

Torvean and Ness-Side Development Brief

Brath-leasachaidh Thòrr Bheathain agus Thaobh Nis



**Adopted
August 2019**

Part 1:

Updated 2013 Torvean and Ness-Side Development Brief



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Status

This Development Brief is part of the Council’s statutory development plan following clearance by Scottish Ministers and adoption by the Planning, Environment and Development Committee in November 2013.

This guidance will not be applied retrospectively to applications which have already received planning consent (unless a new applications is brought forward for the site in whole, or part, in the future) or those which are currently approved subject to the conclusion of a legal agreement.

1. Introduction // Ro-ràdh

Purpose of the Brief

1.1 This Development Brief covers two areas (shown on Map 1) that play an important role in the future growth of the City of Inverness. In the past the development of this area has been held back because there has not been enough capacity on the local roads and other infrastructure. However, with significant progress being made to deliver the Inverness West Link Road, a new connection between the east and west of the city crossing both the River Ness and the Caledonian Canal, will enable the delivery of the development potential in this area.



1.2 In preparing this Development Brief the Council has had significant input from members of the public through an intensive and collaborative workshop event known as a “Charrette”. This event was held over 4 days in September 2012 and empowered local communities to help design the future of the Torvean and Ness-side areas. Consultation on a draft version of this development brief took place between April and May 2013. You can find out more about the Charrette and consultation processes on our website:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/tndb>

1.3 One of the outcomes from the Charrette was a shared vision for Torvean and Ness-side which is shown below. This Development Brief builds on the outcomes of the Charrette and sets out the land use planning framework to deliver that vision.

The Shared Vision for Torvean and Ness-side:

A green gateway with a clear identity that is distinctive and vibrant. A successful place that builds on the heritage of the area and revitalises the canal and the river for both locals and tourists. A safe place that provides for new communities and businesses that is well connected to the city. An enhanced sporting hub for the city that can be used by a wide range of users. A place that respects and preserves the existing special qualities.



2. Policy Context / / Co-theacsa Poileasaidh

2.1 The area covered by this Development Brief has been identified as an area for change in the City for a number of years. The [Highland-wide Local Development Plan](#) which was adopted in April 2012 supports development of the area to meet the aspirations of the Inverness City Vision and to consolidate the City. Policy 8 of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan identifies the area for mixed use development and states:

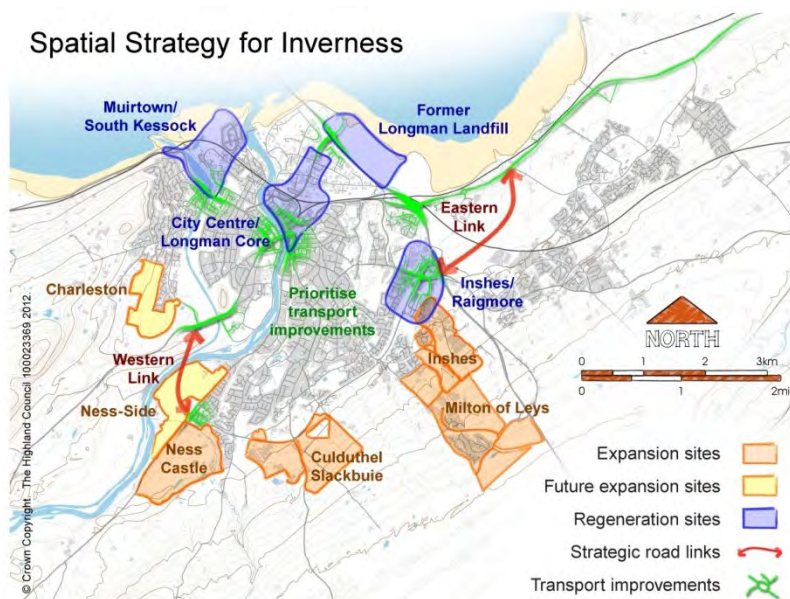
Policy 8 Ness-side and Charleston

The Council will support the master planning of land allocated at Ness-side and Charleston in tandem with the work carried out to identify options for the river and canal crossings that do not adversely affect the integrity of the River Moriston SAC. The Council will produce a development framework for land at Ness-side and Charleston (as identified on Map 5), which will be brought forward as supplementary guidance. The guiding principles for such guidance will be:

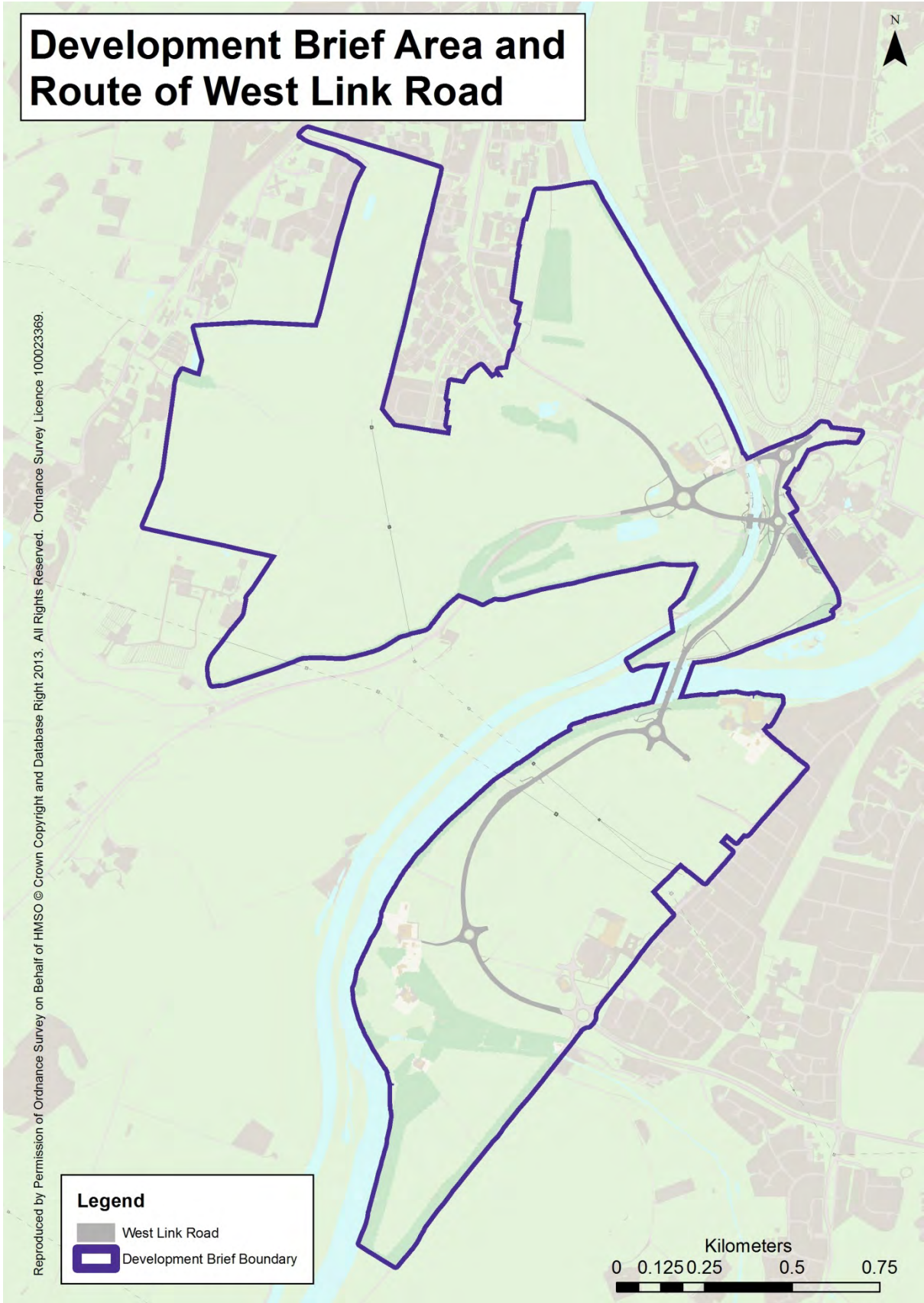
- to provide a land use context for the current assessment of transport solutions for this part of the City, taking into account the need to protect the River Moriston SAC;
- to determine the best mix, arrangement, design and servicing of future land uses compatible with whichever alignment and type of river and canal crossings are confirmed;
- to include within this mix:
 - retention and completion of the district retail and community centre at Dores Road;
 - retention and expansion of the district employment centre at Holm Mills;
 - retention and enhancement of a riverside green corridor at Ness-side including land within the confirmed flood plain;
 - a distributor road connection between Leachkin and General Booth Roads at Charleston; and
 - completion of residential neighbourhoods at Ness-side and Charleston.

2.2 The [Inverness Local Plan \(As Continued in Force\) \(2012\)](#) forms part of the Development Plan and also supports the development of this area and delivery of the Inverness West Link Road.

2.3 The Council is preparing a new Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan which will replace the Inverness Local Plan. The next stage for this Local Development Plan is the Proposed Plan which will be published in Autumn 2013. This will include a land use allocation for the development brief area. The detail of developer requirements and land uses can be found in this Development Brief.



Development Brief Area and Route of West Link Road



Map 1 – Development Brief Area and Route of West Link

3. West Link / / Ceangal an Iar

- 3.1 Historically access to and from the southern and western parts of Inverness without driving through the centre of the City has been difficult. For many years the Council's Development Plan has set out a commitment to the principle of a link road between the A9 and A82. The majority of this link road, known as the Southern Distributor Road, has been completed and runs from Inshes Roundabout to Dores Road Roundabout. The final section of the link is to cross the River Ness and Caledonian Canal. The Council's agreed route is shown on Map 1.
- 3.2 Following public consultation, The Council are progressing planning applications for the West Link Road (to be submitted September 2013 following confirmation of the detailed design of the road at the meeting of Full Council on September 5th 2013) and for Torvean Golf Course, Sports Hub, Kilvean Cemetery extension and Parkland (following further public consultation this application is likely to be submitted in November 2013). These applications will run in parallel with compulsory purchase orders for the necessary land required to deliver these strategically important schemes.

4. Area Analysis / / Mion-sgrùdadh Sgìre

- 4.1 This Development Brief covers the south west part of the City of Inverness, an area of around 300 hectares (as shown on Map 1). The Southern Distributor Road stretches through the south of the City and, with completion of the West Link, will join it up with the A82 on the north side of the River Ness.
- 4.2 Development in this area needs to consider impacts on some very important natural and built heritage features including:
- Caledonian Canal Scheduled Monument
 - Torvean Landforms Site of Special Scientific Interest
 - River Moriston Special Area of Conservation
 - Tomnahurich Cemetery Garden and Designed Landscape.
- 4.3 Of equal importance to the City are the recreation and leisure facilities in and around the development brief area which include:
- Rugby Pitches at the Canal Park
 - Torvean Golf Course
 - Whin Park
 - Caledonian Canal
 - Great Glen Way.

Facilities

- 4.4 Understanding the area's current facilities is an important first step in developing a framework for change in this relatively new part of the City. By doing this it will help new development to complement and integrate with existing areas of the city.
- 4.5 To do this we have undertaken an audit of all the facilities within and surrounding the development brief area (illustrated on Map 2). This has shown that the areas north and south of the river are currently well served by local shops, post offices and local open space. On completion of the West Link, the sports facilities and district park at the Bught area will become much more accessible for people living on the south side of the river. There will also be improved opportunities for access to the City Centre particularly by walking and cycling from these new communities by providing attractive routes through these new developments.. Equally those who live on the north side of the River will have better access to shops such as ASDA and Tesco to the south side of the river. The audit has shown that residential areas have poor access to medical centres. The closest from the Torvean area is at Ballifeary and from Ness-side it is in the Hilton area.
- 4.6 The development brief area is within the catchment area of two secondary schools and two primary school catchment areas: Charleston Academy and Kinmylies Primary to the north of the river, and Inverness Royal Academy and Holm Primary to the south of the river. Current rates of development within these catchment areas combined with any new development in the development brief area will push these schools over capacity. It is therefore important to consider the need for school expansion when planning for a growing population in this part of the city. Although Inverness Royal Academy is going to be replaced with a school of slightly larger capacity by 2016/17 and a new primary school is expected to be built to support the Ness Castle development on the south side of the river, developers will be required to contribute towards the expansion and improvement of the existing and new facilities to increase their capacity.

Public transport

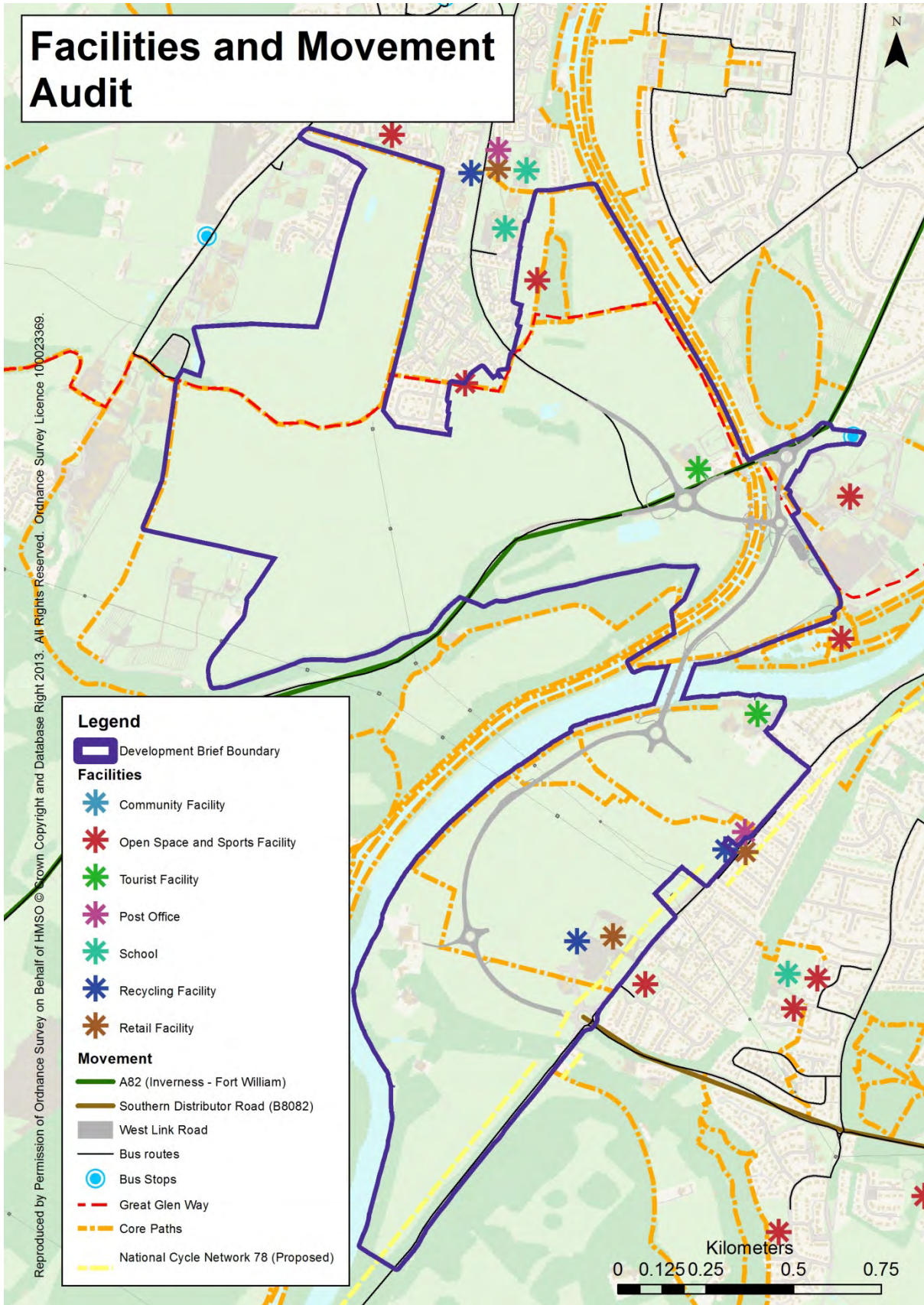
- 4.7 Public transport is vital to help new developments connect to existing and new households across the City. The main bus routes are shown on Map 2. At the north side of the river there are frequent bus services helping people go to and from the City Centre and areas of employment. At this time it is not considered that new services will be needed in the Torvean area if more development takes place in the development brief area. However new bus stops at key points on the existing routes through new developments will be needed.
- 4.8 On the south side of the river at Ness-side there is already an effective, frequent bus service. Nevertheless, it will be necessary to extend this and provide new bus stops to serve any new development.

Utilities

- 4.9 In preparing this brief we have worked with the main utility providers to determine capacity in the water, waste water and gas networks for new development. The main infrastructure for these utilities are shown on Map 3.
- 4.10 Scottish Water have advised that although there is currently capacity in the water network and that the necessary upgrades will need to be undertaken to enhance the network when new development is brought forward. This will partly be paid for by developers.
- 4.11 Scotia Gas Networks have suggested that at present there is insufficient capacity in the gas network for the level of development envisaged in this area. There will need to be enhancements to the gas network some of which are planned for 2015/16 period. This will be partly paid for by developers.

Constraints

- 4.12 There are very few sites which come forward for development which are completely constraint free. Constraints do not always have to hinder development on a site, they just mean you have to work with them rather than against them to produce a high quality development.
- 4.13 There are other constraints which mean that development shouldn't take place in an area, such as flood risk. Others constraints exist, such as overhead powerlines, which mean that an area has to be designed around that feature.
- 4.14 Map 3 shows all of the main constraints which we have identified in the area. The areas in between these constraints are the ones which could be taken forward for development and we will identify particular land uses for them in the development brief.



Map 2: Facilities and Movement Audit

Constraints and Utilities



Map 3: Constraints and Utilities

5. Development Framework / / Frèam Leasachaidh

5.1 This chapter builds upon the context described in previous chapters, and presents the development framework for the area. This reflects the shared vision agreed for the area at the Torvean and Ness-side Charrette in September 2012. In developing this framework (as indicatively shown on Map 5) we have interpreted the vision into a set of key guiding principles that will need to be delivered through the development brief:

Green Gateway with an enhanced sporting hub

5.2 At present the Torvean and Ness-side areas are dominated by green space, including formal recreation facilities at Torvean Golf Club and Canal Parks, and agricultural land at Ness-side and Charleston. Development in this area will undoubtedly change its character but by incorporating the following features it will be possible to retain and enhance this green gateway to the City:

- 3 pitches will be retained at the Canal Parks;
- A reconfigured golf course will allow for a better playing experience;
- Retained green corridors through the heart of developments to maintain connections for wildlife and people;
- Improved access to the riverside greenspace, helping residents and visitors enjoy the natural and built environment by the river and canal;
- Delivery of an underpass of the A82 providing safe access to existing and future recreational routes and trails in the area;
- Strategic landscaping to help integrate development into the landscape, including planting along the West Link Road.

5.3 Development in this part of the City gives us a great opportunity to develop a national and international centre for sporting and tourism activity (shown on Map 4). The features listed here should be incorporated into future development to further enhance the reputation of Inverness for recreational tourism. These include:

- Improving access to an ideal stretch of water for rowing and canoeing with a better accessed base for Inverness Rowing Club and increased use of the Great Glen Canoe Trail;
- Potential for International Standard Cross Country Running Routes around Torvean Quarry and Craig Dunain as well as more informal running and mountain bike trails;
- Opportunities to create a fitness trail at Torvean;
- A more accessible Great Glen Canoe Trail; and
- An attractive and welcoming gateway to Inverness.

Well Connected Place

5.6 It is essential that new communities at Torvean and Ness-side are well connected to services and facilities and integrated with existing neighbourhoods. The following features must be incorporated into any development in the area:

- Enhance bus provision connecting the new neighbourhoods with the City Centre and beyond;
- Provision of an indirect road connection between Dores Road and the new West Link Mill Lade Roundabout at Ness-side. This road should be of a standard suitable to accommodate buses and other service vehicles and its middle section should be for service vehicles (buses, refuse vehicles etc) only – this restriction implemented via a traffic order or similar mechanism;
- Provision of a direct walking and cycling route between Dores Road and the new Mill Lade Roundabout;
- Create new walking and cycling routes through the developments which connect to existing path networks. This will include a safe walking and cycling route along Dores Road and connections to West Link foot /cycleways which provide linkage to Bught Road and other routes into the City Centre;
- Within Ness-side provide an internal local distributor road which will function as the primary bus route through the area;
- Improve access across the river and canal to provide opportunities to access sport and recreational facilities across the city alongside the West Link Road;
- Provide a section of the new National Cycle Network 78 from Oban to Inverness segregated from the road through Ness-side.

5.7 Alongside the provision of physical infrastructure and improvements to transport services, delivery of high quality design and layout of development is just as important to create efficient travel to and from new development areas. All development which takes place within the Development Brief boundary must reflect the principles from the Scottish Government's Designing Streets. This will mean:

- The creation of a place is more important than car movement;
- Land within the Development Brief area will be distinctive, safe and pleasant, easy to move around, welcoming, adaptable and resource efficient;
- Connections to the wider network will allow for future changes in the way people travel; and
- Landmarks and vistas will be created to help people navigate the area, and this will include the use of public art.



Images from [Polnoon Masterplan](#)

Respects and preserves the existing special qualities

5.8 This part of Inverness has distinctive qualities that help give it character, such as from the views down the river bank and across the city from Charleston, to the enclosed tree lined road at Milton of Ness-side. These special qualities must be preserved and wherever possible enhanced to help create new neighbourhoods with a sense of place which reflect, but do not replicate, surrounding areas. To achieve this, all development in the area will be required to:

- Maintain key vistas within and across the site;
- Retain as much woodland as possible and where woodland is lost compensatory planting will be required;
- Integrate public art to give the area a unique sense of place and identity, together with the use of public art to help connect people with the natural and built heritage of the area through bespoke projects; and
- Continue the frontage features along Dores Road with the provision or retention/enhancement of drystone walls and beech hedging.



Densities and Design

5.9 The principal land uses in the Development Brief area will be recreational facilities and housing. To create a sustainable place which is adaptable to change a degree of flexibility is proposed for the amount of housing that can be delivered on site - between 689 and 829 homes at Ness-side. While we seek to deliver flexibility in the housing numbers we consider that the level of greenspace in the area should remain a constant to help create attractive places.

5.10 Across the development brief area we have identified indicative areas for housing at high, medium and low densities which equate approximately to:

Low Density Housing	Medium Density Housing	High Density Housing
15-20 dwellings per hectare	25-30 dwellings per hectare	30-35 dwellings per hectare

5.11 We have identified the areas where these housing densities would be best suited on the site. Generally, land for high density developments should be located along main roads and at key nodal points such as bus stops. Medium density developments have been located in the centre of the development areas and low density development at the fringes of the development brief area such as at Milton of Ness-side.

5.12 As development in this area will create a new community for Inverness and a gateway to the City, we will expect innovative, modern design which reflects the unique characteristics of the site. This will ensure a sustainable community and enable the creation of a place with its own identity and sense of place.



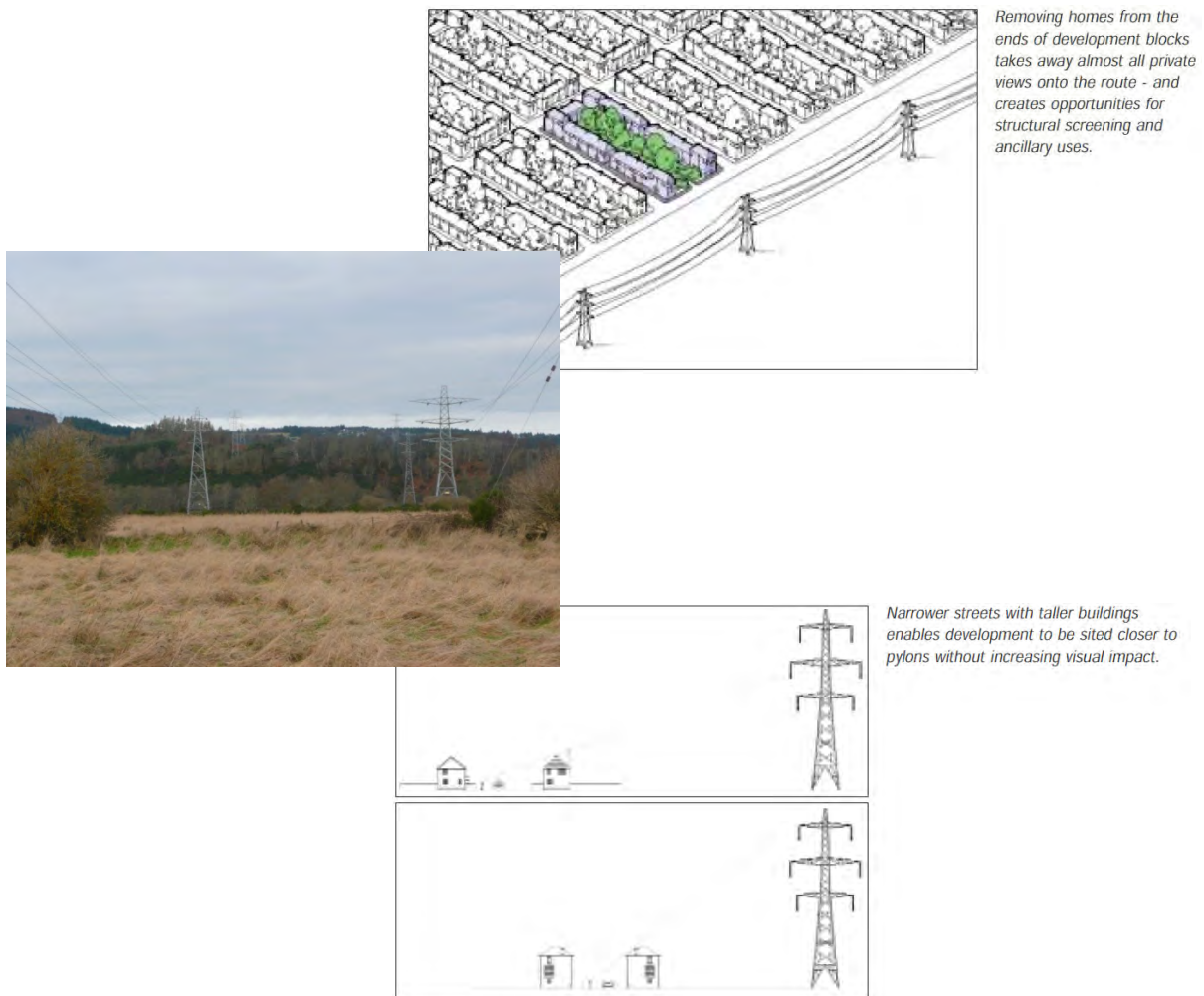
Scotland's Housing Expo (Left) and Maryhill Locks, Glasgow (Right)

Development Around Powerlines

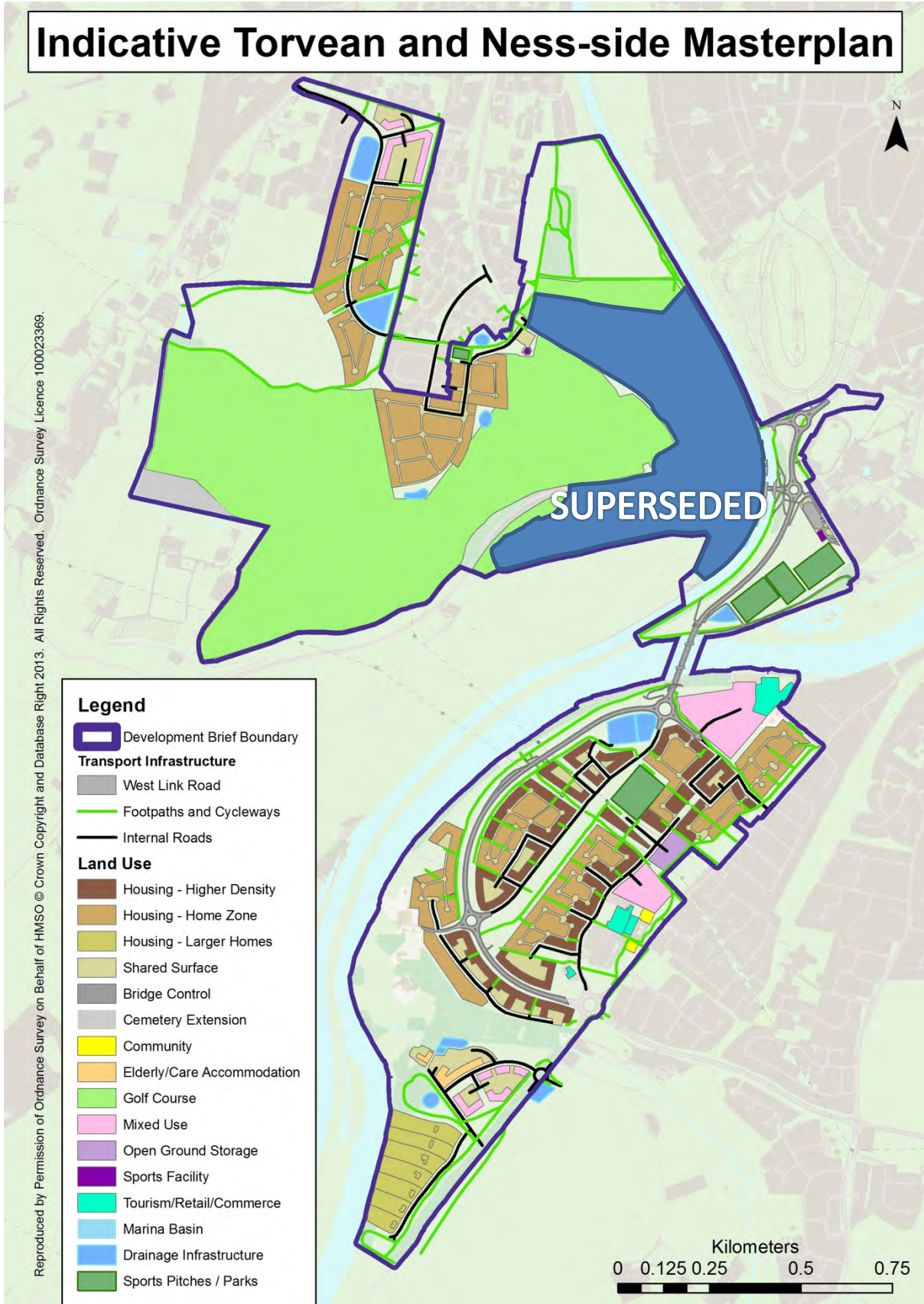
5.14 In the Ness-side development area there are a number of overhead powerlines running through the centre of the site. Following National Grid guidance on designing development near high voltage overhead powerlines called "[Sense of Place](#)" we have been able to identify some opportunities around these areas that would be suitable for development. In these areas the following principles must be applied to development:

- Streets should be narrower with taller buildings but no taller than 4 storeys;
- Streets should be off set from the pylons to make them less prominent and blocks should be orientated perpendicular to the route;
- Development should be designed not to reinforce the linear nature of the overhead lines;
- A strong mix of greenspace and housing should be brought forward;
- Closer to the substation non-residential uses such as storage and warehousing should be brought forward;
- Development should be at least 12m away from the centreline of the overhead lines.

5.15 Overhead powerlines are also a feature of the land to the West of the Canal at Torvean. It is anticipated that no built development would take place here and any golf course design should ensure a buffer to these lines.



Indicative Torvean and Ness-side Masterplan



Map 5: Indicative Masterplan for Torvean and Ness-side

Ness-side

- 5.23 The indicative masterplan for the Ness-side area is shown on Map 7. At Ness-side some development has already begun including the first part of the new district centre which in time will comprise of the existing Tesco Dores Road Store, smaller retail provision and community facilities. The development of the rest of the Ness-side area can be categorised into two areas – Ness-side covering the majority of the site closest to the City Centre, and Milton of Ness-side situated south of Holm Burn.
- 5.24 At Milton of Ness-side the land uses could comprise lower density housing, a residential care home and other care accommodation. Much of the existing landscape would be retained in this development. In the short term access to the residential care home only may be acceptable from the existing access into the land off Dores Road. In the longer term, access to development at Milton of Ness-side would be taken from a roundabout which would also serve the Ness-Castle Development to the east.
- 5.25 In the rest of the Ness-side area, north of the Dores Road Roundabout, there will be a mix of uses across the site but housing and open space will be the most dominant uses. The table below sets out the land ownerships in this area and the potential level of housing development:

Table 2: Indicative future housing stock at Ness-side ¹

Landowner	Houses Low	Houses High
Burt Boulton	184	216
Clunas	110	131
Cardrona Trust	10	20
MacDonald Family	88	106
Macrae Family	15	20
Tulloch	282	336
Total	689	829

- 5.26 The total housing numbers in the table above reflect the high, medium and low density areas set out on the Indicative Ness-side Development Framework map (Map 7), the densities discussed earlier in this document and landowner aspirations for development. They have been balanced to ensure that where a landowner will be required to deliver a larger proportion of the shared infrastructure (i.e. strategic sustainable drainage infrastructure and playing fields) then they are able to develop at a higher density.
- 5.27 It is anticipated that in addition to housing there may be an expansion of the business/tourism facilities at Holm Mills Shopping Centre which is an important retail and tourism destination for the City. We have also identified land for other employment generating uses including a small area of light industrial storage uses and/or warehousing near the electricity substation.
- 5.28 Open space and improved access to the outdoors is a key feature of this area and three green corridors are proposed through Ness-side. A new playing field will also be located in this area supplementing the facilities already available in the wider area. This will serve the new and existing households and will be available both for formal and informal use.

¹ All housing numbers are indicative and may rise or fall subject to detailed design through the Planning Application Process.

Indicative Masterplan Ness-side



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Map7: Indicative Masterplan Ness-side

6. Delivery // Libhrigeadh

- 6.1 Creating a balanced and sustainable community with its own identity and sense of place will require developer contributions to mitigate any impacts generated or amplified by new development. Table 3 sets out the number of new residential units envisaged in each of the development areas.
- 6.2 Only contributions arising from residential development have been set out in this development brief as this will be the predominant land use across the Torvean and Ness-side areas. However, all uses (except community uses such as churches, community centres etc) will be required to make developer contributions proportionate to their impact. Where uses other than housing are proposed we will use the per house equivalent for the use proposed as set out in the Developer Contributions Supplementary Guidance. This figure will be based upon the principles set out in this section. For an indication of what type contribution will be sought for different uses please see the Developer Contributions: Supplementary Guidance.
- 6.3 It should be noted that other recent developments in and adjacent to the development brief area have been required to contribute towards the required infrastructure. This includes development at Ness Castle and the District Centre (i.e. Tesco).

Table 3: Estimated Future Housing Stock

Development Brief Area	Total number of mainstream residential units envisaged
Torvean	466 – 603
Ness-side	689 – 829
Total	1155 – 1432

Developer Contributions

- 6.4 The table below outlines the methodology for developer contributions required from housing developments across the development brief area. These figures have been calculated based on the cost of providing the required infrastructure divided by the mid-point average in the number of new homes (of an average 100m² floorspace) we expect to be delivered across Torvean and Ness-side.

Table 4: Developer/Landowner Contributions

Contribution	Applicable Area	Trigger	Review	Cost
Affordable Housing				
25% Affordable Housing contribution	Ness-side Torvean	Completion of first unit	No Review	The Council's preference is for on-site provision of

Contribution	Applicable Area	Trigger	Review	Cost
				affordable housing. Benchmark figures are included in the Developer Contributions: Supplementary Guidance.
Education				
<p>Primary and Secondary School</p> <p>Contribution at Torvean to go towards enhanced provision at Charleston Academy and Kinmylies Primary</p> <p>Contribution at Ness-side initially towards enhanced provision at Holm Primary followed by contribution to new school. Contribution to secondary provision based upon new pupils above the existing capacity of Inverness Royal Academy at a total build cost rate of £1900/m²</p>	Ness-side Torvean	Completion of first unit	Pause and review prior to commencement of each subsequent phase.	<p>Ness-side £4483 per house</p> <p>Torvean £3052 per house</p> <p>£325 per flat</p>
Transport				
<p>West Link Road. This is based upon the following formula:</p> <p>Contribution from Development site (£) = Total cost of west link X Average Annual Daily Trips (AADT) generated by development site taking access along any part of west link / AADT along busiest part of west link when all allocated and consented development complete.</p>	Ness-side Torvean	Completion of first unit	Review on outcomes of each transport assessment. All developments will be required to contribute.	<p>Estimated £2,500 per house.</p> <p>(to be confirmed by traffic modelling assessment at time of application / pre-application stage)</p>

Contribution	Applicable Area	Trigger	Review	Cost
Contributions towards provision of public transport – subsidised bus route and provision of bus stops (including provision of real-time information infrastructure)	Ness-side	Completion of first unit	Review on outcomes of each transport assessment. All developments will be required to contribute.	£370.23 per dwelling at Ness-side
	Ness-side (Provision of 6 bus stops and subsidised bus route)			£123.36 per dwelling at Torvean
	Torvean (Provision of 6 new bus stops only)			
Open Space				
Development of strategic open space (riverside park)	Ness-side	Completion of first unit	At end of each phase of development	£153.78 Cost to be refined based upon detailed design of facilities.
Outdoor Access				
Existing Footpaths to be retained and upgraded to 2m absolute minimum 3m desirable shared cycleway/footpaths wherever possible at cost of £66,025 per kilometre of path required. Direct provision will be deducted from contribution	Ness-side	Commencement of Development	No review	£271.81 per dwelling
Community Infrastructure				
1 playing field	Ness-side	Completion first phase of development	No review	£362.32 per dwelling Cost to be refined based upon detailed design of facilities.
Sports Hub – Based upon 4 new turf pitches, changing facilities, access car parking and fitness trails.	Ness-side Torvean	Completion first phase of development	No review	Ness-side £311.59 per dwelling

Contribution	Applicable Area	Trigger	Review	Cost
Cost has been apportioned between Torvean and Ness-side to reflect the levels of development and access to other sporting facilities.				Torvean £585.98 per dwelling Cost to be refined based upon detailed design of facilities.
Public Art				
Development and delivery of public art in line with the Public Art Strategy: Supplementary Guidance. The Council's preference is that delivery of public art should be made by the developer. However, if this is not forthcoming then the developer contributions in this table will apply.	Ness-side Torvean	Completion first phase of development	No Review	£57.96 per dwelling
Total Cost Per Unit			Ness-side	£8510.69
			Torvean	£6319.30

Assumptions

The above represents an assessment of the requirements based upon the best available information at the time. Development may be subject to further developer contributions and requirements which can only be determined through the planning application process.

- The developer contributions are based upon an average residential unit having 100m² gross (all floors) floorspace. Actual contributions will vary on a pro-rata basis according to the floorspace consented.
- Negotiation of individual planning applications and related agreements will take account of the total development costs, including contributions, on the economic viability of delivering a high quality development in this area.
- The development will lead to Kinmylies Primary School, Holm Primary School, Charleston Academy and Inverness Royal Academy being over capacity in the short – medium term. These capacity issues will be dealt with primarily through expansion of the existing facilities. A serviced site for a new primary school has been secured through the planning permission at Ness Castle. A pause and review will be used after each phase of development at Ness-side to determine whether developer contributions will be sought to the expansion of existing facilities or the provision of the new school.

- Any “windfall” housing in excess of these capacities within either the Ness-side or Torvean area will be required to make an equal contribution per unit.
- Any uses other than housing will be required to make a proportionate contribution towards the provision of infrastructure in the following table based upon a per house equivalent rate which is set out in the Developer Contributions: Supplementary Guidance.
- Contributions will be secured by signing of individual land planning agreements with developers/landowners in the context of each grant of an applicable planning permission within the development brief area.
- It will be for The Council to identify from its own capital programme or other sources, where they are required to contribute towards the necessary infrastructure for development within their landownership.
- Direct developer provision of the facility or improvement may be appropriate. An agreed cost for such provision would then be deducted from that developer’s contribution.
- Any non-child generating use such as the development of uses other than mainstream housing will not be required to make contributions towards education.

6.5 The costs for provision of facilities in the development brief area are assumed as follows:

Table 5: Indicative costs of required infrastructure

Requirement	Ness-side (£)	Torvean (£)	Cost Per Unit Ness-side (£)	Cost Per Unit Torvean (£)
Subsidised bus route	215000	0	283.27	0
Bus Stops	66000	66000	86.96	123.36
Riverside Path 1097m				0
Central Green Finger and Dores Road Connection Paths 1176m				0
Dores Road Green Finger Path 841m	206302.5	0	271.81	0
1 turf pitch at Ness-side ²	275,000	0	362.32	0
Sports Hub (4 turf pitches and 4 team changing room, fitness trails and access) ³	550,000		311.59	585.98
Public Art ⁴	75000		57.96	57.96
West Link (per dwelling)	2500	2500	2500	2500
Education (per dwelling)	4483 ⁵	3052	4483	3052
Ness-side Riverside Park ⁶	116,566	0	153.78	0
Total Contribution			8510.69	6319.30

The above represents an assessment of the requirements based upon the best available information at the time. Development may be subject to further developer contributions and requirements which can only be determined through the planning application process.

² Cost based upon provision of 1 turf pitch. Indicative costs to be subject to further design work.

³ Cost Based upon assumption of £550,000 to be accrued towards the sports hub via developer contributions. This is based on the assumption made in The Highland Council’s Capital Programme, which allocates a total of £3.874m towards delivery of enhanced recreational facilities including delivery of the sports hub.

⁴ Based upon cost for delivering a bespoke art trail and seating areas throughout the brief area exploring the natural and built heritage of the area.

⁵ Increased figure at Ness-side due to construction of new Inverness Royal Academy with build cost of £1900 per m², which is higher than standard cost of providing additional temporary class rooms at existing schools.

⁶ Based upon cost of delivering Phase 1 of Inshes District Park.

Developer Requirements

6.6 In determining any future planning applications for development in the Development Brief area the Council will expect the following issues to be reflected and incorporated in any development proposals:

General

- Proposals will reflect the pattern of land uses shown on the indicative Masterplans for the area. This includes the presumption against piecemeal development that would undermine this arrangement;
- Integrate the key design features as set out in Section 5 of this Development Brief;
- All services (including but not limited to internal roads, water and waste water networks), to be provided to the edge of the individual developers landownership to secure timeous development of the whole of the development and avoid any ransoming of land or related accesses;
- Deliver sufficient land on the site to meet the Council's requirements for waste management as set out in the Managing Waste in New Developments: Supplementary Guidance;
- All costs to the Council of all additional consents, orders and legal agreements to be reimbursed to the Council which are required solely as a result of the development;
- Delivery of infrastructure in the development brief area (including but not limered to internal roads, water and waste water infrastructure) such as water/waste water infrastructure), should be delivered in partnership between the developers/landowners in the development brief area. Alternative arrangements to the delivery of strategic infrastructure will only be accepted where a developer/landowner can provide evidence of unreasonable non co-operation by another landowner(s) and these arrangements are acceptable to the relevant agencies such as SEPA, Scottish Water and the Council's Flood Team.

Transport (including Active Travel)

- All land required for the provision of the Inverness West Link Road and accommodation works is to be safeguarded from development;
- In the first instance, any land which will be required for the delivery of the Inverness West Link Road will be secured by agreement using established valuation principles;
- Delivery of internal road network (including internal distributor road at Ness-side following approximate alignment as shown on Map 9) up to boundaries of each landholding;
- Produce a Green Travel Plan;
- Accord with the principles and policies of The Highland Council's Roads Guidelines for New Development;
- Land should be safeguarded and provision made for additional pedestrian crossings of the Inverness West Link Road through developments. A contribution towards the delivery of these may be sought;
- Safeguard and deliver a secondary distributor connection between Dores Road and the new Mill Lade Roundabout at Ness-side. The middle section of this should be for service vehicles only and will be enforced via a Traffic Order;
- Safeguard land for the provision of a direct walking and cycling route between Dores Road and the new Mill Lade Roundabout;
- At Milton of Ness-side, developer funded 30mph countdown markers should be provided;

Green Infrastructure and Recreation

- Deliver on-site open space in line with the Open Space in New Residential Developments: Supplementary Guidance;
- Safeguarding of existing green network features (people and wildlife), and linkage of greenspaces within the development to the green network both within the site and linking to the wider green network of adjacent sites;
- Safeguard of land for the linear riverside greenspace to the west of the Link Road;

Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage

- Provide an archaeological evaluation and carry out any necessary mitigation;
- Safeguard the passage of salmon along the River Ness to and from the River Moriston Special Area of Conservation to avoid significant effects on the qualifying interests of the River Moriston SAC;
- Produce a Badger Protection Plan and carry out necessary mitigation;
- Produce a Protected Species Survey and carry out necessary mitigation;
- Produce a Landscape Management Plan to include woodland safeguards, appropriate tree hold backs & protection areas, and details of felling and replanting;
- Any proposal which involves the development of additional trails in and around Torvean Landforms SSSI will require to be accompanied by a Recreational Access Management Plan;
- Avoidance of any adverse effects on the adjacent Torvean Landforms Site of Special Scientific Interest;

Water Environment

- Produce a Flood Risk Assessment for any development within or adjacent to the 1 in 200 year indicative flood risk areas as shown on the Indicative River & Coastal Flood Map (Scotland) or any other more up to date information and demonstrate that the proposal comply with Scottish Planning Policy;
- Produce a revised strategic Drainage Impact Assessment to enable the development of a strategic approach to sustainable drainage across Ness-side, and to safeguard the water quality of the River Ness;
- No further culverting of watercourses;
- There may be culverts present which could restrict the area of land available for development. A survey of existing culverts should be submitted in support of any planning application which demonstrates a minimum buffer of 6m to the culverts or other suitable mitigation which protects the watercourse whilst protecting the proposed and any existing development from flood risk.
- A minimum set back of 6m between the top of the bank of any water body and any proposed new development. This may be increased depending on site specific constraints including river morphology and flood risk;
- Where a development impacts upon an existing groundwater abstraction or water supply then suitable mitigation will be required;
- Any redevelopment of the land at Holm Mills Shopping Village should be no more sensitive to flooding than it's current use;

- All development must connect to the public water and waste water networks, which will require to have sufficient capacity to avoid impacts on the River Moriston SAC and Moray Firth SAC;
- Water quality of River Ness to be protected during construction works (particularly at Ness-side) by production and approval of a Construction Method Statement to avoid pollution and sediment run-off;

Design and Place-making

- Provide strategic landscaping including a beech hedge or stone wall along the Dores Road Frontage at Ness-side;
- Delivery of public art in line with the Public Art Strategy: Supplementary Guidance.

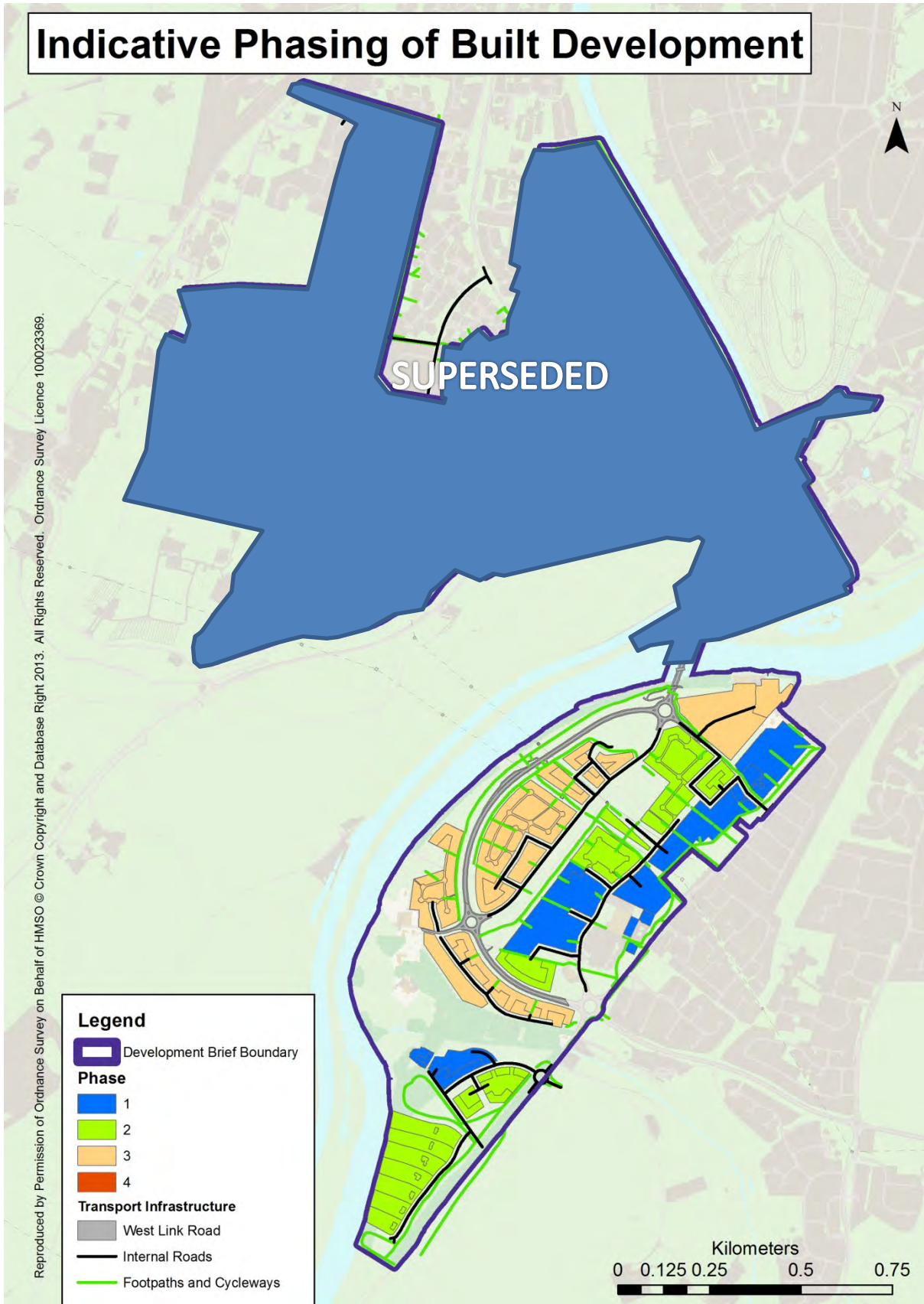
Phasing

- 6.7 Delivery of development in this area is heavily dependent on delivery of the West Link Road. It may be possible to bring forward a level of development prior to the completion of the road however this must be demonstrated through a developer funded Transport Assessment for each proposal.
- 6.8 Indicated on the following map is what we envisage as the broad phasing of development at Torvean and Ness-side. This is based around the principle that development which can be accessed from the existing road network or more minor improvements to the existing network can progress at an earlier stage and those which will take access from the internal distributor road will come in later phases. This approach also ensures that all land owners in the development brief area can get a proportionate amount of development of their land holding within early phases.
- 6.9 Phasing at Torvean/Charleston is largely dependent on the crossing of the canal. However land at Torvean Caravan Park has a “minded to grant” decision in its favour for around 80 new homes.
- 6.10 Given the development of West Link is the determining factor in enabling development in this area the phasing of development has taken account of the phasing of the road. Stage 1 of the West Link will not be subject to phased opening. Indicative phasing of development is described below and shown on Map 9:
- Phase 1 – Once the West Link is legally committed and all necessary consents are in place
 - Phase 2 – Following commencement of construction of West Link and up to its connection with the A82 at the Tomnahurich Roundabout and opening of Stage 1 of the West Link Road
 - Phase 3 – Post completion of the A82 connection at the Tomnahurich Roundabout
 - Phase 4 – Post completion of the canal crossing and connection to the A82 at Torvean.

It is not necessary for all houses to be complete in a previous phase for a next phase development to commence. Phasing is dependent upon infrastructure timing not completion of housing.

- 6.11 The delivery of sport and recreation facilities is also determined by the phasing and delivery of the road. Indicative phasing of the sport and recreation uses is described below:
- Phase 1 – Reconfiguration of the Canal Parks and relocation of Inverness Blitz to Bught Park to be completed prior to commencement of Stage 1 of West Link;
 - Phase 2 – Reconfiguration of the Golf Course to be completed prior to construction of Stage 2 of West Link (Appendix 1 provides a justification for private land acquisition connected with this reconfiguration);

Indicative Phasing of Built Development



Map 9: Indicative Phasing of built development

7. Appendix 1: Torvean Golf Course Reconfiguration: Justification For Location And Area Of Land To Be Acquired

1 The Need for Land at Torvean

- 1.1 The land to be acquired is to allow the reconfiguration of an existing golf course not a new course for Inverness or the surrounding area. Torvean Golf Club serves this south and west part of the City, draws the majority of its members from the local area and does not wish to relocate. It has a relatively long history in this area, opening in 1961 as a 9 hole course and was extended in 1979 to 18 holes by utilising land north of the A82. Torvean Golf Club has undertaken various improvements to the course since taking a lease from the Highland Council in 2002 including establishing the practice area on adjacent land which is in private ownership. The Club and the Council wish to retain and ideally enhance facilities at this location.
- 1.2 A formal planning policy commitment to reconfigure Torvean Golf Course in this area was made during the Inverness Local Plan process, which culminated in the adoption of the plan in 2006. This envisaged 55ha. of land north of A82 for an 18 hole golf course and a new clubhouse. The 2006 Plan recognised the need to secure that part of the reconfigured course area that lay in private ownership. The formal commitment to progress the golf course reconfiguration at that time stemmed from a commitment to progress a road scheme that linked across the south west part of the City. The 2006 Plan remains the approved development plan for part of the land area to be acquired. The balance of the land to be acquired is allocated in the Highland wide Local Development Plan (Adopted 2012) as part of completion of a residential neighbourhood at Charleston.
- 1.3 By reason to the matters referred to 1.1 and 1.2 above, the Council does not believe that there is any credible alternative to acquiring land at Torvean. Further, wholesale relocation would cause significant disruption to existing Members, would not retain any existing, mature sections of the golf course, would be prejudicial to investment made to date, and may open up the possibility of built development within a presently attractive green corridor gateway to the City. This green gateway is embodied within the approved development plan via Policy 2:41(ii) Torvean/Muirtown Green Wedge of the Inverness Local Plan 2006. The nearest alternative site that benefits from either a planning application or a development plan allocation is at North Kessock across the Beaully Firth but this is distant from the Torvean area and the base of the existing Club's membership.

2 The Need for the Particular Land Identified

- 2.1 Policies 2:29 and 2:43 of the adopted Inverness local Plan 2006 establish the principle of reconfiguration of Torvean Golf Course and other recreational facilities in this part of the City. The related road project causes the displacement of a minimum of 6 existing holes, club house and car parking. This is the bare minimum requirement for acquiring additional land for golfing use. Options for acquiring land for this use are limited by the physical and existing use characteristics of land adjoining the existing course. The Council believes it is reasonable

to assume that reconfiguration must be provided on contiguous or closely adjacent and accessible land. On this basis, steeper wooded slopes to the south and south west are inaccessible and form part of a geological site of special scientific interest, land to the east is already developed and severed by the Caledonian Canal, land to the north is developed for housing or occupied by established recreational uses (the Charleston Academy sports pitches and the Highland Football Academy pitch). Accordingly, land to the north west of the existing course presents the only credible, alternative location for a reconfigured course. It is particularly suitable for golfing use because it is: contiguous to the existing course and not severed from it; gently rolling – i.e. has no insurmountable gradient issues; by reason of its ground conditions is conducive to golf course construction albeit surface water drainage works will be required; already partly in golfing use as a practice area, and; relatively insulated from neighbouring uses – i.e. errant golf shots can be contained by boundary woodland, steeper slopes and a new development setback. The credible alternatives relate to how much of this should be acquired.

3 Why The Land to be Acquired is Better Than Credible Alternatives

- 3.1 Although land for 6 holes, club house and car parking is the bare minimum requirement, this would not deliver an equivalent quality of course to that existing. Retaining holes east of General Booth Road would result in longer green to tee walking distances if the existing underpass is used and would not enable the delivery of the expanded sports hub, which is vital to the proper planning of the area. The reconfiguration of the whole course, its club house and car parking to land north of the A82 and west of General Booth Road would avoid any major road severance and the consequent need for underpasses and longer green to tee walking distances. A credible alternative would be to retain the area covered by existing holes 5-8 south of the A82 with the balance of the course to the north of the A82. Both of these alternatives are safeguarded within the Brief. The Council and the Club believe that these enhanced facilities will be vital to the playability of the course and its future success in retaining existing and attracting new members.
- 3.2 The Council commissioned a golf course architect to test potential layouts for their playability and other suitability with the aim of delivering equivalent or enhanced provision to that of the existing course. These test layouts revealed that the 55ha. land area and shape reserved for golf course reconfiguration in the Adopted Inverness Local Plan 2006 would not deliver a course of equivalent quality. This is due to the steep gradient of the slopes below the Westercraigs development, the constrained width of the area which would compromise player safety (i.e. two adjacent fairways would be too close to each other), the length of the common boundary between proposed housing and golf course which would necessitate visually intrusive high fencing, and the fact that 6ha. of the available land had since (2009) been lost to the golf practice area.
- 3.3 Moreover, the bare minimum land area would not allow the proper planning of the wider area if the West Link road scheme is implemented. The scheme impinges upon other recreational facilities which could be enhanced through reconfiguration or relocation. In particular, there is a net loss of one sports pitch at the Canal Parks and the Council wishes to ensure replacement provision for this pitch in this locality. Existing golf holes 10-14 (east of General Booth Road) represent the most suitable land for replacement and additional sports pitch provision, being flat, well drained and within Highland Council ownership. Accordingly,

acquiring a larger area of land west of General Booth Road for golf course use would release this land east of General Booth Road for enhanced recreational provision. The Council believes this pattern of land use is consistent with the proper planning of this part of the City because it retains and enhances a hub of sports facilities in this locality and with it the open, green character of this vital tourist, Great Glen entrance to the City. As stated above, the principle of this mix of uses (if not its precise pattern) is already established in the approved development plan (Policies 2:29, 2:41(ii) and 2:43 of the adopted Inverness Local Plan 2006). The proposed pattern is also complementary to existing, adjoining uses. For example, the proposed sports hub changing facilities will lie close to the existing Highland Football Academy pitch and offer the prospect of shared use. The West Link road scheme will also leave part of existing golf holes 2-4 as surplus. Theoretically, these could be retained as part of the reconfigured golf course but the land area remaining is of an awkward size and shape in terms of golf hole design. The Council believes this land would better be suited to canal related tourism development and has been working with Scottish Canals to achieve this aim.

4 Environmental and Land Use Implications

4.1 Golf courses are generally considered as an environmentally benign or even beneficial use in terms of effects. Use of fertilisers and their potential leakage into the water environment is one issue of concern but this and other effects will be assessed through a formal Environmental Impact Assessment process associated with the planning application the Council is progressing for this and adjoining land. Suitable mitigation will be incorporated within the application.

4.2 The alternative, part allocated use is residential development serviced by a new distributor road. The Council believes that this use of the same land would be likely to have greater adverse environmental effects than golf course use. Indeed, the Council's Development Brief reduces the area allocated for housing development to reduce potential adverse effects. Principally these are visual – e.g. the loss of views from the Great Glen Way long distance footpath, the unnatural landform cut and fill necessary for a distributor road on this sloping site, and the incursion into a presently green, open area at this principal tourist gateway into the City. The loss of the existing agricultural use is not seen as significant relative to the newly proposed land use arrangement because the land is used for informal grazing, is not prime farm land and not vital to the viability of the unit concerned. Similarly, the loss of some allocated residential use is not seen as significant because there are sufficient, allocated and permitted housing site alternatives closeby and elsewhere within the City. 6.0ha of the land to be acquired is already in golf course practice area use and is currently leased by Torvean Golf Club.

5 Evidence of Funding and Council Commitment

5.5 It is expected that a Planning Permission in Principle application for the golf course reconfiguration and other associated recreational improvements will be lodged in November 2013 and determined in Spring 2014. A £3.874M Highland Council capital programme commitment has been made to implement this application. The Council are also investigating third party funding opportunities.

6 Community and Landowner Consultation

- 6.1 A September 2012 Charrette (a public, sports clubs and agency design workshop) produced an optimum 18 golf course location west of General Booth Road and north of the A82. The April 2013 Draft Torvean and Ness-side Development Brief consulted on three possible alternative layouts for the 18 holes. Responses received on the Brief favoured the layout comprising land wholly north of the A82 and west of General Booth Road.
- 6.2 The Council has contacted and discussed the golf course reconfiguration proposal with the only directly affected owner (The Barron Family) and with Torvean Golf Club as the only directly affected existing tenant and intended future tenant of the land to be acquired.
- 6.3 Several options have been prepared for the reconfigured course and discussed with representatives of Torvean Golf Club, the landowner's agents and the general public through the Charrette process, the Torvean and Ness-side Development Brief process and initial pre-application consultation. A Planning in Principle application for the reconfigured course and other facilities will be lodged in November 2013 including further opportunities for pre and post application representations.
- 6.4 The Council has attempted to reach a compromise solution between the legitimate development interests of the landowner who benefits from part allocation of its landholding for residential development and the desire of Torvean Golf Club to achieve a much enhanced course and facilities. The land to be acquired will be in the interests of the proper planning of the area in representing a compromise between the desire to deliver an equivalent or enhanced golf course whilst also excluding land which would most appropriately be developed for housing. Negotiations with the landowner to date have indicated no objection in principle to at least part of its landholding accommodating the reconfigured golf course. Disputed matters relate to boundaries and value.

Part 2:

Torvean Gateway



The Torvean and Ness-side Development Brief (The original Brief) was adopted in March 2013. This document (the Brief) updates the Torvean elements of the original Brief to reflect the latest development context and Council aspirations for most of the area.

The West Link Road is being delivered in two stages, the first is complete and the second commenced in Spring 2019. To facilitate construction of the West Link Road various sports facilities were relocated and, where required, replacement facilities were provided. This included Highland Rugby Club and Torvean Golf Club. The new Golf Course is complete and construction of Stage 2 of West Link will open up the previously used vacant golf course land for redevelopment.

What status does this document have?

This document supersedes the Torvean parts of the original Brief. It is Supplementary Guidance to the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan.

The Brief is divided into the following sections:

- **Section 1: Introduction** - sets out the context the Brief sits within, the Vision of the future development of the area and shows the Indicative Masterplan for development of the area.
- **Section 2: Key Infrastructure** - describes the key natural and man-made infrastructure that currently contribute to the area, or are required to deliver the Vision.
- **Section 3: Character Areas** - provides area-specific guidance and development criteria to help explain how the Brief expects the area to be developed.
- **Section 4: Infrastructure Delivery** - signposts the reader to how the Council will recover the cost of mitigating impacts of new development .

Development Brief

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- 3 This Brief relates to the redevelopment of the vacated Torvean Golf Course land to the south and north of the A82 trunk road.

This land is being opened up for development as a result of the West Link Stage 2 project. Stage 1 was completed in December 2017 and Stage 2 commenced in Spring 2019. This document provides the up to date land use planning framework for development on land surrounding and adjacent to the new road.

- 4 The combination of uses identified on well-connected sites at the edge of the Caledonian Canal will be a complement to the city's existing destinations and will provide a new and exciting place for both visitors and local people to enjoy.

Vision

Vision

- 5 Land to the south (Torvean South) of the A82 will be transformed into a new gateway for visitors and locals in the city through a combination of Council and developer-led projects. Future development will welcome people to a new canal-side destination that provides places to meet and enjoy a new park and sport and leisure uses. It will provide places for food and drink, retail and tourist opportunities, and will be woven together by a high quality public realm.
- 6 Land to the north of the A82 (Torvean North) provides an opportunity to deliver a neighbourhood, including much-needed housing for our growing city, and a land for a potential new school. A new neighbourhood in this location will connect seamlessly to the existing and consented uses to the south. It will enjoy a local park to the north, the Caledonian Canal to the east and a green corridor to the west.

Indicative Masterplan

- 7 The Indicative Masterplan shown overleaf sets out what the acceptable land uses are for future development in this area, which is owned by The Highland Council.
- 8 The Council is currently undertaking further detailed design work for this area that will enable the marketing of the site for private sale(s). All development proposals will require planning permission and will be assessed against this Development Brief and, in particular, how they:
 - accord with the Vision, policies, Indicative Masterplan and other criteria set out in this Brief;
 - prioritise place quality over the movement of motor vehicles;
 - can deliver a well-maintained, high quality public realm;

Section 1: Introduction | Ro-ràdh

- demonstrate the [six qualities of a successful place](#)⁽²⁾, as defined in national planning policy (Distinctive; Safe and Pleasant; Easy to move around; Welcoming; Adaptable, Resource-efficient);
- accord with National planning guidance (e.g. PAN 83 *Master Planning*), including best practice examples.

From this point, references to 'the masterplan' in the Brief include reference to all of the maps, illustrations and information presented in the document, which will be used to assess future planning applications in the Brief area.

2 <https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20161201151506/https://beta.gov.scot/policies?topics=Building%20planning%20and%20design>

Torvean Gateway Indicative Masterplan

Revised Brief Boundary

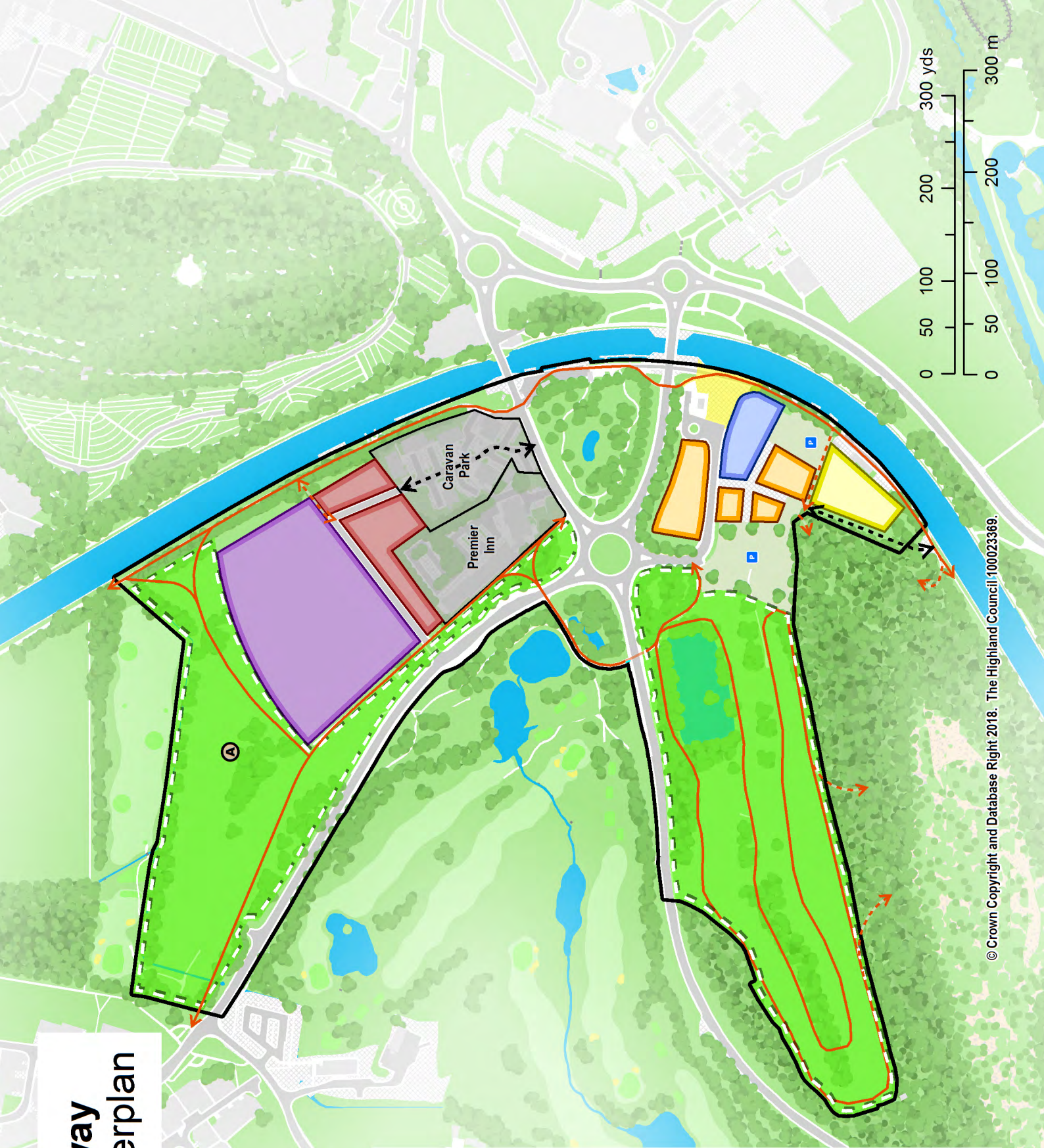
Growing Spaces/Allotments

Proposed Landuse

- Residential
- Mixed Use
- Community
- Hotel
- Potential School Site
- Committed Development
- Important Public Realm
- Park

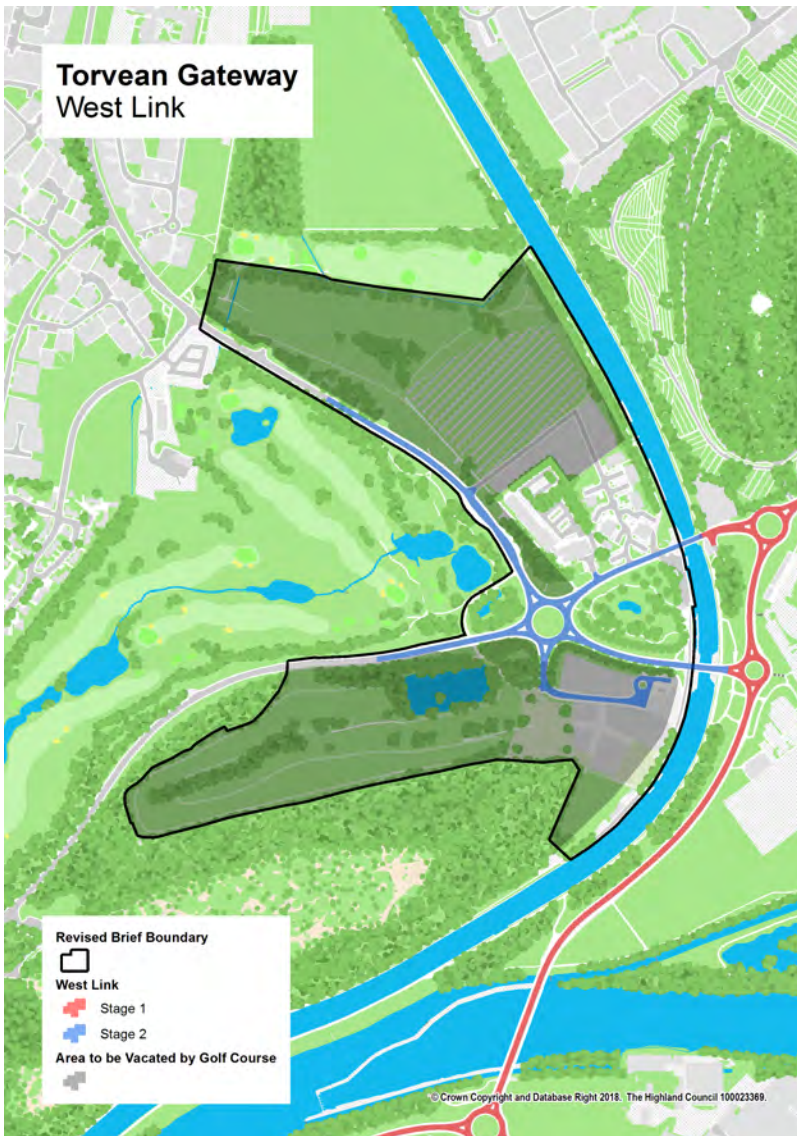
Proposed Access and Parking

- Parking
- Potential Access
- Shared Path
- Potential Shared Path



West Link

- 9 The 'West Link Road' is a key infrastructure component in the area. Stage 1 of this project now connects pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles from Holm Roundabout on Dores Road over the River Ness to the A82, Glenurquhart Road. With Stage 1 complete and consent granted for Stage 2, construction of a new roundabout, realignment of the A82 and General Booth Road, and a second canal swing bridge is underway (find out more on the [West Link webpage](#))⁽³⁾.



West Link Road

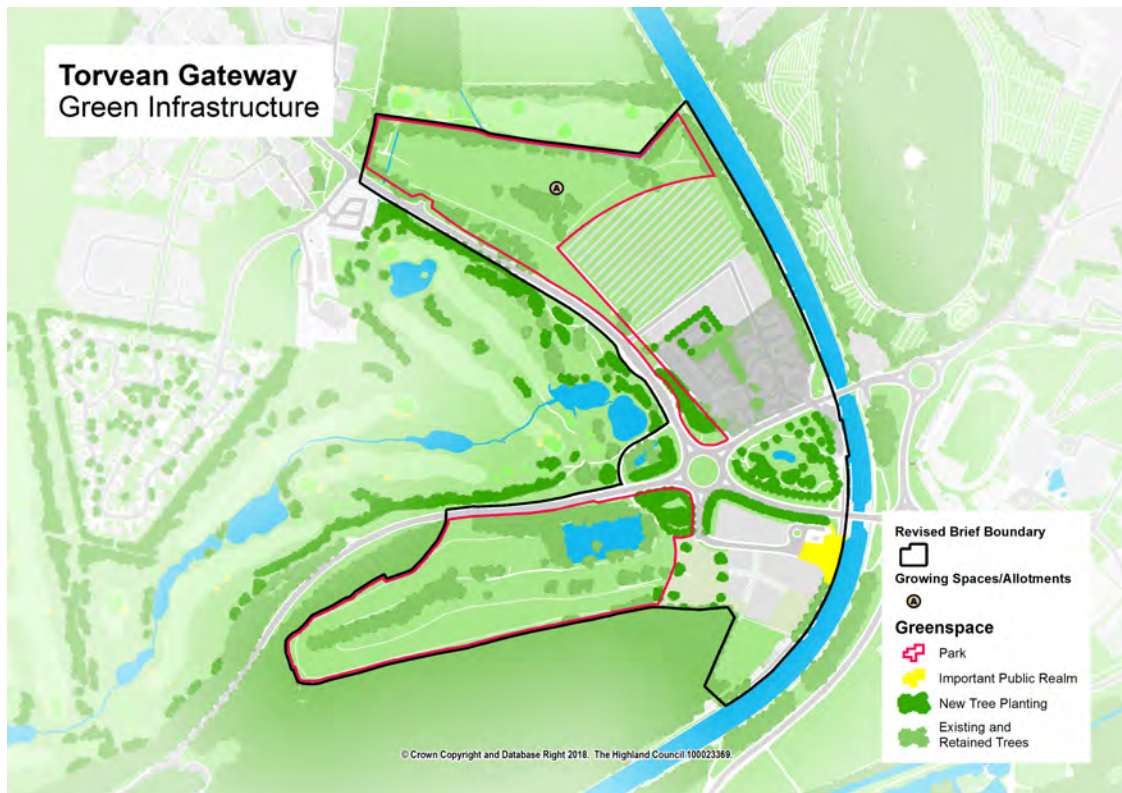
3 https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1523/transport_and_streets/128/the_inverness_west_link

Torvean Park

- 10** Once land becomes available after the contractors constructing Stage 2 of West Link vacate the site there is an early opportunity to deliver a new city park at Torvean. The former land use as a golf course means that, with the addition of a new path network and appropriate future maintenance, this area can be made available to the public for play and recreation. It also offers the opportunity to facilitate the relocation of [Inverness Parkrun](#) which often experiences conflicts between their regular events and major events at its current location at Bught Park.
- 11** The design of this park will deliver benefits for both people and nature. The Council will prepare a detailed design for the park, which will include areas set aside for nature and biodiversity benefits, for example areas of wildflower meadow planting. This will enable the Council to contribute in its duty to further the conservation of biodiversity and will contribute to supporting and enhancing the wider green infrastructure and active travel network described below.

Green Infrastructure

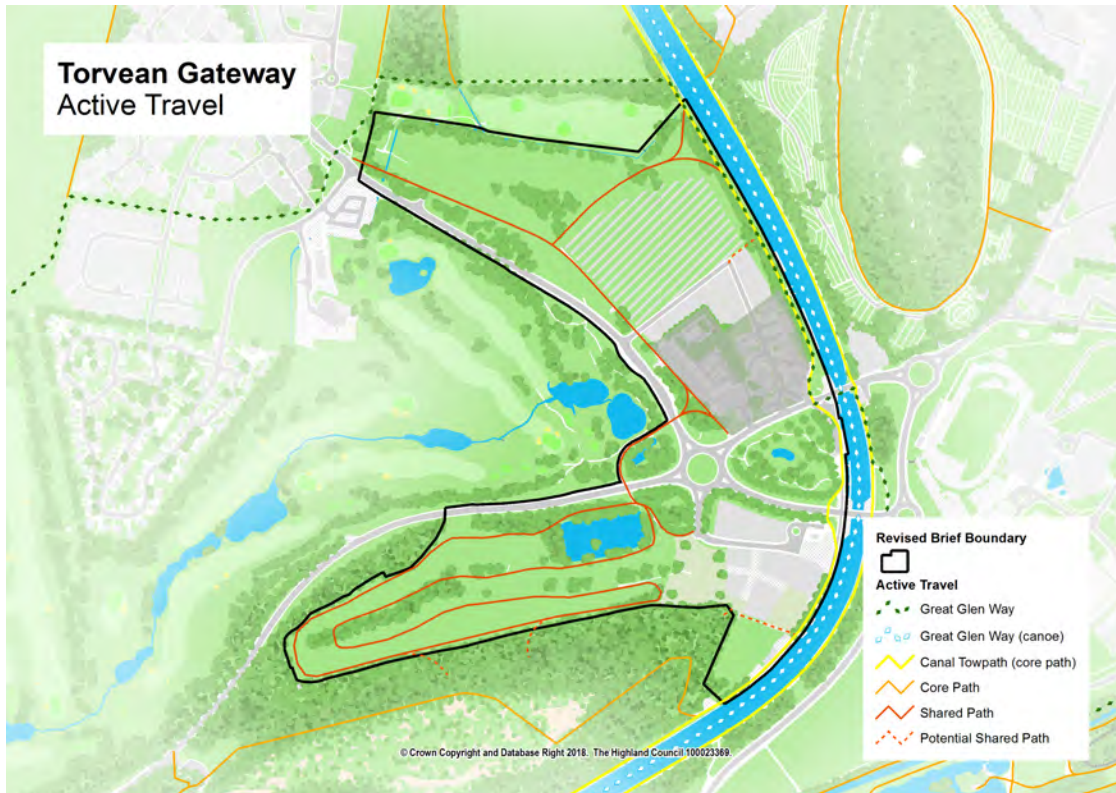
- 12** The former use of the development area as a golf course means there are attractive green and blue (water) spaces across the area. The planting on the new Golf Course, around Stage 2 of West Link, and the existing trees and woodland along the Canal tow paths and adjacent Torvean Quarry mean that this area is well served by generous green and blue infrastructure. The golf course and new roads drainage ponds that manage surface water provide opportunities for nature as well as being attractive landscape features. Balancing these natural assets with the need to deliver new places has been carefully considered in preparing this Brief.
- 13** The Green Infrastructure map below shows the assets and features that exist or are planned in the area. Any areas where new tree and plant species are proposed should feature a variety of predominantly native species suitable for climate, exposure and location.



Green Infrastructure

Active Travel

- 14** The green infrastructure also provides a high quality setting for many of the surrounding active travel network routes that exist in the area. There are various popular and well-used routes. Future development should integrate with these routes and improve active travel connectivity, including connections into Torvean Quarry and the Canal tow paths. The Active Travel map below highlights existing and proposed active travel routes. Developers will be expected to contribute to or deliver the network of active travel routes within the Brief area.

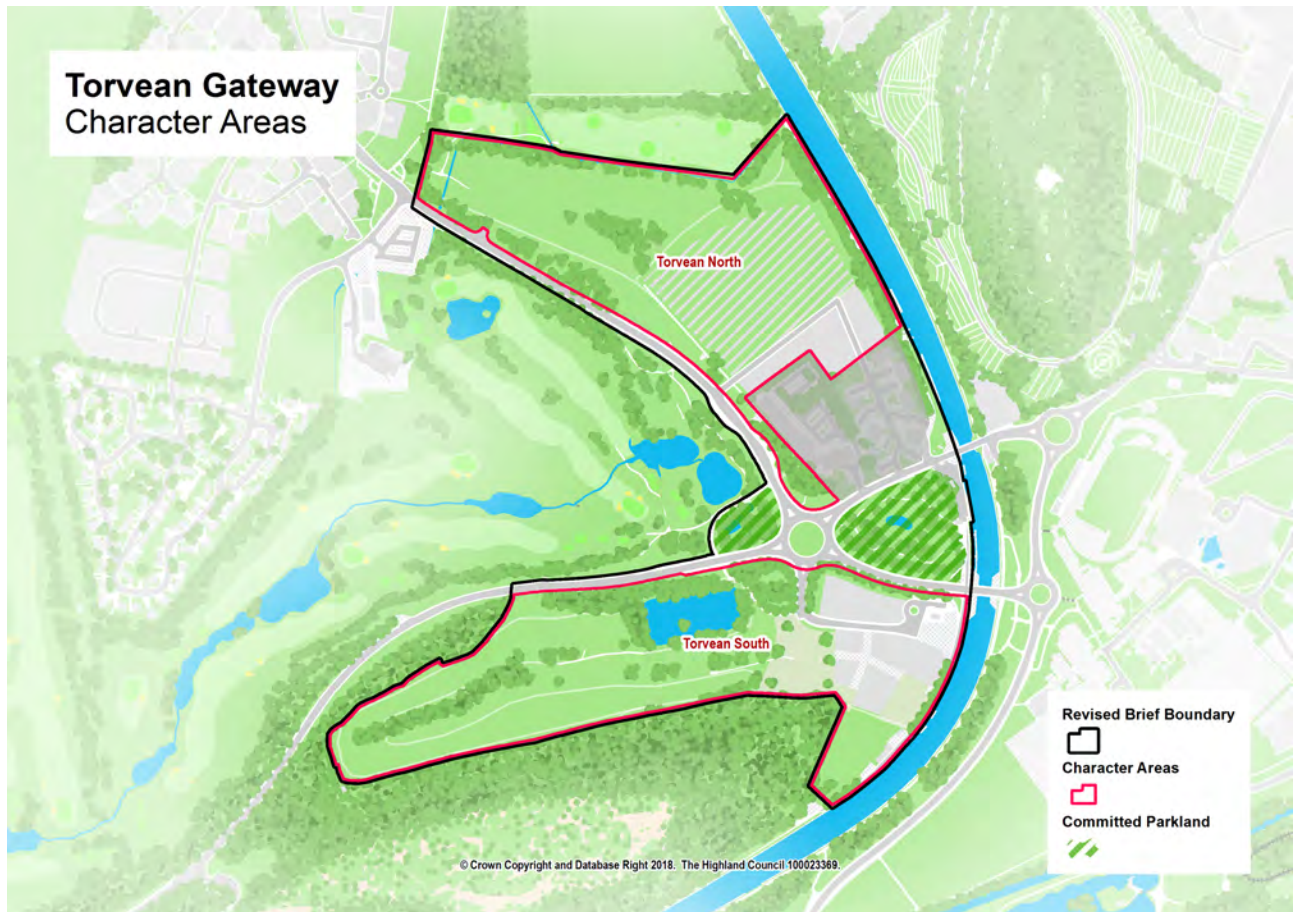


Energy

- 15** The Highland Council promotes national ambitions to transform the places we create through greater energy efficiency, local energy systems and less reliance on carbon-based fuels. The Torvean Gateway area has potential to deliver on these ambitions and to achieve low or zero carbon status. The Development Plan for Highland sets out requirements for sustainability and energy efficient design.
- 16** Applicants in the Torvean Gateway area are expected to demonstrate how their proposals comply with these policies, including how the scheme has taken account of Scotland's Heat Map and the following measures. The Council expects these measures to be incorporated into developments at the outset or safeguarded and planned for future deployment and will welcome engagement with applicants to consider opportunities and their delivery:
- electric vehicle charging infrastructure;
 - Local generation (capture) and distribution of energy and heat;
 - Local electricity and heat storage, enabling excess generation to be stored and later release when demand arises;
 - Air cleansing structures, keeping air clean by filtering out pollutants;
 - Water re-use and cooling networks, perhaps in association with sustainable drainage systems.

Section 3: Character Areas | Raointean Caractair

- 17** The Brief is divided into the two character areas as shown in the map below. These areas are distinguished by their location, land uses and surrounding character. The details that follow explain the 'Indicative Masterplan'. Development criteria for each character area are described and should be addressed when preparing development proposals.



Character Areas

Torvean South

- 18** Torvean South will be a new destination that provides an attractive park and a canal-side open space where pedestrians, cyclists and outdoor activity take priority over the movement of vehicles. It will be easy to walk and cycle to, facilitated by the active travel routes planned or being delivered in and around the area. It will be diverse in uses that provide for both visitors to the city and local people.
- 19** To the west of this character area a new active park will replace the existing golf course. To the east will be a new mixed used commercial and leisure destination adjacent to the Caledonian Canal served by a Primary Street with an important function as a *place* for people to enjoy. Within two of the mixed-use blocks there is opportunity for single-bed homes above ground floor commercial uses. Between these two sites will be an attractive and generous area for parking that will be safely accessible.

- 20 The wider area is rich in sports and recreation opportunities and will serve as a hub for the city. The existing range of sports can be further expanded to embed this area as a diverse and active place. This can be achieved by connecting new routes to those existing, creating new spaces (park) and places (canal-side public realm) to enjoy sport and recreation, and enabling land uses (mixed use commercial development land) that support such activities.
- 21 Should a city-wide strategy emerge in future that identifies sites for Park and Choose facilities, this area may offer potential, given its location on the trunk road network and generous parking provision.
- 22 Early proposals are underway for a dry snow sports centre in the former Torvean Quarry. Whilst these are still at a very early stage and are outwith the Brief area, there is potential for these proposals to complement uses at Torvean South and help deliver the vision for the area. There may be potential for sites in Torvean South to share infrastructure connections (e.g. water and sewerage connections) with proposals in the former Torvean Quarry.
- 23 Where a block is shown as mixed use the following Use Classes are considered acceptable:

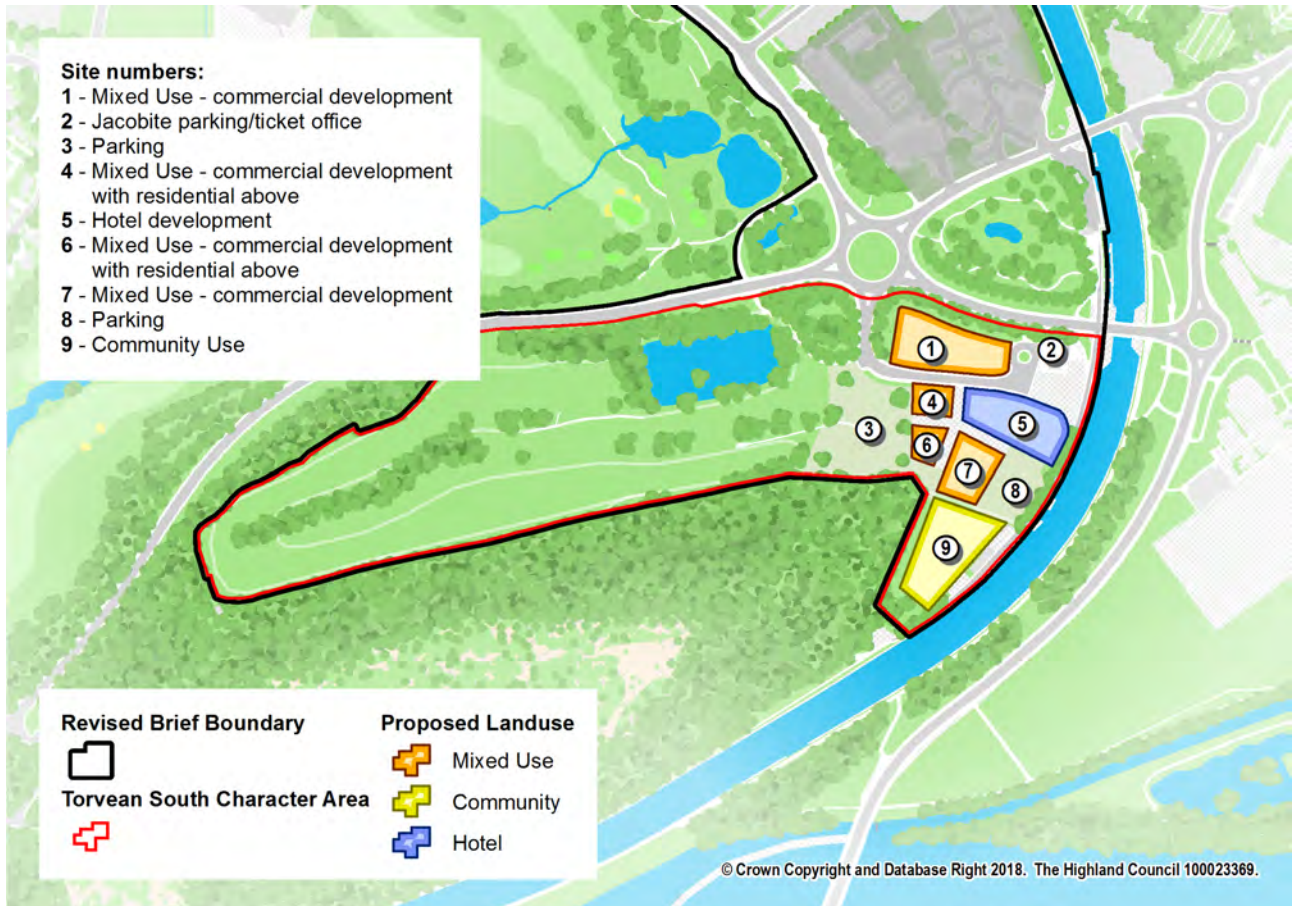
Acceptable Use Classes for Mixed Use Blocks

- 1 (Shops),
- 2 (Financial, professional and other services),
- 3 (Food and Drink),
- 4 (Business),
- 7 (Hotels and Hostels)
- 10 Non-residential institutions.

For Blocks 4 and 6, as well as the above uses, Use Class 9 Houses is also considered acceptable, **restricted to one bedroom homes.**

- 24 The 'Torvean South Sites' map shows nine sites that will deliver the 'Vision'. The Brief sets out guidelines that developers are expected to follow in preparing their proposals. These guidelines, including the 'Torvean Frontages' drawing, will be used to assess future planning applications.
- 25 To enable Jacobite Cruises to continue operating from Torvean, a replacement car parking area, ticket office and access for cars and buses close to the canal are required. Limited car parking and bus drop-off uses are acceptable at site two, but should be sensitively designed to enhance and avoid impact on the important canal-side public realm.
- 26 Community-led proposals to introduce play, recreation and learning facilities to the park will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Support for specific proposals will be based on the conformity with the 'Vision', 'Indicative Masterplan' and Development Criteria where relevant.

Section 3: Character Areas | Raointean Caractair

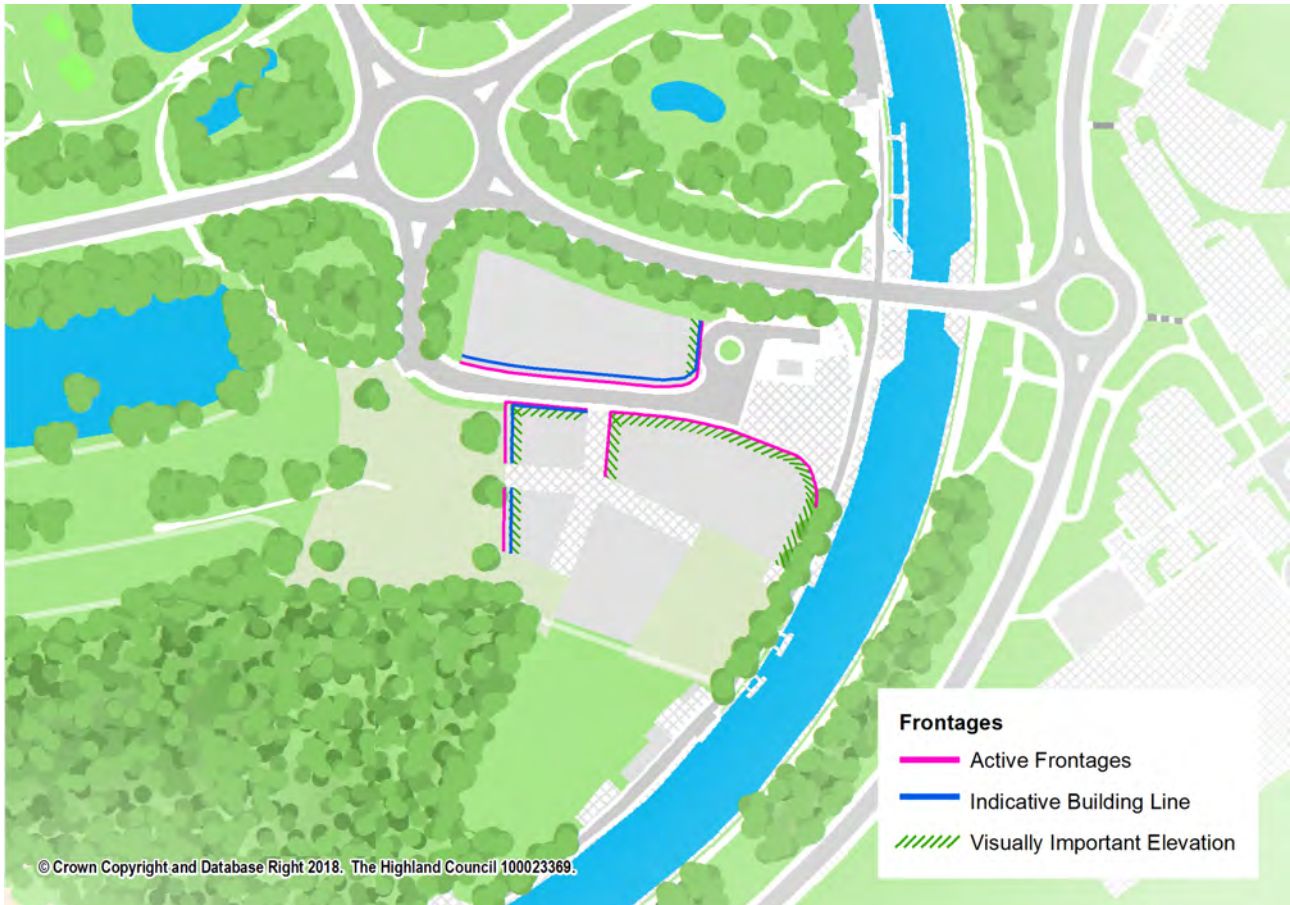


Torvean South Sites

Street design

- 27** All streets will be designed with a hierarchy that starts with pedestrians, cyclists, public transport then private vehicles. Streets will be designed to encourage low vehicle speed so that they can function primarily as social space. Design will include features that slow traffic such as 'pinch points', hard and soft landscaping (including trees), vertical calming and appropriate use of on-street parking. The Primary Street leading to the canal-side will be defined by strong, relatively continuous building lines providing a good sense of visual enclosure.
- 28** Development must respect and enhance the gateway qualities of the A82 and canal swing bridges as an important approach to the city (see for example: [Approaching Inverness Strategy and Design Guide](#)).
- 29** The Torvean Frontages diagram below indicates how future development should be designed to give prominence to the primary street within the Torvean South character area. the blue 'Indicative Building Line' shows where the built forms within the blocks are expected to be located. The pink 'Active Frontages' lines show where the primary elevations of buildings should face and where areas of pedestrian activity and interest should be located (for example street-side terraces for eating and drinking). The green 'Visually Important Elevation' hatching

highlights where it is expected that particular attention will be paid to create prominent elevations of key buildings that will be designed to form positive contributions to the landscape and streetscape.



Torvean Frontages

Sites 1, 4, 6 & 7: Mixed use - commercial development

- 30 Site 1** is an important gateway into Torvean South. The route linking the new roundabout to the canal as part of Stage 2 of West Link will form the basis of a new Primary Street. In the short term most of Site 1 will be made available as a temporary car park for the wider area. Once this site is developed, the Council will provide alternative parking on Site 3.
- 31 Sites 4 and 6:** Facilities that attract, retain and entertain visitors are crucial to the success of this new destination because they help to support the viability and vibrancy of the place. The grouping of commercial, sports and visitor uses on these sites give the opportunity to deliver diverse uses that create a critical mass of activities. To ensure the delivery of commercial uses that will deliver the vision for this area, small-scale residential development is permitted on Sites 4 and 6. The only acceptable residential development will be above commercial ground floor uses. The residential development is restricted to single-bed homes to ensure that development does not create unacceptable car-dependence e.g. families with young

Section 3: Character Areas | Raointean Caractair

children that would be encouraged to drive regularly (e.g. for school drop-off). These sites also present opportunities to accommodate visitor services including Scottish Canals, public conveniences and other recreation and sports facilities.

Sites 1,4, 6 & 7 Development guidelines:

- Development must demonstrate exemplary standards of contemporary design. Design, layout and choice of materials must respect and enhance the visual and spatial character of this important canal-side setting.
- Development must present active frontages to the Primary Street and canal-side open space, including pedestrian entrances and high levels of transparency. Active frontages should wrap around corners at key intersections. There should be no blank walls fronting onto public areas.
- Pedestrian entrances, outdoor seating and occasional on-street public parking should be used to attract footfall, promote outdoor activity and provide interest for people visiting the area.
- To support active travel users, specific attention should be afforded in terms of facilities (e.g. bike shelters/parking) and connections, both within the area and to the surrounding active travel network.
- Vehicle access and parking serving buildings on these blocks should be restricted to the rear of buildings, except on the primary street where occasional on street public parking will be supported. Service delivery bays/infrastructure and bin storage should be located to the rear or the side where appropriate. High quality landscaping and planting should be used to screen/soften these areas and minimise their visual impact.
- Insensitive over-sized signage will not be supported.
- Residential development restricted to single-bed homes on upper floors of sites 4 and 6 only.
- Building height should not exceed 2 storeys.

Site 2: Jacobite Cruises and important public realm

- 32** Stage 2 of West Link will provide new canal-side infrastructure for boats, including the relocation of Jacobite Cruises' facilities. Site 2 provides this opportunity as well as facilitating a high degree of interest and activity for the public to congregate and enjoy the new swing bridge and in-canal activities. The provision of a high quality public realm is therefore key for this site and to the success of the Torvean South Character Area.

Site 2 development criteria

- High quality appropriate building and surface finishes that respect the historic character of the canal-side setting. Where necessary surface finishes should distinguish where restricted vehicle access is permitted to, for example, the tow path. Design should achieve a simple, uncluttered appearance.
- Ground level should match that of the canal tow path, making use of fill to raise levels where appropriate or necessary.
- Development should retain existing or provide new connections to the active travel routes identified in this Brief and in the wider area.
- Development related to the relocation of Jacobite Cruises and its setting should be sensitively designed to reflect the prominent and public canal-side location. No set-down of plant or other equipment will be permitted within this site.
- In the long term bus drop off should be limited to the eastern end of the Primary Street shown in the Indicative Masterplan, and not into the area identified as important public realm. Bus parking opportunities may also be available in Sites 3 and 8.

Sites 3 and 8: Parking

- 33** Visitors driving into the area may require vehicle parking. There is opportunity to combine this provision with major events parking, for example at Bught Park, where current provision can be inadequate. There may also be potential for coach and trailer parking to be accommodated within these sites only.
- 34 Site 3:** Design, layout and materials must reflect the sensitivity of the setting including its visual impact on the new park and views from the A82 at this important city gateway.
- 35 Site 8:** This area, which is subject to flooding, presents an opportunity for visitor parking to the immediate area as well as parking for major events at, for example, Bught Park where current provision is inadequate. Given its proximity to the Caledonian Canal and tree-lined tow path, the design and layout of this parking area must be sensitive to and integrate well with adjacent uses.

Sites 3 & 8 Development guidelines

- The design and layout of parking bays should be informal, with sensitive demarcation and should avoid the use of impermeable surfaces (e.g. tarmac). Preference should be given to permeable surfaces that allow water to permeate the ground to help address potential flood issues and that can contribute positively to the natural and visual environment (e.g. grass matting) ;
- Planting and landscaping, including new trees, should be used to break up parking areas into small bays (around 6-8 cars) and soften the visual impact of parked cars.

Site 5: Hotel development

- 36** Tourist accommodation continues to remain in high demand in the city and there is a good opportunity at Torvean to realise potential to help meet this demand. As well as providing an anchor use of the site, it may also add to the mix, helping to create vibrancy to this new city destination.

Site 5 development guidelines:

- The primary elevation, including the hotel entrance, must face the Primary Street.
- Hotel accommodation must present active frontages to this street, the canal-side important public realm and the towpath, including spill-out space as appropriate.
- Design and layout must respond sensitively to the setting of the adjacent Caledonian Canal and must capitalise on this historic asset as a positive neighbour.
- Taller building heights may be acceptable at the western end of the site but at the eastern end, adjacent to the canal, the height should be restricted to avoid significant overshadowing of the adjacent canal-side important public realm. Opportunities to create a roof terrace overlooking the canal should be explored.
- Car parking and service access should be restricted to the rear of the site (on the south side of the building). Use of Site 8 for a Hotel's parking needs would be acceptable. Safe, attractive pedestrian routes must be provided between all parking areas and the principal entrance/hotel lobby/ Primary Street.
- Opportunities for ground floor mixed uses include retail and food and drink, for example restaurant space overlooking the canal and canal-side important public realm.

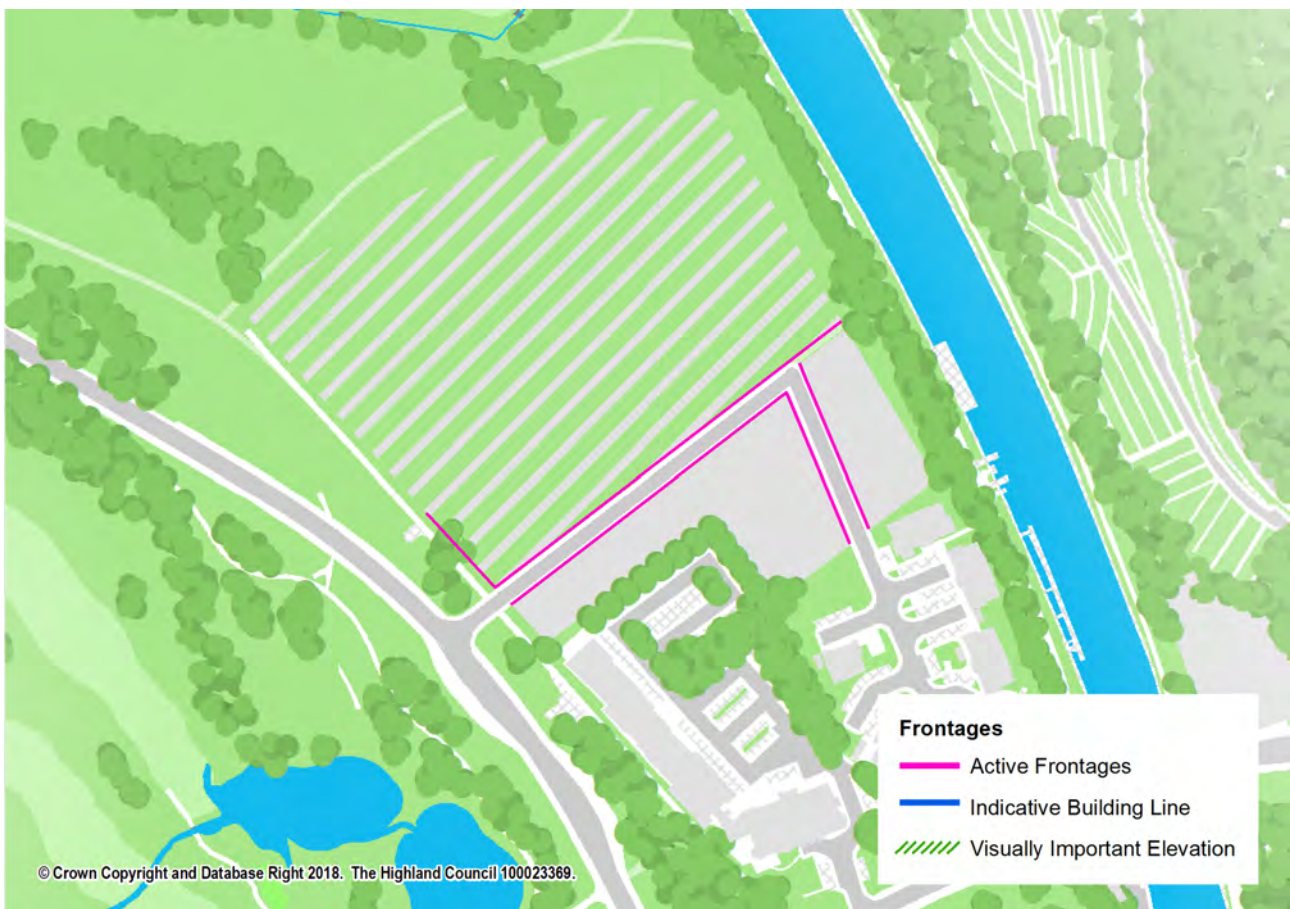
Site 9: Community use

- 37** Inverness Rowing Club has a long-established presence on the banks of the Caledonian Canal. This contributes to the vibrancy and diversity of uses in the area and the Club will continue to be an important user while Torvean South is re-developed as a city destination. The rowing club is scoping options to expand their existing facility and sufficient land is available in the southern corner of the site to support future plans. This area may also be suitable for meeting the needs of the wider site in terms of flood risk and potential SUDS.

Torvean North

- 38** Torvean North will provide a new neighbourhood with great active travel connections to local services at Charleston, as well as active travel and vehicle links to the rest of the city. It will safeguard the setting of the Caledonian Canal and be set back from General Booth Road. A generous provision of open space between the area and the new golf practice course will provide play and recreation space and help to maintain a high quality green network.

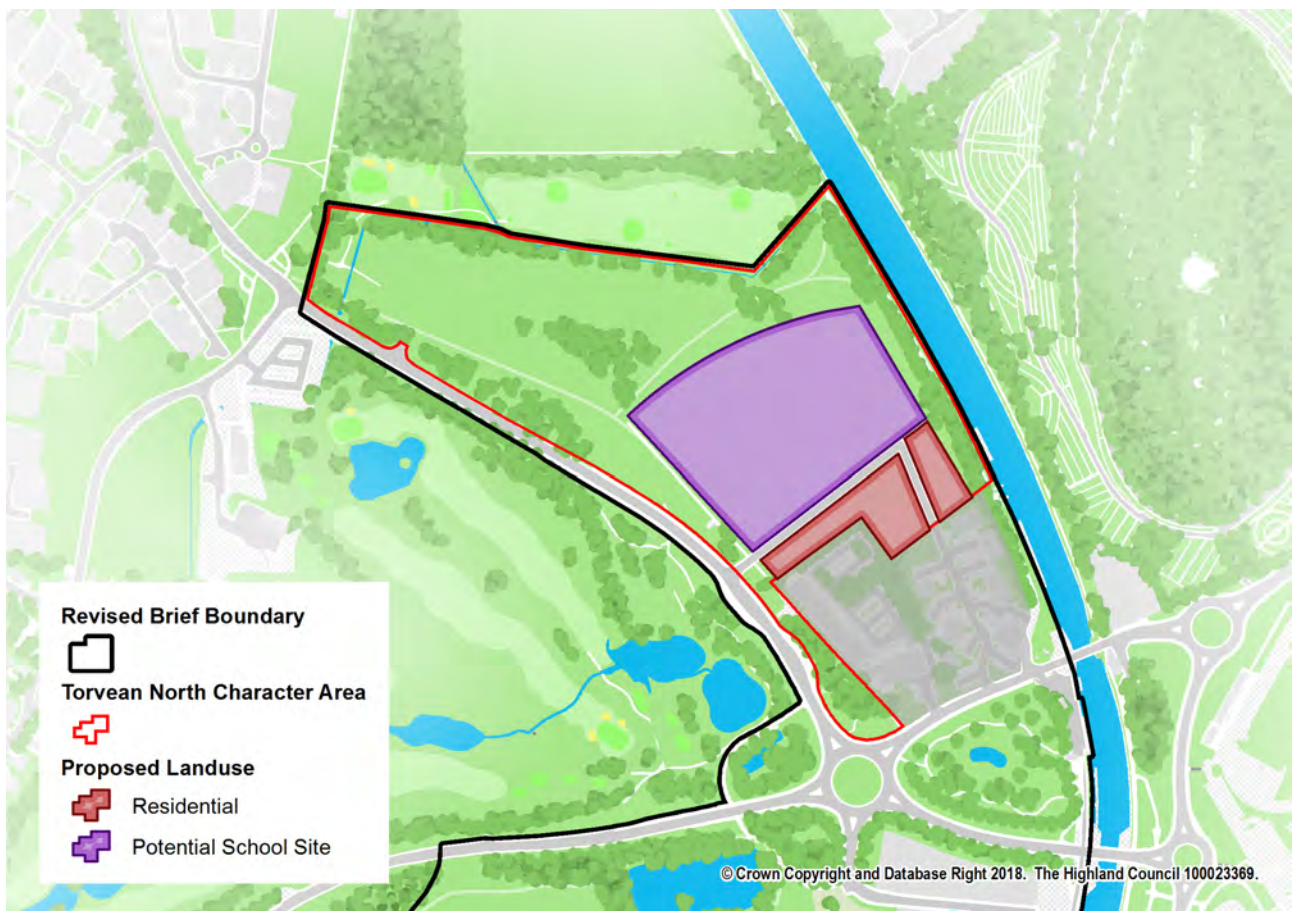
- 39** As the Council develops their strategy for education provision in the city it is important that Council-owned land is considered as an option for future school and nursery use. Should the Council conclude that there is not a requirement for this land to be used for a school, it can be developed for residential use, subject to alternative school capacity being in place. For avoidance of doubt, acceptable Use Classes for the Potential School Site at Torvean North include Class 10 Non-residential institutions and, in the case of a school not being required, Class 9 Houses.
- 40** The area identified for a potential school lies south of the parkland area that is adjacent to the Torvean Golf Practice Holes and will be visually connected to the existing developed area (Premier Inn and Torvean Caravan Park) by a new city neighbourhood.
- 41** All planning applications proposed in this area will be assessed against the extent to which they conform with this Brief, including the Development Criteria and the 'Torvean North Active Frontages' diagram below. The pink 'Active Frontages' lines show where the primary elevations of buildings should face and where areas of pedestrian activity and interest should be located.
- 42** Community-led proposals to introduce play, recreation and learning facilities to the park will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Support for specific proposals will be based on the conformity with the 'Vision', 'Indicative Masterplan' and Development Criteria where relevant.



Torvean North Active Frontages

43 Planning Context

- 44** The Torvean Caravan Park has planning permission (reference: 16/03534/FUL) for 48 flats and 400 square meters of convenience retail (in the ground floors of two of the blocks that front the A82).
- 45** The Premier Inn has applied for permission (reference: 18/03507/FUL) to extend their hotel and car park to the north west. The principle of development in the area is therefore established.



Torvean North Sites

Torvean North Development Criteria

- The layout of this new neighbourhood and potential school should follow an urban street pattern with perimeter blocks that allow an efficient use of land and maximise the creation of safe well-overlooked streets; blocks should:
 - Provide strong, relatively continuous building lines creating well-defined streets and spaces with a good sense of spatial enclosure;
 - Ensure streets, paths and public open space are well-overlooked by frequently spaced pedestrian entrances and high levels of transparency at ground floor level;
 - Achieve a clear definition between public and private space, including shared areas such as semi-private communal gardens, service areas, waste storage, cycle parking etc.;
 - Locate some parking in secure, rear courtyards that are well-overlooked;
- The movement network should maximise connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists within the area and to the surrounding street and path network, including the canal towpath. Design of vehicle routes should encourage low vehicle speed so that streets function primarily as a social space – including features that slow traffic such as ‘pinch points’, hard and soft landscaping (including trees), vertical calming and appropriate use of on-street parking.
- Car-parking should not dominate the public realm. On-street parking should be designed to be an integral part of the streetscape using trees, planting or hard landscaping to arrange parking in small groups and balance visual impact.
- SUDS features should be designed to integrate with and make a positive contribution to open space provision.
- All homes should be provided with fit-for-purpose outdoor private or communal amenity space that benefits from direct sunlight (e.g. gardens, balconies, roof terraces, patios or communal courtyards) and bicycle parking for residents.
- Opportunities for canal-side housing should be explored, where buildings are sensitive to, but overlook the Caledonian Canal;
- If a school is required in this area, the primary elevation of the building should be used to define a new street. Tall perimeter fencing of the school will not be acceptable. Feature walling, planting, landscaping and building edges should be used as secure boundaries where they are required.

Section 4: Infrastructure delivery | Lìbhrigeadh Bun-structair

- 46** Developer contributions towards infrastructure in this area are set out in the original Brief and are updated, where relevant, by the Developer Contributions Supplementary Guidance (DCSG).



**The Highland
Council
Comhairle na
Gàidhealtachd**
