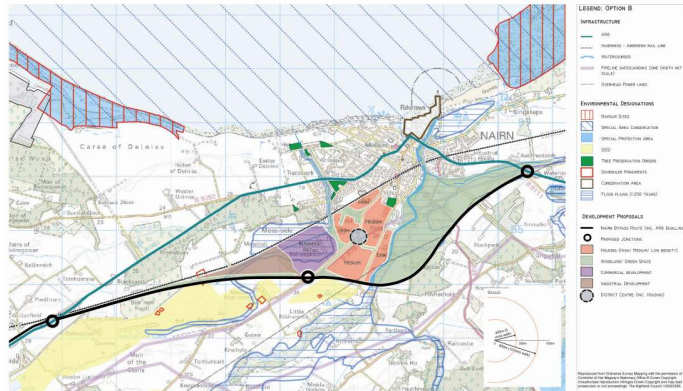
General public comments were extensive with regards to opportunities at Nairn. There was clear support for a by-pass. Although differing views emerged on the appropriate alignment. Other views emphasised:

- Floodplain avoidance
- Accessibility from the south to the town centre.
- Town centre regeneration as a priority.
- Equitable distribution of development opportunities.
- Concern over low density extension to the west.

In seeking public views the options were disaggregated into key components relating to best layout, housing provision, district centre solution, business location, open space provision and relief road options. In expressing preferences

for these Option B consistently emerged as the community’s preference. This suggests that the following characteristics would be supported by the community:

- A by-pass route to the south of the rail line commencing at Gollanfield, crossing the river at Howford and rejoining the A96 at Auchnacloch.
- Growth focused at an extension to the south of Nairn with a district centre in the middle to serve the day-to-day needs of the new community.
- Business and employment land use located and integrated with the extension to the south.
- Open space provision that takes advantage of and integrates the opportunities afforded by the River Nairn and its floodplain.



**Figure 6: Nairn South Option B – Community Preference**

### 3 Nairn South Conclusions and Recommendations

#### 3.1

#### *Conclusions*

Clearly, there is general consensus emerging from technical, CfS and the Nairn South Framework Planning Group with regard to the appropriate approach to the growth of Nairn. General community preferences suggest a different approach. The following table compares these outcomes.

Technical, CfS and Nairn South FPG Outcomes	Community Outcomes
A by-pass route from <b>Drumdivan</b> in the east crossing at Howford and rejoining the A96 at Auchnacloch	A by-pass route to the south of the rail line commencing at <b>Gollanfield</b> , crossing the river at Howford and rejoining the A96 at Auchnacloch.
A compact southern extension to the east of the River Nairn with a <b>district centre toward its northern end</b> . Access to the by-pass would be required. Business allocation should be incorporated.	A compact southern extension to the east of the River Nairn with a <b>district centre toward its centre</b> . Access to the by-pass would be required. Business allocation should be incorporated.
A <b>compact place to the west</b> incorporating modest regional retail in the long term. Business allocation should be incorporated. This should be within the by-pass alignment.	<b>Limited preference for western growth.</b>
Industrial uses focused in the <b>east</b> .	Business and employment land use located and integrated with the extension to the <b>south</b> .
Integrated green space and environmental assets to the west of the River Nairn (incl. the river) and <b>builds on the golf course allocation and landscape quality to the west</b> . This should respond to and develop the town's existing landscape setting.	Open space provision that takes advantage of and integrates the opportunities afforded by the River Nairn and its floodplain. <b>Western landscape to be retained to act as buffer to encroachment from the west.</b>

**Table 2: Comparison of Option Assessment Outcomes for Nairn**

Issues arising from the above are discussed in the following paragraphs.

The commencement of the by-pass travelling from the west at Gollanfield or Drumdivan is critical. Arguments supporting Gollanfield relate to ease of implementation and cost savings as two crossings of the railway will be avoided. Further, supporters have argued that this will help facilitate access to Whiteness. However, supporters of the Drumdivan option would argue that:

1. The Gollanfield option creates an elongated by-pass that encourages traffic away from Nairn.
2. If Nairn West progresses (see below), this will require an access to the by-pass over the rail line in order to facilitate efficient traffic (including bus) movement. Consequently, the saving on bridging is reduced.
3. The Drumdivan option provides the opportunity to effectively link Nairn South, Nairn West (subject to discussion below) and Nairn centre to bring an integrated movement solution for the town as a whole that makes buses attractive.
4. The potential detrunking of the *old* A96 would create development pressure further west toward Tornagrain in the long term.

The location of the district centre for Nairn South is another issue to be considered. The provision of a centre in the middle of Nairn South would provide an accessible range of services designed to meet local needs. However, a centre to the north of Nairn South could also serve this function as it would still be within a 10 minute walk for the majority of residents. It would also provide an accessible additional range of local services for existing communities. It has been suggested that a northern location would assist regeneration initiatives for the town centre as it would attract people from within Nairn South toward the centre.

The accommodation of growth west of Sandown as a low density proposal is not generally supported. However, a higher density solution may be supportable provided the following criteria can be met:

- Growth of Nairn is in the order of 8-9,000 people that will necessitate two new places. Nairn West flows from this as a longer term proposal.



- It can respond to and take advantage of the golf course proposal for Nairn.
- Nairn West can be integrated into the town through appropriate by-pass routing and public transport provision (see above).
- Appropriate structural landscaping that responds to context and sets western boundary for town.

The desire by the community for integration of employment land and other solutions to focus industrial employment allocations to the east is compatible. Service sector employment will be focused into the new place(s). However, industrial employment requires good access to the trunk road network. An allocation at east Nairn meets this requirement. It also offers the opportunity to introduce an appropriate landscape entrance to Nairn.

The landscape to the west can be retained and reinforced to act as a buffer to further western expansion through opportunities afforded by the allocation of Nairn West and the Drumdivan by-pass option. It can be argued that selection of the Gollanfield by-pass option and no allocations to Nairn West will result in incremental western expansion that fails to coherently respond to the opportunities presented through a planned approach (see above).

### **3.2**

#### ***Recommendations***

A clear view has emerged for accommodating growth at Nairn in the context of the A96 Corridor as a whole. Key characteristics are:

- Two new places at Nairn South and West with district centres.
- A by-pass commencing at Drumdivan, crossing at Howford and rejoining the A96 at Auchnacloch.
- Integrated environmental assets focused on the River Nairn (and its floodplain) and the golf course/landscape to the west.
- Appropriate structural landscaping.
- Accessible business/industrial allocations to the east.
- Support regeneration of Nairn town centre.

Figure 7 provides a Framework in response to these recommendations.














It is recommended that, in due course, further consultation is undertaken to establish community support for proposals.

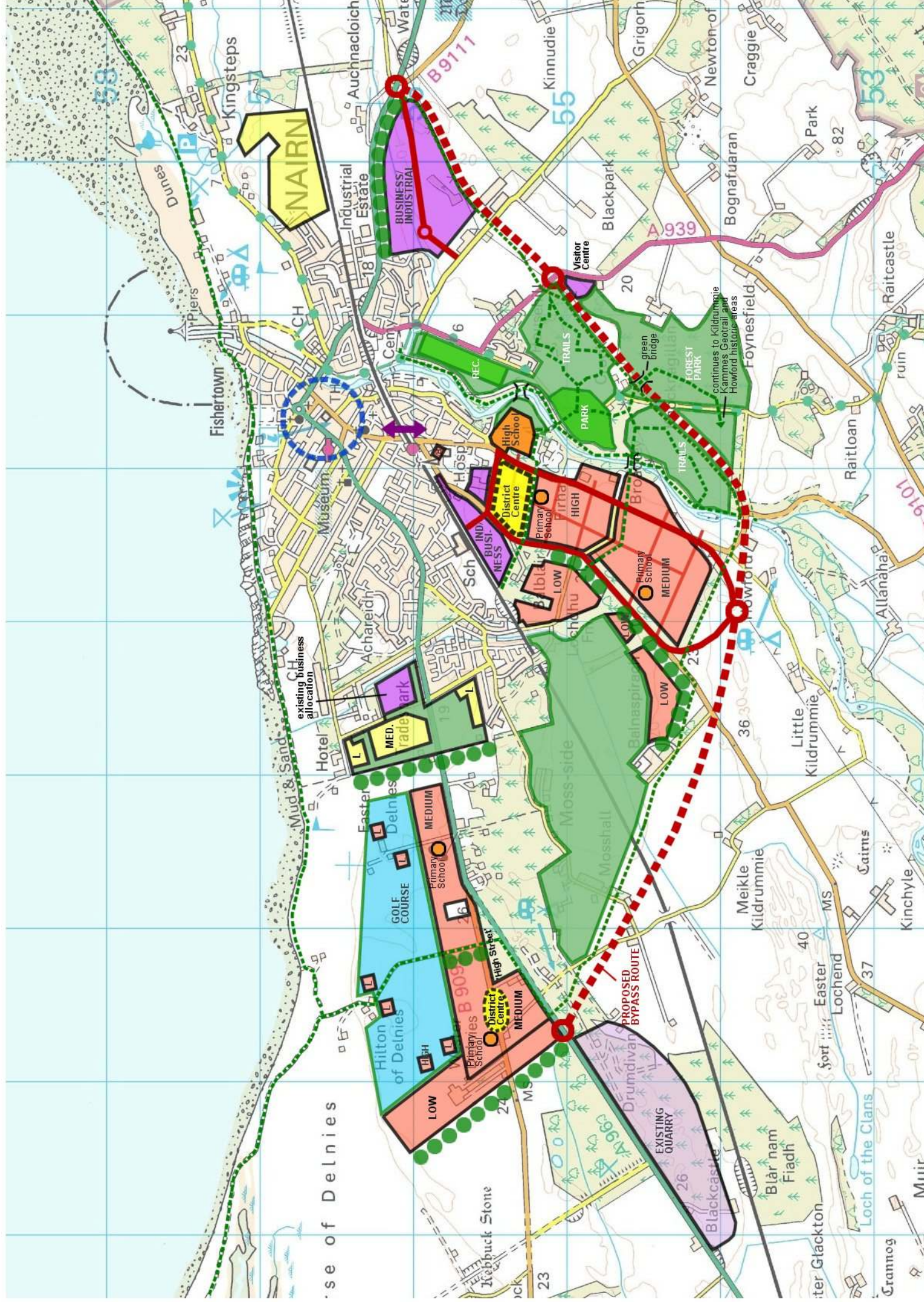
**NAIRN FRAMEWORK PLAN**

**Figure 7**

**8 November 2006**



-  HOUSING
-  HOUSING ALLOCATION
-  COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT
-  EXISTING QUARRY
-  DISTRICT CENTRE (INCL. HOUSING)
-  GOLF COURSE
-  GREEN SPACE
-  PREFERRED BYPASS ROUTE
-  PEDESTRIAN/ CYCLE ROUTES
-  STRUCTURE LANDSCAPE
-  ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN ACCESSIBILITY
-  TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION
-  SCHOOL



**Notes:**

1. A residential expansion is indicated approximately double the existing residential population.
2. The Timber Merchant at Balblair Road is proposed to be retained, with the opportunity for associated uses to be developed to the immediate south.

## 4 East Inverness Considerations

### 4.1

#### *Technical*

A full report *Technical Options Appraisal – East Inverness* (October 2006) provides a comprehensive overview of technical considerations of the options presented for East Inverness. These consider marketability, delivery, urban form, traffic and planning aspects which are outlined in the following paragraphs.

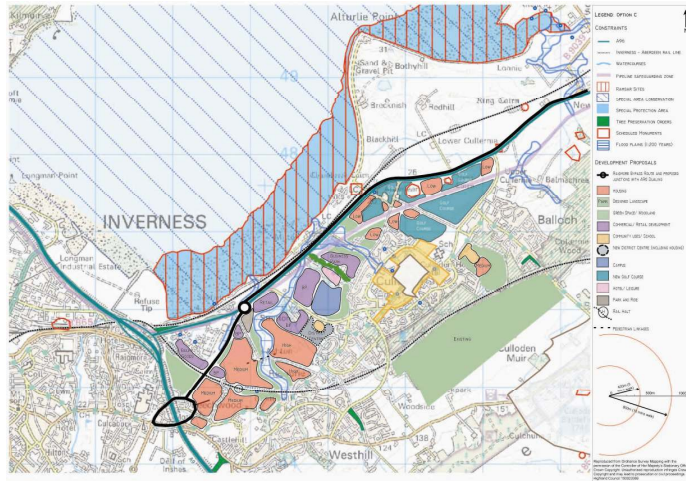
#### *Marketability*

FG Burnet's consideration of the East Inverness options provided the following key aspects of commentary:

- Although a higher density solution can be promoted, there needs to be appropriate balancing of medium and low density housing provision.
- A clear balance between employment land and population needs to be established.
- The provision of comparative regional retail needs to be appropriate.
- Hotel/leisure provision should be increased.
- Golf course proposals are unproven.
- Educational provision should be significant.

This lead to Option A as a market preference





**Figure 9: East Inverness Option C – Delivery Preference**

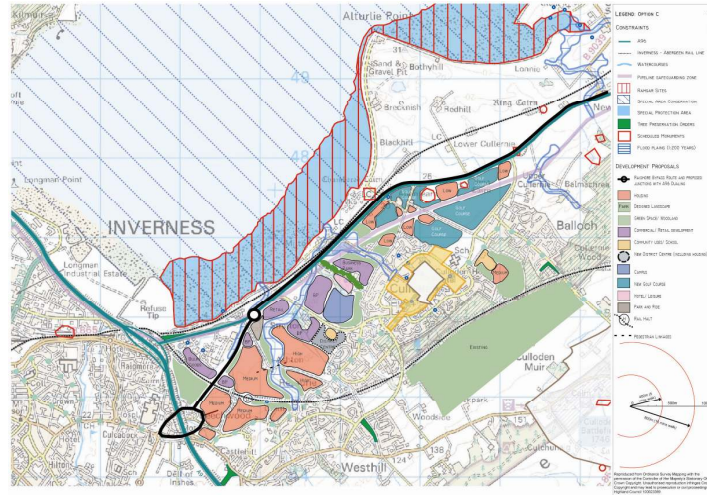
*Urban Form*

Whatmore undertook a SWOT analysis of each option from an urban form perspective. This established some key aspects emerging from the options as follows:

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Legible higher density development opportunity.	Transport infrastructure (existing and proposed) is divisive.	Views across Moray Firth	Clustering of density typologies.
Integrated landscape structure.	Potential unbalanced density range	Well serviced development	Over elongation
Good housing range		Pedestrian permeability	Limited public transport penetration
		High quality environments	
		Effective use of floodplain.	

**Table 1: Key Aspects from Urban Form SWOT**

On balance, urban form considerations pointed to a preference toward Option C.



**Figure10: East Inverness Option C – Urban Form Preference**

### *Traffic*

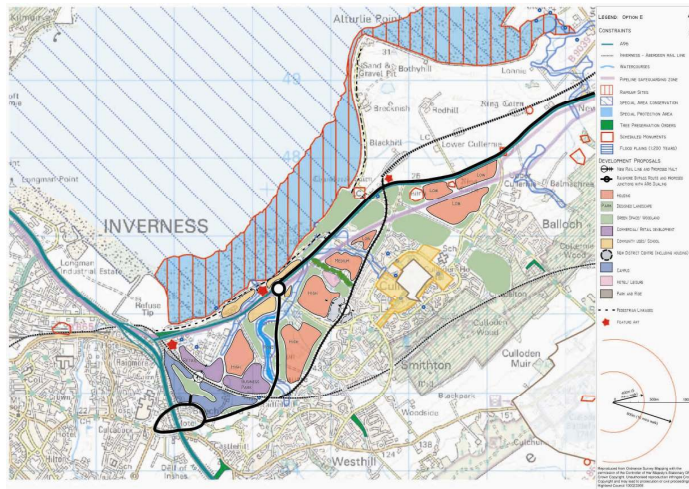
Halcrow Group inquired into the traffic implications emerging from the five options from Nairn South. Key conclusions from these considerations were:

- Land use segregation will limit transport choice.
- By-pass route provides good accessibility across East Inverness.
- There is an opportunity to create attractive movement choices.
- Development to the far east is generally inaccessible other than by private car.

Traffic considerations indicated that Option E was preferable as it promoted excellent transport/accessibility choice and good access to the by-pass and the A96<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> This Option includes significant rail proposals.



**Figure 11: East Inverness Option E – Traffic Preference**

### *Planning*

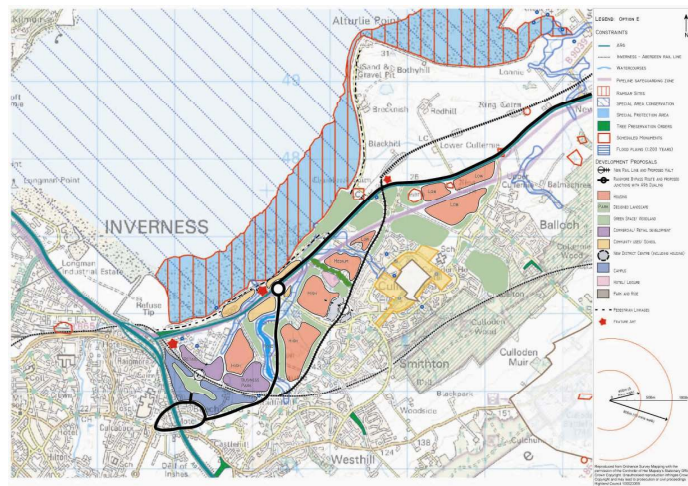
Halcrow Group undertook a planning assessment of each option related to viable and vital places, environment, land use and landscape considerations. This highlighted:

- In respect of viable and vital places
  - That the focus should be a district centre.
  - Lower density development to the far east may become exclusive or *closed*.
  - Segregated land uses should be avoided.
- In respect of the environment
  - There is an opportunity to afford environmental integration.
- In respect of land use
  - Integration of land uses to achieve a mixed use outcome should be promoted.
  - Clustering benefits for campus location should be pursued.
  - Ensure appropriate retail provision.



- In respect of landscape
  - Opportunities to facilitate development of a quality landscape setting should be grasped.
  - Integrate landscape with development.

Planning considerations led to a conclusion that Option E offered the most appropriate solution as it promoted clustered development at Beechwood, an integrated core area with a district centre and affords environmental integration



**Figure12: East Inverness Option E – Planning Preference**

Technical considerations have established that some common themes for the growth at East Inverness. These suggest a balanced mix of housing densities within a compact place, clear integration with existing communities, a balance between population and employment growth, the selection of a by-pass route that facilitates the area’s accessibility and clusters education, research and related business.

This establishes some key features for growth that are technically attractive including:

- A by-pass route that should commence at the Smithton Roundabout crossing the railway before joining an enhanced Inshes junction. This should include one access to the north of the railway to facilitate access to East Inverness.

- Campus, research and related business uses should be focused at Beechwood with access from the Inshes junction. Good green crossings of the A9 (westward) and railway (eastward) should be promoted.
- A compact place with a range of densities should be created around the floodplain and Smithton Road with its district centre toward to southern end in order to facilitate integration. Convenience shopping would be appropriate to serve existing and new communities. This should maximise environmental assets incorporating a park. This community should be accessible from the by-pass.
- Business allocations should be incorporated within the above place.
- Regional retail (e.g. bulky goods) should be focused adjacent to the Retail Park.
- A business park to the south-east of the retail park (north-west of the new by-pass road).
- A rail halt to serve Beechwood and the new allocations to the north-east of the railway.
- A park and ride facility with supporting public transport facility (rail or bus).

#### 4.2

##### ***Collaboration for Success***

Stakeholder considerations through Collaboration for Success (CfS) allowed 30 stakeholders in five workshops to identify a consensual approach to accommodate growth at East Inverness<sup>6</sup>. Key observations that emerged including:

- Low density development to the east was unattractive.
- A district centre and associated retailing should be located so as to bring benefits to established communities.
- Promoting the Beechwood area for a university campus.

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<sup>6</sup> A full report is available – *East Inverness CfS2 Assessment* (September 2006)

- A by-pass route should be close to the retail park so as to minimise the adverse impacts of intersecting East Inverness.
- A park proposal should be developed to bring benefits to new and existing communities.
- Bulky goods provision should be associated with the retail park.

These considerations generally resulted in similar recommended features for growth at East Inverness as outlined above; including:

- A by-pass that relates to the Inverness Retail Park
- A new sustainable extension to the north of Culloden that could accommodate around 8,000 people. This would incorporate higher density development, other appropriate densities, and appropriate retail/business allocations. This would be focused around a central core (district centre) to serve existing and proposed communities (including a supermarket). Schooling would be allocated here.
- A significant park that could serve existing and new communities linked into the floodplain to form a *green wedge* of quality parkland that would provide an integrated environmental asset.
- A university campus located at Beechwood that is accessible from across Inverness and the new communities to its east.
- Appropriate business and employment land integrated with the new communities that can provide substantial employment in the context of requirements for the A96 Corridor as a whole.
- Sub-regional retailing (e.g. bulky goods) should be focused around the existing Inverness Retail Park.

### 4.3

#### ***Framework Planning Group***

Through the East Inverness Framework Planning Group a range of submissions were made in respect of campus location, by-pass alignment, retail provision, rail, open space and placemaking outcomes<sup>7</sup>. Key conclusions that emerged from these submissions were that the growth at East Inverness should respond to:

- The opportunity afforded through research and academic growth/potential.
- The need to bring wider benefit to the established communities; particularly in providing convenience retailing and parkland.
- The by-pass route should balance accessibility, environmental integration and urban form.

These conclusions have led to a set of recommendations for the growth East Inverness that is compatible with technical and CfS conclusions outlined above; specifically:

- The Beechwood area is allocated for high amenity business and campus.
- The by-pass road connects the Smithton roundabout with an enhanced Inshes junction. This should incorporate an access junction for the site. This should skirt the floodplain.
- A park and ride facility at the Smithton roundabout.
- A district centre/convenience retail at the north of new communities adjacent to existing communities.
- Appropriate provision of open space that ensures environmental integration and quality parkland.
- Growth should be generally focused to the west of Stratton Lodge in order to facilitate a sustainable urban extension.

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<sup>7</sup> A full report is available - *Submission Assessment – East Inverness* (September 2006)

#### 4.4

##### *Public/Agency Comment*

The Highland Council undertook general consultation with a range of interests during September/October 2006. These interests were community councils, partner agencies (and other groups) and the general public. Outcomes from these consultations are discussed below. A report of consultation is available.

Concerns about the proposals were expressed by Balloch Community Council and Balloch Village Trust. Their views sought to ensure that proposals for Inverness East retained Balloch's unique identity and rural setting. It was felt that the options promoted ribbon development to the far east and that this was inappropriate. Concern was expressed by Inverness South Community Council with regard to the impacts on the southern distributor road from proposed new network arrangements.

Agency and other group comment had little to say specifically regarding East Inverness other than:

- Network Rail who raised concern as to the viability of a Beechwood rail halt. They were generally supportive of proposals to realign the railway provided this was funded from sources other than Network rail.
- GreenInverness who sought to ensure the green wedge requirements were adequately addressed.
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise/Inverness College who presented a coherent argument for a university campus at Beechwood.
- RSPB Scotland who object to the development in East Inverness.

General public comments emphasised:

- Support for an integrated traffic and movement solution.
- Co-ordinated approach for infrastructural support in parallel with development growth.

- Retention of Balloch as a free standing settlement within a rural context<sup>8</sup>.

In seeking public views the options were disaggregated into key components relating to best layout, housing provision, district centre solution, business location, open space provision and relief road options. Responses were limited at 17. Further, no clear range of preferences emerged.

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<sup>8</sup> Although the land owner in this general area has expressed support for development.

# 5 East Inverness Conclusions and Recommendations

## 5.1

### *Conclusions*

Clearly, there is general consensus emerging from technical, CfS and the East Inverness Framework Planning Group with regard to the appropriate approach to the growth at East Inverness. General community preferences are inconclusive other than that there is a clear view that growth in the Balloch area would be inappropriate. Given this, it is appropriate to prepare a growth option that can be developed through consultation in due course.

## 5.2

### *Recommendations*

Key characteristics for accommodating growth at East Inverness in the context of the A96 Corridor as a whole are:

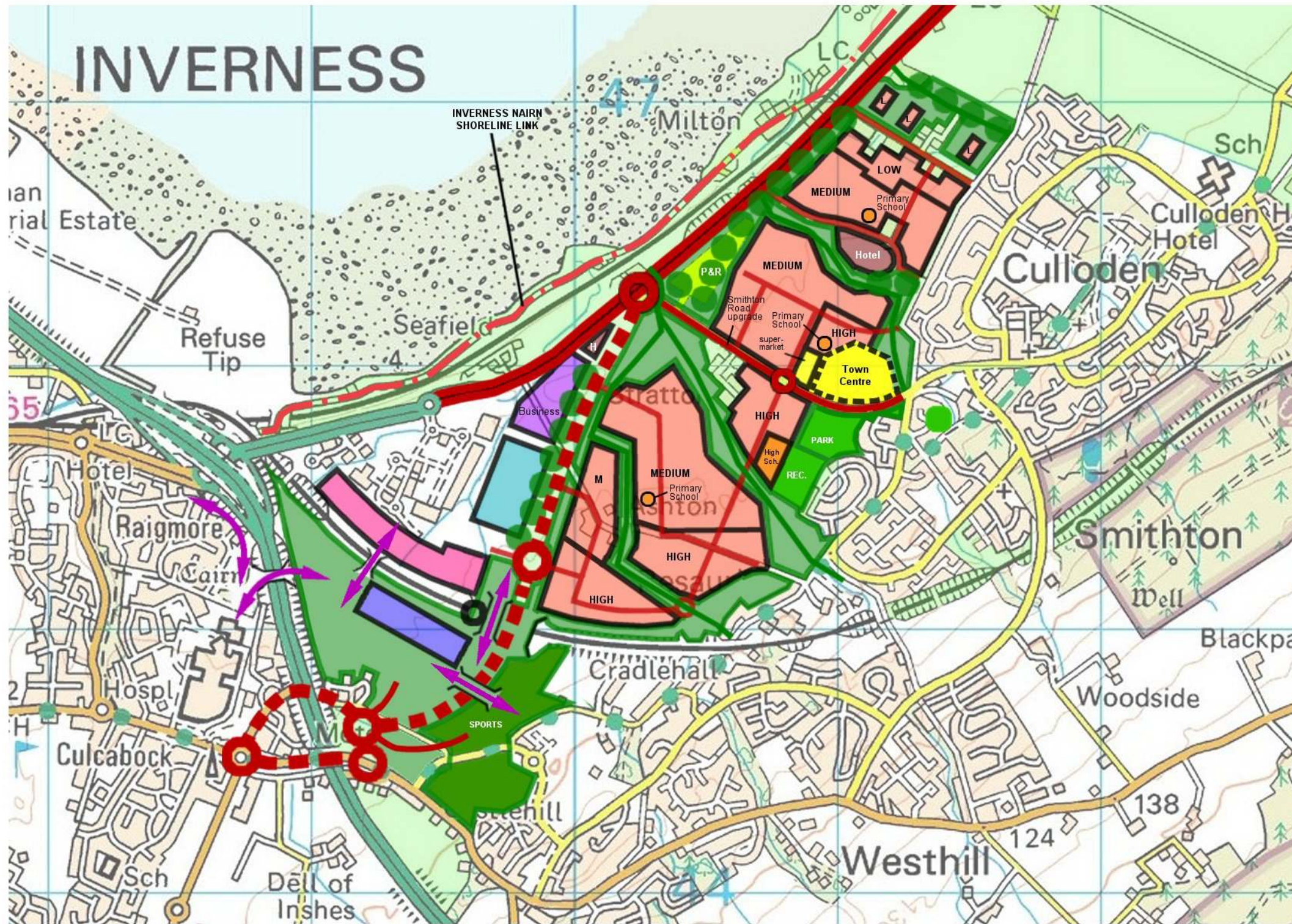
- A by-pass route that should commence at the Smithton Roundabout crossing the railway before joining an enhanced Inshes junction. This should include one access to the north of the railway to facilitate access to East Inverness.
- At the western apex created by the above, a hotel should be promoted to present an iconic entrance to Inverness.
- Campus, research and related business uses should be focused at Beechwood with access from the Inshes junction. Good green crossings of the A9 (westward), the *new* A96 (southward) and railway (eastward) should be promoted.
- In support of the above an innovations park should be created to the south-west of the retail park.
- A compact place with a range of densities at the heart of East Inverness around the Smithton Road. Convenience shopping would be appropriate to serve existing and new communities. This should maximise environmental assets incorporating a park. This community should be accessible from the by-pass.

- In the context of the above a medium to low density community should be created to the east of Stratton Lodge which would have good access to the district centre.
- Business allocations should be incorporated within the above place.
- An integrated and linked green space framework should support development which would include:
  - regional sporting facilities at Beechwood (south-east).
  - A formal park to serve existing communities at Culloden/Smithton.
  - Formal and informal provision running through East Inverness providing attractive amenity and linkages into the countryside and Firth coast.
  - Definition and amenity for new and existing communities.
- Regional retail (e.g. bulky goods) should be focused adjacent to the Retail Park.
- A business park to the south-east of the retail park (north-west of the new by-pass road).
- A public transport interchange to serve Beechwood and the new allocations to the north-east of the railway.
- A park and ride facility with supporting public transport facility (rail or bus).

Figure 13 provides a Framework in response to these recommendations.

It is strongly recommended that, in due course, further consultation is undertaken to establish community support for proposal





**Notes:**

1. Food retail opportunity indicated adjacent to mixed use Town Centre which has access to green routes, housing and open space.
2. Raigmore bypass passes east of existing road crossing on shared 'green' bridge which provides a landscaped link over the railway.
3. An integrated green complex of formal and informal spaces is to provide a range of interests, which will have specific functions and make positive contributions to the overall community.
4. Campus is set in open space landscape with access to recreation to the immediate east and a pedestrian link over the A9 to central Inverness and on towards Life Scan.

## 6 Summary

### 6.1

#### *Nairn South*

Extensive collaboration with a range of stakeholders has allowed a general consensus to emerge to accommodate growth at Nairn in the context of the A96 Corridor as a whole. However, community views differed from *organisational* stakeholders with particular regard to by-pass alignment and development to the west of Nairn. Nevertheless, a clear recommended approach has emerged. This should be developed to allow further community consultation to be undertaken in due course.

Key elements of the proposals are:

- Two new places at Nairn South and West with district centres.
- A by-pass commencing at Drumdivan, crossing at Howford and rejoining the A96 at Auchnacloch.
- Integrated environmental assets focused on the River Nairn (and its floodplain) and the golf course/landscape to the west.
- Accessible business/industrial allocations to the east.

### 6.2

#### *East Inverness*

Similarly at East Inverness a general consensus has emerged across the *organisational* stakeholders. However, no clear community view emerged. This will, it is recommended, require further community consultation in order to ensure that the Culloden, Smithton, Westhill and Balloch are supportive of proposals.

Key components of the emerged proposal are:

- A by-pass route that should commence at the Smithton Roundabout crossing the railway before joining an enhanced Inshes junction.
- Campus, research and related business uses should be focused at Beechwood.

- In support of the above an innovations park should be created to the south-west of the retail park.
- A compact place with a range of densities should be created around the floodplain with its district centre toward to southern end in order to facilitate integration. Convenience shopping would be appropriate to serve existing and new communities.
- A medium to low density community to the east of Stratton Lodge.
- An integrated and linked green space framework