

# Longman Core Development Brief

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The Council approved the Development Brief on 19th June 2006.  
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## BACKGROUND

### Purpose

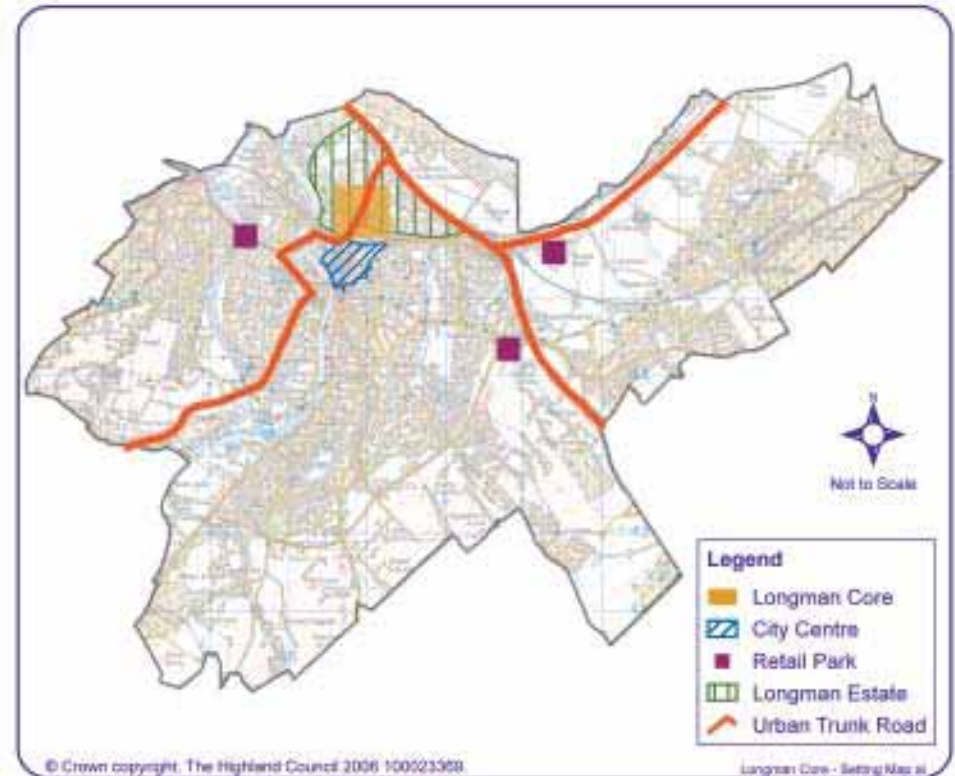
1. This Brief provides supplementary policy guidance to the Inverness Local Plan (2006). It seeks to co-ordinate redevelopment of land and property at the “core” of the Longman estate, set the context for development in a key urban transport corridor and examines the contribution that this location can make to meeting anticipated bulky-goods/warehouse retail floor-space needs in the City, to 2011. The Longman “core” is identified as suitable for bulky-goods/warehouse retailing, business/industry and related services.

### Location

2. Longman is Inverness’s prime industrial and business trading estate. It comprises some 120 ha. of land and property located between the City Centre and the A9. The agreed long-term vision for Inverness, with further major regeneration east of Academy Street, places the “core” of Longman at the edge of the City’s expanding commercial hub.

3. Comprising the quadrants immediately adjoining the A82 trunk road/Harbour Road and extending to more than 15 ha., Longman “core” is dominated by large scale mixed uses. These include Inverness College, the Police Area Command HQ, Fire Station, public transport depots, office/distribution facilities and bulky-goods/warehouse retailing. Several properties are vacant or expected to become available as existing uses relocate, presenting a major opportunity to restructure and enhance a prominent urban area.

## LOCATION



## Policy

4. The Inverness Local Plan (see Fig. 1: Local Plan Proposals Map: Extract) refers to Longman in the following terms:

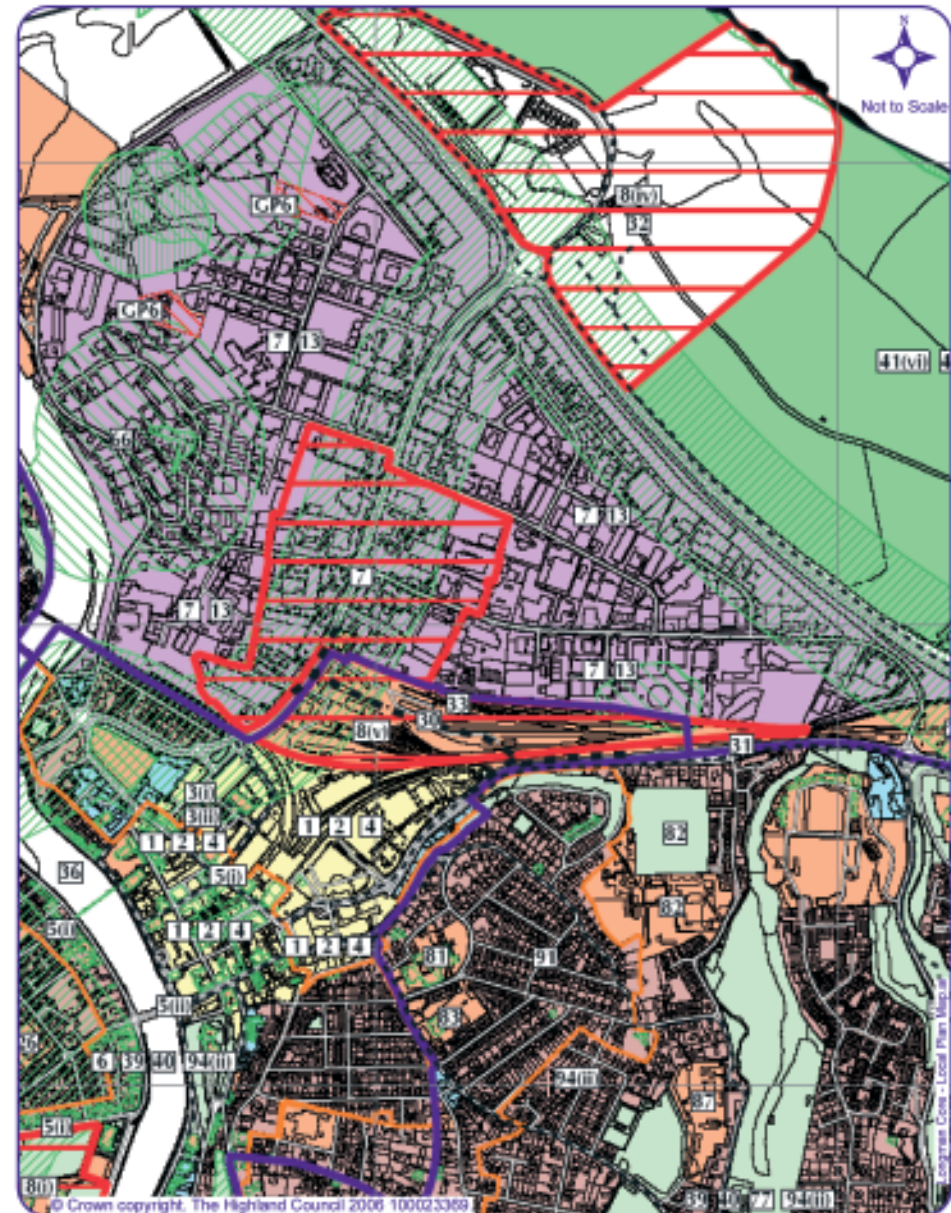
Policy 7 (Retailing Outwith the City Centre): *“that provision should be made for further growth in bulky goods/warehouse retail floor-space...The Council has identified additional sites for this purpose ...(including) within a defined area of the Longman/A82 “core”. Any planning permission will be restricted to bulky goods only”;*

Policy 13 (Longman): *“the Council will promote development/redevelopment of land and buildings for business/industrial purposes...and will seek to restructure the estate consistent with the following principles: .....*

- *redevelopment of land adjoining the A82/Harbour Road axes for office/educational/service activities consistent with the adjoining college campus and Rail Yard; and within the A82/core area defined on the Proposals Map, retail use, restricted to bulky-goods. Consideration will be given to land assembly to co-ordinate development;...*
- *revised traffic management and safety features, including for public transport, a rail halt, cyclists and pedestrians; and urban design and enhancement initiatives.”*

5. The *Development Principles* below indicate the measures the Council expects developers to embrace in implementing policy.

Fig 1 : LOCAL PLAN PROPOSALS MAP : EXTRACT





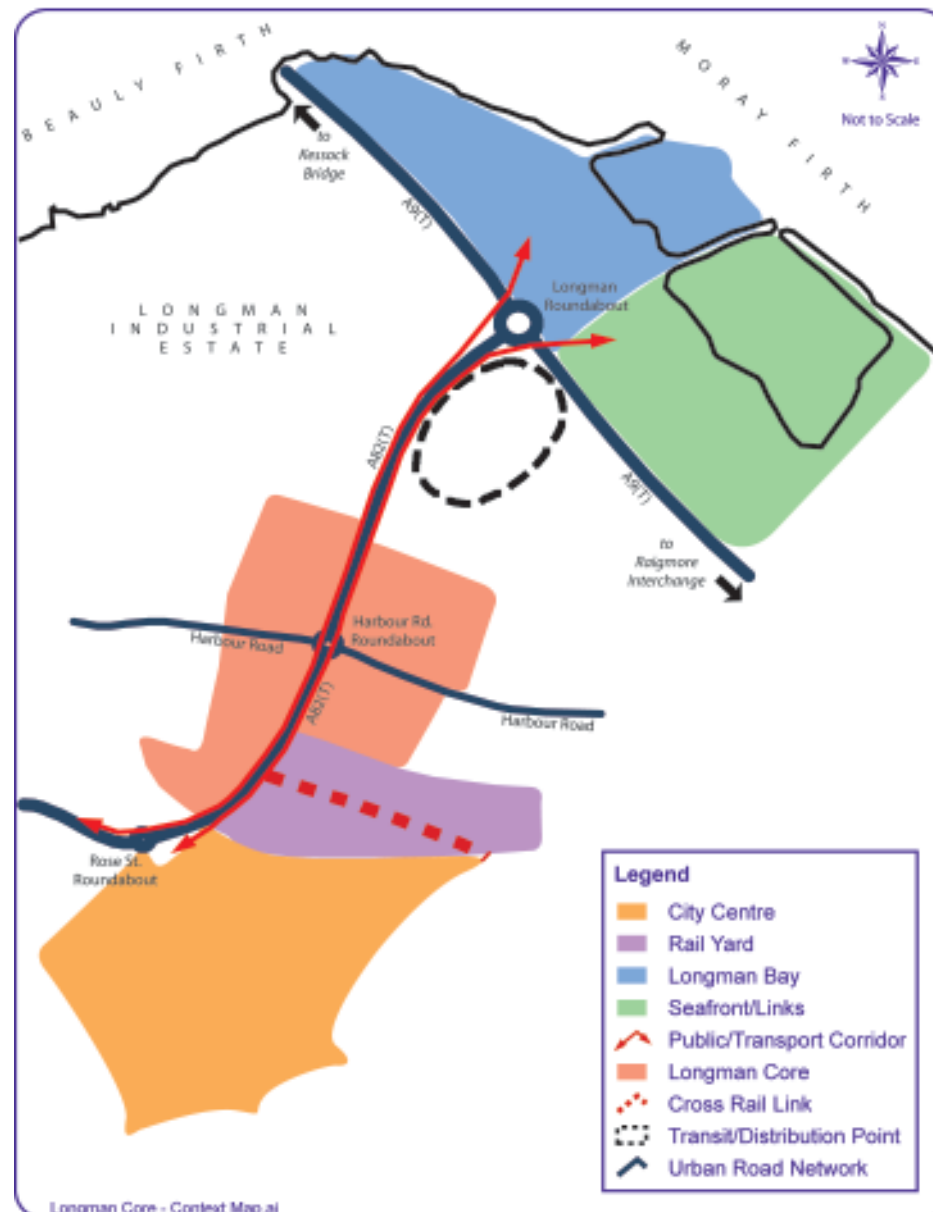
## Setting

6. Longman “core” occupies a pivotal position on the main A82-City Centre approach from the A9 (see Fig 2: Context). As a major part of the City regeneration strategy, this corridor links three key future redevelopment areas, namely;

- Longman Bay – a high density “urban village”/visitor “gate way” of mixed residential, hotel and office development, tourist attractions including marina, together with major recreational links, the Caledonian Stadium and park n’ ride terminus;
- the Rail Yard – dependent on rail-freight uses freeing-up land for residential, office, leisure and retail development astride a new inner City relief road connecting the A82 and Millburn Road; and
- the City Centre – where ongoing pedestrian and traffic enhancements dovetail with potential for a further phase of strategic shopping, business, leisure and residential (redevelopment) incorporating a new bus-rail transport inter-change.

Whilst completion of the *A9/A82 Trunk Road Link* on the outer edge of the City may alter traffic flows, the A82 through Longman will continue to function as an arterial route. With these major sites likely to progress over the next 10-15 years, it is essential that redevelopment at Longman “core” integrates the transport, design and environmental principles which connect these locations and enables them to interact and function effectively as part of a sustainable City.

Fig 2 : CONTEXT



7. Bulky-goods/warehouse retailing is promoted at locations accessible to the resident population of the City and the outlying catchment at a scale capable of meeting projected needs, and which protects the City Centre and the established pattern of retailing. These locations include the Longman “core” and the Rail Yard together with the established Retail Parks at West Seafield (Inverness Retail and Business Park), Inshes and Telford-Carse.

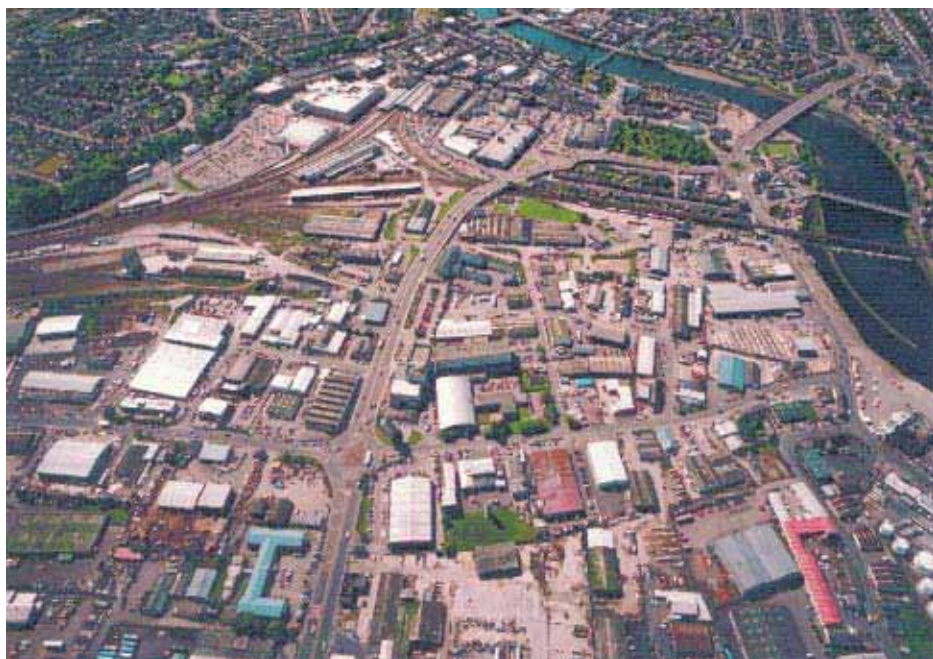


Photo: Longman Core in the foreground looking towards the City Centre

## POSITION STATEMENT

### Bulky-goods/Warehouse Retailing

8. Against a requirement across Inverness for approximately 19,000 sq m (net) additional floor-space by 2011, opportunities within the Retail Parks are likely to arise from restructuring; and there is no clear prospect that the Rail Yard will present any retail opportunity before 2011. It is conceivable also – with no restriction on (Class 1) shopping – that further City Centre/High Street formats may seek to establish within the Retail Parks, forcing bulky-goods enterprises to relocate over time.

9. Accordingly – and further to the outcome of the Public Local Inquiry (Inverness Local Plan Public Inquiry Report: Chapter 8, para. 209) – it needs to be demonstrated that the Longman “core” has potential to create sufficient capacity to meet projected demand. The Council is therefore seeking to fulfil the outcome of the Inquiry by preparing this Development Brief, and in the context of proposals for strategic urban expansion into the A96 Corridor post 2011, by preparing a *Development Framework* for further major expansion of Inverness to the east. It is in this context, that any retailing provisions beyond those promoted in the Inverness Local Plan require to be examined.

10. At June 2006, proposals with planning permission for bulky-goods retailing in Inverness (granted since the Public Inquiry 2004) could deliver a net floor-space increase of 7,970 sq m. On this basis, the outstanding need to 2011 is calculated at 11,030 (net) sq m. This Brief finds that an **indicative capacity** for bulky-goods retailing at Longman “core” **could substantially meet the 19,000 sq m. identified in policy, and that there a reasonable possibility that bulky-goods/warehouse needs in Inverness**

**can be accommodated within the strategy set out in the Local Plan; provided land/property at Longman “core” becomes available for redevelopment and is found to be attractive to bulky-goods/warehouse retail operators.**

11. Local Plan Policy seeks to contain bulky-goods/warehouse retailing at Longman within the identified “core”. In this regard, the Inquiry Reporter concluded, that *“if the core area is carefully defined, to guard against the “domino” effect that could result in the creation of an extended ribbon of retail development to the A9, the type of sporadic development to which NPPG8 refers, could be avoided.”* Consequently, outwith the defined “core”, policy permits retailing only as an ancillary part of industrial/business uses, and at a scale commensurate with the particular enterprise concerned. Where this involves sales/display floor-space within or attaching to premises, limitations will normally be specified. There is no provision in policy for food or general shopping at Longman, with such activities being directed to the City Centre or District Centres.

## Industry/Business

12. As the overriding location for mainstream manufacturing, depot/distribution, storage-based and service outlets, the Longman estate performs an important role in the City’s economic development strategy, essential to ensuring that it continues to offer a full range of employment opportunities. Accordingly policy seeks to avoid any spread of uses which are predominantly non-industrial or non-business outwith the “core”.

13. Substantive upgrading of business and industrial property is underway throughout the estate, as proprietors seek to modernise and adapt accommodation. Over time, a pattern of

showroom/office/public service facilities has become established along the main roads and “waterfront”; with small and medium-scale enterprises, or those not requiring a higher profile position, contained within the “backlands”. Further (re)development should consolidate these principles and the function of the estate for traditional activities and related employment.

## Administrative/Services

14. On-line services are diminishing the necessity for administrative/service premises to serve businesses locating at Longman; and the anticipated relocation of large-scale users such as Inverness College, may further reduce the case for related back-up facilities and accommodation. Given projected bulky-goods/warehouse retail needs, it would be appropriate within the “core” to encourage public service/administrative uses which are not able to mix with retail, to locate adjacent to established activities where expansion or like uses are proposed; or otherwise, in less high profile, more discreet positions.



## DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

### Land/Property

15. This Brief examines the *capacity* of Longman “core” to develop bulky-goods/warehouse retail floor-space. For this purpose, buildings are assumed to comprise 25-30% pro-rata of any site area with net sales floor-space provided at 75%.

*Schedule 1: Land/Property* identifies existing landholdings according to their size and potential. Further to policy and the status given to Longman “core”, bulky-goods/warehouse retailing should be afforded precedence on larger landholdings occupying higher profile, frontage positions. In addition to four existing premises with established bulky-goods/warehouse retail units extending to some 7,500 sq m *gross* floor-space, one further site - Inverness Pre-cast Ltd with potential for 7,220 sq m (net) of accommodation, has approval.

16. At June 2006, further to initial discussions with owners/proprietors and having regard to property currently available, it appears that up to 5.6 ha. could be released from existing uses in the foreseeable future. The sites at Stagecoach, with net capacity for 1,815-2,178 sq m. of bulky-goods floor-space; Hewden, 807-968 sq m. and Inverness College 4,236-5084 sq m. - which has submitted an initial *business prospectus* for consideration by the Funding Council in lieu of its proposed comprehensive relocation and the expectation that this will free-up further potential by 2010 - offer scope for approximately 6,800-8,200 sq m net floor-space, additional to that granted planning permission. If released for redevelopment, further substantive “backland” capacity - British Bakeries - could yield an additional 3,429-4,115 sq m. of net

floor-space, giving a total potential capacity of 10,200-12,300 sq. m. at the Longman “core” on land earmarked for redevelopment by 2011. This excludes sites of less than 0.3 ha. (regarded as *windfall* opportunities). On this basis, **Longman “core” could make a substantial contribution to meeting bulky-goods/warehouse retail requirements in the City over the next 5 years.**

17. Whilst most landholdings exceeding 0.4 ha. - with potential to create viable retail opportunities - are located west of the A82, the tendency for customers to cross (as pedestrians) from one side of the A82 to the other may depend in part on the type and position of any bulky-goods outlets becoming established, and the option to patrons of make the same journeys by car. Whilst a major lit crossing has been installed at the College, such activity will require to be monitored and consideration given to measures to channel pedestrians to further defined crossing points if necessary.

18. With land/property at the “core” of Longman involving “brownfield” sites, there may be a requirement for remediation to enable redevelopment in particular circumstances. Consistent with Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and PAN 33 *Development of Contaminated Land*, there may be a requirement for planning applications to be accompanied by a Qualitative Risk Assessment and an assurance of any appropriate remedial action.

### Traffic/Access

19. Whilst major transport issues will require to be addressed in the context of strategic traffic modeling for the City, the A82 will continue to function as a strategic City Centre approach and



urban distributor road. This route is the responsibility of the Scottish Executive. In this context, it will perform as a priority public transport route - possibly with dedicated bus lanes in future - and as a segregated cyclist/pedestrian artery. Bus lay-bys/stops will require to be located close to the core, north and south of the Harbour Road roundabout.

20. It is anticipated that traffic generated by future bulky-goods/warehouse retailing would to a degree, replace that serving existing uses. However, there will be a developer responsibility to demonstrate that the traffic generated by bulky-goods/warehouse retailing is acceptable in terms of the capacity of the road network and – notwithstanding the proposed Trunk Road Link (see para. 6 above) - its capability for improvement, if necessary. A Transport Impact Assessment will be required for planning significant applications.

21. Given current traffic loadings and the A82 dual carriageway, access to redevelopment sites in each of the quadrants should be from single points on the existing network. The A82 will provide for entry only; and Harbour Road, Seafield Road and Henderson Drive will provide for both entry and exit. These roads have the with capacity to distribute traffic throughout the wider circulation system. Access points to these secondary roads may require to be configured as roundabout/light controlled junctions in future.

22. Opportunities should be taken therefore to open links to Harbour Road/Henderson Drive through the north-west and south-west quadrants, between Harbour Road and Seafield Road in the north-east quadrant and to the Rail Yard through the south-east quadrant; and to close access between Seafield Road/A82 in the north-east quadrant (see Fig 3: Structure). These

measures will be implemented or reserved in the event that redevelopment/land assembly opportunities emerge.

23. Bulky-goods/warehouse retailing will require customer parking at the rate of 4.5 spaces per 100 sq m of gross floor-space and dedicated on site/rear servicing, with staff and cycle facilities consistent with the Council's guidelines#. The ratio of retail floor-space to parking/servicing should increase where proposals involve mezzanine accommodation.

24. Improved legibility of the Longman estate is essential to its function and performance as a business location. An accessible, safe interceptor/reception point at the entry to the estate from the A9 - and possibly alongside an A82-Millburn Road ultimately - would sign/index proprietors. This could associate with supplementary directional signposting at key points on the distributor network, including the A82//Harbour Road roundabout and at the entry points to more discrete parts of the estate. It is conceivable that such an interceptor/reception facility located (outwith the "core") in the eastern margin of the A82 could function as a transit break-of-bulk facility, with secure



*Photo: current redevelopment opportunity*

#Adopted Roads Guidelines for New Development: Highland Council 1996

warehousing, lorry/coach parking and amenities. Some 2 ha. might need to be reserved or assembled for this purpose. This requires consideration in the context of a strategy for freight and transport within the City and the City region and should take account of desired modal shift (freight to rail) and the continuing importance of road haulage and servicing to businesses in the Longman estate. Consideration may be given to the scope for a direct link between Harbour Road and the Rail Yard.

25. The Council will consider - in discussion with the Highland Cycle Campaign - a comprehensive approach to improving conditions for cyclists/pedestrians using the Longman Estate, including opportunities for shared use, safety at the A82/Harbour Road roundabout and connecting “arms”, and other upgrades; and the opportunity to achieve any such improvements in the context of development proposals, any works to be designed to appropriate standards. The scope for additional crossings of the A82 needs to be considered in the context of the functioning of this route between the City Centre and the A9, and any bulky-goods retail/other uses within the “core” and beyond.

## Design/Enhancement

26. Given the industrial/business character of the wider Longman estate, the emphasis in upgrading and enhancement should focus on the main thoroughfares. A cohesive frontage to the A82, should be encouraged by an up-lift in the form, functioning and appearance of buildings and in “greening” the spaces which link them.

*Photo: established bulky-goods store with major redevelopment site beyond*

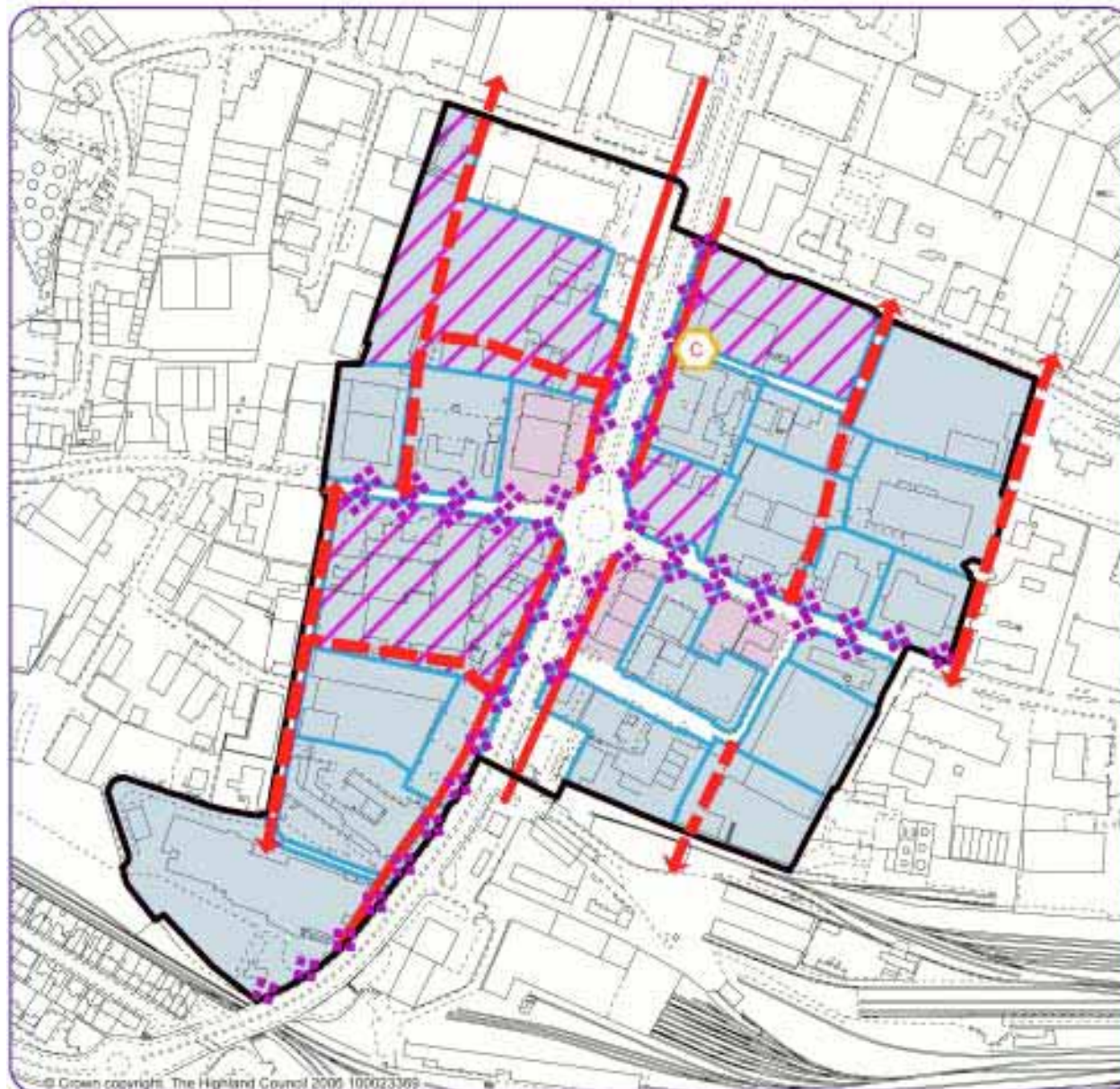
27. High standards, embracing the principles of sustainable design - including energy efficiency, access for all and recycled materials - will be sought in redevelopment proposals, with a view to achieving:

- the highest intensity of activity/massing/density together with mixed uses - office/display/retail/supporting services - within and towards the “core”, to give variety and vibrancy. Introducing *transparency* to bulkier buildings would help conceal otherwise blank, exposed walls;
- discernable building lines notably by orientating developments with their longer sides parallel to the “corridor”, but with scope for variation - occasionally setting buildings back or forward or by accentuating height;
- innovation in the form and finishes of development including detailing and discrete lighting/appropriate signing to create a prestigious, high quality frontage;
- good integration to enable adjacent bulky-goods retail sites to link to, and interact with, one-another as redevelopment proposals come forward.





**Fig 3 : STRUCTURE**



**LEGEND**

**Area: Longman Core**

**Access**

New/Improved Links - Options

Road Closure

**Design/Enhancement**

Key Building Frontage

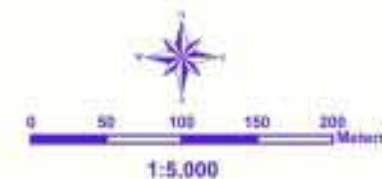
Boulevard/Transport Margin

**Land/Property**

Existing Retail

Possible Redevelopment < 2011

Assembly/Main Compartments



Longman Core - Structure Map

28. In this setting, the A82 should function as a major public transport/multi-user corridor, suitably “greened” and able to present - from an amenity and safety perspective - a substantially enhanced approach to the City. A lit “boulevard” with segregated pedestrian/cyclist thoroughfare, flanked by an avenue of robust, large scale trees planted at intervals of 25 m is envisaged. This will require a margin some 15m in width either side of the A82 to be committed with any grant of planning permission, within and outwith the “core”. Of this, a minimum of 10m will be reserved for a pedestrian/cyclist shared-surface, and a further 5m. will enable intermittent structural tree planting and on site parking/servicing.

29. Appropriate reservations of land require to be vested with the Council, in anticipation of a comprehensive engineering and design commission to be progressed as part of the City vision. This facility could be phased according to the assembly of land and the availability of funding. The City Partnership has a rolling programme of funds for design and physical works associated with enhancement of the City’s “gateways”/approaches.

## BULKY-GOODS DEFINITION

30. The following definition contained in NPPG8 will apply in relation to bulky-goods retail uses referred to in this Brief. *“Goods generally sold from retail warehouses where the goods are of such a size that they would normally be taken away by car and not be manageable by customers travelling by foot, cycle or bus (flat-pack), or that large, flat areas would be required to display them e.g. furniture in room sets, or not large individually, but part of a collective purchase which would be bulky e.g. wallpaper, paint”*.

## SCHEDULE OF OBLIGATIONS

31. Planning permission for the development of additional retail floor-space will be restricted to bulky-goods/warehouse retailing only within the defined Longman “core”.

In addition to site planning considerations which might require suitable conditions where planning permission is to be given, developers will be expected to fulfill the following further *structural* obligations:

- (1) Reservation of a minimum 10 m wide strip of land along the A82 “frontage” of each site (including the public footpath); this to be incorporated and maintained with development sites pending an agreement to vest the land with the Council at an agreed time, and implementation of an engineering contract thereafter.
- (2) Construction of access roads as identified indicatively on *Fig 3: Structure* for which a minimum 10 m wide strip of land will be required within redevelopment compartments as necessary.

These matters will be secured by Section 75 Agreement where necessary.



*Photo: College and main transport corridor*



## SCHEDULE 1

Schedule 1: Land/Property

quadrant/property		area (ha.)	indicative gross floorspace		corresponding indicative net floor space (75%)	
			(25%)	(30%)		
north-west						
1	Inverness Precast	2.2	5918	7101	4438	5325
2	Fire Station	0.6	1613	1963	1209	1452
3	City Plumbing/Hawco*	0.4	1076	1291	807	968
south-west						
4	Inverness College	2.1	5649	6778	4236	5084
5	British Bakeries	1.7	4573	5487	3429	4115
6	Police HQ	0.8	2152	2582	1614	1936
7	Inverness Traction	0.7	1883	2259	1412	1694
north-east						
8	Stagecoach	0.9	2421	2905	1815	2178
9	British Telecom	0.9	2421	2905	1815	2178
10	Highland Council/Highland Steel	1.2	3228	3873	2421	2905
11	Auto Repairs/Weldex etc*	0.6	1613	1963	1209	1452
12	Government Buildings	0.5	1345	1614	1008	1210
13	Hewden	0.4	1076	1291	807	968
14	Calterdon	0.3	807	968	605	726
15	City Electrical	0.3	807	968	605	726
south-east						
16	south etc*	0.7	1883	2259	1412	1694
17	Ken's Garage*	0.5	1345	1614	1008	1210
18	Keyline	0.5	1345	1614	1008	1210
19	Crown	0.5	1345	1614	1008	1210
20	RBS	0.2	538	645	403	484

\*more than one property