

Policy 15(d)

Muirtown and South Kessock Development Brief



MUIRTOWN & SOUTH KESSOCK
DEVELOPMENT BRIEF
JANUARY 2016



Scottish
Canals



The Highland
Council
Comhairle na
Gaidhealtachd

BRIEF BOUNDARY



INTRODUCTION

This development brief for the Muirtown and South Kessoock area of Inverness has been prepared to guide future development in the area and to assist the Council, partners and community organisations in making any bids for funding to help regenerate the wider brief area. It reflects the outcomes of the charrette workshops with the community and stakeholders that took place in February and April, 2014. Scottish Canals and The Highland Council sponsored the charrette jointly with support from the Scottish Government as part of its Charrette Mainstreaming Programme 2014.

The spatial focus of the brief is an area in the north of Inverness and includes the Muirtown Basin eastwards to the mouth of the River Ness. Scottish Canals have interest in developing the Muirtown Basin area with the Highland Council having an ongoing interest in the regeneration of the South Kessoock area. A holistic approach was taken to the future development of the area considering how to strengthen connections within the area and more widely to other parts of the city and in particular the City centre.

Section 2 of this document sets out an analysis of the area and Section 4 setting out the regeneration strategy with a series of projects identified through the charrette process that were considered appropriate to carry this forward. These projects range from shorter term projects, some of which are already being delivered, alongside some larger scale and longer term aspirations and aims.

In preparing this Development Brief the Council has had significant input from members of the public through intensive and collaborative workshop events held over 4 days during the Spring of 2014. The outcome of these events informed the preparation of a draft brief and was the subject of consultation on its content in March 2015. The feedback from the consultation has been considered in the preparation of this document.

This Development Brief is a material planning consideration for development management and investment. The Brief is statutory Supplementary Guidance to the Development Plan.

This guidance will not be applied retrospectively to applications which have already received planning permission (unless a new application 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.

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INTRODUCTION BACKGROUND

The Muirtown - South Kessock area has the ability to strengthen its role in the city and the Highlands and develop its role in the provision of recreational opportunities and activities (including water based), as well as providing new homes for people to live. The South Kessock area is a unique location being the only part of the City that has a close relationship with the coast. This provides significant opportunities to develop a stronger link with the Firth and the River Ness through the enhancement of existing infrastructure. In the Carse the main emphasis is in employment based activities, whilst the Muirtown Basin area is an important marine gateway with potential to develop as a tourism hub providing leisure and recreational space alongside providing commercial, community and housing opportunities.

Scottish Canals and Highland Council have established a joint venture relationship which aims to maximise the tourism, leisure and regeneration potential of the Caledonian Canal and to pull resources and land together to facilitate this. Scottish Canals has highlighted Muirtown Basin as a key tourism, leisure and development opportunity and Highland Council have also long recognised the need for regeneration of the South Kessock area. Funding was secured from the Scottish Government's Charrette Mainstreaming programme to facilitate the delivery of this Development Brief for the Muirtown and South Kessock area. The charrette resulted in a series of plans and proposals for the area which have now been pulled into this Development Brief.

PLAN OF BRIEF BOUNDARY



INTRODUCTION POLICY CONTEXT

Reinforcing Inverness' Regeneration Strategy

The City of Inverness has a major role to play in delivering the vision as set out in the Highland-wide Local Development Plan for the Inner Moray Firth area. While consolidation of the City continues through development around the southern edge of the City there is a need to look to the regeneration and renewal of specific areas of the City. The Highland-wide Local Development Plan sets out four regeneration priorities in the City. Muirtown and South Kessoack is identified as one of these strategic regeneration areas. The boundary for the proposed project has been discussed with local members and amended following their comments. The final boundary of the Development Brief has been amended to take account of the outcomes of the charrette process.

Policy Context

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. For this brief area the Development Plan comprises the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan.

The Highland-wide Local Development Plan 2012 allocates an area at Muirtown - South Kessoack to have the delivery of development and regeneration opportunities identified and coordinated through a masterplan led approach.

POLICY 6 Muirtown and South Kessoack

The Council will support masterplan led development proposals for the Muirtown/South Kessoack area (as indicated on Map 3) in the short term which fit with the provisions of the existing Inverness Local Plan for the development of the area, whilst seeking to ensure that they deliver improvements to the transport network, including improvements at the Telford Street Retail Park roundabout, and do not result in adverse effects on the integrity of the Moray Firth SAC.

The Council intends to adopt as supplementary guidance a future developer led masterplan or produce its own development brief for part or all of the area. This masterplan or brief will be guided by the following principles and objectives:

- net improvement of the local transport network including the junction at Telford Street Retail Park;
- maximum employment potential from commercial use of the waterfront frontage at the Muirtown Basin;
- safeguarding and if possible enhancement of navigation, water based recreation facilities, heritage features, and public pedestrian access, including the avoidance of any adverse effect on the integrity of the Moray Firth SAC; and
- greater diversification of housing tenure and renewal of housing stock within the area.



INTRODUCTION PLANNING

The Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) contains the requirement for the Council to deliver masterplan led development proposals. The Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan identifies for development, two infill housing sites in Merkinch and the potential for housing development at the former quarry site in Clachnaharry. These sites form an integral part of the setting for the wider development area and have as such been included in the core of the development brief.

The Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP) confirms the key built development sites within the area, at Muirtown Basin, Carse Industrial Estate, Carse Road and Glendoe Terrace.

The IMFLDP also includes the potential for the improvement of sporting and recreational facilities on land adjacent to Merkinch Primary School and the protection of the valuable amenity areas within the area. The approach taken by the IMFLDP does also allow for the potential for the delivery of infill development within the defined settlement development area where proposals are compatible with existing adjacent land uses.



Mixed Use

Site: IN21 Muirtown Basin

Area (ha): 16.3 **Uses:** Business, Community, Tourism, Leisure, 30 homes.

Requirements: Developer to prepare masterplan / development brief to be agreed with the Council who may adopt this as **Supplementary Guidance**. This should address: no net detriment to the local transport network including the adjacent Teiford Street Retail Park and King Brude Road A862 road junctions; maximum employment potential from commercial use of the waterfront at Muirtown Basin; safeguarding and if possible enhancement of navigation, recreation facilities, heritage features, existing woodland and public pedestrian access; avoidance of any adverse effect on the integrity of the Moray Firth SAC (any water borne access in accordance with the **Scottish Marine Wildlife Watching Code** and the **Dolphin Space Programme** as well as avoidance of any cumulative impact of boat traffic as assessed according to 'Dolphins and Development'); other survey and any resultant mitigation.

Community

Site: IN27 West of Merkinch Primary School

Area (ha): 2.6 **Uses:** Sporting/ recreational facilities connected to school and wider community.

Requirements: Safeguarding and improvement of existing uses.

Industry

Site: IN34 Carse Industrial Estate

Area (ha): 3.2 **Uses:** Industrial.

Requirements: Development in accordance with planning permissions 12/04705/FUL, 13/00338/FUL and 13/01828/FUL. Flood Risk Assessment (may affect developable area).

Housing

Site: IN17 Carse Road

Area (ha): 0.4 **Housing Capacity:** 16

Requirements: Local traffic management measures; Flood Risk Assessment (may affect developable area).

Site: IN18 Glendoe Terrace

Area (ha): 1.1 **Housing Capacity:** 50

Requirements: Local traffic management measures; Flood Risk Assessment (may affect developable area).

Site: IN19 Clachnaharry Quarry

Area (ha): 0.3 **Housing Capacity:** 16

Requirements: Adequate visibility for access onto A862; implementation of a suitable scheme to reduce vehicle speeds on the A862; consideration of underground services in the site's frontage; setback from the quarry face and its woodland cover for safety and shading reasons; improved footpath provision.



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AREA ANALYSIS
DESTINATIONS
OPPORTUNITIES
PUBLIC USE & CONNECTIONS

AREA ANALYSIS DESTINATIONS

This Development Brief covers the part of the City of Inverness. Development in this area needs to consider impacts on some very important natural and built heritage features including:

- Caledonian Canal Scheduled Monument
- Moray Firth Special Area of Conservation
- Clachnaharry Conservation Area

Of equal importance to the City are the recreation areas in the brief area which include the Local Nature Reserve and football pitches as well as extensive opportunities for walking and cycling..

The brief area is within the catchment area of Inverness High School (secondary school) and the primary school catchment area for Muirtown and Merkinch Primary Schools. The lack of capacity at Merkinch Primary is an existing issue with temporary accommodation being provided on site. The development of further housing in the catchment will place further pressure on the existing school accommodation. New development in the development brief area is likely to push the Merkinch Primary School over capacity. It is therefore important to consider the need for school expansion, options include provision of a new school with resultant sale of the existing primary or the extension of the existing school.

Utilities and public transport

The bulk of development opportunities identified within the Brief area are identified on brownfield sites and capacity already exists to service most of the development opportunities identified. There will, however, be a need to upgrade some services to build in capacity to accommodate intensification of use. Developer obligations will be sought from developers towards the costs of improvements.

Public transport (bus) connections to the wider area are largely in place serving existing communities within the brief area, given the range of development uses identified extension of these services may be required.

Constraints and Sensitivities

There are very few sites which come forward for development which are completely constraint or sensitivity free. Constraints and sensitivities do not always hinder development on a site, they just mean you have to work with them rather than against them to produce a high quality development.

The brief has identified several areas within the brief area where transport and active travel connections are viewed as a constraint to regeneration and growth, these are highlighted within the individual sections of the document with a consideration of actions required to address them. The Council will undertake a Transport Appraisal to identify measures required to address any transport, active travel or road safety issues. Developer contributions may be required towards identified improvements.

Flood Risk is an issue for extensive areas within the brief area. Proposals for built development will consider this issue in moving forward. A strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared which demonstrates the areas of the South Kessoock and Muirtown area that lie within areas of Low to Medium Risk and being suitable for most forms of development, excluding essential civil infrastructure (e.g. schools) where a higher level of protection is generally required. Detailed Flood Risk Assessments may be required for individual proposals within the area to confirm the level of protection and mitigation measures required. The study also confirms the level of protection to the area from flood risk provided from the Firth (coastal) by the existing Coastal Flood embankment. The completion of the River Ness flood alleviation works will provide protection from the River Ness (fluvial) flood risk.

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.

Destinations

The project area covers a large swathe of Inverness including several destinations (see map opposite) which each have their own identity and character. The area includes:

Muirtown Basin is already recognised as an international gateway for European boating visitors. It presents a fantastic opportunity for both land and water based development which could lead to a new waterfront city quarter with a cultural and civic extension of Inverness City Centre. It is already used for berthing leisure craft and as a place of residence for boaters and it is a safe haven for many large commercial craft including the Floating Hotel - the Lord of the Glens.

At Clachnaharry, many proposals relate directly to the Muirtown Basin and providing further connections through pedestrian, canal

and road crossings to the west of the city.

The South Kessoock residential area sits to the north of Merkinch, is also known as the Ferry since prior to the construction of the Kessoock Bridge the Kessoock Ferry sailed to North Kessoock from the pier. This area is considered isolated from the Merkinch and City Centre areas due to the railway line passing through the area. At Muirtown, the Telford Retail Park and the Carse Industrial Estate are nestled between South Kessoock / Merkinch and Muirtown Basin. The area lies several metres below the level of Muirtown Basin which presents a challenge in terms of connectivity. In recent years, several retail outlet operations have ceased in the retail side of the estate. These sites represent key opportunities for change.

The Merkinch Local Nature Reserve (LNR) sits between South Kessoock and the Beauty Firth. The area has a diverse set of wildlife habitats with a wide variety of plants and animals and as such was designated as a LNR in 2007. The LNR is the 50th local nature reserve in Scotland and is the only one in the Highlands.

The Merkinch area skirts the edge of the study area to the south. Recent regeneration efforts have seen vacant sites being promoted for affordable and social housing. It is essential that these regeneration efforts are reinforced by the development brief or the Muirtown / South Kessoock area.

The key challenges and opportunities in the area are:

- Delivery of leisure, tourism and housing led regeneration around Muirtown Basin;
- The need to address complex movement patterns in the area on both land and water;
- The need to improve walking and cycling connections to, from, and within the area;
- The protection and enhancement of the natural, built and cultural heritage of the area;
- the regeneration of the South Kessoock area and the opportunity to improve connections between Muirtown and South Kessoock;
- the opportunity to create an internationally recognised water-side destination at Muirtown Basin



AREA ANALYSIS OPPORTUNITIES



MUIRTOWN BASIN

The opportunities map highlights some of the key sites and opportunities across the brief area which were highlighted and discussed at the charrette. This recognises a range of uses or driving themes emerging which will dictate their future. This brief also recognises a series of opportunity sites including residential infill opportunities in South Kessock, employment opportunity sites in Carse Industrial Estate and a concentration of potential sites to the south of Muirtown Basin which could be brought forward for a range of uses including residential and a range of other uses such as tourism, leisure and culture.

This brief also presents the opportunity to reinforce the physical connections between these locations and their attractiveness which will help increase use. Some of these routes or sections of them are not pleasant for pedestrian and cycling at present and improvements need to be provided to enhance this aspect. The plan also identifies some key 'pinch points' which act as gateways into areas which need to be improved.

There are several traffic bottlenecks within the Muirtown / Merkinch / South Kessock that need further assessment for the wider Inverness North area. Traffic assessments may be required to assess current congestion and identify opportunities for improvements particularly at Clachnaharry Road, Telford Street / Muirtown Bridge Roundabout and the Academy Street / Blackbridge / Grant Street corridor. Any improvements would integrate the adjacent traffic and pedestrian corridors to provide high quality environmental and amenity benefits. Highland Council also have aspirations to carry out a traffic assessment of the study area and hence other improvements may be identified through a co-ordinated approach.



MUIRTOWN



MERKINCH



AREA ANALYSIS PUBLIC USE & CONNECTIONS



CLACHNAHARRY

The public use & connections map shows an overview of the various areas of land within the study area where the public can access waterfront or parkland or where there are other public uses such as schools or leisure uses. This map highlights the existing provision of waterfront amenity within this area. Whilst there is already good coverage for people accessing open spaces and waterside areas, the framework highlights an opportunity to reinforce this further and create a joined up series of spaces along the waterfronts for local residents but also to appeal to the wider city residents and visitors. This appeal is enhanced by the fact that green routes connect the canal basin with the river with the local nature reserve and have the potential to connect into a wider, strategic network of walking and cycling routes. The map identifies a number of key routes which need to be enhanced for public enjoyment and particularly for pedestrian and cycle use which could further strengthen the city's position as a people friendly, healthy place.



MUIRTOWN SWING BRIDGE

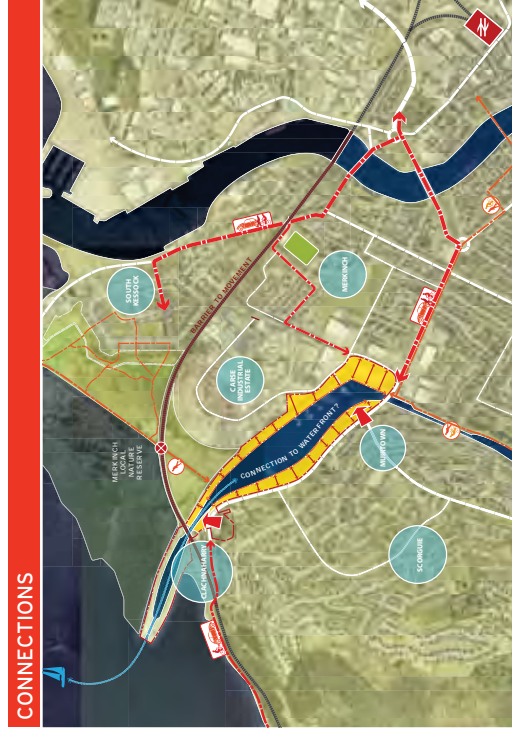
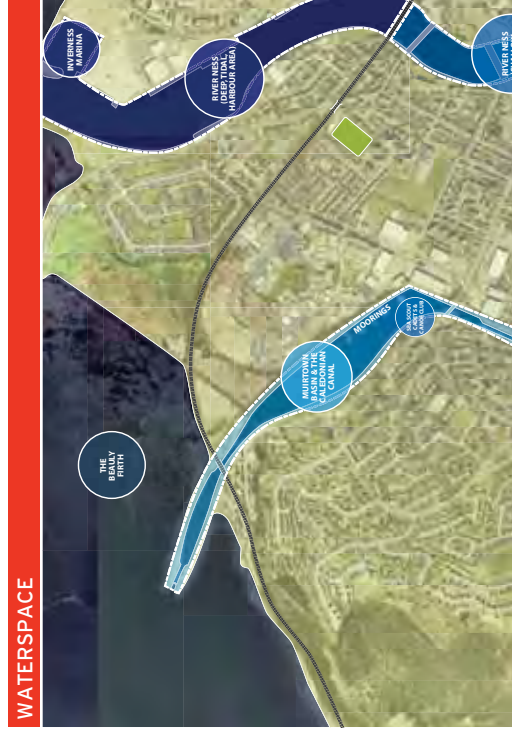
One of the key issues which was discussed at the charrette was the disconnected nature of South Kessoock which is largely cut off from the surrounding city by the River, Canal and the railway line. At present, the main access route that enters the South Kessoock area under the railway line at Lower Kessoock St / Wyvis Place. Whilst the charrette explored the idea of extending the route of Glendoe Terrace across the railway line to provide another access route, upon further investigation it was decided that this would be too expensive and unfeasible since it would need a lifting mechanism to get people over the railway line. In addition to the desire to maximise the routes between the different locations within the study area the map opposite also shows opportunities where these routes could be further enhanced.



KESSOOCK NATURE RESERVE



AREA ANALYSIS PHYSICAL BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES





3

DEVELOPMENT BRIEF
PROPOSALS
LONG TERM VISION
AND MASTERPLAN

DEVELOPMENT BRIEF SUMMARY DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

The Vision map presents an overview of all the project ideas and design concepts that were discussed at the charrette which should now form the basis of an Action Plan for the Caledonian Canal Partnership (Scottish Canals and Highland Council) to focus upon with other stakeholders and delivery groups.

This plan sets out development opportunities, access improvements, enhanced greenspaces, tourism and leisure opportunities which were explored as part of the charrette process.

The following sections of the Development Brief set out the proposals and regeneration initiatives sought to be delivered in each part of the area:

- Clachnaharry
- South Kessock and Local Nature Reserve
- Merkinch
- Muirtown Basin
- Muirtown

This list includes projects identified at the charrette event, through the consultation periods and also in discussion with interested parties.

It is worth noting that these projects now extend beyond the original boundary of the charrette project such is the importance of connecting to closely related areas outwith the original defined boundary. The Vision map and the associated masterplan diagram have helped underpin a subsequent bid to enhance strategic access and greenspace improvements in the area.

The overall masterplan encapsulates the main themes for each of the individual areas within the wider area.

The Consultation events have highlighted the main priorities for development and regeneration of the area as well as the potential for enhancing and developing existing facilities and employment generating areas. The following sections provide more context as the history of each of the areas.

The emerging masterplan map illustrates the main themes for each

of the individual destinations within the brief area. The following sections highlight the various proposals identified at the workshop sessions in more detail along with a consideration of the next steps/ actions that need to be delivered to assist in the delivery of each proposal.

Each individual area within the brief sets out the Opportunities and Actions identified through the consultation process, along with identified development requirements and next steps. There is potential for development sites identified within this Brief to have an adverse effect on qualifying natural heritage interests alone or in combination, any proposals should avoid any adverse impact on the integrity of these sites.

Diagrams and illustrations have also been included within each section to highlight design ideas and potential solutions for each of the areas.





CLACHNACHARRY

Area Analysis

Clachnaharry village lies to the west of the Caledonian Canal at the mouth of the Muirtown Basin. The part of the village to the north of the Far North Rail line forms part of a designated conservation area which also includes the sea locks at the mouth of the Beauty Firth of the Caledonian Canal (Scheduled Monument).

There is an ongoing concern in Clachnaharry with high traffic speeds through this historic village which was also raised as a concern at the workshops.

The quarry site which has been vacant and derelict land for some time had previously been identified as a development opportunity for the village by Scottish Canals through the Local Development Plan process. Detailed proposals were developed and an appropriate access solution had previously been agreed (in principle) with Highland Council requirements. Due to the topography of parts of the site it is anticipated that there would also be a landscape buffer to the rear of the site.

Opportunities & Actions

Opportunity exists to create a 'gateway or entrance' features either on or adjacent to the roadway at either end of the village as well as appropriate traffic management measures to help slow traffic down upon entering the village. Development of the former quarry site could be linked to the historic cluster of canal-side buildings at Clachnaharry. The functional and physical link between the two areas reinforced by traffic management measures on the main road and appropriate access solutions. Road treatments to slow-down general traffic and improve cycle and pedestrian movements between

the quarry site and the canal-side buildings will further reinforce the 'gateway' feature at this end of the village. This would help to reduce traffic speeds and in line with Scottish Planning Policy promotes a design and 'place' lead approach towards new development in what is an important and special, historic location.

This would utilise existing assets and vacant / derelict land in the area to enhance the visual and historic appeal of the village, much of which falls within a Conservation Area. Development here linked to the Canal will also increase economic and tourism opportunities in the village and allow it to benefit from proposed canalside improvements, facilities and amenity.

Scope is identified for additional parking (for the Clachnaharry canal-side buildings) to be provided on the quarry site as part of a complementary development.

The improvement of footpath connections to wider development brief area, Muirtown and Merkinch Local Nature Reserve as well as footpath linkage to Craig Phadrig are identified as key areas of improvement.

CLACHNAHARRY - OPPORTUNITIES AND ACTIONS

	PROPOSALS	DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES / REQUIREMENTS	NEXT STEPS/STATUS
1	Development Opportunity; Clachnaharry Quarry site, tourist and residential opportunity.	Set-back of development from quarry face and woodland.	Scottish Canals funded Feasibility Study to consider an integrated urban design approach to development at the canal and the village.
2	Improved parking at Clachnaharry within the Quarry site.		Consider funding opportunities to improve the approaches to Inverness
3	Development Opportunity; old sawmill site potential for restaurant, leisure heritage and wildlife.	Need for proposals to consider improved local pedestrian connectivity and traffic management in the village. Direct delivery or developer contributions to deliver improvements to any deficiencies in services in infrastructure.	Council to investigate opportunities to make small scale improvements through the Approaching Inverness project.
4	Traffic calming at Clachnaharry; potential signalised crossing		
5	Delivery of a new heritage centre; utilise existing Scottish Canals buildings on Clachnaharry side of basin.		
6	Inclusion of road network / access improvements.		
7	Improve paths /wider linkages.	Improvements required to existing access networks through work on the ground for signage improvements	The Council is hopeful of securing funding from the European Regional Development Funding, to facilitate improvements to existing access networks through work on the ground for signage and foot/cycleway improvements.
8	Highlight and improve access route from Clachnaharry to Craig Phadraig footpath.	Provision of better access to all routes including providing access to view a wide variety of wildlife. Consideration to be given to delivering improved access from A862/ Clachnaharry Road given constraints to road width and limited potential for improvement.	As part of Green Infrastructure Fund bid and/or developer contributions seek delivery of signage improvements and path works. To provide better access to route providing access to view a wide variety of wildlife.

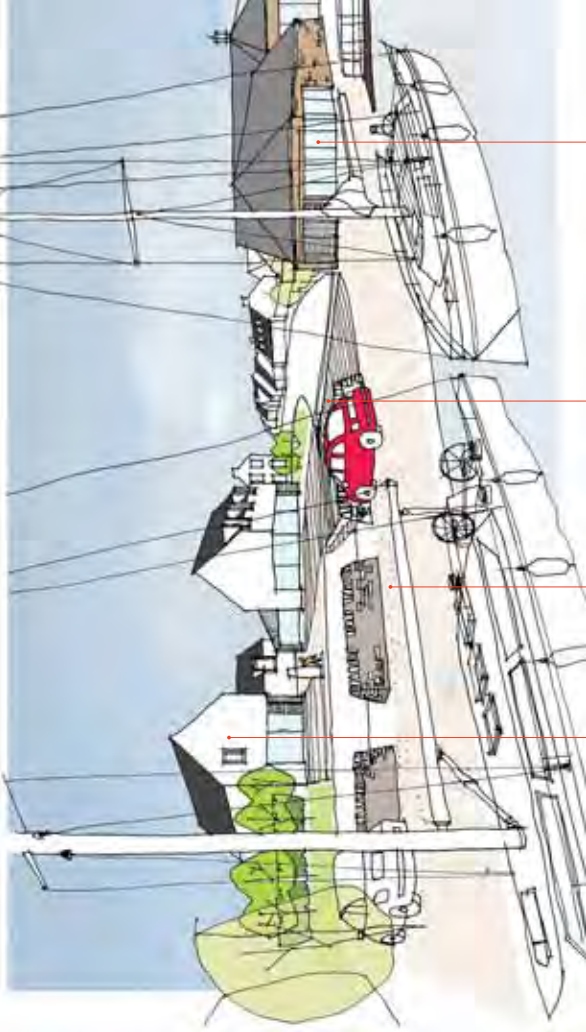
CLACHNAHARRY

OPPORTUNITY - DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT MASTERPLAN



CLACHNA HARRY - CONCEPT DIAGRAMS

1, 2 & 4: QUARRY SITE - KEY CONNECTION TO CANAL SIDE



MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

NEW HARD LANDSCAPING AND PARKING

TRAFFIC CALMING AND
OPENING TO CANAL SIDE

HERITAGE
DEVELOPMENT

3: SPORTING & LEISURE FACILITIES - TOURISM DESTINATION



NEW CANAL SIDE RESTAURANT

CLUB AND BOAT HOUSE

CLACHNAHARRY - CONCEPT DIAGRAMS

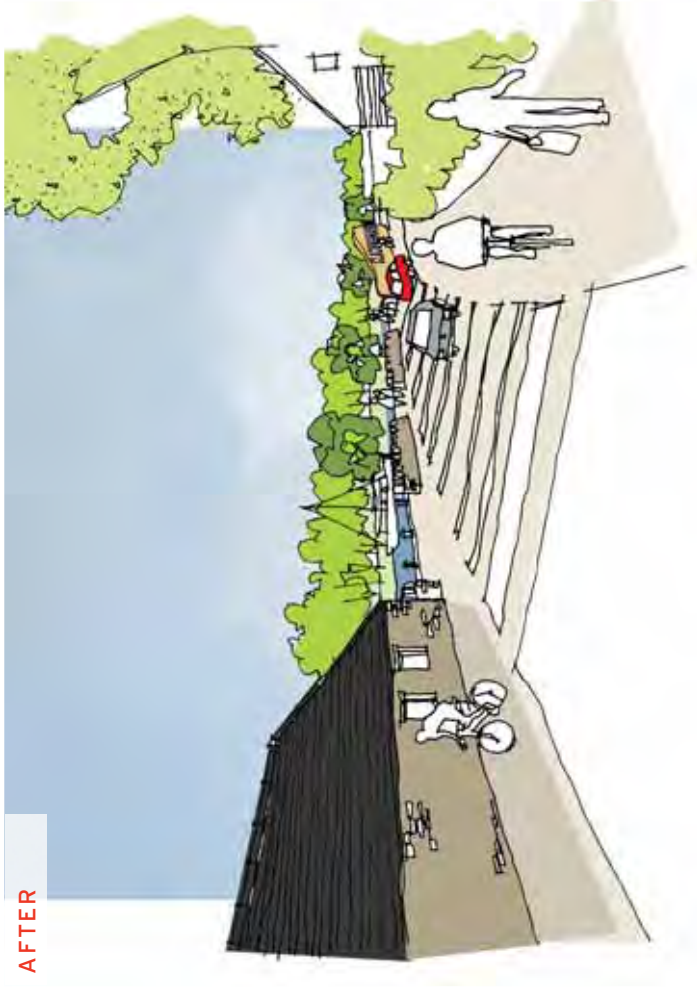
4: VIEW FROM CLACHNAHARRY ROAD

BEFORE



- Improvement of pedestrian / cycle pathway with re-aligned kerb.
- Road surface treated with applied resin bonded aggregate to encourage awareness of approach to village.

AFTER



SOUTH KESSOCK AND LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

Area Analysis

The area of South Kessock form the northern part of the wider Merkinch area, separated by the Far North Rail Line. The area was developed largely in the period between 1930 and 1940 when 490 dwellings were built in the South Kessock area. The Kessock Ferry had, until the opening of the Kessock Bridge in 1982, provided a direct connection from Inverness to the Black Isle sailing across the Beaully/Moray Firth from the pier at South Kessock. The area contains a mix of predominately housing, retail and business uses.

Opportunities & Actions

To make the area more accessible, welcoming and attractive to locals and visitors a range of measures are proposed. Improvements to road and footpaths included general surface improvements and improved directional signage will make access to the area easier and also inform visitors of the attractions of the area as part of a wider recreational area encompassing footpaths along the River Ness. The proposed improvements will highlight the availability of views across the Beaully Firth and to waymark the footpath links to the Merkinch Local Nature Reserve and the opportunity to view a variety of wildlife species and habitats, both landward and seaward while following the paths and trails within the nature reserve.

Proposals also support the delivery of further housing opportunities promoting a greater tenure mix in the area and opportunities for people to access housing in the area.

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Proposals also support the delivery of further housing opportunities promoting a greater tenure mix in the area and opportunities for people to access housing in the area.

SOUTH KESSOCK - OPPORTUNITIES AND ACTIONS

PROPOSALS		DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES / REQUIREMENTS	NEXT STEPS/STATUS
1	Road /pedestrian/cycle improvements to Kessoek Road.	Provision of interpretative and directional signage providing context and user understanding.	Bid by Highland Council/Scottish Canals to Scottish Government Green Infrastructure Fund to provide improvements to
2	Tourist led development opportunity; South Kessoek Ferry terminus. Opportunities for tourism /leisure related uses. Increase and improve parking. Potential for delivery of coastal path and view areas to Beaulay Firth and delivery of coastal path.	Any vessel movement utilising the South Kessoek slipway must not have an adverse effect on the integrity of Moray Firth Special Area of Conservation through disturbance to bottlenose dolphin (alone or in combination with other plans or projects). Development proposals that would increase boat hours spent in the Moray Firth SAC will require to be subject to Habitats Appraisal.	standard of footways including surface improvements to standard to permit use by cyclists and pedestrians. Provision of interpretative and directional signage providing context and user understanding.
3	Redevelopment opportunities at existing business units retaining traditional stone buildings around junction of Kessoek Road/Thornbush Road/Anderson Street, including strategic and public realm linkage improvements.	Further investigation required of potential relocation of existing business/light industrial uses and redevelopment for community/retail/office/residential. Improvements to pedestrian footpath. Flood Risk Assessment, Residential uses would require Affordable Housing contribution.	Further investigation required of potential for relocation of existing business/light industrial uses and redevelopment for community/retail/office/residential. Footpath improvements to Anderson Street forms part of bid by Highland Council/Scottish Canals to Scottish Government Green Infrastructure Fund
4	Improve retail opportunity.		
5	Development opportunity at Gael Force Marine site for residential led and mixed use development.	Requirements for delivery of development relate to provision of open/play space, education capacity, affordable housing provision, and public art. Flood Risk and Transport Assessments required. Given the previous use as a shipyard there is potential for contamination issues to be present on site. Consideration should be given to the reinstatement and integration of the Category B Listed Sheer Lags Crane. Development proposals must provide surface water drainage and an appropriate SUDS solution and also connect to the public water and waste water networks, to avoid impacts on the River Morriston SAC and Moray Firth SAC	Planning application for 38 flats pending completion of River Ness Flood Alleviation scheme and confirmation of the Flood Risk Assessment.
6	Potential development; Housing fronting on to the nature reserve. Understand potential impact.	Need to carefully consider wider amenity of area in particular existing housing, footpath connections and impact on the Merkinch Local Nature reserve.	Site considered as having longer term potential,
7	Potential Development; Infill Carnac Crescent and Craighton Avenue. Consider potential impact.	Consider compatibility of development with loss of greenspace and potential mitigation through delivery of adequate open space including space for community uses. Flood Risk Assessment to support development of specific proposals and mitigation measures. Transport Assessment may be required.	Pending planning application for 24 unit housing development and community facility, with enhanced play and recreation area. Intended to deliver a range of housing tenure options

Area Analysis

The Merkinch Local Nature Reserve (MLNR) was declared as such in November 2007 under the National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The area extends to over 54 ha of land across the Carse and South Kessoock and includes a variety of habitat areas including grassland, mudflat, saltmarsh, brackish pools, wet heath, scrub and woodland. The creation of the Local Nature Reserve was to conserve and restore natural habitats and maximising biodiversity of these areas. The provision of access to the site to encourage opportunity for community involvement in the management of the area and provide learning opportunities was central to the aims of the reserve. It was also considered that the value of the reserve to the wider area and tourist should be highlighted through its development.

Opportunities & Actions

The potential exists for the development of a Green Network clearly promoting the MLNR as a destination within the town and linking the area closely with other areas of attraction (e.g. Muirtown Basin and Clachnaharry) as being of interest to both locals and tourists alike and also forming part of a wider walking network around the Inverness area. Physical improvements to the surface and signage of footpath links to the area as well as improvements to the MLNR facilities in the general area and that of the Nature reserve would improve the quality and perception of the route to the area.

1	PROPOSALS	DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES / REQUIREMENTS	NEXT STEPS/STATUS
	<p>Improve connectivity between South Kessoock and Carse. Improve the pedestrian crossing over the railway.</p>	<p>Consideration of new path link to the South Kessoock Pier. Further community consultation required on the delivery of proposals</p>	<p>Further investigations required on improvements the level-crossing within the reserve, considering delivery of improved fencing providing better sightlines along the rail line. Also potential for new surface treatment at crossing point.</p>
	<p>Improve pedestrian linkages from South Kessoock to Clachnaharry along the coastal path. Potential for viewing platforms and recreation etc.</p>		<p>The updating of the Reserve Management Plan to review and refresh the aims and objectives of the reserve, this will include consideration of potential for improvements to existing recreational and leisure aspects.</p>
	<p>Consider proposals for the LNR in terms of better recreational value.</p>		<p>The Highland Council/ Scottish Canals to Scottish Government bid for European Regional Development Fund seeks funding for a project towards improving walking and cycling in the wider area. This may also provide improvements to seawall walkway, provision of a central viewing platform, interpretation boards and additional sheltered seating.</p>
	<p>Investigate the incorporation of picnic areas, zones for benches /sitting,</p>		<p>Management Plan review to also consider potential positive/ negative impacts of proposed development site proposed adjacent to the nature reserve</p>
	<p>Consider potential for the LNR area in the future to extend to Carnarc Point.</p>		<p>Review of Reserve Management Plan to consider potential of expansion of LNR in consultation with the Port of Inverness.</p>

SOUTH KESSOCK AND LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

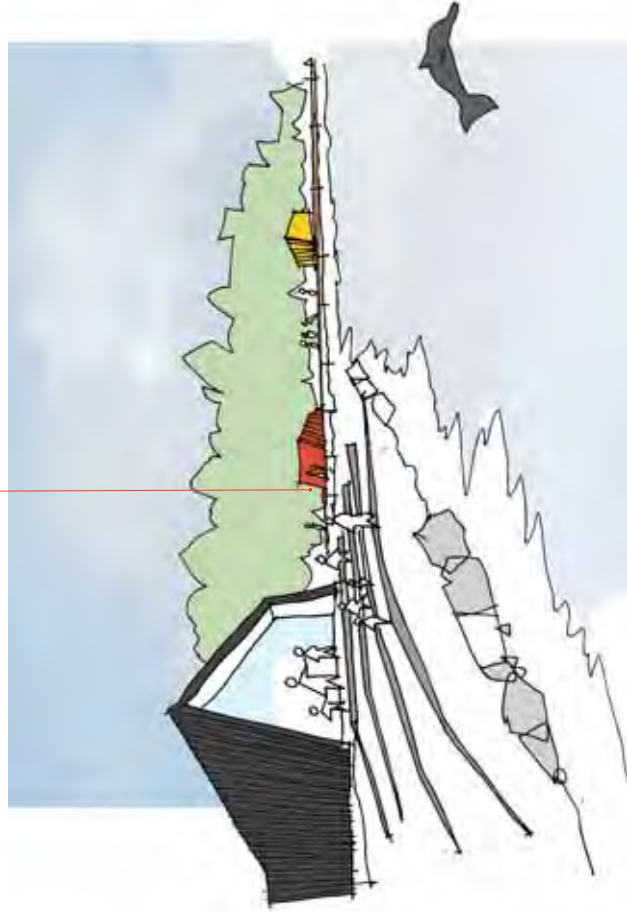
OPPORTUNITY - DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT MASTERPLAN



CONCEPT DIAGRAMS

4: WATERS EDGE SHELTERS/SEA CABINS

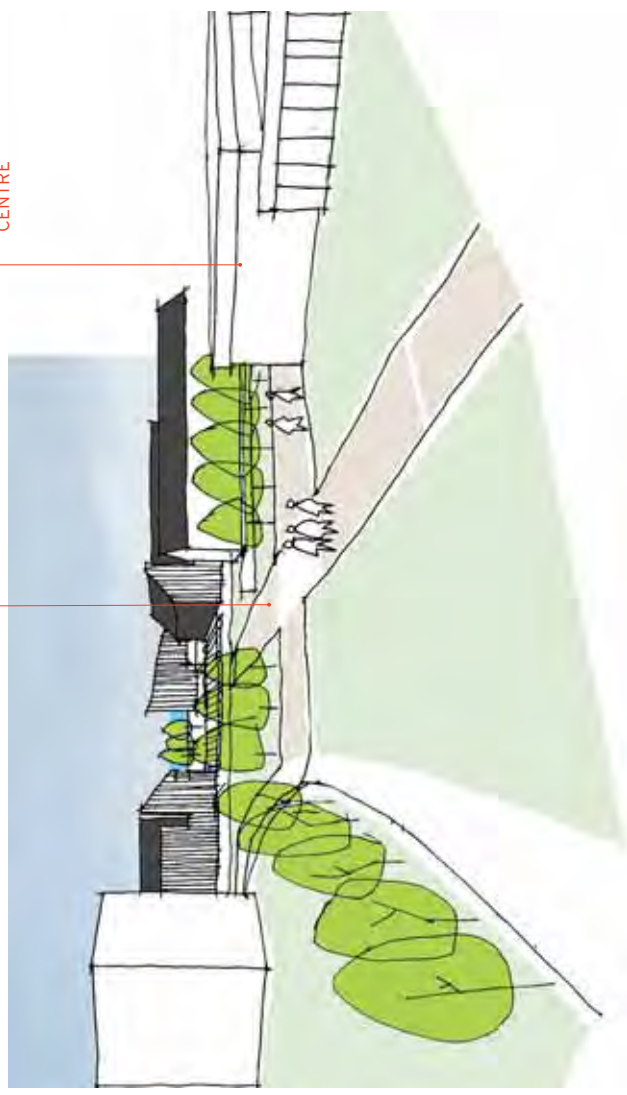
PROPOSED VIEW POINT LANDSCAPE SHELTERS



1: IMPROVED LINKS TO COMMUNITY CENTRE

THERE IS POTENTIAL FOR A NEW PEDESTRIAN LINK BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE AND WATERFRONT

COMMUNITY CENTRE

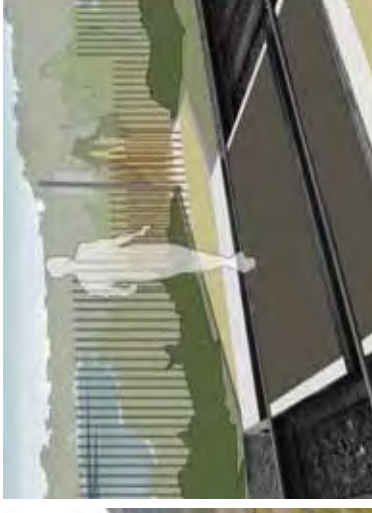


CONCEPT DIAGRAMS

SOUTH KESSECK LANDSCAPE PLAN



1. Proposed viewpoints and landscape shelters
2. Picnic areas set into landscape edge
3. Improve connections from residential areas to waterfront
4. Recreational zones
5. Improvements to linear footpath along waterfront
6. Improve visibility at rail crossing.



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M E R K I N C H

Area Analysis

Merkinch forms one of the Inverness's oldest areas located in the north-west of the city, flanked by the Caledonian Canal to the west and the River Ness to the east.

The Grant Street area provides the focal point for service provision for the area providing a range of retail, service and community and training facilities to serve the local community. Employment is focussed on business and light industrial activities in the Carse Industrial Estate and retailing at the Telford Retail Park.

There a number of vacant units on Grant Street, the most long standing vacant buildings includes the Welfare Hall, which has lain empty for over 20 years and whose condition has declined as a consequence. Proposals are forming to restore and convert the building into an employment support centre, office space and amateur boxing club. The reuse and renovation of one the major landmark buildings in the area would help invigorate the wider area.

Primary School provision is met at Merkinch Primary School, an increasing schoolroll will require consideration of the expansion of the Catgory B listed building or potentially the delivery of a new primary school campus.

Access to the area to and from Inverness City centre is across the Black Bridge to Grant Street provides one the primary access points to the wider Merkinch and South Kessoock area. Existing pedestrian access onto and along the Black Bridge is significantly constrained particularly due to the narrow width of existing footpath on the bridge and on footway approaches to the bridge.

Opportunities and Actions

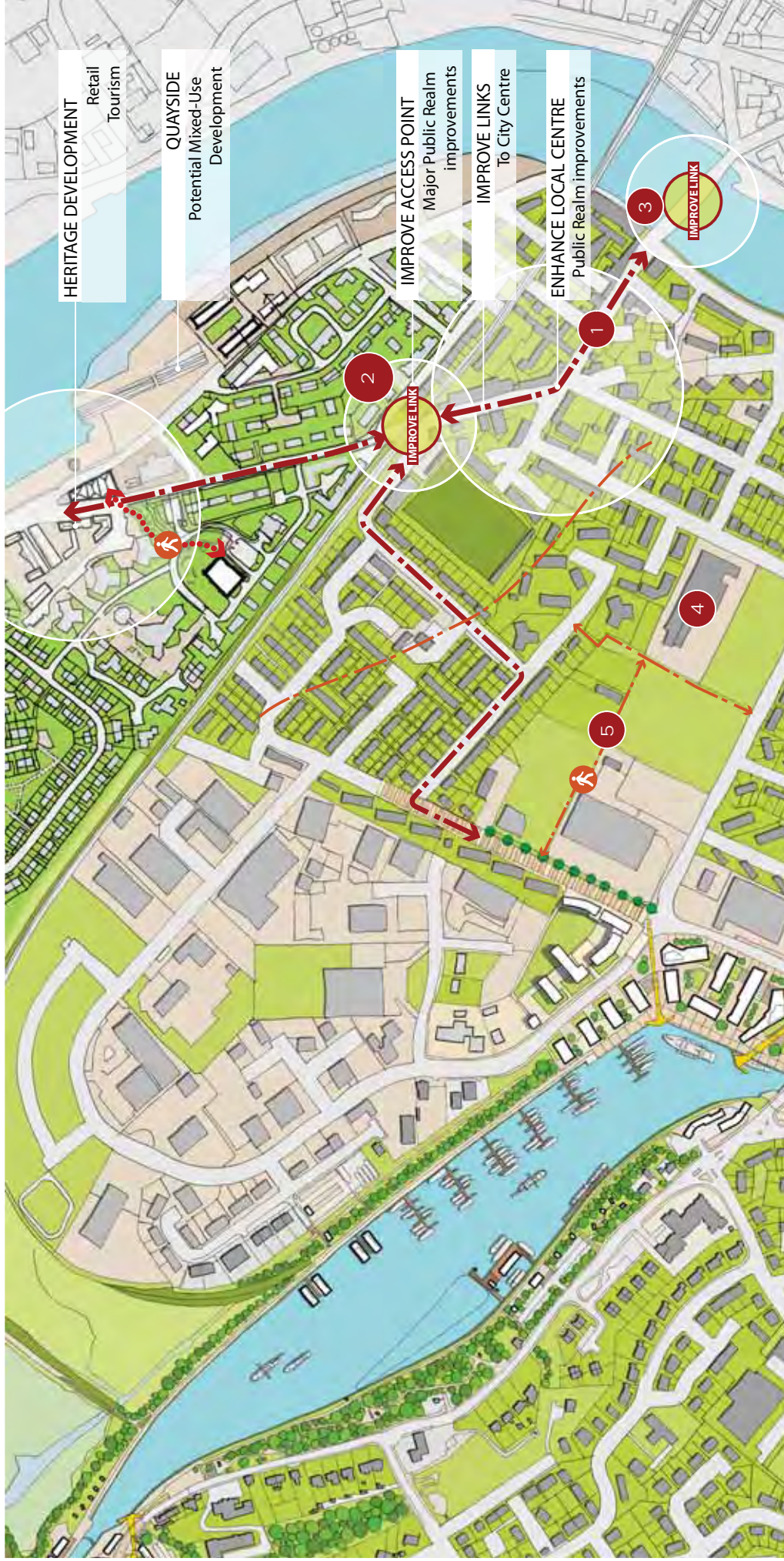
Proposals aim to improve pedestrian linkage from the local footpath network onto the bridge. Pedestrian access along the bridge could be improved by switching footpath provision to a single pedestrian friendly access rather than 2 non-pedestrian friendly footpaths. This proposal includes the possibility of installing a separate attached footbridge to the existing Black Bridge for dedicated pedestrian use to be either bolted on to the existing bridge structure or stand alone structure. This option however has an estimated construction cost of £1M +. The potential for improving pedestrian access on the Black Bridge needs to be confirmed by an appropriate connectivity study.

There is an identified need for improvements to provide a safer pedestrian environment at the Lower Kessoock Street/Thornbush Road junction with the rail bridge.

Redevelopment of vacant buildings in the area should be encouraged to be reused, in particular the Welfare Hall is seen as a key candidate for reuse in Grant Street. The project seeks inclusion of accommodation for community learning and development as well as space for recreational / leisure uses.

MERKINCH - OPPORTUNITIES AND ACTIONS

	PROPOSALS	DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES / REQUIREMENTS	NEXT STEPS/STATUS
1	Road /pedestrian improvements to Grant Street; public realm improvements	Developer contributions may be sought from new developments to fund pedestrian/cycle improvements.	Highland Council to undertake transport study across wider brief area to identify strategic and local objectives and defining potential design solutions and costs..
2	Road / pedestrian Improvements at the rail bridge junction of; Wyvis Place/Kilmuir Road / Thornbush Road / India Street/Lower Kessock Street		Application has been made by Merkinch Enterprise for Regeneration and Heritage Lottery Funding to refurbish the Welfare Hall and delivering capacity for community learning and development and also leisure uses. This will bring a general uplift the the fabric of the area.
3	Improvements to Black Bridge; improve public realm, pedestrian/ cycle access	Further work required to consider feasibility and potential funding. Connectivity Study required to inform potential solution. Water quality of River Ness to be protected during any construction works likely to impact on the water environment by production and approval of a Construction Method Statement to avoid pollution and sediment run-off and avoidance of any construction that would impact on seasonal migration of Salmon. The passage of salmon along the River Ness to and from the River Moriston Special Area of Conservation must be safeguarded to avoid significant effects on the qualifying interests of the River Moriston SAC.	Initial consultant work has considered broadly potential improvements to pedestrian footways on the Black Bridge. Options include surface improvements and traffic calming; loss of one pedestrian walkway and increase of width of remaining or; pedestrian attachment to side of existing bridge.
4	Requirement for extension to Merkinch Primary School, preferable to newly built school	Consideration will be required of the schools status as a Category B Listed Building. Delivery of safer routes to school scheme. Flood Risk Assessment will be required to support any emerging proposals.	Council review of Inverness school estate to establish clearer picture of overall estate requirement. THC Care and Learning Service to consider the potential for redevelopment of site as the preferred option to accommodate additional class space.
5	Incorporate traffic free route from Merkinch Primary to Glendoe Terrace		



MERKINCH - CONCEPT DIAGRAMS

3: VIEW OF JUNCTION FROM THE BLACK BRIDGE

BEFORE



- Pedestrian movement promoted with new surface treatment.
- Threshold between Grant St, Gilbert St and Anderson Street emphasised.

AFTER



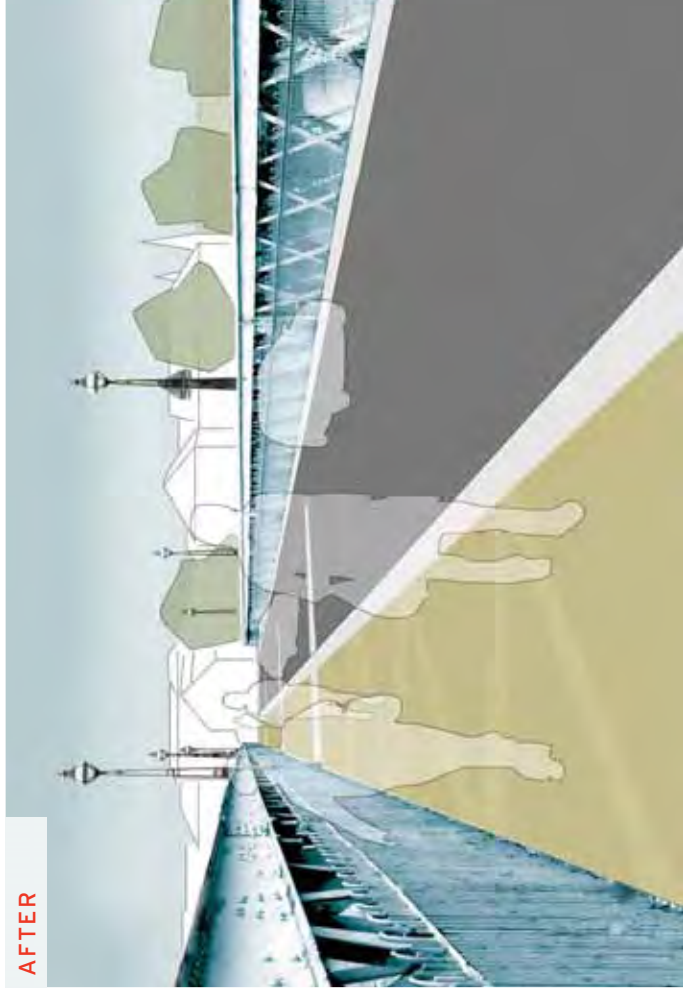
3: VIEW ALONG THE BLACK BRIDGE

BEFORE



- Footpath and road proportions adjusted to promote pedestrian movement and encourage slowing of traffic.
- Bridge aesthetic improved by painting of the structure.
- Bridge structure and lighting features emphasised by surface details.

AFTER



MERKINCH - CONCEPT DIAGRAMS

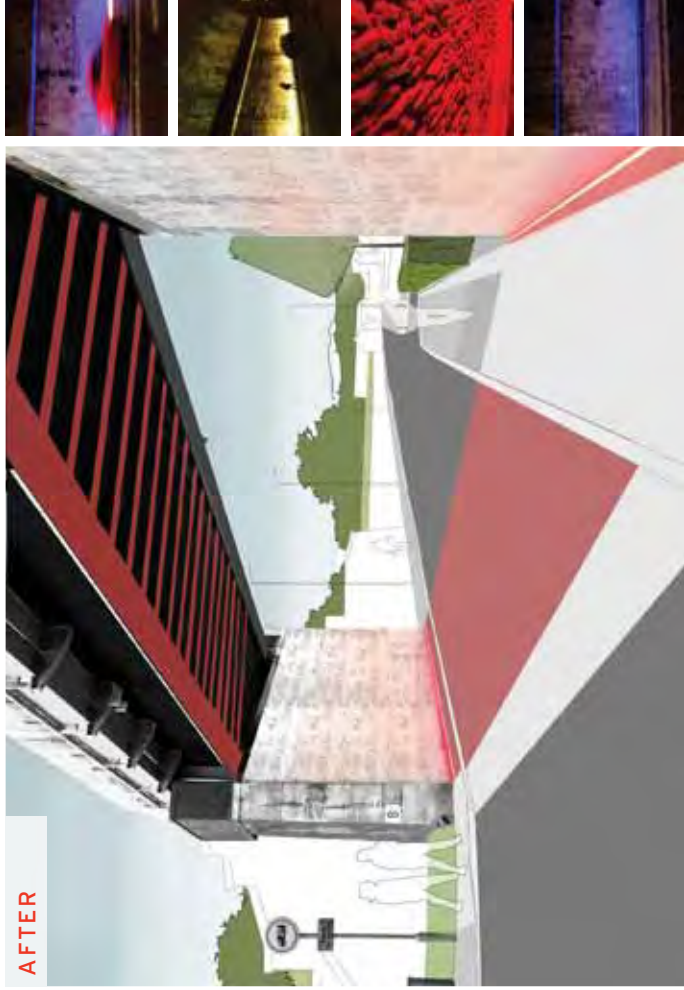
2: VIEW OF LOWER KESOCK STREET RAIL BRIDGE

BEFORE



- Bridge improved with new paintwork and lighting.
- Pedestrian movement emphasised with surface treatment.

AFTER



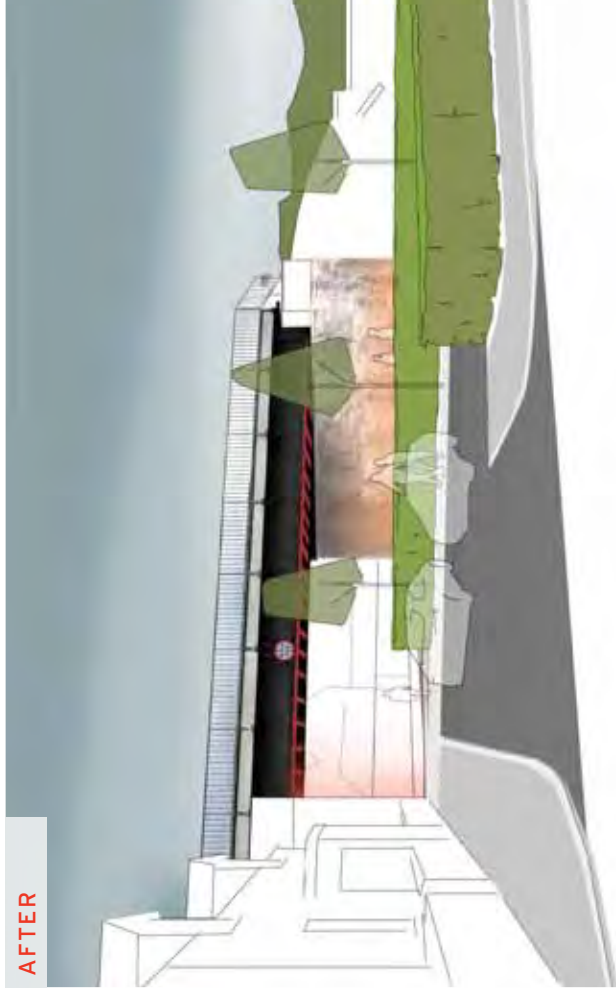
2: VIEW OF RAIL BRIDGE FROM INDIA STREET

BEFORE



- Strengthening of edge between India Street and Lower Kessock Street.
- Replacement of galvanised fencing with hedging.
- Resurfaced pathways connecting Wyvis Place Lower Kessock Street and India Street.

AFTER



M U I R T O W N B A S I N

Analysis

Muirtown Basin is a key arrival and destination point on the Caledonian Canal. It already hosts a number of large craft, visiting vessels and is home to a growing number of people living on the water. The area is dominated between the interface to the Canal and Basin and is considered as an underutilised asset for the wider City.

The canal was historically built to provide safe passage for ships from the North Sea to the Atlantic and was completed in 1822. Today the Basin is used primarily for leisure sailing vessels who experience the Great Glen from the canal and associated lochs.

The basin is home to the Sea Cadets/Scouts and Inverness Canoe Club both of which seek high quality, modern facilities at an appropriate site on or around the basin edge

The paths around the basin are in need of further investment to bring them up to a standard.

Opportunities and Actions

The potential development opportunities within the Muirtown Basin area relate to the enhancement of the basin to accommodate a wide range of activities and uses.

The redevelopment of the Basin area will underpin existing activities and stimulate investment in the surrounding area.

The Basin is expansive and can host further activities to promote uses on and around the water's edge and increase the number of people living and even working on the basin.

Key development proposals to incorporate gateway features at the entrance to the sea lock and also at the current site of the Sea Cadets/Canoe Club will increase the attractiveness and interest to the wider public and visitors alike.

Providing better access to the basin through the provision of pedestrian and cycle access from other areas of the City will be delivered alongside the delivery of proposals identified elsewhere in the Brief, putting the basin at the heart of a much higher quality network for walking and cycling routes for the benefit of neighbouring communities and visitors.

The provision of further car parking will also assist in accommodating visitors from further afield.

Areas of development proposed for the basin would have a synergy with proposals considered in the Muirtown section of the Brief.

MUIRTOWN BASIN - OPPORTUNITIES AND ACTIONS

PROPOSALS		DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES / REQUIREMENTS	NEXT STEPS/STATUS
1	Road improvement scheme along High St / Clachnaharry Rd / Telford St.	Provision of greater safety / pedestrian and cycling measures	The Highland Council (THC) roads to begin this study in partnership with Scottish Canals and local community.
2	Landscape / parking around Muirtown Basin	Delivery of additional visitor parking facilities and enhanced landscaping to be provided around basin.	Scottish Canals to investigate in partnership with THC
3	Potential basin entrance feature - Mackenzie Joinery site	Access and parking improvements. Consider impact of any development on the Muirtown Basin Scheduled Monument.	Scottish Canals to investigate potential development or this area for further leisure uses.
4	Development Opportunity: Floating offices and holiday homes (Muirtown Basin, Workshops area and canal 'spit' to sea lock.		Scottish Canals to undertake feasibility study and future planning applications for these opportunities on and off the water.
5	Water-based leisure activities: Sea Scouts, cable wakeboard park, small boat hire, swimming		Scottish Canals to undertake feasibility study of most suitable locations for these activities in partnership with Sea Scouts, Canoe Clubs and others e.g. community.
6	Development Opportunity: Residential-led or tourism related development on Gateway Site, possibly including adjacent cottage.	Relocation of Sea Scouts to new site. Access and parking improvements.	Scottish Canals to bring forward planning application for site in discussion with THC Roads / Planning/ Historic Scotland/community. Design work underway with Sea Scouts for new base.
7	Proposal for additional moorings in Marina, with potential impact on Scheduled Ancient Monument	Subject to no adverse effect on the integrity of Moray Firth SAC (bottlenose dolphin interest) through increased recreational boat movements (alone or in combination with other plans or projects). Development proposals that would increase boat hours spent in the Moray Firth SAC will require to be subject to Habitats Appraisal.	Scottish Canals to take forward further moorings on basin in consultation with Historic Scotland.
8	Development Opportunity - Potential Restaurant	Access and parking improvements. Seek retention of existing native woodland resource as far as practical. Maintain pedestrian linkage with Clachnaharry Road. Consider impact on Scheduled Monument.	Scottish Canals to investigate feasibility of conversion of Sea Lock buildings to restaurant.
9	Gateway Structure		Scottish Canals /THC to scope out mini-brief for design ideas / concepts to be brought forward
10	Car park adjacent to Carse Rd		Scottish Canals / THC to jointly bring forward development opportunities along this edge which maximise links to and frontage of basin or serve basin's future operational needs.
11	Improvement of links to Muirtown locks and wider footpath/cycleways. Enhance visitor attraction and interpretation at lock gates.		Scottish Canals to investigate potential development or this area for further leisure uses.

MUIRTOWN BASIN - CONCEPT DIAGRAMS

OPPORTUNITY - DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT MASTERPLAN



MUIRTOWN BASIN - CONCEPT DIAGRAMS

2: VIEW LOOKING NORTH WEST OF BASIN FROM FOOTPATH

BEFORE



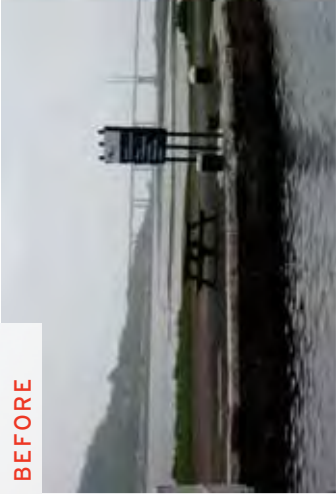
- Improvement to linear footpath along west side of Muirtown Basin.
- Seating spaces created at key points.

AFTER



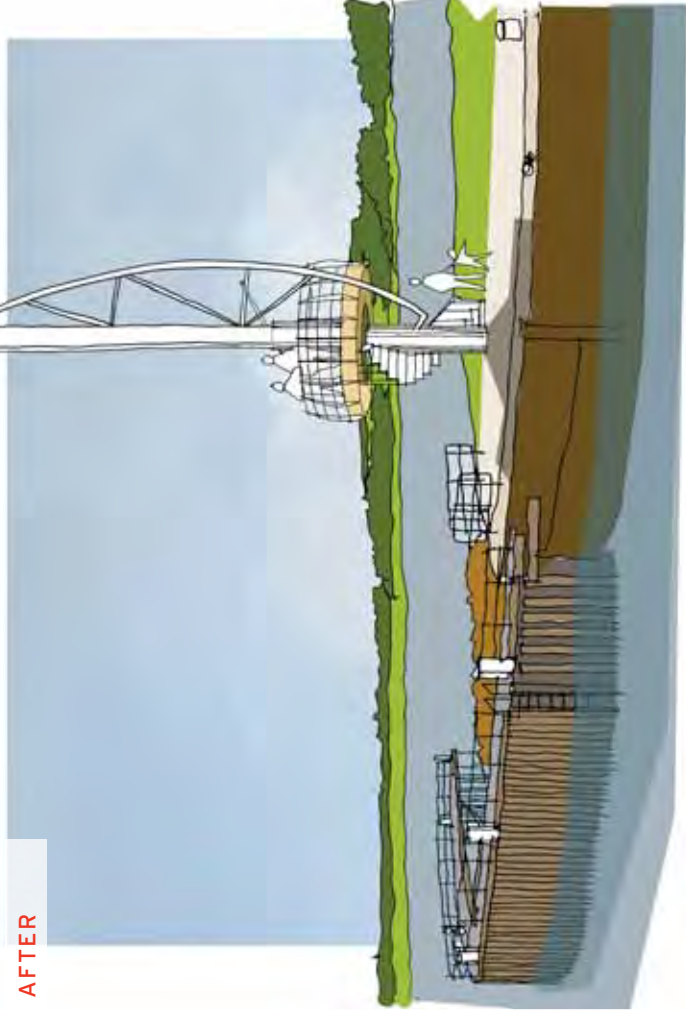
9: GATEWAY TO THE CALEDONIAN CANAL

BEFORE



- Gateway feature.

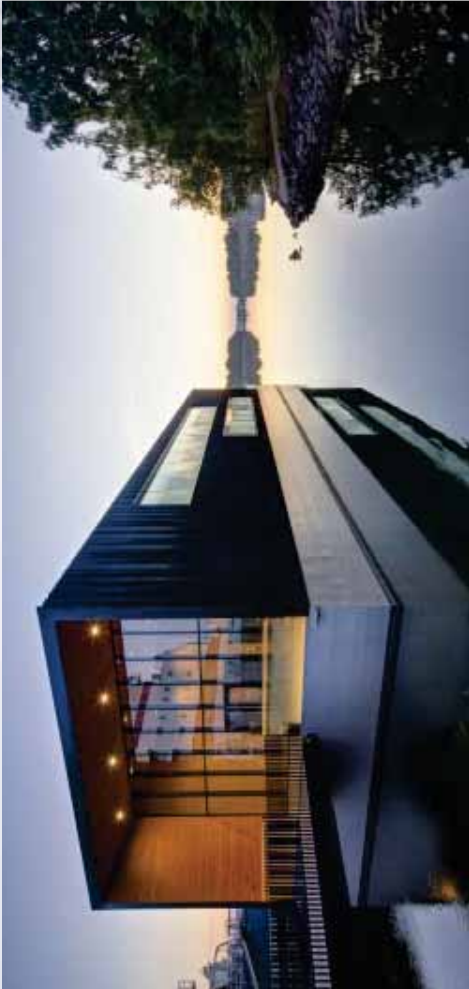
AFTER



MUIRTOWN BASIN - CONCEPT DIAGRAMS

4: FLOATING HOMES & OFFICES

FLOATING STRUCTURES



WHARFS/JETTYS



OFFICE/COMMERCIAL



INCREASED MOORINGS



5: RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

SPORTING ACTIVITIES



WOODLAND WALKS



ACTIVE HARBOUR AREA



POTENTIAL WAKEBOARD PARK



COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES



M U I R T O W N

Area Analysis

The Muirtown area accommodates land immediately adjacent to the Muirtown Basin on the Telford Retail Park extending into the Carse Industrial Estate.

The area was previously occupied by the Glen Albyn Whisky Distillery, as recently as the mid-80's and now occupied by large retail warehouses is identified as being key to providing development that would support and enhance proposals for the adjoining Muirtown Basin.

Constraints to development relate to land ownership and to concerns relating to increased traffic movements and impacts in the general area, in particular of the roundabout junction of Telford Street / Carsegate Road and also potential need to manage traffic speed on the Muirtown swing bridge.

The basin holds the potential to augment it's attraction to visitors and locals alike through the provision of a range of services, activities and employment opportunities.

Opportunities and Actions

Future development of the area should deliver a mix of uses incorporating civic, retail residential and leisure uses. Proposals should ensure significantly enhanced connectivity to the Muirtown Basin from Telford St / Carse Rd with dual frontage development to both the Basin and Carse Road, with a focus on creating an attractive location that would link closely to the adjoining assets of the canal and basin.

Development opportunities considered a tourism and cultural hub could be developed linked strongly to the adjacent assets offering recreation and leisure activities. The area is well placed to provide a wider mix of uses incorporating residential, retail, restaurants and cafés providing a variety of sympathetic uses that will enable delivery of a vibrant development that fulfills a variety of attractions and services for local and visitors alike

The main opportunity sites identified including the former B&Q and Texstyle World sites

The B&Q site is no longer available for redevelopment in the short term having being re-occupied for retail purposes and there is retail interest in the reuse of the Texstyle World site. As a key site for the regeneration of the area the opportunity to redevelop on this site is maintained in the Brief and the future availability of the site.

Development proposals in the Muirtown area would need to be supported by a Transport Assessment and identification of improvement and mitigation measures required.

MUIRTOWN - OPPORTUNITIES AND ACTIONS

PROPOSALS		DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES / REQUIREMENTS	NEXT STEPS/STATUS
1	Road improved scheme along High street/ Clachnaharry Road/ Telford Street. Alternative / Preferred option to replace Telford Street / Carsgate Road roundabout with signalised junction.	Transport appraisal to identify strategic and local objectives and defining potential design solutions and costs	Transport study required across the wider brief area to identify strategic and local objectives and defining potential design solutions and costs use of developer contributions in growth areas. Scottish Canals advise that whilst it would be possible to change the surface of the Muirtown swing bridge to help reduce traffic speed, further evidence is required that this is a major problem. If surface treatments on the bridge are to be introduced this would need to take into account a technical appraisal of the bridge, particularly its capability of taking further weight.
2	Links between Telford Street / Balnacraig Road/ Fairfield Road could be better	Business, Community, Tourism, Leisure and residential uses (30 homes). No net detriment to local transport network. Consider impact of any development on the Muirtown Basin Scheduled Monument. Safeguarding and if possible enhancement of navigation, recreation facilities, heritage features, existing woodland and public pedestrian access; avoidance of any adverse effect on the integrity of the Moray Firth SAC	The Highland Council and Scottish Canals to maintain watching brief on availability of sites and continue to negotiate with landlords/owners to secure control of sites and delivery for development.
3	Road/ pedestrian improvements; Carsgate Road / Benula Road / Kilmuir Road	Provision of footpath and access improvements	Scottish Canals have secured the landownership required to progress development of car park and ancillary storage to support development in the Muirtown Basin.
4	Muirtown swing bridge; Road / Pedestrian improvements.	Proposals will need to consider impact on habitats on sites adjacent the basin and potential transport impacts of intensification of access points.	Bid by Highland Council/Scottish Canals to European Regional Development Fund to provide improvement to existing footpaths and cycleway networks Delivery of a number of small scale improvements alongside the improved steps and ramps at Muirtown Basin alongside the path improvements on Carsgate Road.
5	Development Opportunity; B&Q site strategic development site, mixed use cultural / residential development.	Seek retention of existing native woodland resource as far as practical. Maintain pedestrian linkage with Clachnaharry Road.	Provision of further parking around the basin will facilitate wider use of the area. Scottish Canals have secured the landownership at Carsgate Road required to progress development of car park and ancillary storage to support development in the Muirtown Basin.
6	Development Opportunity; Textile World site, potential for mixed use cultural / residential development.	Delivery of mixed use development to complement redevelopment opportunities at former B&Q/Textile World site.	Longer term development proposal to be considered subsequent to progression with B&Q(3) and Textile World (4).
7	Carsgate; Development of car park and ancillary storage for residential moorings at Muirtown.		
8	Strategic links to be incorporate though B&Q and Textile World site to connect the basin with Carsgate		
9	Increase parking around the basin; Gateway site, Titanic site/ Sea Scouts, Clachnaharry, B&Q/Textile World sites, Carsgate.		
10	Woodland strip West side of Muirtown Basin; Enhance the woodland experience between the Swing bridge and Clachnaharry. Picnic area, integrating car parking. Increased access from the adjacent residential development to the basin.		
11	Development Opportunity - Long term Mixed Use		

MUIRTOWN - CONCEPT DIAGRAMS

The longer term development of the Muirtown Basin requires related development at the Telford Street Retail Park and the strengthening of the linkages between the 2 areas as can be seen from the adjacent diagram. Currently development at the Telford Street Retail Park turns its back on the Muirtown Basin and the potential exists for development to re-orientate and provide double fronted development opportunities.



OPPORTUNITIES AND ACTIONS



MUIRTOWN - CONCEPT DIAGRAMS

5: OPPORTUNITY - FORMER B&Q SITE



MUIRTOWN - CONCEPT DIAGRAMS

8: OPPORTUNITY - ENHANCED PUBLIC REALM



OPENS UP KEY VIEWS THROUGH
TO THE QUAYSIDE

9: OPPORTUNITY - GATEWAY SITE



MUIRTOWN - CONCEPT DIAGRAMS

1: TELFORD STREET LOOKING TOWARDS THE MUIRTOWN SWING BRIDGE

BEFORE



BEFORE



1: VIEW LOOKING AT MUIRTOWN SWING BRIDGE

- Improvement of movement at bridge with a new single surface for pedestrians and carriageway.
- Bridge aesthetics improvement with a black & white painting theme.

AFTER



AFTER



MUIRTOWN - CONCEPT DIAGRAMS

3: VIEW FROM GLENDOE TERRACE LOOKING NORTH EAST



BEFORE

- Improvement of public realm along Glendoe Terrace with surface treatments and additional tree and hedge planting.



AFTER

5: CIVIC & CULTURAL PRECEDENT

CULTURAL BUILDINGS



CULTURAL CENTRE



LANDMARK BUILDINGS



SOCIAL BUILDINGS



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4

PROJECT ACTION
PLAN

PROJECT ACTION PLAN STRATEGIC PROJECTS

CLACHNAHARRY; STRATEGIC PROJECTS	
1	Development Opportunity; Clachnaharry Quarry site, tourist and residential opportunity.
2	Improved parking at Clachnaharry within the Quarry site.
3	Development Opportunity; old sawmill site potential for restaurant, leisure heritage and wildlife.
4	Traffic calming at Clachnaharry; potential signalised crossing
5	Delivery of a new heritage centre; utilise existing Scottish Canals buildings on Clachnaharry side of basin.
6	Inclusion of road network / access improvements.
7	Improve paths /wider linkages.
8	Highlight and improve access route from Clachnaharry to Craig Phadraig footpath.
SOUTH KESSOCK; STRATEGIC PROJECTS	
1	Road /pedestrian/cycle improvements to Kessoock Road.
2	Tourist led development opportunity; South Kessoock Ferry terminus. Opportunities for tourism /leisure related uses. Increase and improve parking. Potential for delivery of coastal path and view areas to Beaully Firth and delivery of coastal path.
3	Redevelopment opportunities at existing business units retaining traditional stone buildings around junction of Kessoock Road/Thornbush Road/Anderson Street, including strategic and public realm linkage improvements.
4	Improve retail opportunity.
5	Development opportunity at Gael Force Marine site for residential led and mixed use development.
6	Potential development; Housing fronting on to the nature reserve. Understand potential impact.
7	Potential Development; Infill Carnac Crescent and Craighton Avenue. Consider potential impact.

LOCAL NATURE RESERVE; STRATEGIC PROJECTS	
1	Improve connectivity between South Kessoock and Carse. Improve the pedestrian crossing over the railway.
2	Improve pedestrian linkages from South Kessoock to Clachnaharry along the coastal path. Potential for viewing platforms and recreation etc.
3	Consider proposals for the LNR in terms of better recreational value.
4	Investigate the incorporation of picnic areas, zones for benches /sitting,
5	Consider potential for the LNR area in the future to extend to Carnarc Point.
MUIRTOWN; STRATEGIC PROJECTS	
1	Road improved scheme along High street/ Clachnaharry Road/ Telford Street. Alternative / Preferred option to replace Telford Street / Carsegate Road roundabout with signalised junction.
2	Links between Telford Street / Balnacraig Road/ Fairfield Road could be better
3	Road/ pedestrian improvements; Carse Road / Benuila Road / Kilmuir Road
4	Muirtown swing bridge; Road / Pedestrian improvements.
5	Development Opportunity; B&Q site strategic development site, mixed use cultural / residential development.
6	Development Opportunity; Textile World site, potential for mixed use cultural / residential development.
7	Carsegate; Development of car park and ancillary storage for residential moorings at Muirtown.
8	Strategic links to be incorporate though B&Q and Textile World site to connect the basin with Carse
9	Increase parking around the basin; Gateway site, Titanic site/ Sea Scouts, Clachnaharry, B&Q/Textile World sites, Carsegate.
10	Woodland strip West side of Muirtown Basin; Enhance the woodland experience between the Swing bridge and Clachnaharry. Picnic area, integrating car parking. Increased access from the adjacent residential development to the basin.
11	Development Opportunity - Long term Mixed Use

MERKINCH; STRATEGIC PROJECTS	
1	Road /pedestrian improvements to Grant Street; public realm improvements
2	Road / pedestrian Improvements at the rail bridge junction of; Wyvis Place/Kilmuir Road / Thornbush Road / India Street/ Lower Kessoock Street
3	Improvements to Black Bridge; improve public realm, pedestrian/ cycle access
4	Requirement for extension to Merkinch Primary School, preferable to newly built school
5	Incorporate traffic free route from Merkinch Primary to Glendoe Terrace
MUIRTOWN BASIN; STRATEGIC PROJECTS	
1	Road improvement scheme along High St / Clachnaharry Rd / Telford St.
2	Landscape / parking around Muirtown Basin
3	Potential basin entrance feature - Mackenzie Joinery site
4	Development Opportunity: Floating offices and holiday homes (Muirtown Basin, Workshops area and canal 'spit' to sea lock.
5	Water-based leisure activities: Sea Scouts, cable wakeboard park, small boat hire, swimming
6	Development Opportunity: Residential-led development on Gateway Site, possibly including adjacent cottage.
7	Proposal for additional moorings in Marina, with potential impact on Scheduled Ancient Monument
8	Development Opportunity - Potential Restaurant
9	Gateway Structure
10	Car park adjacent to Carse Rd
11	Improvement of links to Muirtown locks and wider footpath/ cycleways. Enhance visitor attraction and interpretation at lock gates.



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CHARTER PROCESS AND
CONSULTATION SUMMARY

APPENDIX

CHARRETTE PROCESS SUMMARY

MUIRTOWN AND SOUTH KESSOCK DRAFT DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

This Appendix sets out the steps undertaken in preparing the Development Brief and the various stages of consultation undertaken to engage with local communities, businesses, wider public and other interested parties.

EARLIER STAGES OF THE DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

Parts of Muirtown and South Kessoock are identified as having potential for future development in the Highland-wide Local Development Plan, Inverness Local Plan and the emerging Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan.

- The area to be included within the Brief is the part of the city shown on the map above as originally defined in the Highland-wide Local Development Plan.

REASONS FOR PREPARING THE DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

- To identify and support the delivery of improvements to the area
- To include the net improvement of the local transport network
- The delivery of a greater diversification of housing tenure and renewal of housing stock in the area
- The opportunities for development at and around the Muirtown Basin and improvements to water and land based recreation opportunities and pedestrian access to the area

Draft Development Brief February 2015

The draft Development Brief was prepared for the Muirtown and South Kessoock area of Inverness after analysing the comments a series of consultation events that took place in February and April of 2014.

The content of the Brief set out the opportunities and challenges identified during the consultation for each of the locations within the wider brief area. The geographical area covered by the brief had been enlarged reflecting the discussions at the workshops and the identification of the key linkages and relationships across the area. As a consequence the Development Brief encompassed a larger geographical area to now include Clachnaharry and a wider area of Merkinch.

Public consultation on the draft Development Brief took place in the period from 27 February to 2 April 2015 to gather views on the content of the draft document. The consultation included 2 drop-in exhibition and discussion sessions where the public could discuss the draft brief contents with staff in attendance. Comments on the draft brief were invited to be submitted on the Council website either online or by filling in the feedback form made available at the exhibitions.

Over 1000 letters of notification were sent out to residential and business properties across the Brief area in February 2015 to highlight the consultation on the draft Brief. Additionally the consultation was publicised in the local press through issuing a press release and the placing of an advert in the Inverness Courier on 27th February to highlight the time and venue of the consultation events.

Consultation events took place in Muirtown Primary School on Wednesday 11 March and Merkinch Community Centre (Corbett Room) on Thursday 12 March. The events took the form of drop-in exhibitions in the afternoon followed by evening presentation and workshops sessions in the evening.

The consultation invited comments on the content of the draft Brief. After considering comments made and making any appropriate changes based on the comments received on the public consultation a final version would be presented to committee to be adopted as Supplementary Guidance to the Development Plan.

Comments on the draft brief were invited to be submitted on the Council website either online or by filling in the feedback form made available at the exhibitions.

CHARRETTE EVENTS 2014

The Muirtown Basin and South Kessoock event was split between stage one on 26-27 February, with a stage two follow-up event on 1-2 April.

STAGE 1: 26-27 FEBRUARY 2014

Stage one, which took place over two days, was built around a public working-session on day one, followed by technical sessions and drawing time on day two. In the evening of day one the public working-session was repeated in a compressed format to accommodate members of the community unavailable during working hours. At the end of the two days the design team had produced design approaches for the area and detailed studies on key sites that were displayed for a public event at which attendees had the opportunity to give feedback.

The following is a summary of the responses from attendees on the work completed by the end of stage 1:

- Muirtown Basin should be a high-quality destination for visitors, boaters and residents with support facilities
- Clachnaharry traffic calming needs a solution - design led to affect driver behaviour
- Improved connection to the Basin - including visual - is desirable
- B+Q site is a key opportunity for improving the area and reconnecting with the water
- Environmental improvements around the canal basin - tree management, lighting and de-clutter
- Connections that make South Kessoock less isolated are important for this community
- Make the most of proximity to city centre - this area is the connection between city and sea

STAGE 2: 1-2 APRIL 2014

The second stage presented material that had been developed in the interim period and provided an opportunity for the community and stakeholders to discuss the proposals and provide comments. The format was of 3 repeating sessions, Tuesday evening, Wednesday afternoon and Wednesday evening. The sessions provided attendees with an opportunity to view the work that had been prepared for stage 2, followed by a presentation that summarised stage 1 and gave an explanation of the work that was being presented. Group discussions based on the work gave an opportunity for the public and agencies to respond to what had been presented and to make further suggestions. An evening session was held at Muirtown Primary School, followed by an afternoon and evening session at the Merkinch Community Centre. The following is a summary from the feedback and suggestions gathered across the three sessions.

Muirtown Basin

- Strike a balance between the uses both on and off the water while retaining 'destination' factor.
- Water uses need to have a level of compatibility - for example, how would swimming work alongside the movement of large yachts?
- Work may need to be done on the impact increased boat traffic would have on dolphins and other wildlife in the Beauty Firth.
- Sea Scouts HQ would be an important aspect of improvements - provide options for their relocation.

Circular Pedestrian and Cycle Route and other paths

- The proposed circular route was popular, especially the thought that it could connect distinct hubs with different attractions.
- Lighting on the towpaths should be improved to make them safer and more useable for longer periods.
- Improved signage and even coloured paving to guide people to the different attractions along the proposed circular route were suggested.
- Wheelchair access would be very important. Improved pedestrian 'pinch points'
- Key points to improve are Muirtown Swing Bridge, Black Bridge and Kessoock Railway Bridge.
- A pinch point that can be exasperated by the operation of the bridge.
- Improved pedestrian environment and public art welcomed.
- Provide live information on operation for journey planning at the swing bridge

Clachnaharry

- Improve perception of the place as a 'village'
- Enhance the connections for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Sensitive development in the quarry would be ok - it could be used to fund further improvements.
- Development of a destination by the canal would be good, provided the restaurant was not too 'posh'.

Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

- A very important amenity for the local community.
- The wetlands are part of a soft flooding strategy, and if it were to dry out (due to a changed flood defence strategy) it would have a negative impact.
- Carnac Point is a very popular area and calls for the extension of the LNR to include this were made.
- South Kessoock needs renewed play that is accessible for all ages and all abilities - this could be complementary to the Local Nature Reserve and the aspiration to increase user participation.
- Balance between light pollution on the LNR and improved lighting for safety needs to be found.

B+Q site

- Proposals were considered attractive, particularly the visual and physical connections created to the canal.
- Preference for mixed use - residential plus cultural and tourism development.
- A negotiation with the owners is an early priority.
- Any development on this gateway site would need to be commercially viable.

CHARENTE PROCESS SUMMARY

STAGE ONE CHARENTE

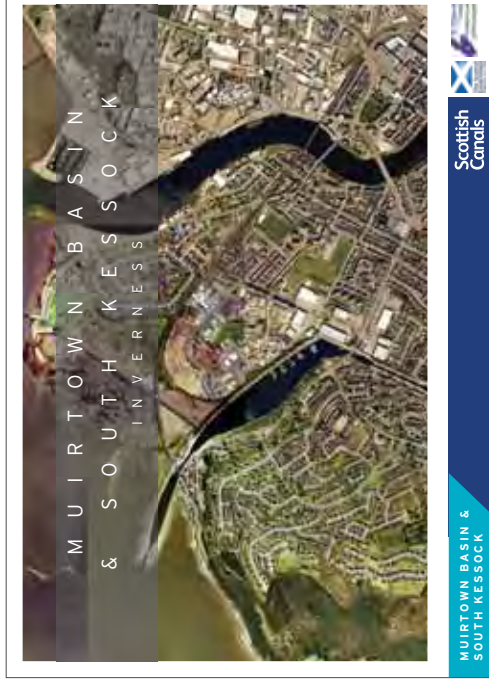
The Muirtown Basin and South Kessock event was split between stage one on 26-27 February, with a stage two follow-up event on 1-2 April.

STAGE 1: 26-27 FEBRUARY 2014

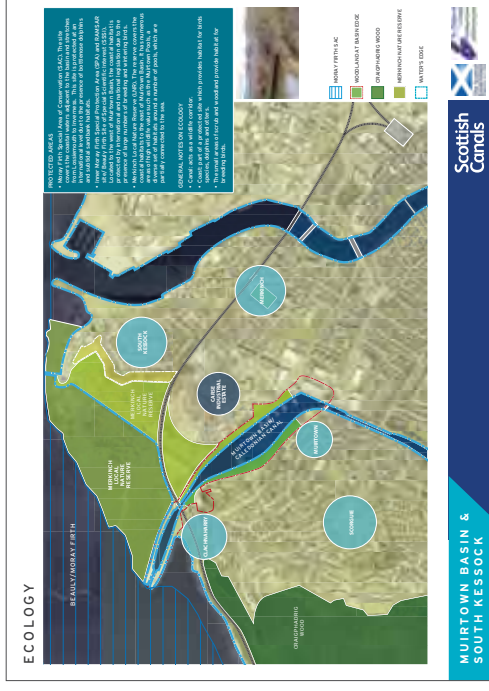
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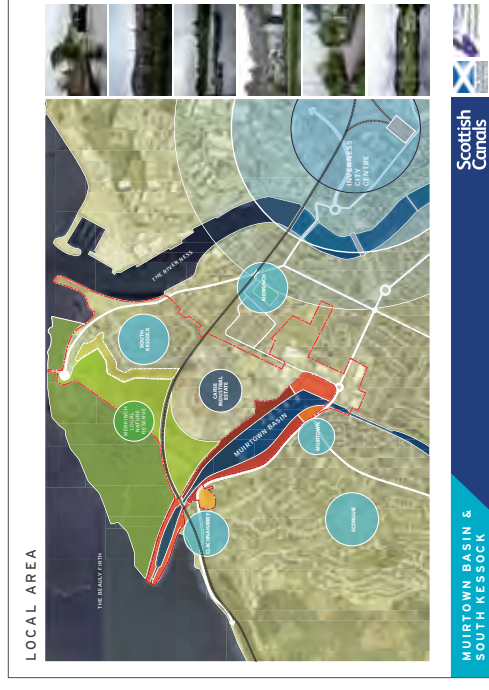
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MUIRTOWN BASIN & SOUTH KESSOCK



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STAGE ONE CHARETTE - EVENT



CHARENTE PROCES SUMMARY

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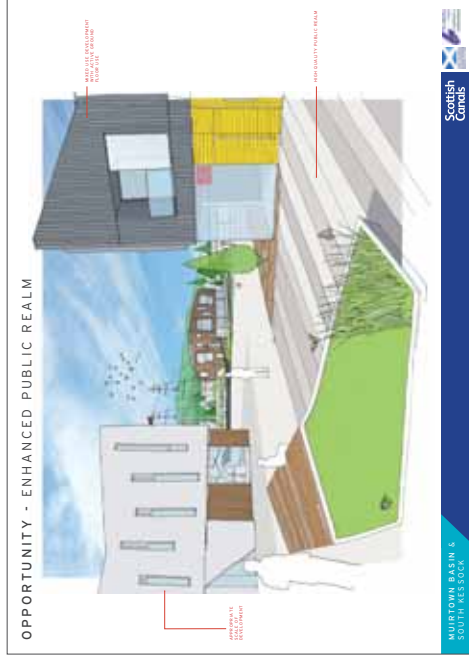
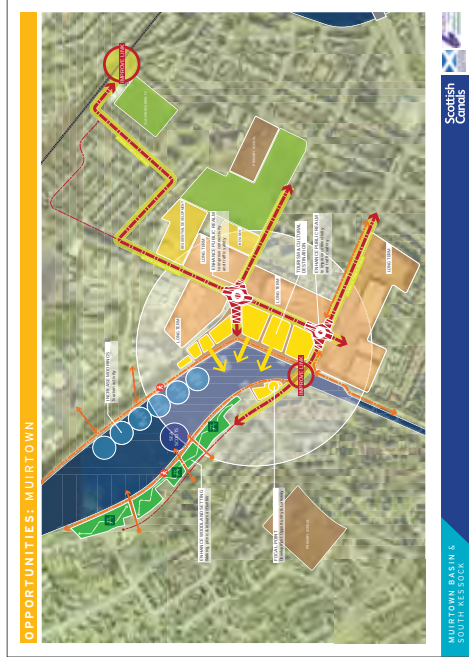
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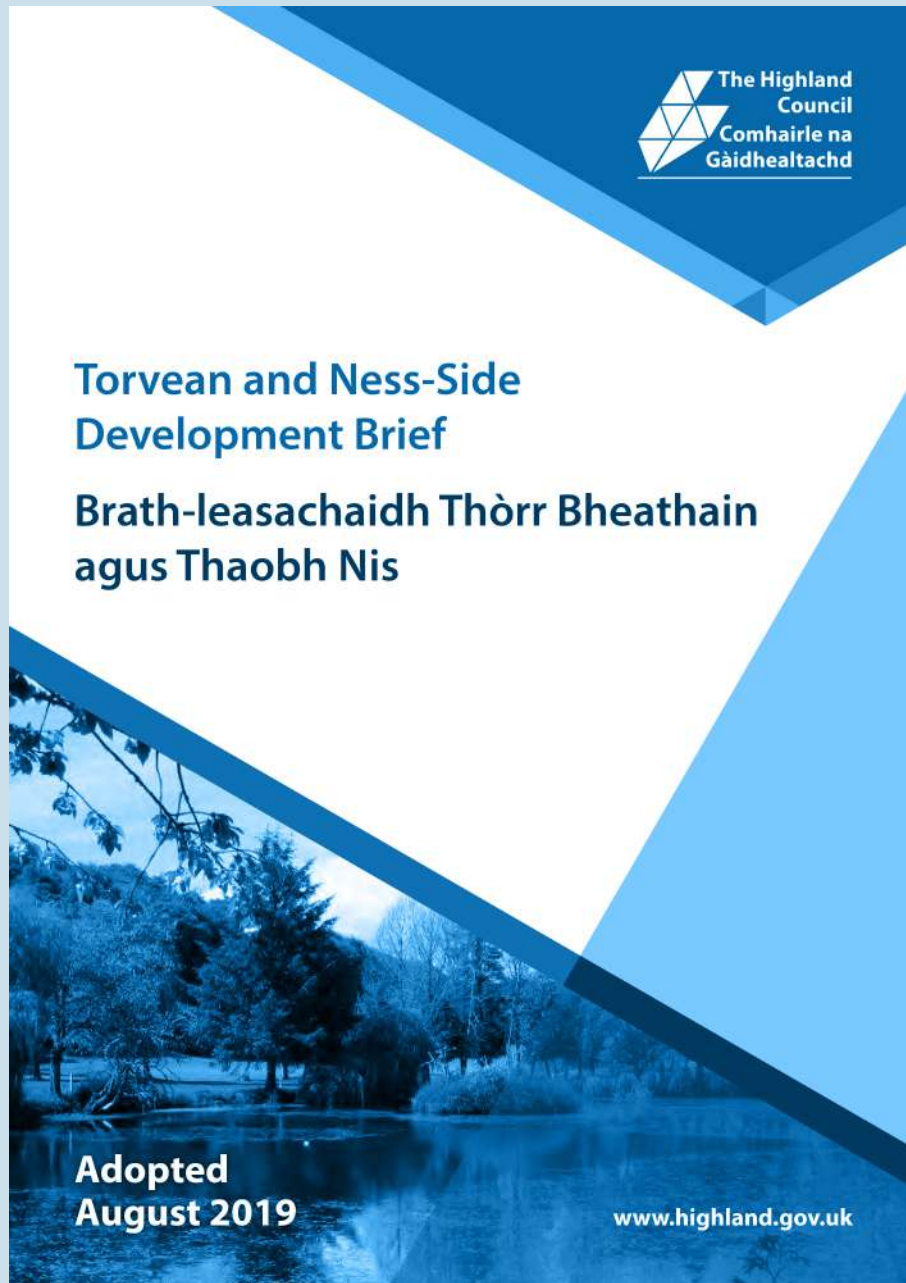
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EXTRACTS FROM STAGE TWO CHARETTE



Policy 15(e)

Torvean and Ness-side Development Brief



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:

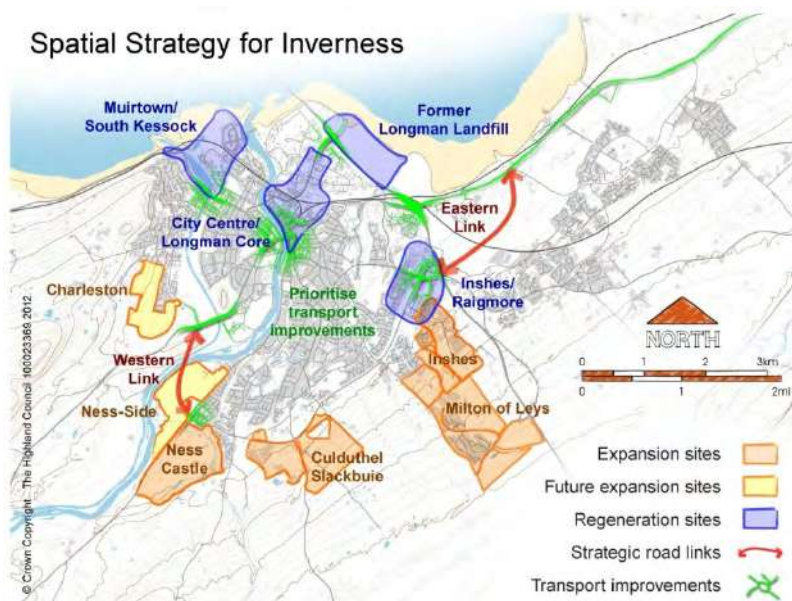
Policy 8 Ness-side and Charleston

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.





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

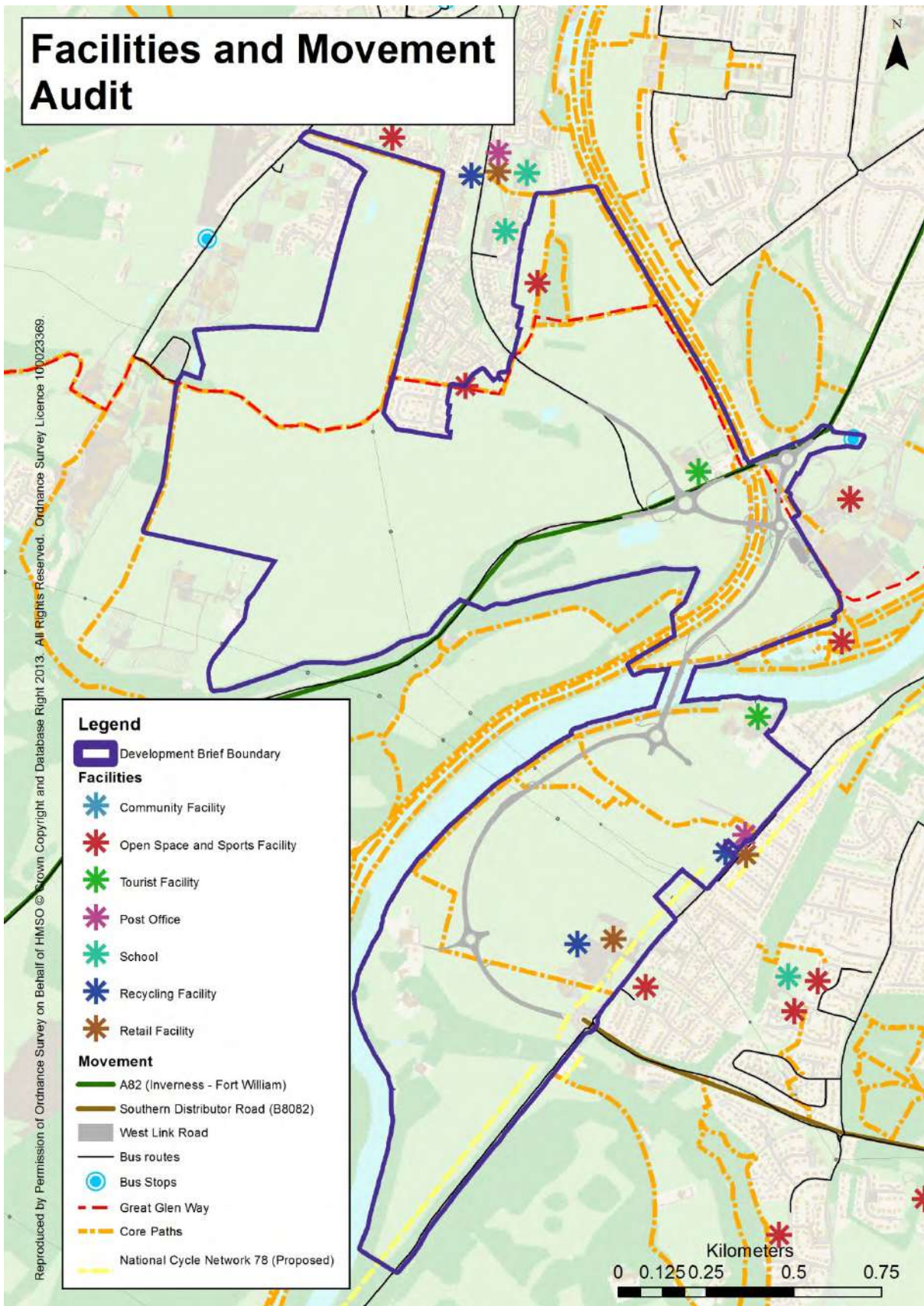
- 4.7 Public transport is vital to help new developments connect to existing and new households across the City. The main bus routes are shown on Map 2. At the north side of the river there are frequent bus services helping people go to and from the City Centre and areas of employment. At this time it 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



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.



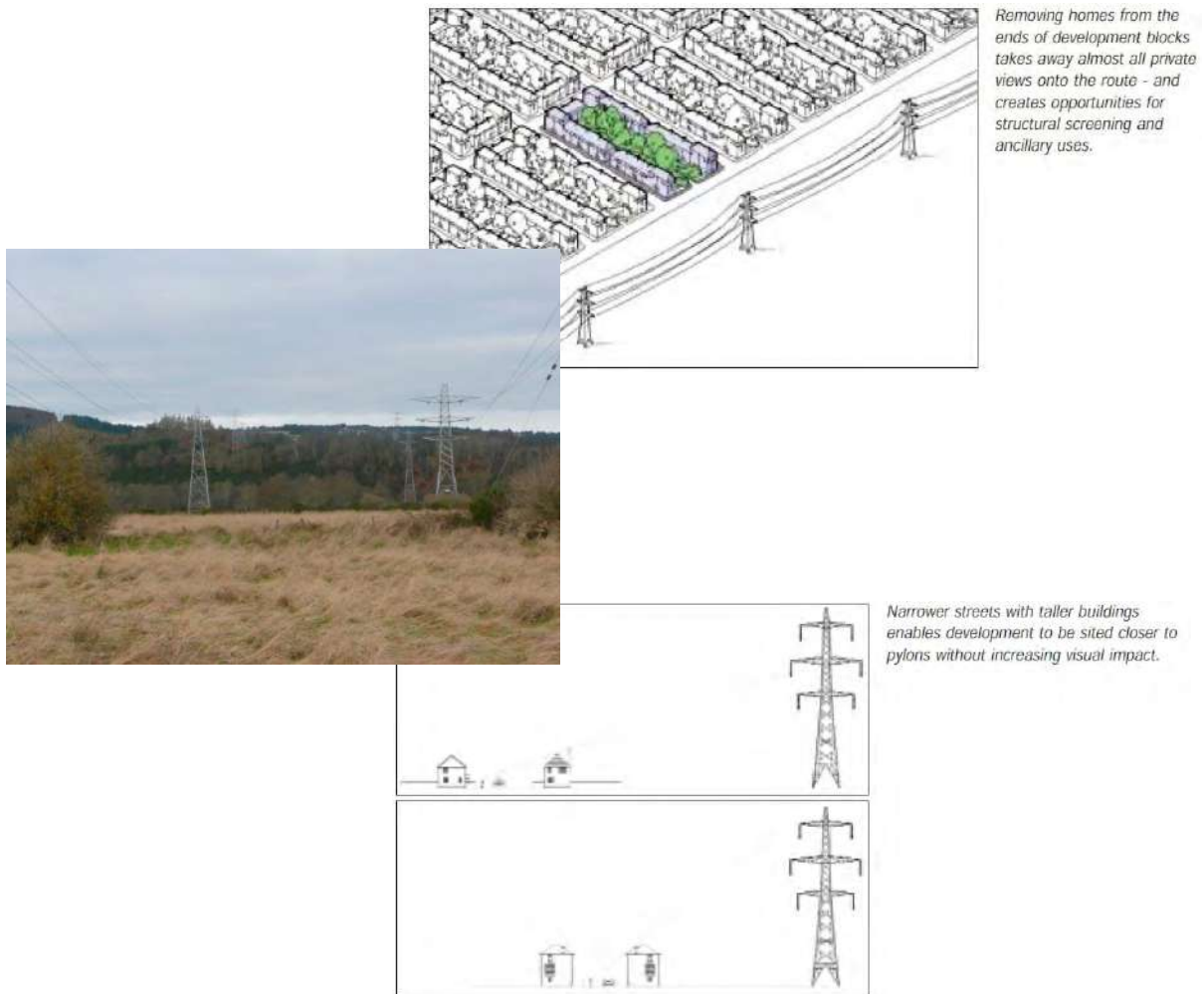
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Development Around Powerlines

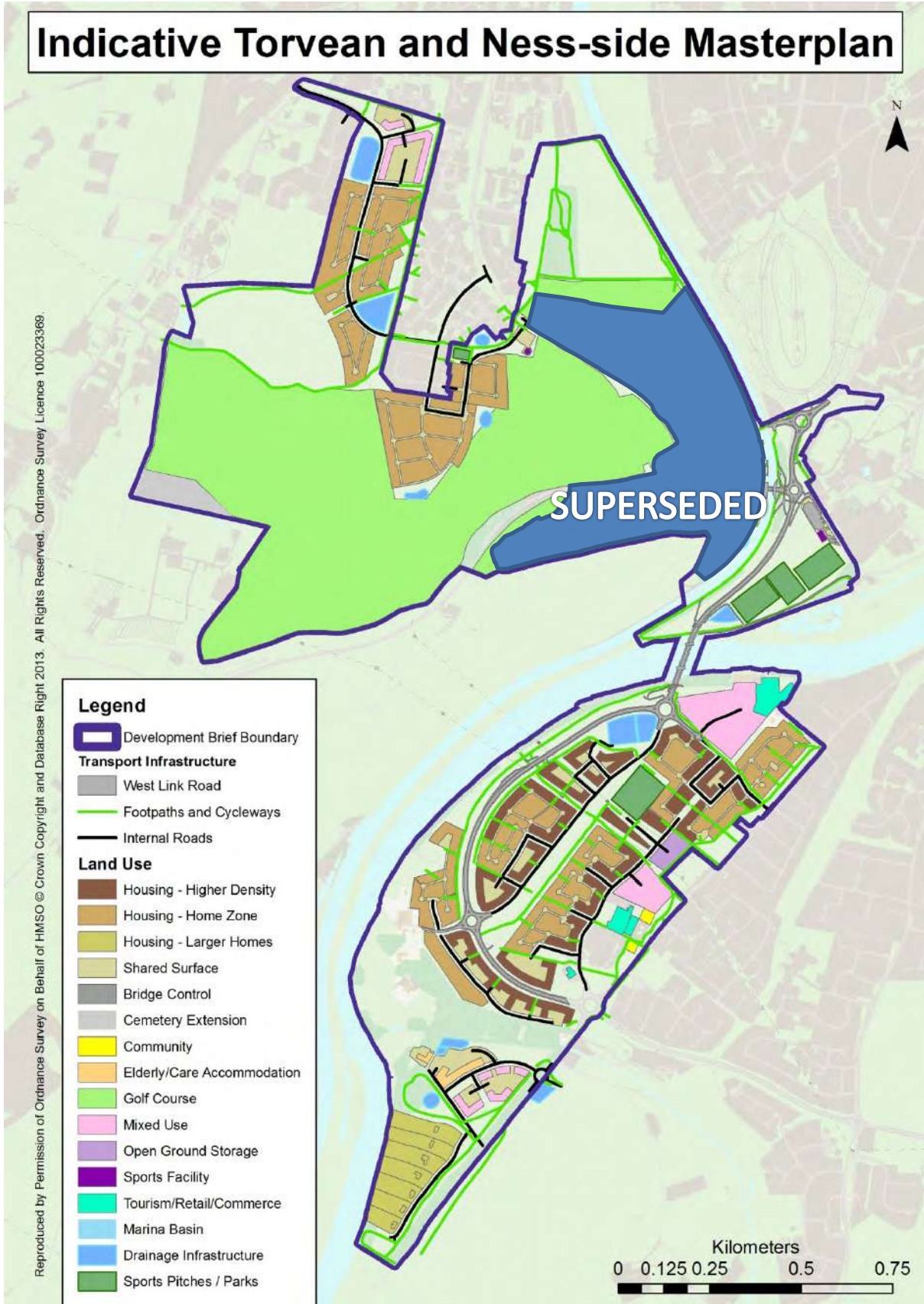
5.14 In the Ness-side development area there are a number of overhead powerlines running through the centre of the site. Following National Grid guidance on designing development near high voltage overhead powerlines called "[Sense of Place](#)" we have been able to identify some opportunities around 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



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.

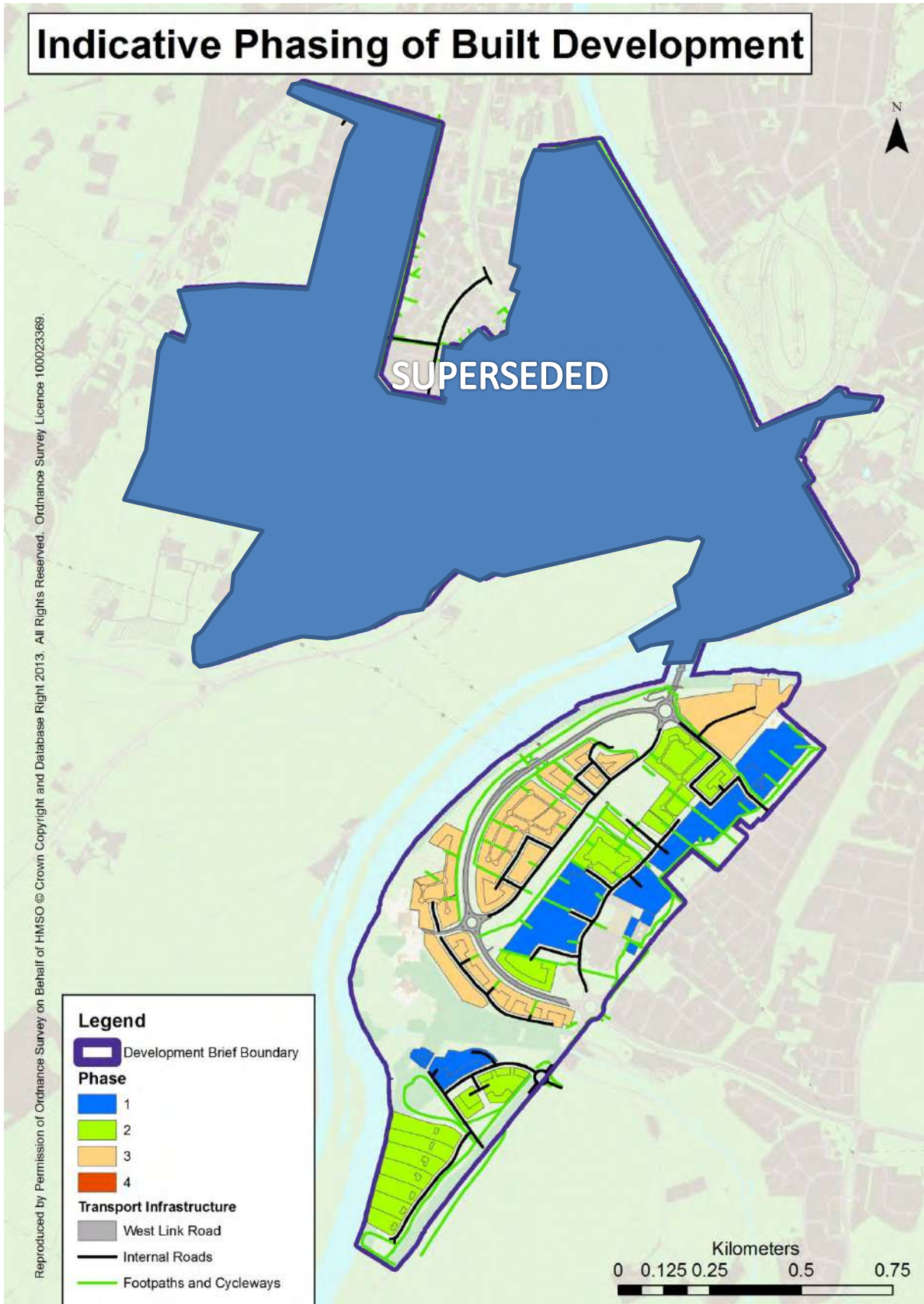
Phasing

- 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

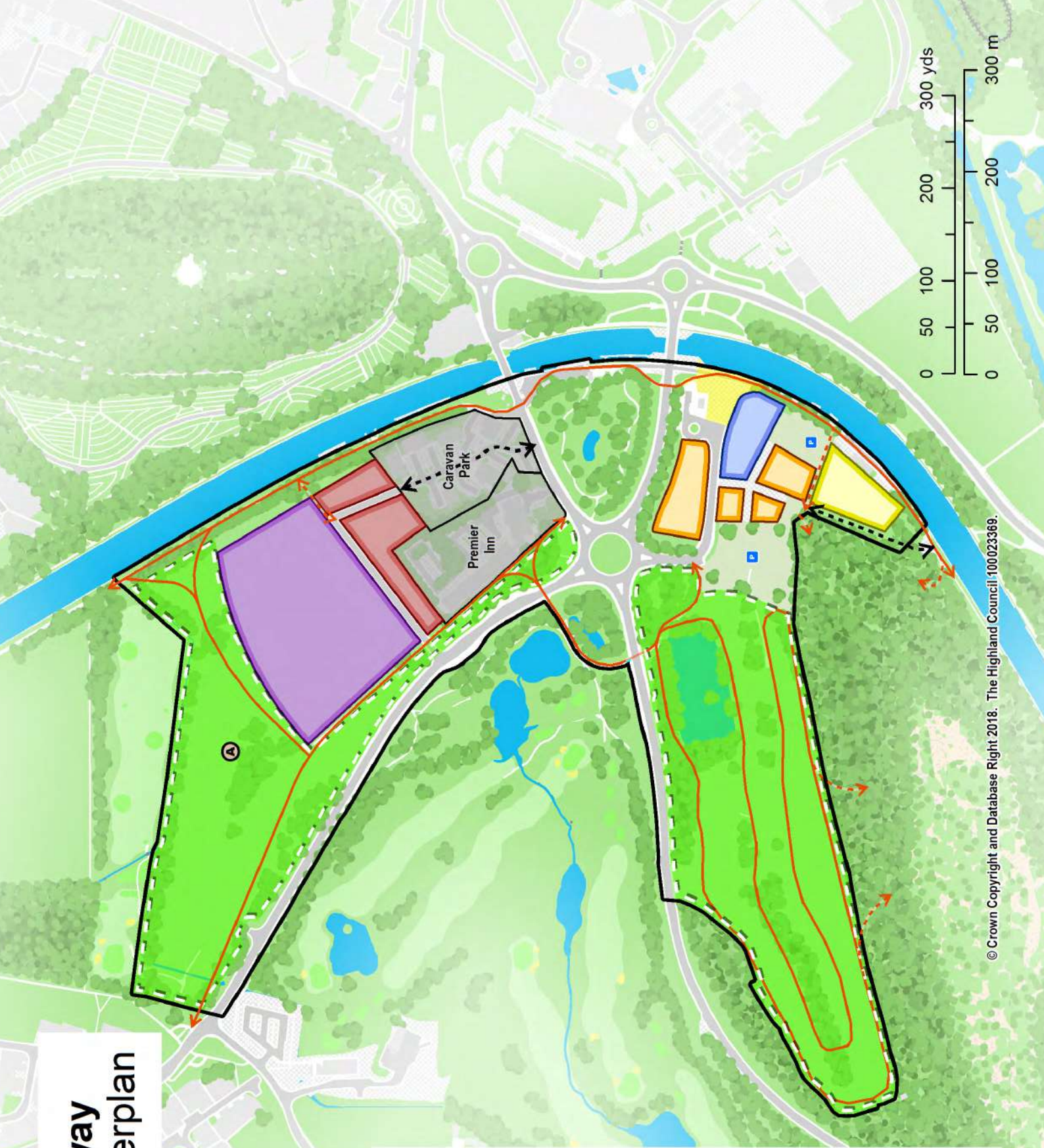
Growing Spaces/Allotments

Proposed Landuse

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

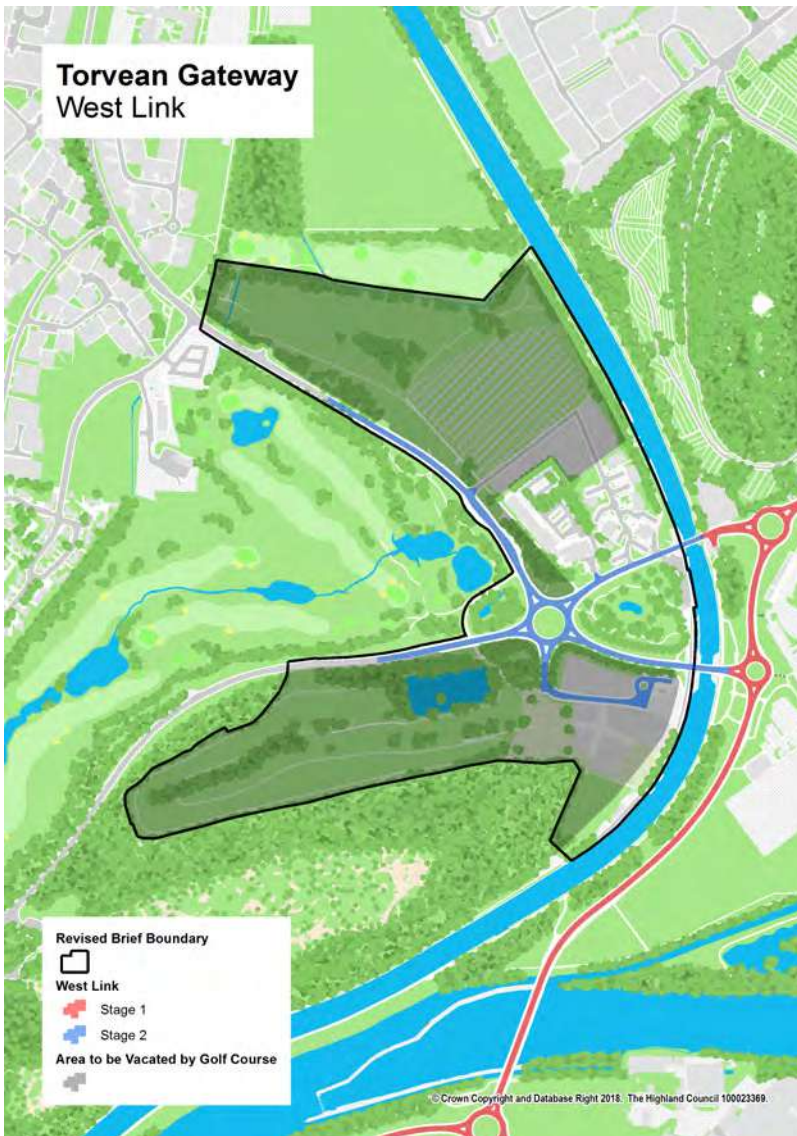
Proposed Access and Parking

- 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

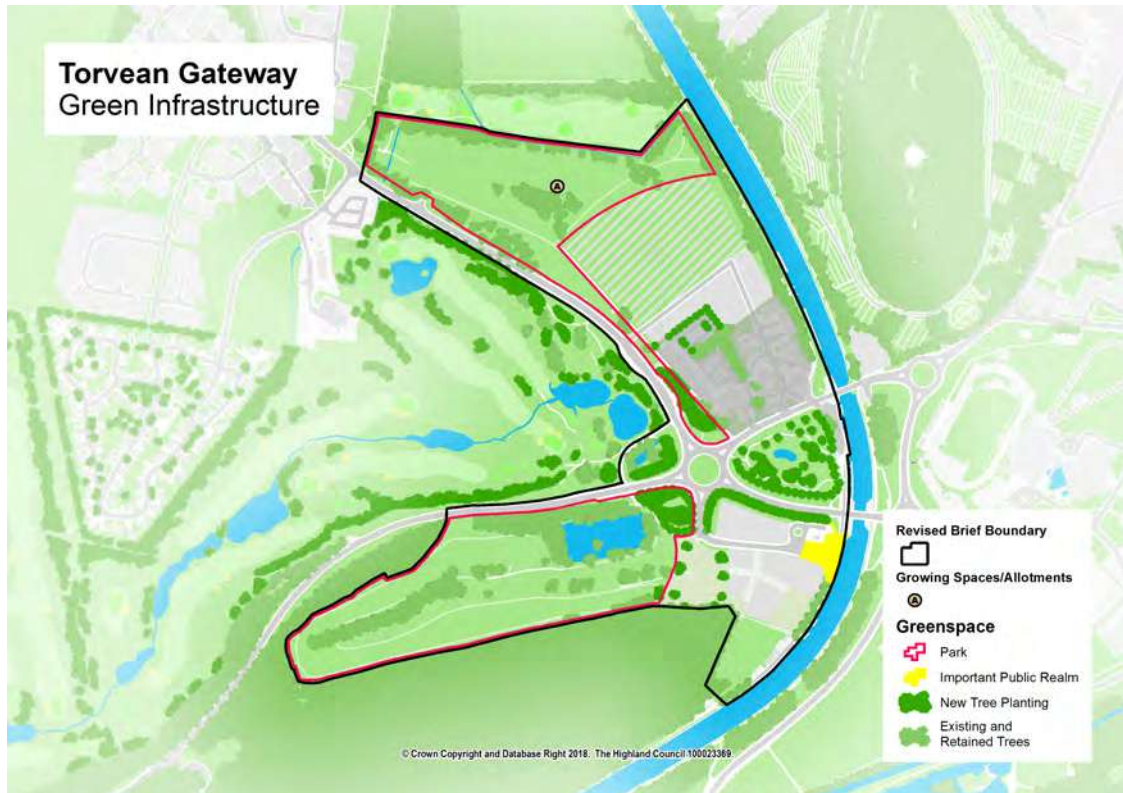
3 https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1523/transport_and_streets/128/the_inverness_west_link

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

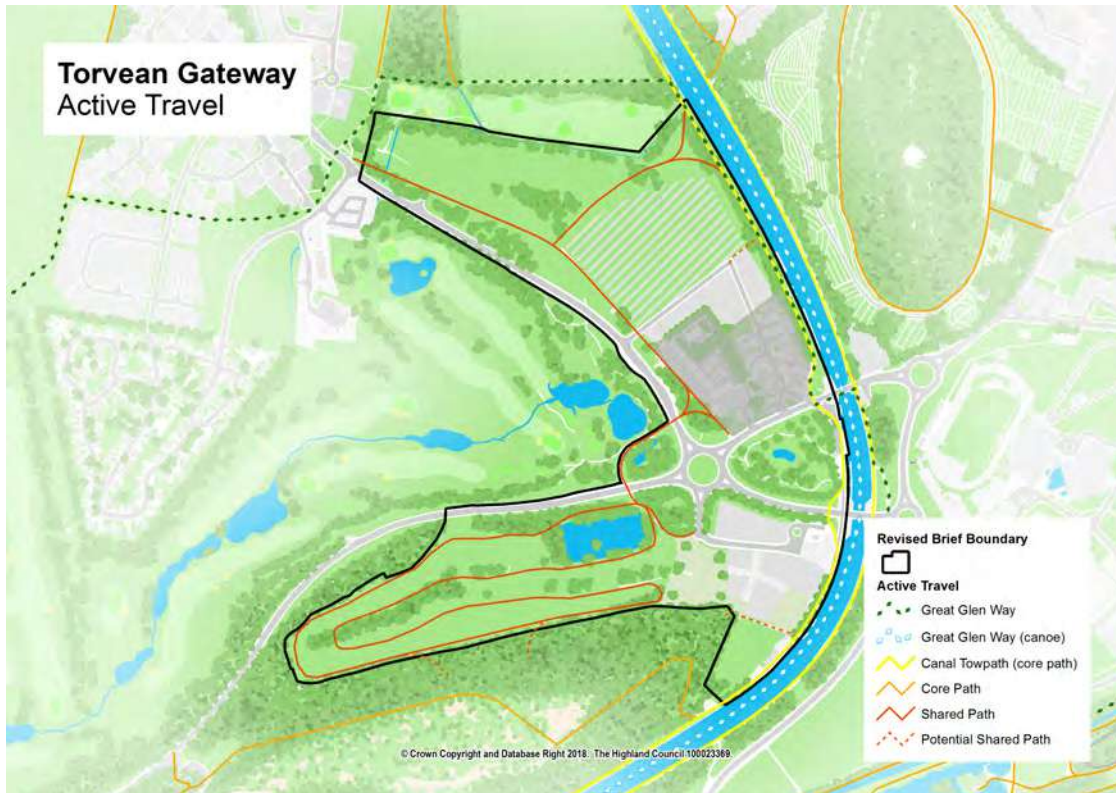
- 12** The former use of the development area as a golf course means there are attractive green and blue (water) spaces across the area. The planting on the new Golf Course, around Stage 2 of West Link, and the existing trees and woodland along the Canal tow paths and adjacent Torvean Quarry mean that 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.

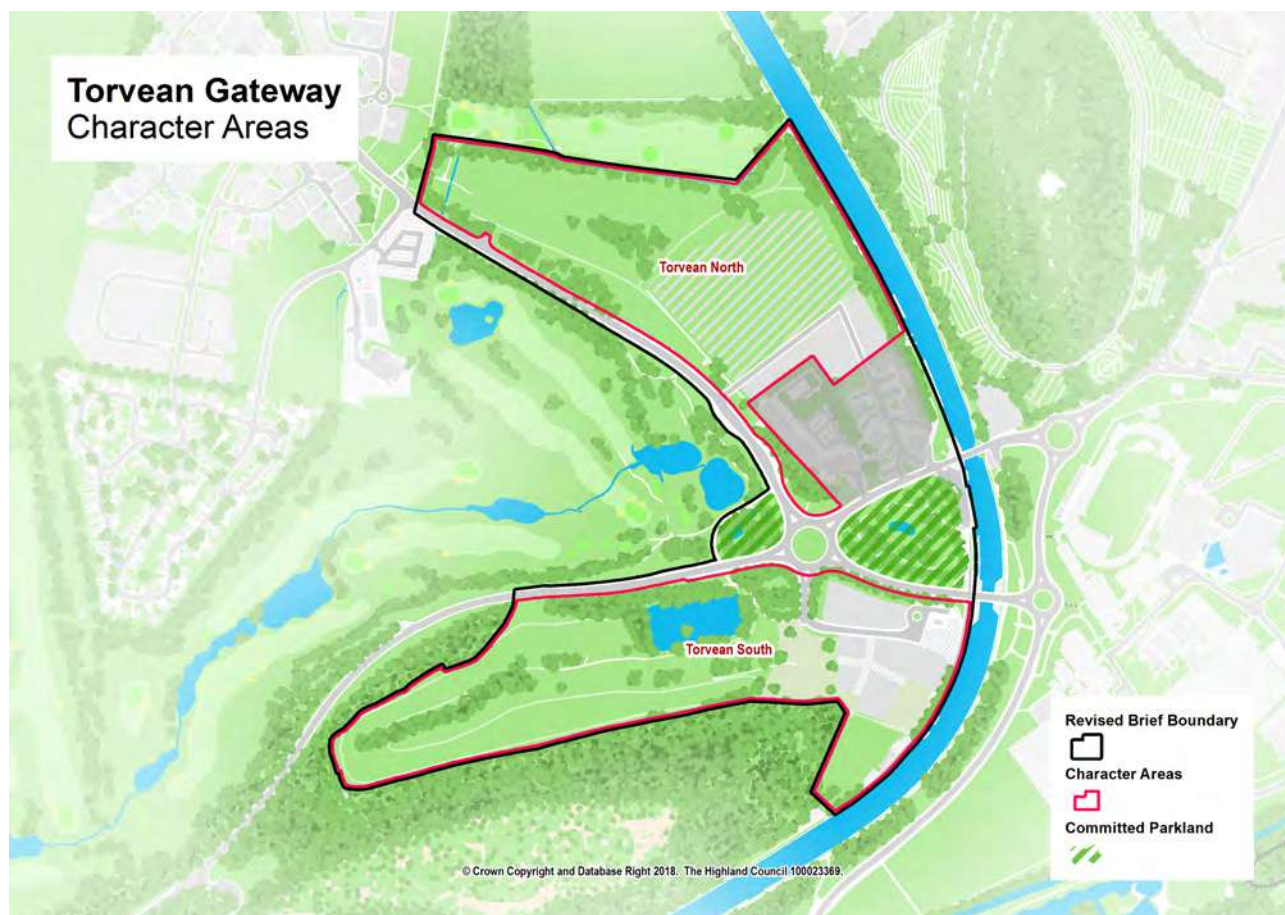


Energy

- 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:

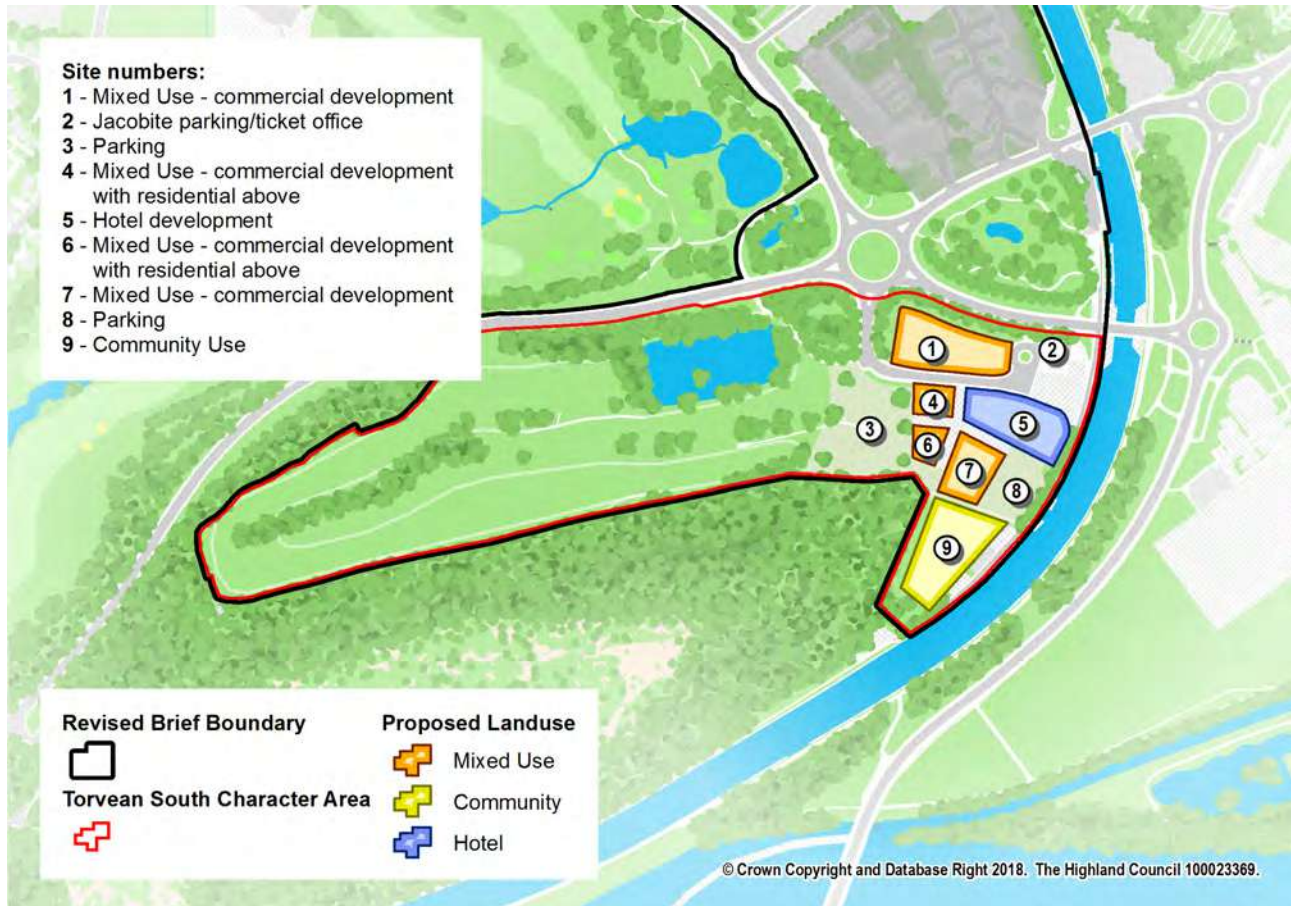
Acceptable Use Classes for Mixed Use Blocks

- 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

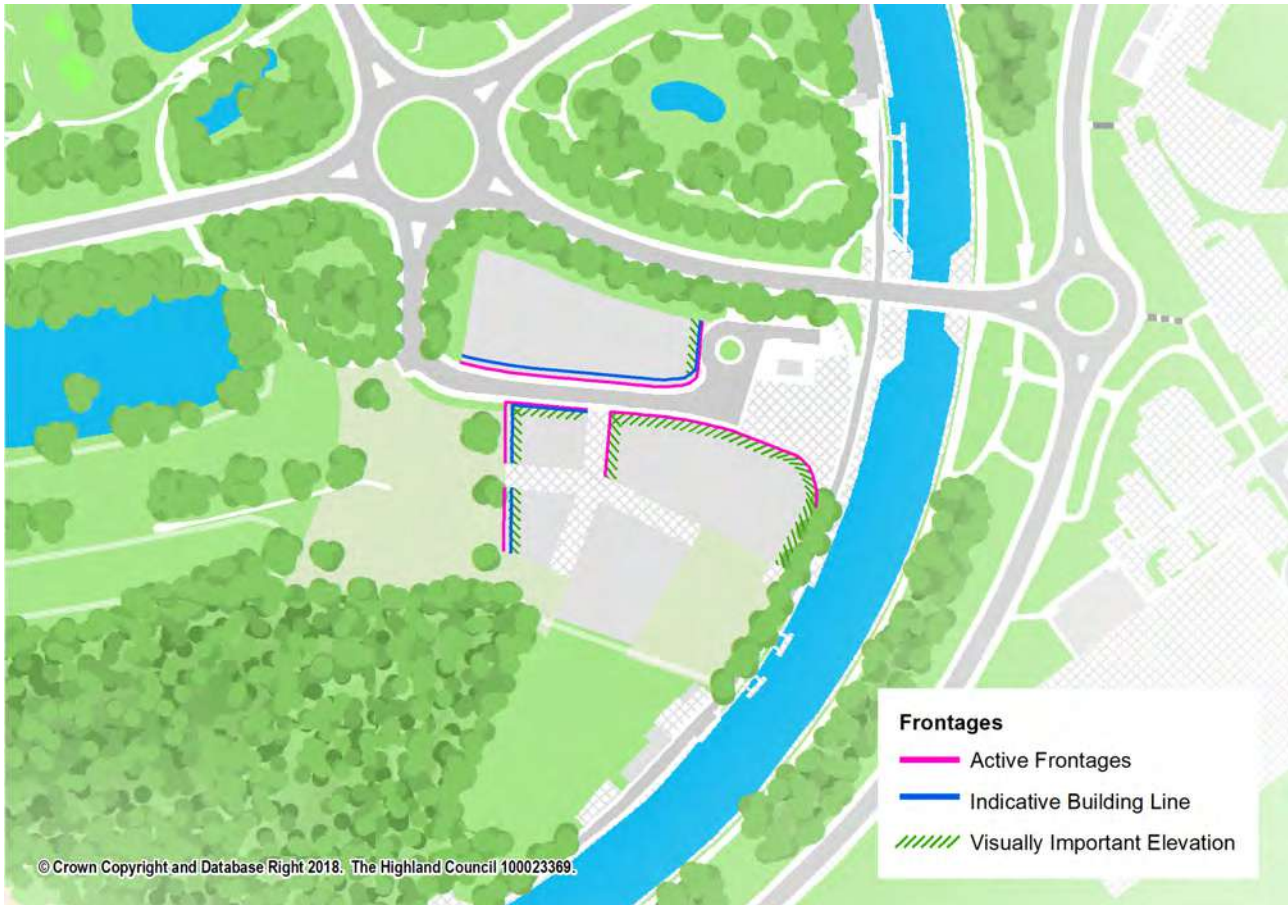


Torvean South Sites

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.

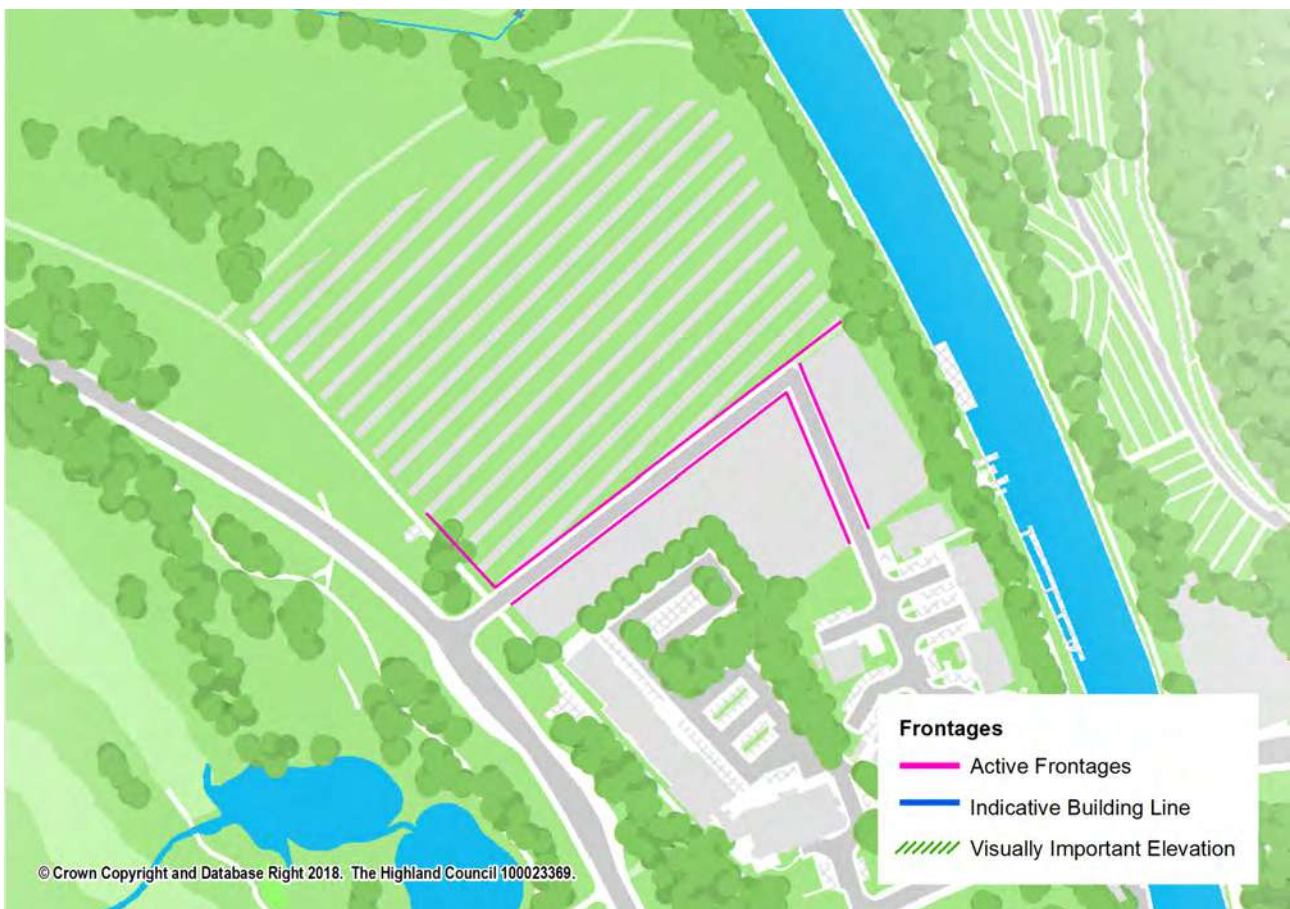
Site 9: Community use

- 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

Section 3: Character Areas | Raointean Caractair

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).