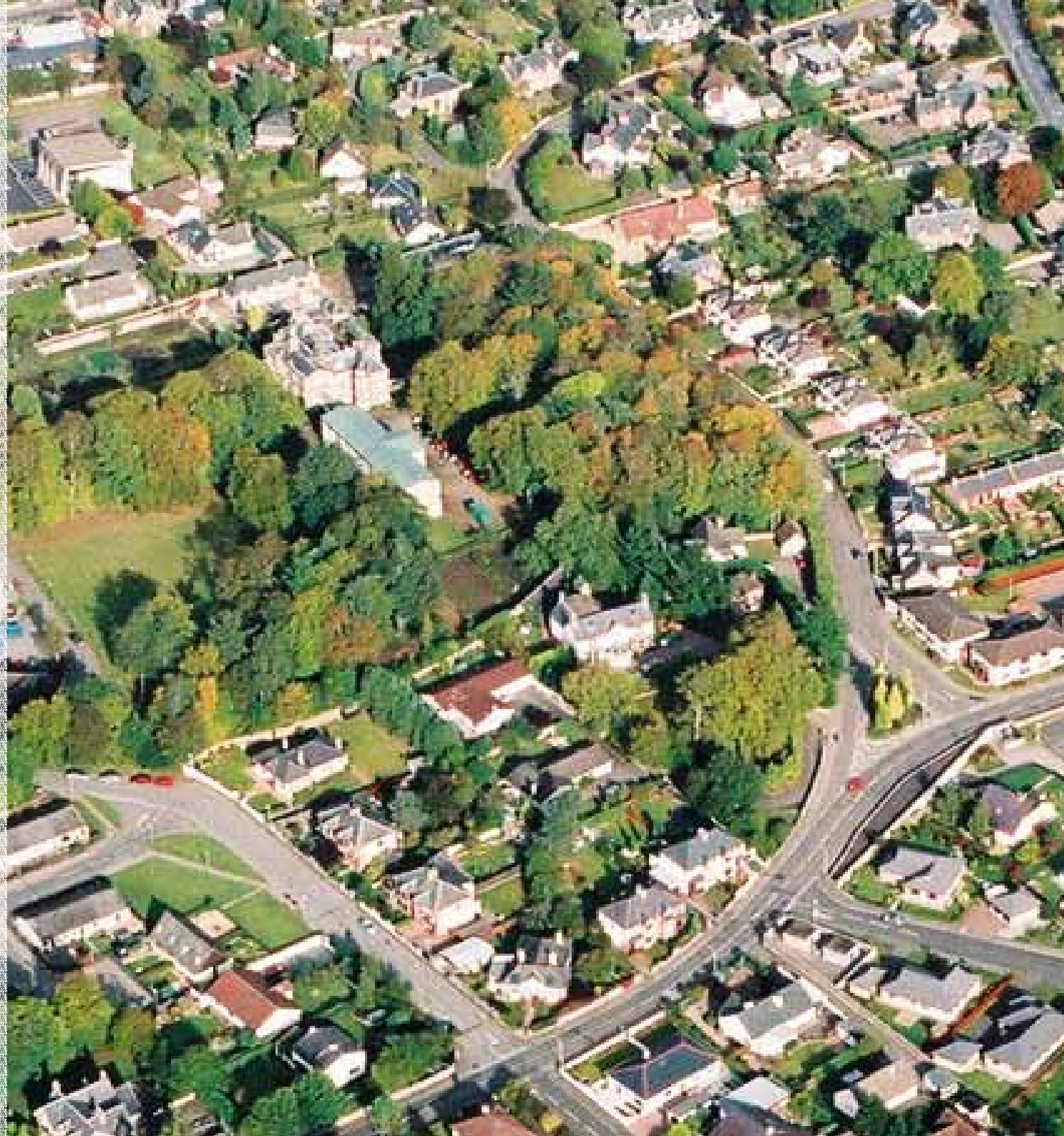




Hedgefield House Development

Planning and Development Service
October 2005

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1.0 PURPOSE OF THE BRIEF

1.1 This Planning Brief has been produced by Jenkins & Marr on behalf of Inverness College, in partnership with The Highland Council to provide guidance on future development at Hedgefield House. It elaborates on the policies set out in the Inverness Local Plan and will be regarded as a material consideration in respect of development proposals at Hedgefield House.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 In March 2004 Inverness College Board of Management adopted its Estate Strategy. This covered a number of issues, but of primary importance was their preferred option to relocate the entire College to a single site campus within Inverness. Should this option proceed, it will mean that the majority of existing College sites will become surplus to requirements. Alternative uses therefore require to be explored, and one of the purposes of this Planning Brief is to facilitate this in relation to the Hedgefield site.

3.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

3.1 Hedgefield House is located approximately one mile to the south of Inverness City Centre (Figure 1). Surrounding uses are predominantly residential including The Highland Council owned Mackenzie and Woodlands Centre Sheltered Housing complex.



3.2 The site comprises a category B Listed Building, a modern three storey accommodation block and a number of outbuildings, all of which are located in landscaped grounds. The listed building was originally built in 1821 with further extensions being added in 1846. It is three storeys in height and constructed from stone and slate. An Ionic portico has been added to the front elevation, and in recent years a small flat roofed extension has been built on to the rear.

3.3 The eastern edge of the site is heavily wooded, and mature trees are abundant elsewhere within the grounds. Virtually all of the trees are subject to a Tree Preservation Order. The main access road to the site bisects an extensive lawn, as illustrated in Figure 2. The northern portion includes an area of formal ornamental hedging, and outbuildings.

3.4 The site extends to approximately 2.5 hectares. The Listed Building has a floor area of 800 square metres; and the combined floorspace of the three storey accommodation block is 1140 square metres. The area covered by the Tree Preservation Order measures 1.2 hectares.

4.0 SITE HISTORY

4.1 Hedgefield House forms part of the property portfolio of Inverness College. Although previously used for teaching, it has for some years been employed as a management training centre, offering courses to the business community.





Planning permission and listed building consent was granted in March 2004 for the alteration, refurbishment and part demolition of the existing building. The proposal involved the demolition of the modern three storey block which is linked to the original building by a first floor corridor. The modern flat roofed extensions to the rear of the main block would also be taken down. Finally a modern two storey extension would be constructed on the north-west elevation. The new extension would be flat roofed and would be finished using natural stone and smooth render. These alterations have been designed to allow continued use as a management centre. There is no requirement for a prospective developer to carry out these changes.

5.0 POLICY

National Planning Guidance

5.1 Government policy takes the form of *National Planning Policy Guidelines (NPPGs)* and *Scottish Planning Policy (SPPs)* advice. In this case two NPPGs and one SPP are relevant.

NPPG14 - Natural Heritage

5.2 NPPG14 advises that Planning Authorities should seek to protect trees, groups of trees and areas of woodland where they have natural heritage value or contribute to the character or amenity of a particular locality. Tree Preservation Orders can provide an effective means of protecting isolated trees, copses or groups of trees associated with buildings. Planning Authorities should consider whether the conclusion of a management agreement is appropriate.

NPPG 18 - Planning and the Historic Environment

5.3 NPPG18 states that in the determination of an application for listed building consent or for planning permission for development affecting a listed building or its setting, the Planning Authority is required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Furthermore new economic uses should be found for historic buildings where they can no longer be reasonably expected to serve their original purpose over the long term. The aim should be to find a new economic use that is viable over the long term with minimal

impact upon the special architectural and historic interest of the building.

5.4 Achieving best viable use may require adaptation of the fabric. This should be undertaken carefully and sensitively, having regard to its architectural and historic interest, character and setting. Further advice is given in Historic Scotland's Memorandum of Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (revised 1998).

[SPP17 - Transport and Planning: Maximum Car Parking Standards](#)

5.5 SPP 17 - Transport and Planning Maximum Parking Standards sets out the required number of car parking spaces to be provided in association with a range of different development types. Any development of the site should comply with these standards, which are included as Appendix 1.

[Highland Structure Plan 2001](#)

5.6 The Plan seeks to encourage sustainable developments, which are measured in terms of their location, the promotion of sustainable transport and reuse of brownfield land and existing buildings. The promotion of tourism and educational uses is also highlighted. All developments should comply with the Council's standards for car parking and national government guidance on the subject. The Structure Plan recognises the importance of the preservation of the cultural heritage of the area, in the form



of listed buildings. Woodland areas and local wildlife habitats should also be protected from development that would be harmful to their intrinsic value.

[The Inverness, Culloden and Ardersier Local Plan 1994](#)

5.7 Although this document is of some age, it contains a number of general policies which are relevant to the development. The policies on amenity woodland seek to protect groups of trees, particularly where they have amenity value. In cases where trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order, there will be a strong presumption against any development which would have an adverse effect on their health. The Plan also seeks to protect the character

and setting of listed buildings, by ensuring that any development within their curtilage is sensitively designed. Finally, the Plan aims to protect essential areas of open space from loss by development.

[Inverness Local Plan Deposit Draft with Modifications 2 July 2005](#)

5.8 This Local Plan is a more up to date statement of the Council's policies for Inverness and will be a material consideration when the Planning Authority considers any planning applications. The policies in the Local Plan are either *settlement policies* which may be site specific or *general policies* which apply to the whole Local Plan area. The relevant ones are summarised below:

[Settlement Policies](#)

5.9 The site is identified as being within a residential area. Although housing development is likely to predominate, non-residential uses are not ruled out, so long as they do not adversely effect the amenity of the area. Developer contributions may be required to offset any infrastructure costs which would be generated by the development. Further discussion would be required with The Highland Council's officials to quantify the necessary financial contribution.

5.10 The Council has a long term aim to create a series of interlinked green spaces and corridors throughout the urban area aimed at the "greening" of the City. The current site will form part of this green space network.

[General Policies](#)

5.11 The general development policies are aimed to ensure that:

- projects are well designed and appropriately serviced;
- the location of the development encourages the use of sustainable transport;
- the use of brownfield sites is encouraged;
- all surface water from developments should be dealt with using a SUDS scheme; and
- all foul sewerage should be directed to public infrastructure.

5.12 In terms of design, the policies encourage a distinctive approach which help to contribute to the unique historical character of the site. However special care is required to protect the listed building and its setting. Flexibility in the layout of any development should also be considered, to allow a range of future uses to be possible.

5.13 Should a residential scheme be proposed, this will require to comply with the Council's policy for affordable housing provision. This stipulates that provision of 25% affordable housing on all future developments for 10 or more units. A copy of the policy can be found at:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/plintra/planpol/dppg_affh.htm

6.0 DETAILED DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

Uses

6.1 The existing use on site is a non-residential institution as defined in Class 10 of the *Town and Country Planning (Use Classes)(Scotland) Order 1997*, and planning permission may not be required to pursue activities within this Use Class.

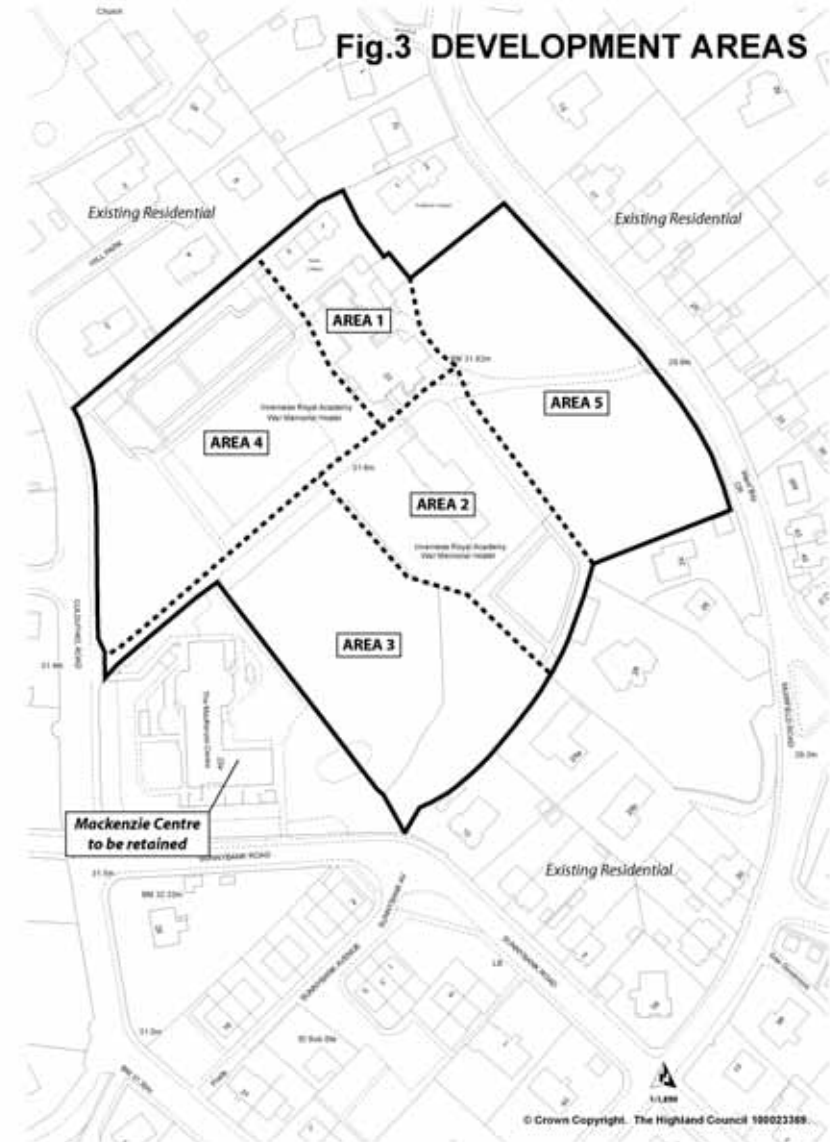
This would therefore offer scope for the continued provision of an educational facility or perhaps development of a creche or day nursery. Any alternative use which falls within Class 10 may be carried out within the existing buildings, without the need for a further planning application. Other potential uses include;

- dwellinghouses, sheltered housing, flats, all subject to the Council's Affordable Housing Policy;
- nursing home, residential training Centre;
- hotel, self catering accommodation;
- Business Use as defined under Class 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997.

6.2 The above uses are considered to be the most suitable in principle. The following section examines the scope for physical development on the site. Figure 3 divides the site into 5 distinct areas, and the development potential for each area is discussed below.

Trees

6.3 Council policy requires a safeguard zone between trees and development. A guideline figure of 20m is normally required, but this may require adjustment in



relation to tree heights and growth potential.

Development Potential

Area 1

6.3 This contains the main Hedgefield House Listed Building, which it will be necessary to retain. The previous planning permission highlights the possibility for extension incorporating a more contemporary style, however high design standards will be of paramount importance.

Area 2

6.4 This is currently occupied by a modern three storey accommodation block which is linked to the main building by a first floor corridor. This building is not of a high standard and the Council will expect it to be demolished and replaced with a design more sympathetic to the adjacent listed building.

6.5 Careful consideration in the design process would be required to ensure that the replacement of this block would not have an adverse effect on the character and setting of the Listed Building.

6.6 The height of any building on this part of the site is an important consideration. The existing accommodation block is three storeys in height. However a replacement structure of equivalent height will only be considered where it can be shown that it would not impact adversely on the character of the adjoining listed building. Should a traditional design



option be preferred by the developer, then natural materials such as stone and slate to match Hedgefield House should be used in the construction process. If a more innovative approach is preferred, then more modern materials, such as smooth coloured render, glass and metal finishes, may be considered for the development of this area.

6.7 Alternatively, it would be possible to use the area for car parking purposes, following the demolition of the accommodation block.

Area 3

6.8 There is limited scope for the development of Area 3. This grassed area is surrounded by mature trees, and is currently used for amenity purposes.

6.9 There may be scope for the erection of a building. Any such development must be located and accessed so as to ensure that no adverse impact on the health and visual setting of the adjoining trees. Any buildings should be located outwith tree height distance. This criterion will dictate the size of the footprint of any building, and will necessitate that it be positioned centrally within the lawn. Overshadowing from the adjoining trees should also be considered as part of the building design process on this area. The setting and amenity of the adjoining MacKenzie Centre must also be taken into account.

6.10 Any development should be no greater than single storey height, to protect both the setting of the Listed Building and the amenity of the Mackenzie Centre. The areas of trees which require to be protected are highlighted in dark green in Figure 4. It would also be important to ensure that any building respected the setting of the Listed Buildings.

Area 4

6.11 Has no potential for the erection of buildings, as this would impact adversely on the setting of the Listed Building.

Area 5

6.12 This area is heavily wooded, and the trees are covered by a Tree Preservation Order. Although the trees are planted at a high density, their condition is relatively healthy. A tree management plan will be required to improve the structure and diversity of the trees. This area has no development potential.

Guidance Access

6.13 The main vehicular access should be taken from Culduthel Road (Fig. 4). This requires upgrading, including widening and the formation of a passing place. Widening of the access will involve demolition of a 15 metre section of 2 metre high stone wall, and the removal of one small tree. The passing place should be created without the need to remove any further trees. The secondary vehicular access via Muirfield Road will be restricted to emergency vehicles only. Pedestrian access should be available via both these routes. The Council's Road Guidelines for New Developments can be found at:
http://www.highland.gov.uk/rt/service_information/planning&transportation/mudhut.pdf

Parking

6.14 Parking Standards must comply with Scottish Planning Policy 17 and Highland Council's own car parking standards. Depending on the proposed use of the site, a Green Travel Plan may be required.

Servicing

6.15 No servicing difficulties are anticipated. Scottish Water has confirmed that both a public water supply and foul sewers are available. However all surface water will require to be disposed of using a SUDS system and without detriment to existing trees. This part of Inverness also offers a connection to broadband.

Tree Protection & Management

6.16 The trees on the site are of particular importance, as recognized by the Tree Preservation Order which is in place. An extract from this is included as Appendix 2. In addition to the three areas (AI, A3 & A4) there are individual trees (T1, T2 and T3) located to the southeast of the modern three storey accommodation block and one group of trees (G1) located adjacent to the north-west corner of Hedgefield House. The trees covered by the Order require to be retained and fully protected. The permission of The Highland Council is required to authorize the removal of any trees covered by the Order.

6.17 A tree management plan for the site is required. This will require an accurate survey and condition report, phased programme of tree works including selective thinning, replacement and new planting. The plan will be subject to ongoing review.

6.18 Any construction works should be carried out in such a way that no existing tree, that is being retained within or



immediately adjacent to the site, is damaged. Trees should be protected in accordance with a scheme of fencing and other required measures based upon British Standard 5837 (1991) and be agreed with The Highland Council.

Listed Building

6.19 Any alterations to the Listed Building must be in accordance with the requirements of Historic Scotland and The Highland Council. Developers should consult the *Memorandum of Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas*, which is produced by Historic Scotland and provides detailed advice. Development proposals will require to retain the historic character of Hedgefield House, and this applies both to external and internal alterations. Listed building consent will be required to authorise these. The extant planning and listed building approval illustrates the scope which exists to extend the property, and the possibilities to utilise a more contemporary design when doing so. Furthermore there would be no objection in principle to the extension of Hedgefield House using a traditional approach, but whichever style is preferred, a high standard of architecture is required. Prospective developers are encouraged to discuss initial proposals with the Planning Authority.

6.20 In terms of demolitions on the site, it will be acceptable to remove the three storey accommodation block, and the two extensions to the original Listed Building, located on the north-western and north-eastern elevations.



Appendix 1: SPP17– National Maximum Car Parking Standards

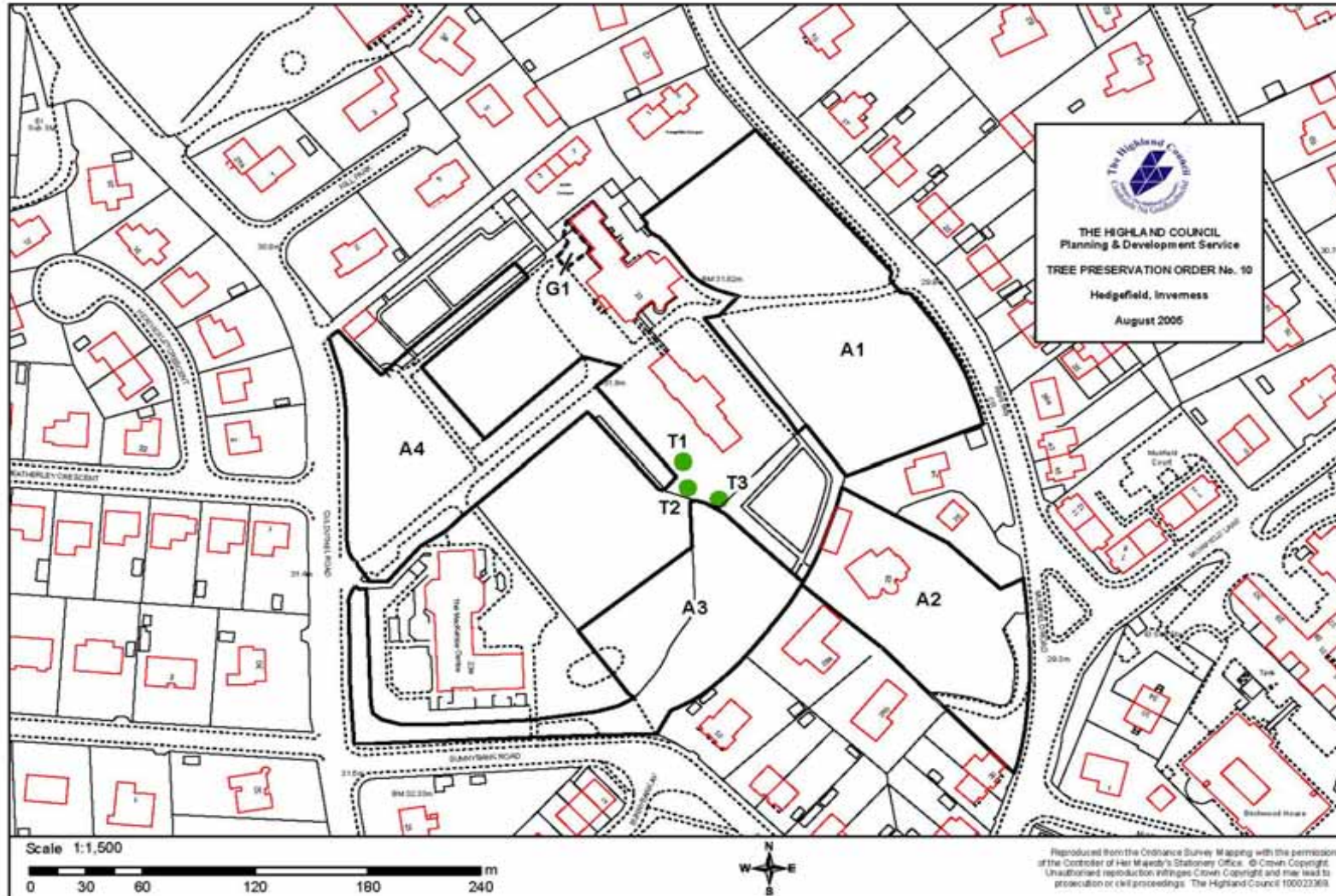
Reference to m2 is to Gross Floor Area	Threshold from and above which Standard Applies	National Maximum Parking Standard applicable to whole development
Retail (Food) (Use Class 1)	1000m2	1 space per 14m2 (See Note 1)
Retail (Non-Food) (Use Class 1)	1000m2	1 space per 20m2
Business (Use Class 4)	2500m2	1 space per 30m2
Cinemas (Use Class 11(a))	1000m2	1 space per 5 seats
Conference Facilities	1000m2	1 space per 5 seats
Stadia	1500 seats	1 space per 15 seats (see Note 2)
Leisure (other than Cinemas and Stadia)	1000m2	1 space per 22m2
Higher and Further Education (non-residential elements)	2500m2	1 space per 2 staff plus 1 space per 15 students (see Note 3)

Note 1: Where a retail development car park is designed to provide general town centre parking, or can be demonstrated to do so to a significant extent, that should be recognised in the amount of parking that is permitted above that specifically allowed for the development. In such cases, provision in excess of the above standard would not invoke referral to the Scottish Ministers.

Note 2: Note 2: Sufficient coach parking should be provided to the satisfaction of the local authority and treated separately from car parking. Coach parking needs to be designed and managed so it will not be used for car parking.

Note 3: The standard for students relates to the total number of students attending an educational establishment, rather than full-time equivalents.

Appendix 2 : The Highland Council Tree Preservation Order No. 10 (Extract)



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