

Archibald B (Brian)

From: Donna Laing <DLaing@aberdeencity.gov.uk>
Sent: 17 May 2016 09:47
To: Archibald B (Brian)
Subject: Aberdeen City FIR10_Issue07
Attachments: FIR10Q1 Map.pdf; AerialMap.pdf; FIR10.1.pdf; FIR10.2.pdf

Hello Brian,

Please find our response to Further Information Request Issues 10 on Issue 07. I have arranged the responses underneath the individual elements of the request which are highlighted in **bold**.

As the response is more than 10 pages and is in colour a paper copy has also been sent to your postal address.

Information requested

1. A plan of the site indicating where the ancient woodland and quaker burial ground are situated.

Please see attached a copy of the map as requested; an aerial short of the site has also been attached to provide clarity.

There is no access to the Friends' burial ground. The access point infilled with stone. It would appear the burial ground is no longer in use.

2. An assessment of the landscape impact of developing this site, including as viewed from the AWPR, from land to the west (including Westhill), and on the function of the green belt between Kingswells and Westhill.

As outlined in Appendix 4 of the Proposed LDP – Masterplans, the site would be subject to Development Framework. The developers of the site, Drum Property Group, have already engaged a consultant to progress the framework and have been in discussion with Aberdeen City Council's Masterplan, Design and Conservation Team regarding the Development Framework. It has been made clear that the progression of the Development Framework as at the developer's risk. The draft Development Framework has been produced and will be presented to Aberdeen City Council's Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee on 17 May 2016 seeking permission to be released for consultation. We have attached an electronic copy of the development framework (FIR10/1) and committee report (FIR10/2), and will also send hard copies.

With regard to an assessment of the landscape impact of developing this site, initially a development option appraisal assessment (CD28) was completed during the Pre-Main Issues Report stage for options B0308, B0309 and B0310. It should be noted that the allocated site (OP63) is an accumulation and modification to the site boundaries of these bids.

The development option appraisal at the Pre-Main Issues Report Stage on Development Option B0308, B0309 and B0310 states that development may have an impact on the landscape features and landscape fit of the area. It is noted within these that 'development would intrude onto the surrounding landscape and be visible on both directions in the A944. The Development would be contained within the AWPR; the AWPR will also alter the views of this area from the west.'

The draft development framework applies the same principles as its sister documents, the masterplan for site OP29. The landscape framework will continue to be informed by existing features such as tree belts, stone dyke boundary features and so on. Further to this, the massing of the buildings on site and potential heights have been mapped (page 42 -44) of the draft development framework.

It is noted in the draft development framework, that input has been sought from a landscape architect. Key views to and from the site have been identified on page 27 of the draft development framework, these include views of the site from the Westhill roundabout, Brimmond Hill, the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, and the A944. It is noted the northern part of the site will be screened by the existing tree cover. The OP site will be visible from the west, and from the A944. The draft development frameworks notes existing tree belts will be reinforced and new tree belts created (p 36 & 37). The view of the site from the south will be limited in the immediate vicinity due to topography but would be visible from higher ground. The OP site should be viewed in light of the AWPR. This will have a significant impact on the landscape character of this area.

The exact detail of the units proposed on site would be subject to planning permission, and other more detailed assessments may be required at this point, such as Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments.

As is noted in Scottish Planning Policy 2014 (CD05) paragraph 49, the designation of green belt around a city or town to support the spatial strategy can have a number of functions. The development requirement of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire due to the Strategic Development Plan allocations dictates the greenbelt has a strong role to play in directing development to the most appropriate location.

The development of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route will establish a clearly identifiable visual boundary to this site as considered appropriate in paragraph 52 of SPP. The boundary of the site has been drawn to exclude the ancient woodland which is landscape feature in the area. Both the AWPR and woodland will serve to contain development in this area. This will ensure that the physical separation between Kingswells and Westhill will be maintained and their coalescence prevented. The green belt to the west of the AWPR and between the two distinctive settlements will be maintained. This will continue to protect the character, landscape setting and individual identity of Kingswells and Westhill.

A further function of green belt is to protect and provide access to open space. Current access to the site is poor. The development of Prime 4 could allow for enhanced access through the area whilst at the same time, maintaining features of interest such as the woodland and the burial ground.

3. An explanation of the proposed access arrangements to this site and the western portion of OP29, including the relationship with the AWPR, and an explanation of why the development of this site is required to unlock access to the western part of OP29.

The final access arrangements will be subject to consideration at planning application stage. Access arrangements proposed at BID stage and worked up in the draft development framework state access for foot/cycle/public transport and other vehicles will be as an extension of the existing transport routes in the existing allocated and built up area of Prime Four.

Footpath Network / Cycle Routes will follow the east-west layout with a north-south approach required in some areas in the form of both formal and informal footpaths. The draft development framework says that initially, vehicular access will continue on from the main east-west route running through the existing allocated and partially developed site, while accommodating the Friends' Burial Ground with either a route running to the north or south of it. A continuation of this road will potentially lead to future phases to the south (western section of OP29). Should the future phases become realised, this road may form the main approach to these (p39).

There will be no direct access to the site from the AWPR. The Kingswells South junction of the AWPR is to be located to the south west, with the Kingswells North junction 2 kilometres to the north east. Access to the site would have to be gained from the A944, using the existing junction of the A944.

As is outlined within the Schedule 4 the south west part of OP29 is constrained at present due to access issues. OP63 will allow for the continued growth and success of the site in order to capture the current demand.

4. An estimate of the likely developable area within OP63 recognising the apparent woodland, greenspace network and cultural heritage constraints.

The site size within the proposed plan is 12.7 hectares. The draft development framework outlines a 20 metre buffer is proposed between the Friends' Burial Ground and any proposed development (P31). With regard to the ancient woodland a buffer had also been proposed, a minimum of 10 metres from the fence line (p33). The ancient woodland is all contained within the greenspace network.

The greenspace network occupies approximately 7.3 hectares of the site. The area of the site outwith greenspace network, outwith the ancient woodland and outwith any cultural heritage constraint and the proposed buffers is approximately 5.2ha. However, it should also be noted that paragraph 4 of Policy NE1 Green Space Network states that 'masterplans will determine the location, extent and configuration of the Green Space Network within the area, and its connectivity with the wider network', as is the case with existing master planned areas within the city. This means that the developable area is unlikely to be definitively established until after the framework is finalised.

Best,

Donna Laing

Planner (Local Development Plan)

Planning and Sustainable Development | Communities, Housing & Infrastructure | Aberdeen City Council | Business Hub 4 | Ground Floor North | Marischal College | Aberdeen | AB10 1AB

DD: +44 (0) 1224 523512

T: +44 (0) 3000 200292

W: www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/planningandsustainabledevelopment

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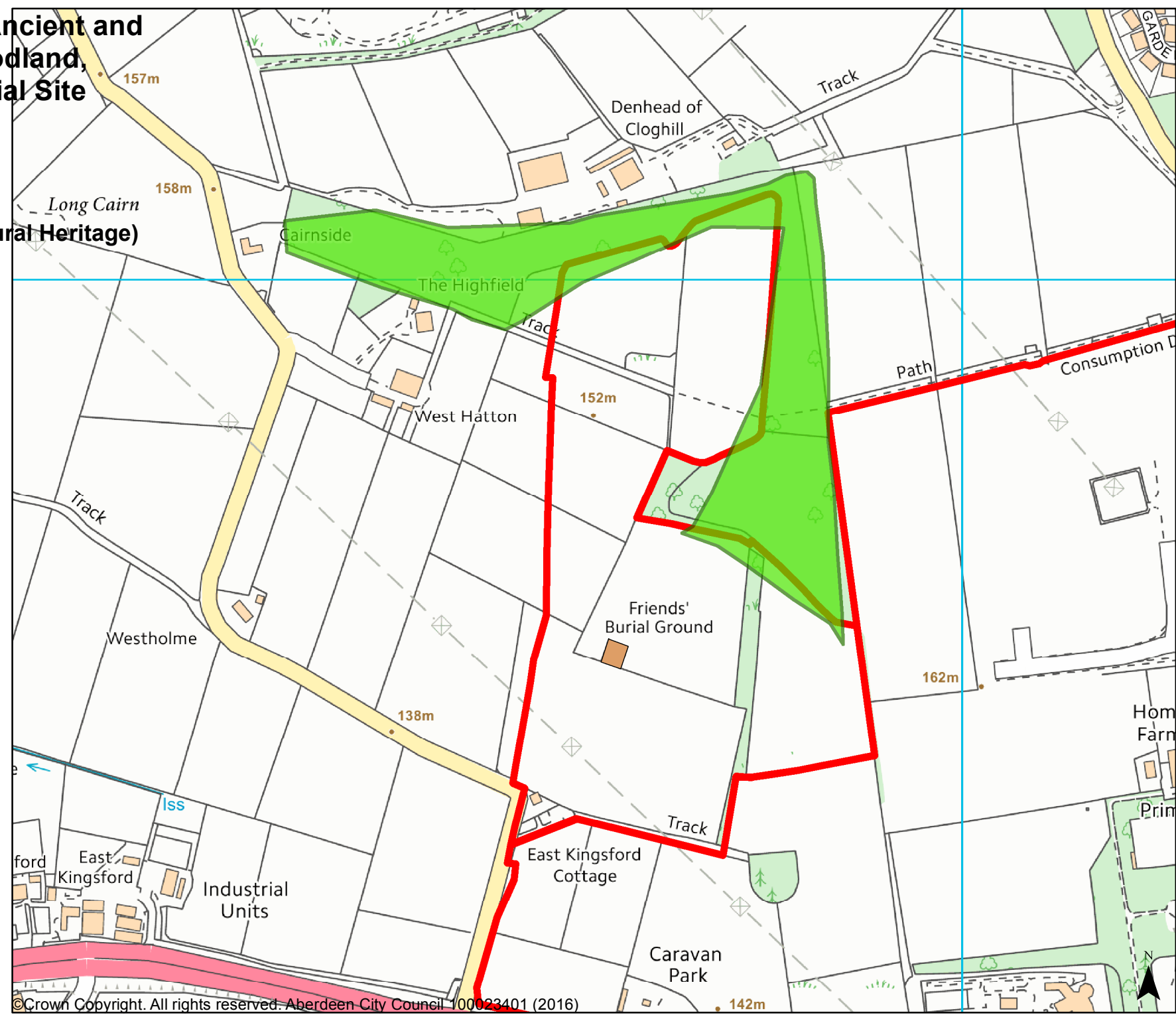
Map showing OP63, Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland, and Friends' Burial Site

Legend

Woodlands (Scottish Natural Heritage)

DESCRIPT

-  Ancient Woodland
-  Semi-Natural Woodland
-  Friends_Burial



Map showing OP63: Aerial





PremierOil

**Site OP63, Prime Four Business Park
FRAMEWORK**

Prepared by Halliday Fraser Munro on behalf of Drum Property Group

Contents

Section One

Introduction

Introduction
Purpose and Structure

Planning Position

Regional Context
Local Context

Previous Phases

Circulation Context
Circulation Update
Development Zones Context
Development Zones Update
Framework Context
Framework Update

Section Two

Communication & Engagement

Communication
Engagement

Appraisal

The site
Existing Site
Development boundaries
Land ownership or control
Surrounding context
Ecology
Heritage and Archaeology
Topography
Land Use
Movement routes
Landscape and open space

Section Three

Development Principles

Purpose / Vision
Key Objectives

Development Principles

Response to the Historic Environment
Landscape
Connectivity and Circulation
Buildings
Framework
Drainage
Accessibility
Infrastructure
Sustainability
Phasing
Delivery
Next Steps

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In 2011, Drum Property Group Ltd working with Aberdeen City Council produced a Development Framework to guide the development of a new employment destination to the west of Kingswells, Aberdeen. Following the adoption of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012, this Framework was adopted as supplementary guidance in January 2013.

The Framework informed detailed masterplans for Phases 1-3 of the successful Prime Four Business Park. This document builds on the success of that process and considers the forthcoming phase. Future development at the park will retain the key principles of the original Framework so that the exceptional quality of Prime Four is continued whilst still allowing flexibility to meet market requirements.

The process of adopting a strong set of design principles and working within these to reflect market demands has created a very successful business park which has been recognised for the quality and delivery of both buildings and spaces. The extensive landscaping at Prime Four plays an important role in making this an attractive location for businesses locate.

At the time of preparing this OP63 Framework, an area of 3.5 acres remains available for development in the Phases 1-3, this equates to approximately one 60,000sqft office development. All other land in Phases 1-3 is either under construction, or the subject of planning applications.

It is clear that the uptake of development at Prime Four has been unprecedented and in order to satisfy the demand for high quality office space in this location, additional land is required. Despite the recent sector uncertainty and fluctuations in oil prices, the number of enquires for office space at Prime Four remains high. In first quarter of 2015, 8 feasibility studies have been undertaken in response to enquiries ranging from 10,000sqft – 50,000sqft. Should any of these proceed, Phases 1-3 would essentially be complete.

As part of the forthcoming 2016 Local Development Plan, Halliday Fraser Munro submitted a development bid for additional land immediately to the west of the existing Phase 3 allocation. This land presents the obvious direction for expansion at Prime Four Business Park. Aberdeen City Council have supported the development bid and the site is now included in the Proposed Local Development Plan as site OP63 for a further 12 hectares of high quality business park use.

In taking the additional land forward both Drum Property Group and Aberdeen City Council were keen to replicate the success of the framework and masterplan process for Phases 1-3 whilst considering potential improvements to that process. Drum Property Group Ltd have therefore produced this development framework for the next phase of the business park to be agreed with Aberdeen City Council at the appropriate time. It should be noted that due to servicing and connectivity reasons, it is intended to take forward site OP63 as phase 4.

The aim of this document is to provide a spatial framework to inform the future development of site OP63. The document also demonstrates, via an indicative layout, how an effective development solution for this phase can be delivered in accordance with the principles carried forward from the previous development framework and masterplans.



fig 1. plot one landscape and setting



fig 2. plot three internal street

1.3 Purpose and Structure

This Framework document is being prepared to guide the future development of site OP63, the next phase of the Prime Four Business Park. In discussions with Aberdeen City Council the benefits of having such a document along with the individual masterplans for Phases 1-3 were clearly recognised.

- It allows the Planning Authority and the public to understand the wider context;
- It identifies key principles to be applied throughout the development;
- It summarises constraints and opportunities as well as infrastructure issues for the benefit of all users;
- It generally identifies where development is likely to happen and the general form of that development.

This document builds on the format and content of the existing Framework. It does not replace the original framework but adopts its key principles and identifies where improvements can be made.

1.4 Structure

Section One

Following this introduction, Section One will address a number of topics, including identifying relevant national, regional and local town planning policies and guidance. It will be demonstrated how the relevant guidance has informed the framework and design.

Section one also identifies the key development principles set out in the original framework, and considers how these have been incorporated in the delivery of the development on the ground.

Section Two

Section two will discuss in detail the consultation undertaken during the production of this document, the feedback received, and how this has influenced our proposed design.

This section will then provide a detailed analysis of the site and surrounding environs, including the topography, landscape context and connectivity of the site.

Section Three

The analysis prepared in section two will inform the preparation of development principles which will be outlined in section three. These development principles will guide any future applications within the OP63 site. Key development principles include landscape, connectivity, buildings and delivery.

Planning Position

2.1 Where are we now

The existing development at Phases 1-3 were identified as site OP40 in the Local Development Plan. This land was the subject of a development framework and Phase One Masterplan, which was adopted as supplementary guidance in January 2013. Almost all land released in Phases 1-3 has now been built out, is under construction, or is committed:

Complete / Occupied:	590,000sqft
Under construction:	123,000sqft
Committed development / pre let :	116,000sqft
Total:	829,000sqft.

Following the successful delivery of the majority of the first three phases, the site has been the subject of a Local Development Plan bid, and has been identified as site OP63 in the Proposed Local Development Plan (2015). This Framework document has therefore been prepared to inform this next phase and guide the future development of the Business Park.

2.2 Regional Context

The Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (2013) identifies three strategic growth areas; 1- Aberdeen City; 2-Huntly to Laurencekirk; and 3-Aberdeen to Peterhead. Prime Four OP63 lies within the boundary of the Aberdeen City strategic growth area.

A key objective of the Strategic Development Plan is to provide opportunities which encourage development in strategic growth areas.

2.3 Local Context

The 2016 Aberdeen City Local Development Plan is currently being progressed, and the Proposed Local Development Plan (2015) was published for consultation in March. This proposed plan identifies site OP63 for specialist employment use, as an extension to the Prime Four Business Park (Fig. 3).

The Proposed Local Development Plan identifies the land for:

‘expansion to existing allocation. Masterplan required. A TIA will be required. In addition, adequate buffer zones for the Friends Burial Ground and the woodland will need to be identified on the masterplan.’

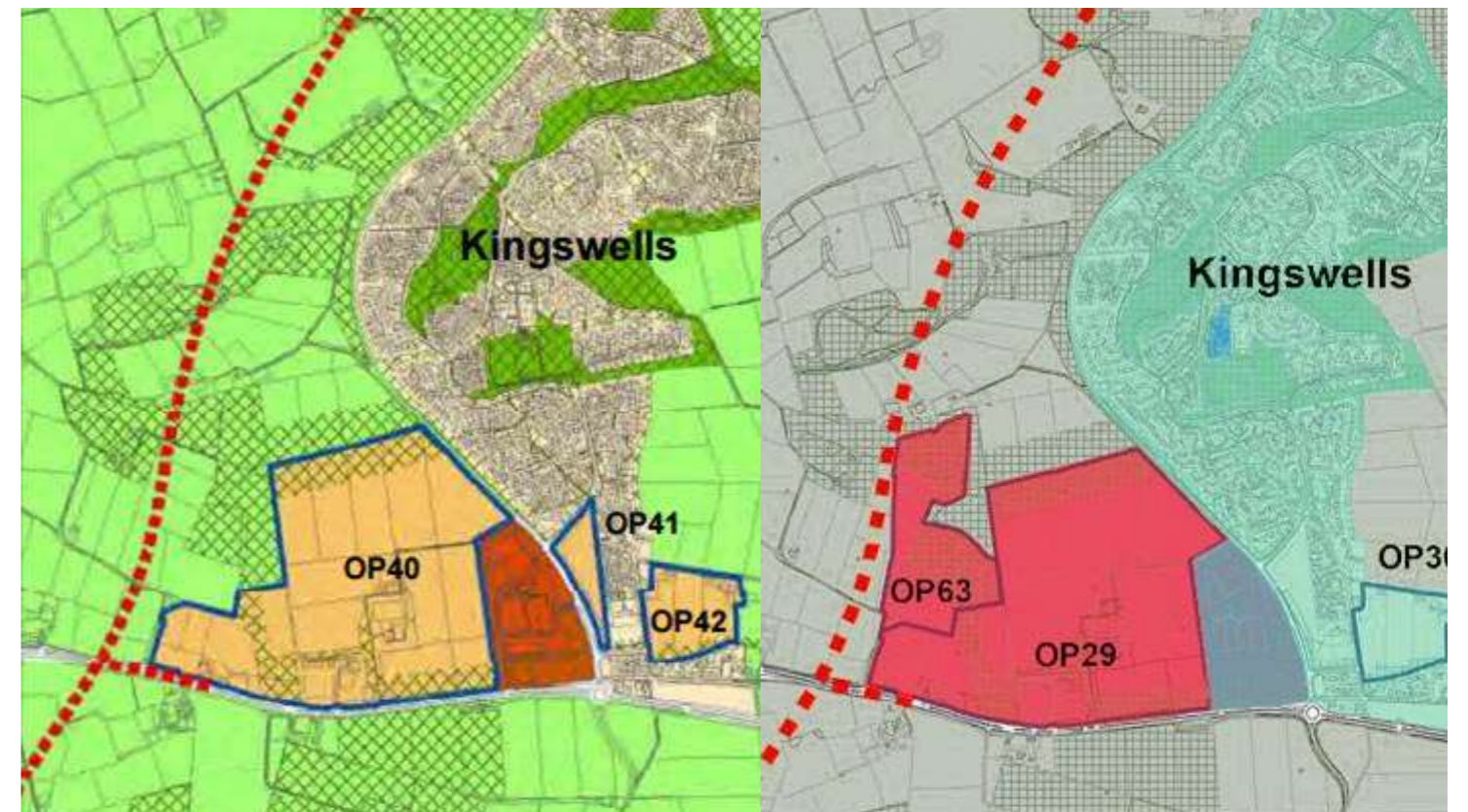


fig 3. ALDP map from 2012 with designations and Proposed ALDP 2015 map with proposed designations

Previous Phases

3.1 Introduction

Since the completion of the OP40 Development Framework and its subsequent approval by Aberdeen City Council, much of what was described in the document has now been delivered. It is recognised within the development framework that the indicative masterplan *'...is however only a guide, and must be flexible enough to respond to market requirements and changing economic circumstances'*, as well as *'individual Parts contained within this document can be updated and superseded in order to provide a detailed masterplan for each individual phase of the site at the appropriate time'*.

In order to identify the principles set down in the development framework, a framework drawing was prepared. This framework drawing showed one possible permutation of the masterplan layout. The purpose of this conceptual drawing was to illustrate key principles that would have to be addressed in future development through the preparation of phased masterplans.

However, there are a number of factors that can affect the delivery of a masterplan. These can broadly be categorised into two main groups; technical requirement or market driven.

Technical factors could be any number of site issues that only become apparent during the detailed site investigations or new information coming to light that was not available at the time of the preparation of the masterplan. Other technical factors could be the progression of detailed design of infrastructure, for example roads geometry.

Market factors include the changing requirements for tenant space within the site. These are driven by economic circumstances and in turn the changing demand for the size and number of prospective buildings.

It is essential therefore that prior to any master planning of future phases or extensions to the development framework, a study or comparison between what was identified originally in the OP40 development framework and what was delivered be undertaken. The following sections will therefore consider the main principles identified in the original framework and assess each in turn.

3.2 Circulation Context

From the OP40 Development Framework, 'a clear hierarchy of routes and their different functions is proposed'. Circulation networks should link to the surrounding infrastructure and a key aim 'was to continue and enhance these existing linkages wherever possible', including the consideration of future connections to the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR).

Footpath Network / Cycle Routes

'A dedicated network of pedestrian / cycle paths within the site is essential.' It was proposed that these should connect all development plots to the Kingswells Park and Ride, the surrounding core path network and cycle ways and the existing residential areas of Kingswells.

Public Transport

Connections with the Park and Ride were to form a key feature of the Park to ensure maximum numbers of staff and visitors are encouraged to use sustainable transport modes to get to and from the site.

Vehicle Circulation

It was identified that the main vehicular entrance into the Business Park be taken from the A944. The diagram opposite shows the main access would be located adjacent to the existing Park and Ride facility thereby offering the opportunity to combine these accesses.

'The primary street will run east/west along the centre of the site starting from the Community Hub'. It is noted that 'on completion of all phases [the primary street] may link to the wider road network at the western end of the site'. Internal circulation is to provide a secondary grid of streets and footpaths serving individual sites and open spaces.

Character

'The Main Entrance Boulevard will run south to north from a new access point from the A944. It should be designed to reflect a main entrance to a prestigious business park using the vocabulary of the rural landscape of the area.'

It was also important that the main entrance took consideration of the existing Westhill - Aberdeen Cycle Route and 'ensure no barrier or significant detour is created. Vehicular access to the Park and Ride facility, if the existing access is to be replaced should also be fully considered.'

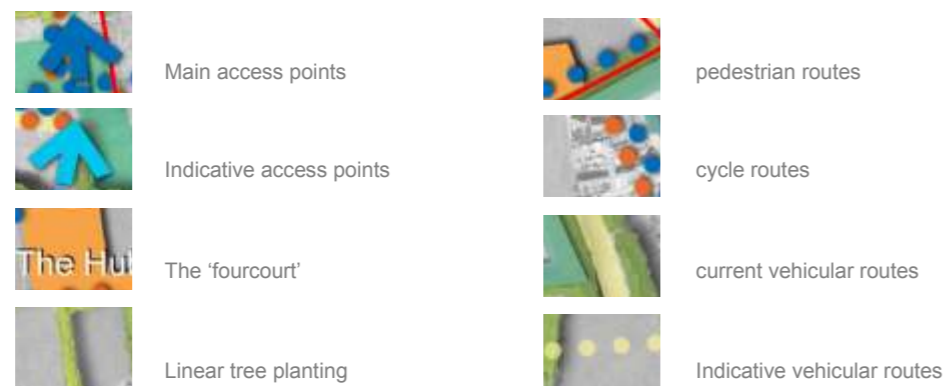
'The primary street should run east/west along the centre of the site starting from the Community Hub and on completion of all phases should link to the wider road network at the western end of the site. The main street will have the look and feel of a countryside road. Wide sloped verges should be provided either side. Footpaths running adjacent should sit behind verges or retained existing dykes. The surfaced dressing of the adjacent footpath should be of bound crush gravel or similar.'



fig 4. framework circulation drawing



fig 5. current circulation drawing



3.3 Circulation Update

The diagram opposite (Fig. 5) shows the current circulation strategy as it has been delivered within the Prime Four Business Park. The key principles identified in the OP40 framework have been delivered.

The main access to the development is via a new junction on the A944, the access to the Kingswells Park and Ride has been consolidated into this new junction. This junction provides access to the Kingswells Causeway, a new wide boulevard running south to north. Vehicular access to the park and ride can be taken directly off the Kingswells Causeway.

At the top of the boulevard, a junction is formed providing access to the hotel and community hub, now named 'the Fourcourt'. The boulevard then continues west forming the main phase 2 access road. Access to all of the existing and proposed plots is taken directly off this road.

A secondary access road into the park, as proposed in the development framework, lies to the immediate north of the park and ride. This runs from C89 Kingswells bypass to the primary street, the main phase 2 and 3 road running east-west. The position of this link road, north of the Fourcourt, was preferred in order to remove significant vehicular movements from the Fourcourt area, as well as complying with technical requirements and roads geometry.

The current road strategy has been designed to allow links into future phases.

A clear strategy of pedestrian circulation is delivered throughout the park. Wide verges are provided alongside the primary streets and footpaths are set back beyond these verges and are generally formed in bonded gravel. In and around the fourcourt, (the main pedestrian zone) these finishes have been enhanced to provide a more attractive setting.

A secondary path network leads from the Fourcourt to the Northern Park and the plots to the west. Footpath links have been formed north to south from the primary street to the Northern Park and connect with the informal path network alongside the consumption dyke.

Links to the wider path and cycle network have been provided at the main access on the A944 and via the pedestrianised route to the north of the Park and Ride. A solution to 'ensure no barrier or significant detour is created' to the cycle network by 'the provision of a priority crossing point, or raised / colour surfacing for the cycle route as it crosses the access road' could not be identified that satisfactorily complied with the roads technical requirements. Therefore, a full pedestrianised crossing was formed.

3.4 Development Zones Context

A key component of the OP40 Development Framework was the creation of 'development rooms'. These rooms would be formed using the linear pattern of existing features evident on the site and would be emphasised by additional tree belt planting. Within the overall strategy of creating development rooms *'the site layout must also address the design of external spaces'*.

It was noted in the Framework that the relationships between buildings and the creation of varying landscape spaces between them would be important if the high aspirations for this business park were to be achieved.

'A relentless grid of buildings covering the site would be alien to the rural area and will be avoided.'

Recognising that existing buildings in the countryside often appear more sensitive when they are clustered together with surrounding open space, the diagram opposite (Fig. 6) shows how, depending on the scale and nature of requirements, relationships could be formed between buildings. The drawing indicates the type of grouping which should be promoted.

Other points to note include *'buildings within the Northern Zone should be orientated with gables facing north and south to minimise the visual impact'* and *'generally, parking must be to the side or rear of buildings to allow active frontage to the street'*.



fig 6. Phases 1-3 framework zones drawing



fig 7. current zones drawing

3.5 Development Zones Update

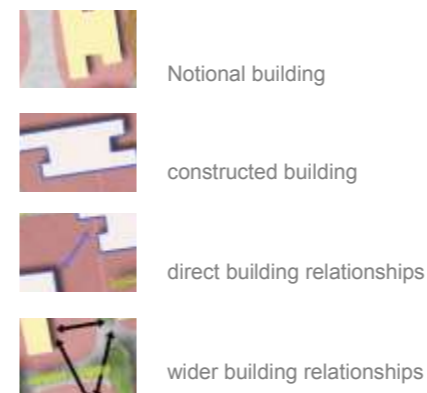
The OP40 Framework set guidelines for the creation of building clusters, and set the guidelines for the relationships between neighbouring plots. The phase one buildings which individually were approximately 100,000sqft, sat within their own defined 'room', whilst phase two buildings, anticipated to be of a smaller scale, were clustered.

As the floor space requirements of the buildings within Phase 2 and 3 has been greater than anticipated, the scale and context in which these buildings are read has also increased. The buildings now form relationships over larger distances.

An evident cluster in Phase 2 is formed by the buildings located around the Fourcourt. The three to the north have an immediate relationship; however the building to south also provides a sense of enclosure to the Fourcourt and as such is an integral part of this cluster (Fig. 7).

Further westwards, the consented plots, although not forming part of an immediate cluster have been designed to form a relationship by how they address the Phase 2 road as well as their scale, massing and materials. The smaller scale developments located within this wider context form a direct relationship with one another.

In every delivered and consented building, a significant level of tree planting around the perimeter of the each plot has been proposed. Over time, this landscape strategy will provide a sense of enclosure and form clear 'development rooms'.



3.6 Framework Context

This conceptual drawing illustrates the following key principles that were identified as having to be addressed in future development:

- How existing landscape features and planting could be enhanced;
- How traditional patterns of fields and woodlands can be used as design inspiration;
- The different approaches taken to the different topography of the site;
- Relationship to the Kingswells Consumption Dyke and the Green Space Networks;
- The footpath, cycle, and road networks and how they support and encourage sustainable travel to and around the site, as well as how they link to the surrounding infrastructure.

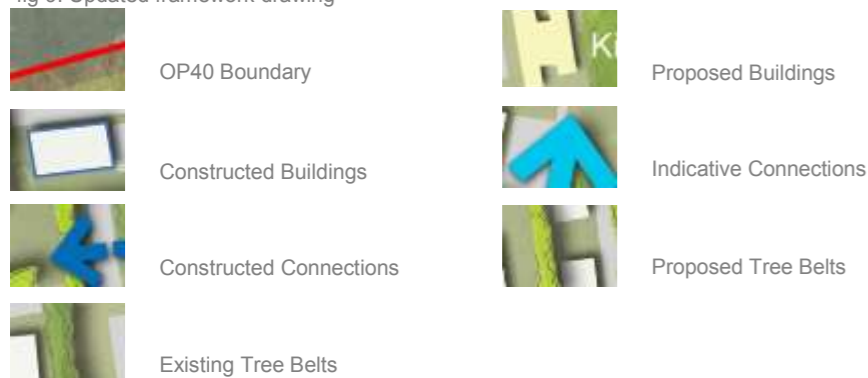
This layout is however only a guide, and must be flexible enough to respond to market requirements and changing economic circumstances.



fig 8. framework drawing



fig 9. Updated framework drawing



3.7 Framework Update

The diagram opposite (Fig. 9) represents the current status of development at Prime Four, in a format similar to that of the existing OP40 Framework drawing. The diagram also shows how the remainder of allocated land at Prime Four could be developed following the principles set down in the overall development framework. These future phases would require the production of a masterplan as per Phases 1 and 2.

What this diagram clearly shows is that key principles contained on the page opposite have been delivered and that the development of a flexible framework can achieve successful results.

The considerable tree planting within the plots, once matured, will read as a natural extension to the established tree belts around the site. This has been supplemented with additional tree planting, including some semi-mature specimens tree planting in and around the public areas, along the main boulevards and including the Fourcourt.

The existing field pattern and the north south running drystone dykes have directly shaped the size and orientation of the plots. Where requirements have been larger than the field pattern has allowed, a strong north - south axis in the configuration of the site layout has been developed. This, supplemented with additional tree planting along the same north – south orientation allows the building to be easily read in the wider context. The drystone dykes within the Northern Park will run from the consumption dyke directly into the development plots, ensuring the new development and has a direct connection within the surrounding historical landscape.

To date, all frontages addressing the north of the site have presented a narrow gable, as set down in the OP40 Framework guidelines. Proposed buildings that directly address the Northern Park are limited to two stories, effectively using the site topography and existing tree belts to screen the larger requirements.

The Northern Park, and the consumption dyke to which it relates, is maintained in the current proposals. The existing field setting of the consumption dyke has been protected and enhanced by the development of the northern park currently being implemented. Amenity value is being added to this by the inclusion of both accessible, gravel bound formal paths and informal mown paths. A car park for the use of visitors to the park is also being provided. Feature earthworks have been constructed to highlight the eastern entrance to the business park and will act as a future local landmark on this main route to and from the Aberdeen airport.

The greenspace network to the southern edge of the development has been enhanced considerably. The creation of the wetland adjacent to plot one has introduced new wetland and semi-aquatic plant species into the site, establishing a new habitat and enhancing biodiversity within the area.

Section 02

Section Two

Communication & Engagement

Communication
Engagement

Appraisal

The site
Existing Site
Development boundaries
Land ownership or control
Surrounding context
Ecology
Heritage and Archaeology
Topography
Land Use
Movement routes
Landscape and open space

Communication and Engagement

4.1 Introduction

As the site analysis and concept details have evolved, we have undertaken consultation with both the community and key stakeholders. This has ensured that individuals are informed of the proposals and provides the opportunity to influence the development.

The public consultation period ran for two weeks with two manned drop in sessions. This was advertised through the Aberdeen Citizen newspaper, invite letters were sent to key stakeholders and posters advertising the events were displayed around Kingswells and Prime Four Business Park.

The public consultation period ran from 14th-25th September 2015, with manned drop in sessions on the 16th and 23rd, where members of the public could attend and ask questions of the design team. The exhibition was open for two weeks to allow individuals to view the proposals. The exhibition material explained the process being followed and displayed the suggested design and layout for the development.

This information was displayed at the Prime Four Management Suite, located within an easily accessible area of the business park. The exhibition was open from 10am-4pm daily and the drop in sessions ran from 2pm-8pm in order to appeal to a wide range of attendees from all sectors of the community.

The event was advertised in the Aberdeen Citizen newspaper the week prior to the exhibition being opened. All Local Ward Councillors, the Kingswells Community Council and Westhill Community Council were invited to the event through a formal letter. Furthermore, A3 posters were displayed in locations throughout Kingswells, inviting the public to attend.

The exhibition comprised a number of display boards and plans and was staffed by members of the Project Team on the identified drop in session dates.

A sign in sheet was provided for attendees, which recorded a total of four attendees. The majority of these individuals attended the event on the days manned by the project team. All attendees were local to the area, and representatives from the Community Council were in attendance.

Comments Forms were provided and one completed form was returned to a member of the team. The Project Team also took a note of the comments made to them on the day.

The Community Council also provided comments on the proposals via email following the exhibition.



fig 10. OP63 boundary

Feedback from Public Events

Comments received through completed comments forms, written responses and through verbal feedback focused on the following issues:

Principle of Development

The Community Council object to the principle of the development on this land. No development should take place.

Protection of Heritage Features

Due to the location of the Friends Burial Ground and the Ancient Woodland on the site, concerns raised that the development adversely impact on these features. It was felt that the design and layout of the proposed development could address these features more appropriately and the proposed exclusion zone be extended.

Impact on Landscape

Due to the location of the development on a hill, the proposals will create a significant visual impact on the landscape.

Phasing of Development

The allocated land adjacent to the A944 should be developed first and access taken off the main road before any development is located on this area.

How the Comments Have Been Considered

Following consideration of the comments received through the consultation process, we would address the points raised as follows:

Principle of Development

The land has been identified for development in the Proposed Local Development Plan. The production of this Plan has been subject to numerous consultation stages and review.

Protection of Heritage Features

The proposed layout of development has been subject to input from a Landscape Architect and Archaeology Survey to inform the proposals. The delivery of the AWPR will have significant adverse effects on the landscape character of this area and will adversely affect the setting for the Friends Burial Ground in addition to having a physical impact on the Ancient Woodland. However, it is the intention that any proposed development would protect and enhance these cultural and natural heritage features, whilst sensitively integrating them within any proposed development and acknowledge their valued contribution to the cultural and natural landscape. This framework and future planning applications will be subject to consultation with Statutory Consultees and key agencies.

Impact on Landscape

As mentioned above, the delivery of the AWPR will have significant adverse effects on the landscape character of this area. Therefore, the changes introduced by the proposed development should be appraised within the context of a considerably altered landscape. The proposed development will aim to create series of successful, well-designed buildings sensitively located within the landscape, as demonstrated in the first Phases of the development.

Phasing of Development

Due to servicing and connectivity reasons, the land adjacent to the A944 will be developed as phase 5.



Appraisal

5.1 The site

The proposed site (Fig. 11) lies to the north west of the current Prime Four Business Park. Within the wider context, the site is located four miles to the west of Aberdeen City Centre, adjacent to the settlement of Kingswells. Its western boundary abuts the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) route, due for completion in 2017.

The settlement of Kingswells is adjacent, to the east of Prime Four, however visual links to the site from the settlement are limited due to ground levels and extensive shelter belt tree planting and the ancient woodland along the eastern boundary of the site. The Prime Four Business Park also restricts views from Kingswells and the C89 Kingswells bypass.

The site can be seen from certain areas within the business park, predominantly from along the main phase Two / Three access road now known as Kingswells Causeway.

Westhill, just under 2km to the west, is visible from the site. The introduction of the AWPR to the immediate west of the site may restrict these views depending on finalised roads levels and geometry.

It is approximately a fifteen minute journey north to Aberdeen Airport and ten minutes to Cults and the Deeside Valley to the south during off-peak times. These times are expected to be reduced post AWPR completion. Walking time from Kingswells to the site is approximately 5 – 15 minutes. Cycle time from Westhill and Hazelhead (Aberdeen City) is approximately 10- 15 minutes.



fig 11. aerial photo

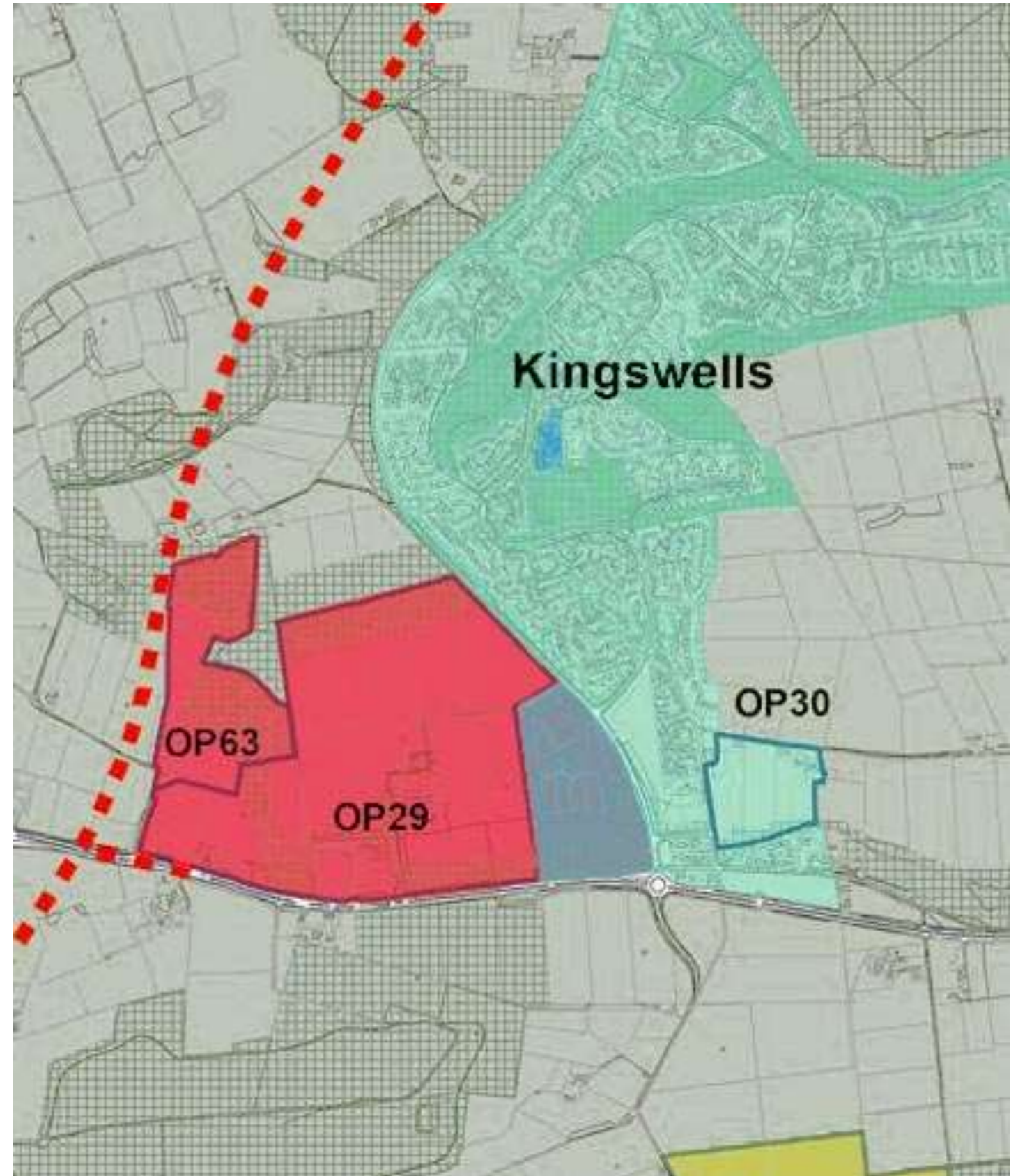


fig 12. ALDP proposals map

5.2 Existing site

This site extends to 17.6ha (43.52acres) and is allocated within the Proposed Local Development Plan as opportunity site OP63. The existing land use is predominantly agricultural; currently seven varied sized fields used primarily for pasture. Woodland runs around the majority of the east and north perimeters of the site.

Existing landscape features run across the site, including drystone walls in various states of repair, which define the fields noted above. Existing residential properties are located nearby, but are out with the site. These properties are:

- Denhead of Cloghill to the north will be compromised by the introduction of the AWPR
- West Hatton Farm to the west will be separated from the by the AWPR
- An unnamed property lies to the immediate south of the site

The site is defined by a central highpoint at 165m A.O.D. From this it falls steeply to the southern boundary before flattening out beyond the site. The ground falls more gently to the north to a low point of the site at 145m A.O.D. There is an area of low-lying, marshy ground out with the site to the south. The northern belt of trees is naturally slow draining with localised occasional flooding

5.3 Development Boundaries

The east edge of the site is dominated by the existing ancient woodland (West Hatton Local Nature Conservation Site), which runs northwards, beyond which lies the Kingswells Consumption dyke. The woodland also forms the northern edge of the site. The western edge is currently undefined, however the AWPR when constructed will form a physical boundary. Mitigation measures for the AWPR along this boundary potentially include new drystone walls.

The southern edge of the site is currently defined by an existing drystone dyke, the land to the south of this is included in the OP40 Framework and will form part of the overall development.

5.4 Land Ownership / Control

Site OP63 is under control of Drum Property Group (fig 13).



fig 13. land ownership plan

5.5 Surrounding Context

The area immediately surrounding the site is undergoing a considerable change at present. The AWPR to the west of the site will dramatically affect the character of the area. To the east, the Prime Four Business Park currently being developed out has transformed the once agricultural setting to an award winning, international business hub.

Notwithstanding the above, the surrounding area is (Fig. 14) predominantly agricultural in use. There are long range views from the site looking southwards to Kingshill Wood and westwards over Westhill towards the Hill of Fare.

Brimmond Hill to the north is visible from much of this site, however towards the southern portion of the site the woodland perimeter prevents views to the east and north.

The land to the south, whilst still in use as agricultural land, is zoned for development as part of the Prime Four Business Park and it is the intention to develop this area of land as the fifth phase of the site.

The area surrounding the site comprises a gently undulating landform consisting of a patchwork of agricultural fields with field patterns. These field patterns are determined by topography, shelter belts and various types of tree cover including commercial plantations, mixed deciduous and ancient woodlands. Higher slopes are generally forested except for Brimmond Hill which consists of heather clad slopes and wild heathland.



fig 14. surrounding context plan

5.6 Ecology

A Phase 1 Habitat Survey has been undertaken by an accredited ecologist during March 2015, with subsequent additional detailed bird, bat and badger surveys undertaken during the year. An Ecological Impact Assessment was also commissioned based upon these surveys. It is noted within the ecological reports that botanical and structural diversity within the cattle grazed pastures is poor and the grasslands are of low ecological interest. There are two fields with wet-grasslands habitats out with the site to the south east.

The site includes Hatton Woods (fig. 19), an area of ancient, semi-natural woodland and identified by Aberdeen City Council as a Local Nature Conservation Site. Around the perimeter of the woodland there is a single line of mature beech trees in the region of 150 years old, which enclose much younger upland birch woodland, containing a mix of silver birch, downy birch, rowan, and scattered invading sycamore. The woodland is shown on the Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 6 inch map, surveyed in 1864-5. Extending from the wood to the north and south are a series of narrow, walled pathways leading to small walled enclosures which support a number of old coppiced trees and patches of gorse scrub. The wood and these enclosures form part of Aberdeen City's Green Space Network (fig. 15). These habitats are considered of local importance for their intrinsic biodiversity attributes and the wildlife corridors they provide. Part of the western limb beyond the site boundary has now been felled for the construction of the AWPR.

To the south of Hatton Wood, a strip of land, varying in width from around 20 to 7 metres, extends southwards, defined by low stone walls on either side.

The Friends Burial Ground comprises a walled enclosure with a number of mature trees (beech, sycamore and a large central spruce). Further to the south-east, just outside the site boundary is a relatively small stand of mature conifers comprising Norway spruce and a central stand of larch. The woodland boundary is defined by an old dry-stone wall with scattered mature deciduous trees of beech and sycamore.

Shallow open water habitats are present in the north east of Hatton Woods, adjacent to the grounds of Denhead of Cloghill. These comprise two main pools connected by a ditch at the base of an embankment rising up to the garden of Denhead. (fig. 17)

A large number of bat boxes have been attached to wooden (telegraph) poles installed in the northern section of Hatton Woods between the pond here and the southern boundary of the wood. It is understood that these have been erected in mitigation for loss of habitat to the AWPR. Two badger setts have been recorded in Hatton Woods; at the time of survey these were unoccupied by badgers. A further survey of this site for badgers would be required at detailed planning stage.



fig 15. green space network



fig 16. Existing landscape features



fig 17. existing watercourses



fig 18. existing drystone dykes



fig 19. ancient woodland

5.7 Heritage and Archaeology

A desk based survey and walkover survey has been undertaken for the site. A number of sites with value are recorded within the site boundary. These are:

- Friends Burial Ground - Category C listed building
- West Hatton Wood - Listed on Ancient Woodland Inventory

Nearby, but out with the site, other protected heritage features include

- Kingswells House – Category B Listed Building
- Kingswells Consumption Dykes – Scheduled Ancient Monument / Category B Listed Building

Friends Burial Ground

The Friends Burial Ground (fig. 22) is located in the centre of the proposed development area. This Quaker burial ground was established by Alexander Jaffrey, Provost of Aberdeen, who converted to Quakerism and lies on what was part of his estate at Kingswells House. Jaffrey had a dry stone wall built around the small burial ground, measuring approximately 24m x 18m; he was buried there when he died in 1673. There are no gravestones in the burial ground but a plaque at the site reads:

'Kingswells Quaker Burial Ground. Here were buried a number of Quakers including Alexander Jaffrey of Kingswells, Provost of Aberdeen 1673, Sarah Cant his spouse 1673, James Forbes of Bervie 1682, Alexander Skene of Newtyle Baillie of Aberdeen 1693, Andrew Jaffrey 4th Laird of Kingswells 1726, Robert Melvin Weaver 1808'.

The burial ground stands on a south-facing slope, with views across a rural landscape. A blocked entrance in the south east of the enclosure wall faces the house at Kingswells suggesting a possible connection between the house and the burial ground. The trees that surround the burial ground were planted by Dr Francis Edmund, who bought the Kingswells estate in 1854 and thus not of the original design.

The burial ground at Kingswells has a strong historical association with the Kingswells Estate and Kingswells House. However, whilst historical associations with the estate are strong, visual links between the burial ground and Kingswells House are not possible given the location of Kingswells house in a dip, and the relationship between the burial ground and house at Kingswells cannot be discerned from its observation in the field alone. The landscape which the burial ground overlooks to the south has been altered by roads and other modern intrusions. The visual sensitivity of the Friends Burial Ground will be affected by the AWPR. The proposed scheme would have an impact on the setting of the burial ground, but can sensitively integrate it within the development and acknowledge its valued contribution to the cultural and natural landscape.

West Hatton Wood

Ancient Woodland is defined as land that is currently wooded and has been continually wooded from at least 1750 when the first maps (fig. 21) to cover the country were produced. Over many years, the continuous historical woodland cover has allowed the wildlife, soils and woodland structure to develop to be richer than that of more recent woodlands. The 1750 map also shows the historic field boundaries which have remained largely unchanged. It is worth noting that although the delivery works for the AWPR have felled a western section of this woodland it is the intention to retain and manage the remaining woodland for future generations to enjoy.

Kingswells House and the Kingswells Consumption Dyke are detailed within the OP40 Development Framework. Any mitigation measures relating to these two sites are in place or are ongoing. It is not expected the works to Phase Four will affect the setting to the consumption dyke in any way, due to the ancient woodland acting a buffer between the two sites.



fig 21. 1750 map showing ancient woodland



fig 22. Friends Burial Ground

5.8 Topography

The site is undulating, its highest point being the western edge of a clearly defined east/west ridge which runs through to the Prime Four development. Earthworks are underway as part to the ongoing Phase 3 works, but the general topography remains as described in the OP40 Development Framework.

The high point within the OP63 site sits at 165.5m above Ordnance Datum. From this point the land falls away to the north, west and south (Fig. 23).

Northwards the slopes are reasonably gentle, falling to the sites low point in the north east corner, 149.4m A.O.D. There is a gentle fall from east to west across the northern part of the site.

The southern part of the site is considerably steeper than elsewhere, falling away sharply from the high point to a level of 148 A.O.D. at the site edge over a distance of approximately 180m. The ground continues to fall away out with the site before levelling off approximately 100m from the A944.

Levels to the west of the highpoint fall away towards the proposed AWPR route. Significant embankments will be produced as result of these works.

The relevant geological maps covering the area record the site to be underlain by glacial till.

5.9 Land Use

The site is bordered to the south and east by land currently allocated for development in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012 (Fig. 24). Phases 1,2 and 3 are either complete, under construction or contracted to be constructed. Due to servicing and connectivity reasons, the site identified as OP63 in the Proposed Local Development Plan will form Phase 4, and the development of Phase 5 to the south will be subject to the works associated with the AWPR. The phasing is different to that previously identified.

The area between Phases 2 and 3 of Prime Four and the consumption dyke will remain as open parkland, as will a zone to the north of the consumption dyke.

To the east of Prime Four across the C89 distributor road lies the village of Kingswells.

The land to the west of the site will be dominated by the AWPR (fig. 25). Junctions from the AWPR are located to the north and south of the proposed site. The major junction of Kingswells South will dominate the immediate vicinity. The Kingswells north junction is a slip road from the AWPR south bound carriageway only.

West of this will remain as agricultural use. A major junction (Kingswells South) to the AWPR will be formed at the south west corner of the overall Prime Four development, linking the A944 to the AWPR. The Kingswells North junction lies approximately 2km to the north.

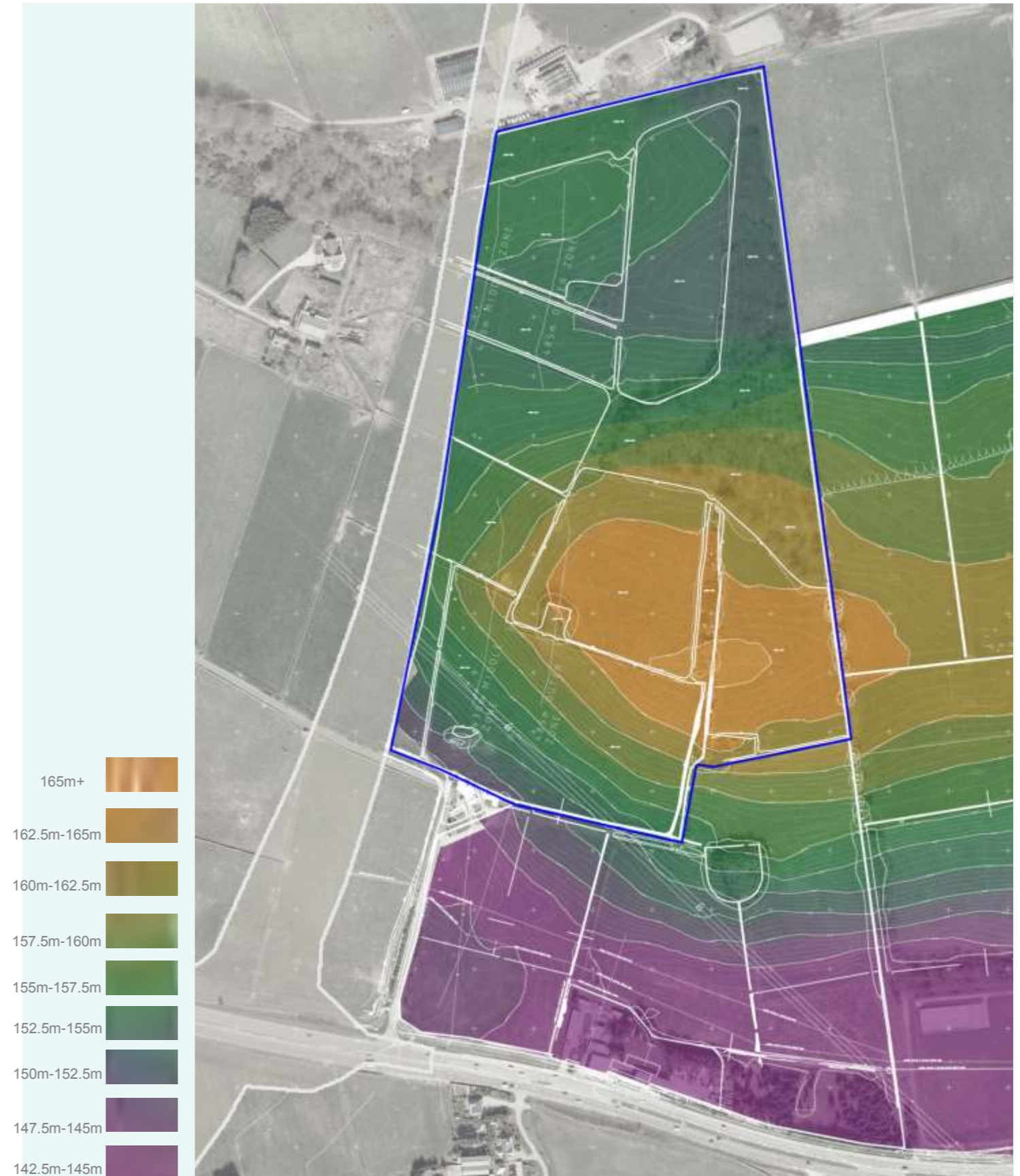


fig 23. topography



fig 24. aerial view showing current committed development

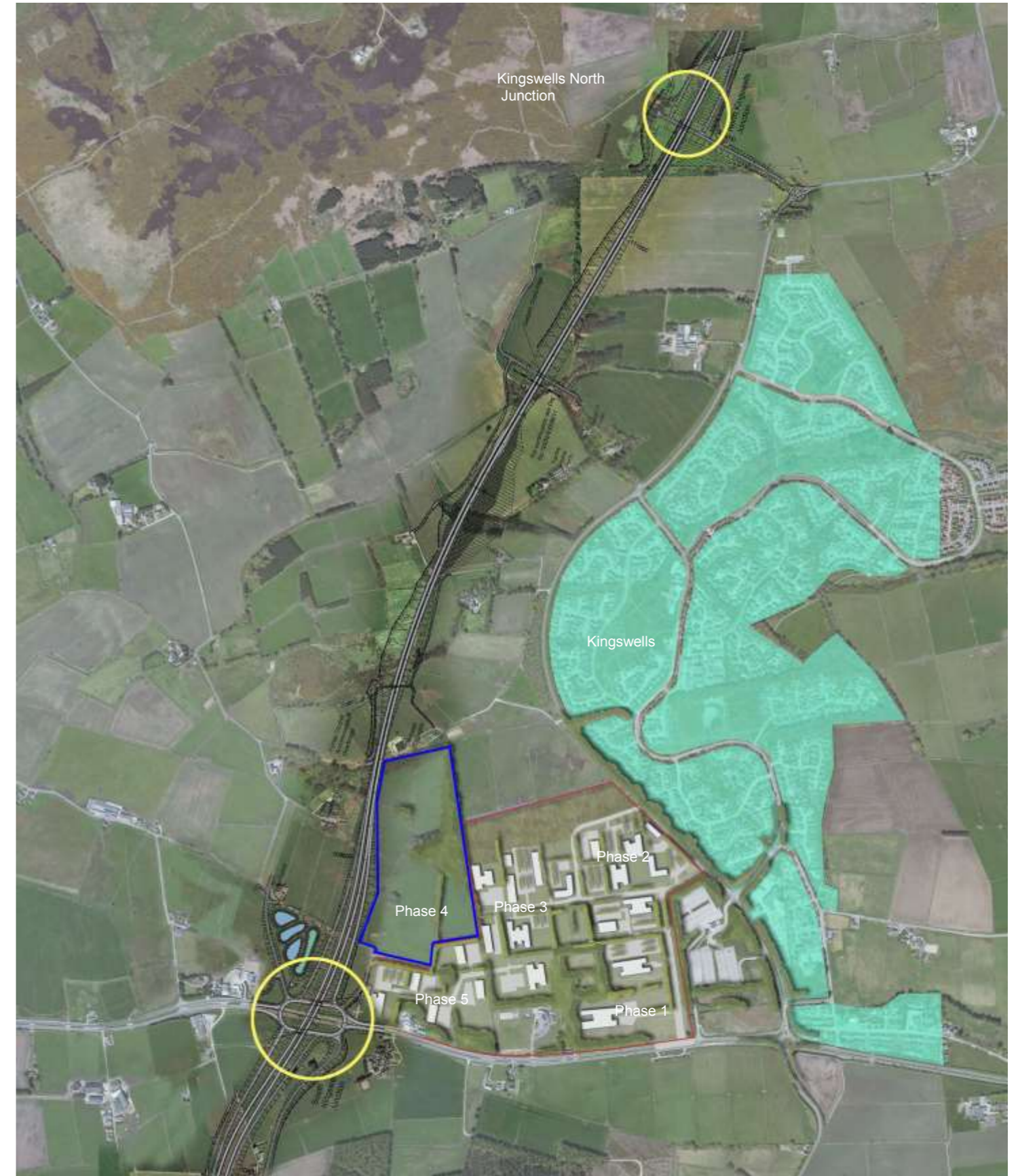


fig 25. diagram showing relationship of A.W.P.R. and site

5.10 Movement Routes

The OP63 site enjoys the benefits of being an extension to the existing successful Prime Four Business Park.

Significant infrastructure improvements have been completed as part of the Prime Four development, including the formation of a new junction onto the A944 and the consolidation of the existing Park and Ride access. The roundabout at Kingswells (Fig. 26) has been considerably remodelled which has greatly eased traffic congestion in the area.

Furthermore, as part of on-going Phase Two and Three works, a new access has been formed to Prime Four from the C89 Kingswells bypass, additionally, a new footpath link along the C89 has been constructed to connect Kingswells with the Fourcourt.

Internal circulation within Prime Four is provided by a main spine road running east to west (fig. 27). This has been designed to allow for direct links to future phases.

The Aberdeen/Westhill cycle route travels along the southern boundary of Prime Four. Access to the cycle route has been provided via the main access point on the at the A944 junction. There is potential for improvements to be made to this route, these will be considered in more detail through future Transport Assessments.

Extensions to the core path network now run through phases 1,2 & 3 of Prime Four. Formal paths alongside primary streets allow for safe pedestrian access to all parts of the park. An informal network of paths will also be provided through the open setting to the consumption dyke.

The Park and Ride facility located to the south east of the site on the Kingswells roundabout provides valuable, sustainable transport links to and from the city and the wider road and rail networks.

Currently a farm track connection leads from the southern end of the site to West Hatton Farm; however the AWPR will bisect this and form a barrier to the western edge of the site.

The Kingswells South junction of the AWPR will provide direct access to the north and south. Opportunities to access this site from the AWPR interchange and the A944 should be investigated.

Bus shelters (fig. 28) have been installed along the Phase 2 primary street in anticipation of a local bus connection.

The existing connectivity routes around the site are highlighted on the image opposite (fig 29.)



fig 26. Kingswells roundabout looking south



fig 27. Kingswells Causeway looking east



fig 28. installed bus shelters



fig 29. existing connectivity plan

Appraisal

5.11 Landscape

The landscape character of this area has been altered by the development of Prime Four, and will be further altered once the AWPR is constructed. Woodland remains a key feature of this now largely developed landscape. There is more detail on the zones applicable to this phase in the 'Development Principles' section. The impact of lighting on the night sky will need to be considered at detailed planning stage.

The local landscape character of the proposed site is an example of The Wooded Farmland Local Landscape Character Area (LLCA). This LLCA is typically a diverse and rural landscape which tends to be associated with more steeply undulating areas. It is mainly agricultural but contains a high proportion and variety of woodland cover either as plantations, shelterbelts or clumps of trees around the scattered, vernacular buildings (extract from SNH Report No 80, Aberdeen, 1996).

A full tree survey has been undertaken to inform the proposals. The area surveyed includes the proposed Op63 site including the external boundaries of the ancient woodland to the east and the north, as well as the future phase land to the south adjacent the A944. The survey highlights two main areas:

- The Ancient woodland
- The Friends Burial Ground

Ancient Woodland

This is bounded by a dry stone retaining dyke along its eastern edge, which adjoins a consumption dyke (Scheduled Ancient Monument) in the north east corner. The dyke retains a level change of around +1.3m. Around the perimeter of the woodland there is a single line of mature beech trees in the region of 150 years old, which enclose much younger upland birch woodland, containing a mix of silver birch, downy birch, rowan, and scattered invading sycamore.



fig 30. OP40 character map

Friends Burial Ground

Lying to the south-west of the woodland The Friends Burial Ground is a stone enclosure containing several mature specimens of beech and sycamore, with a single specimen of noble fir.

Character Areas

The Development Framework for the OP40 site set out three distinct character zones (fig. 30), based on topography and site features. These were

- Northern Zone comprising a broad, flat topped ridge and northerly slope
- Central Zone comprising a south facing southern slope facing the A944
- Southern Zone comprising the low lying, flat area immediately adjacent to the A944.

With the addition of the OP63 site, an updated version of these Landscape Character zones is required (fig 32).

Southern Zone

The Southern Zone consists of the low lying area to the south of the site. This area is associated with the Denburn and in places sits below the level of the A944. The ground here is occasionally marshy and the vegetation of this area reflects this, giving a distinct character. There is a mature belt of tree planting running adjacent to the A944 along some of this length. A number of trees in this area are covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)

Central Zone

The Central Zone consists of south facing agricultural fields divided by stone dykes. In some locations the slopes are considerable. The area is further subdivided by the policy planting of Kingswells House and the adjacent woodland belt of the Park and Ride site, as well as the walled enclosure to the west, thereby giving the landscape a different scale and a distinct character.

Plateau

This flat topped area running east to west includes Phase 2 and 3 of the Prime Four Business Park. It is bordered to the north by the Northern Park and the Ancient Woodland. The area is characterised by agricultural fields defined by drystone dykes on a broadly flat open site. The Friends Burial Ground sits within this zone.

Northern Park

Northern Park comprises grass fields with drystone dykes, with field boundaries running north to south in a regular formal arrangement and meets the consumption dyke at 90 degrees. These dykes define agricultural field patterns and are a distinctive and intrinsic feature of the site and wider North East of Scotland countryside. A network of informal mown paths through the landscape provides amenity to this area.

Northern Zone

The Northern Zone comprises grass fields with drystone dykes, with field boundaries generally running north to south with cross walls at 90 degrees in a regular formal arrangement. The ground falls away to the north. The Ancient Woodland provides enclosure to the east and north of this area with fair consistency in trees of approximately 15-20m high.



fig 31. Fourcourt & plot 6



fig 32. proposed character map

5.12 Key Views

Views To

The site is visible from a number of locations (Fig. 33). From the north the elevated position of Brimmond Hill will give views over the site, although the site will be partially screened by the landscaping to the north of OP63. The site can also be seen from the west, eastward travel along the A944 will offer most views. Continuing along the A944 to the immediate south of the site will also offer some views of the site, although this will only be the southern facing steeply sloping section of OP63 due to topography.

It should be noted that all of these views described above are currently being significantly affected with the construction of the AWPR. New views of the site will be created on completion of the AWPR. These will be from the south when driving north due to the elevated position of the new road and from immediately west of the OP63 where the AWPR sits level with the proposed site.

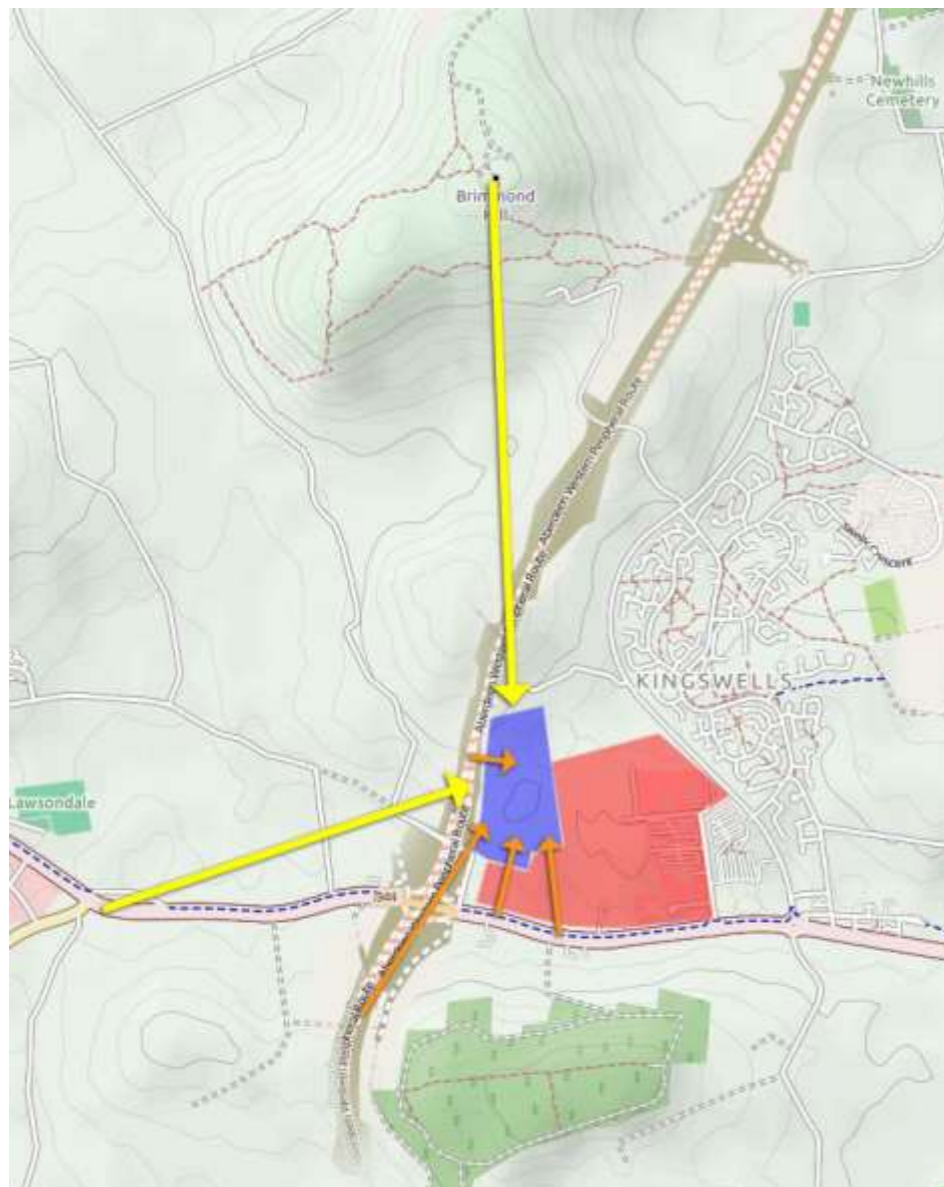


fig 33. views to site

Views From

Views from the site are predominantly to the west and south and only from certain areas of the site (Fig. 34). The ancient woodland and the current Prime Four development restrict views to the north and east.

Distant views to the west open up across the Westhill and towards hill of fayre (Fig. 36), immediate views will look over the AWPR. Southern views will look over future phases of development and over the A944 towards Kingshill Wood. Views south will be limited to the plateau and the south facing sloped area of OP63 due to topography.



fig 34. views from site



fig 35. view north



fig 36. view west



fig 37. view south



Views south

Views west

Section 03

Section Three

Development Principles

Purpose / Vision

Key Objectives

Response to the Historic Environment

Landscape

Connectivity and Circulation

Buildings

Framework

Drainage

Accessibility

Infrastructure

Sustainability

Phasing

Delivery

Next Steps

Development Principles

The Vision

The vision is carried forward from the OP40 Development Framework is as follows:

“The Business Park at this site creates an opportunity to provide Aberdeen City with an innovative, desirable, high quality office development in a peri-urban location attractive to inward investment.

This development is unique in the North East of Scotland in providing occupiers with operational benefits associated with a highly accessible location, close to the local workforce, all within a rural landscaped setting.”

We see no need to alter this vision. The ongoing development at Prime Four has been true to these original principles and has delivered a unique, highly accessible business location but also one that links with the existing community at Kingswells and provides facilities and opportunities that have been lacking in the past.

The overall objective of the extension to the west of Prime Four also remains similar to that set out for the whole designation.

“... to provide a sustainable, well-integrated extension to Kingswells, that includes high quality business accommodation and employment opportunities to enhance the economic growth of the wider City Region ...”

6.1 Purpose

The purpose of this section of the document is to guide any future applications for the site. It will set key principles to shape future applications so that they collectively deliver the vision set out opposite. These principles of development will be categorised into strategic sections looking at landscape, buildings circulation etc. Collectively the key principles will be pulled together in a framework drawing. It must be recognised that there is no one definitive solution. The framework and principles outlined here must be flexible enough to allow for future changes in market forces or technical requirements during detailed stages of design.

In broad terms, this section will consist of two and three dimensional images and text describing how the site will be developed. Through these plans it will describe and map an overall development concept, including future land use, urban design and landscaping, built form, infrastructure, circulation and service provision. This section will be based upon an understanding of place and it is intended to provide a structured approach to creating a clear and consistent framework for development.

This Framework for development will guide any future applications so that they can collectively deliver the vision identified.



fig 38. fourcourt & plot 3

6.2 Key Objectives

Distinctive

- The proposed landscape strategy will be informed by existing natural features. Buildings, street patterns, spaces, skylines, building forms and materials are to enhance the sense of identity and carry on the high standard already delivered in Phases 1-3.
- The Framework will allow for the creation of a place maintaining, as much as possible, the distinctive field pattern and character of the existing landscape.
- The proposed streets will be defined by a coherent and well-structured layout, and will function as a logical extension to Phase 3, as well as allowing expansion into future phases.
- The proposals will create the opportunity for a landmark development signalling a gateway to the city at the AWPR junction and promote visually stimulating architecture when viewed in passing.

Movement

- The development will provide the opportunity for a visual marker and a key interchange for the passing AWPR traffic.
- Buildings and layout will make it easy for people to find their way around, this will be achieved through the placement of new landmarks or gateways.
- Existing views of the surrounding landscape will be maintained
- The Framework will provide the capability to provide, where appropriate, ancillary uses / facilities. Strong pedestrian links to existing facilities will be provided.

Safe and pleasant

- The Framework will allow for the creation frontages to streets.
- Provision of public space will be well designed, and with suitable management arrangements put in place.

Adaptable

- The Framework will allow for flexibility to deal with market changes and technical constraints.
- Provision will be made for a range of plot sizes depending on actual requirements and tenure mix.

Easy to get to and move around

- The Framework will allow for the creation of a network of safe routes to provide well connected access throughout the development.
- Streets will be pedestrian and cycle friendly and provide good access to public transport.
- Car parking will be well-integrated into the overall landscape character.
- The Framework will provide green networks in and around the proposed development area, and provisions be made to connect these to the wider area.
- The Framework will highlight any opportunities to incorporate enhancements to biodiversity.

Resource efficient

- The Framework will highlight significant natural features and other biodiversity and recommend proposals for protection and integration into the overall development.
- The Framework will consider the natural hydrology of the area, including any permanent or ephemeral watercourses and make provision so that these may be enhanced where possible.
- The Framework will highlight opportunities to improve habitats and support wildlife so that these may be incorporated in detailed stages.
- The Framework will highlight options for increased building performance, including Breeam, renewables and EPC

6.3 Response to the Historic Environment

Two historical features of the site must be properly considered and addressed as part of the future development of this phase of the works.

- Friends Burial Ground (Category C listed)
- Ancient Woodland

Friends Burial Ground

The Friends Burial Ground is located in the centre of the proposed development area. As an important historical site and listed building, it is to be retained within the development.

It is therefore proposed that a 20m buffer zone (fig. 39) will be provided between the proposed development and the Friends Burial Ground, in order to prevent direct impacts on this listed building and significant indirect impacts on its setting.

Any building within close proximity to the 20m buffer zone will require to take cognisance of its setting through the use of sensitive design and materials.

Opportunities for incorporation of information regarding the history of the burial ground and its association with the Kingswells Estate within the development should be explored; this may also serve to enhance understanding of the historical associations between the Friends Burial Ground and Kingswells House.

Notwithstanding the above, whilst an important historical site, the Friends Burial Ground has great potential to be an integral part of the site.

As a fixed element in any development of the area certain key principles for the Friends Burial Ground can be established at this point.

Access

In order to link the northern section of the development area a link road will need to be developed. In order to protect the setting of the Friends Burial Ground one of two routes would be considered to be appropriate.

A road running to the north side would protect the setting of the monument when viewed from the south. A road running to the south should, where available, use topography to sit below the existing ground profile to minimise the impact on the setting.

Existing dykes which run into the walled enclosure of the Friends Burial Ground should be retained where possible, if the layout of individual plots around the Friends Burial ground requires removal of exiting dykes then new dykes should be installed as these have the effect of embedding the Friends Burial Ground in the landscape.



fig 39. burial ground principles



fig 40. burial ground access strategy

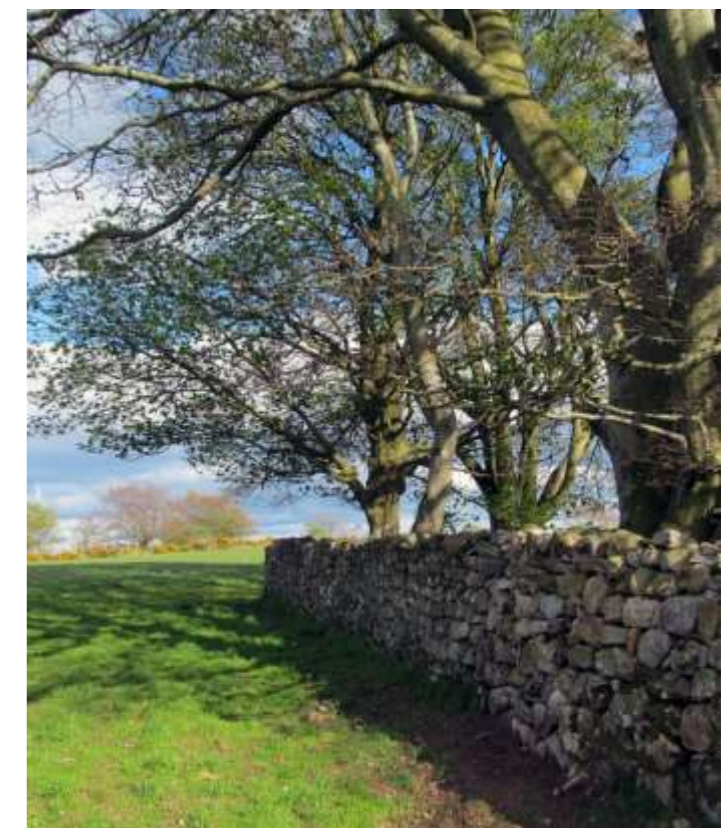


fig 41. linear walled enclosure

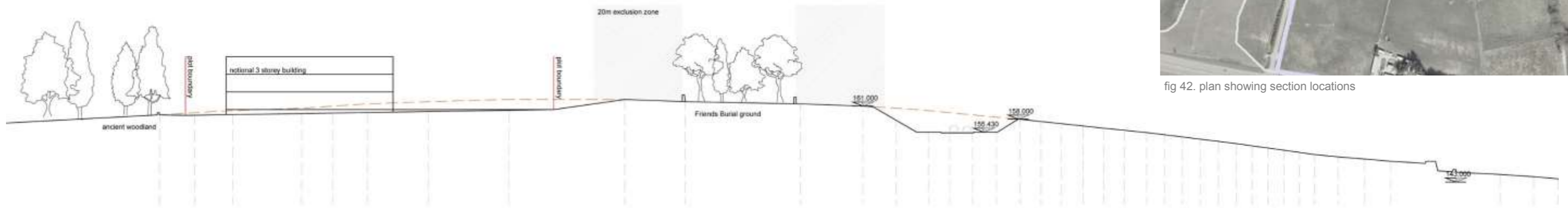


fig 43. Section A:A through ancient woodland

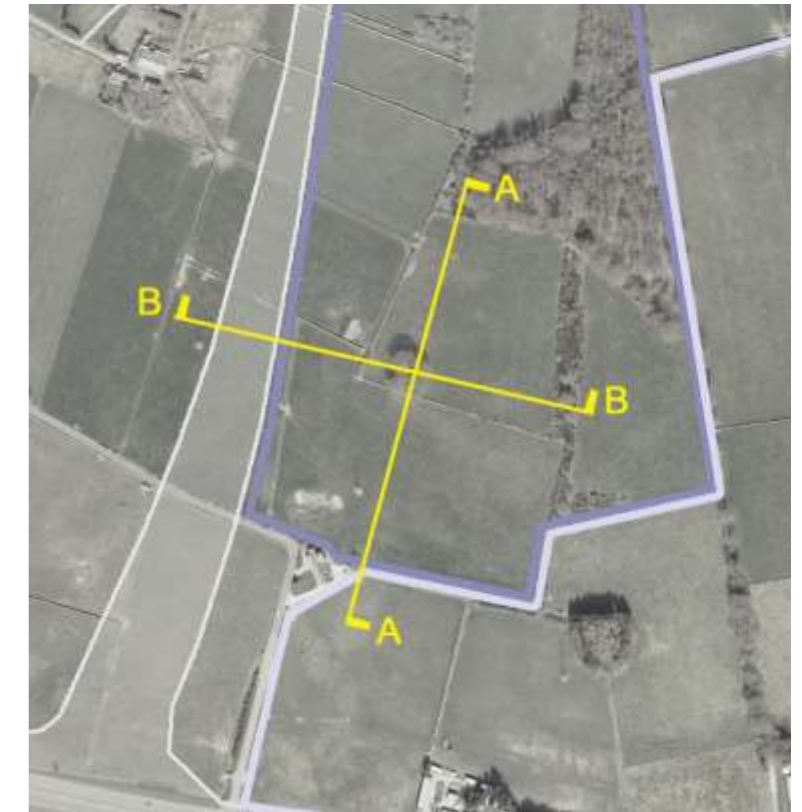


fig 42. plan showing section locations

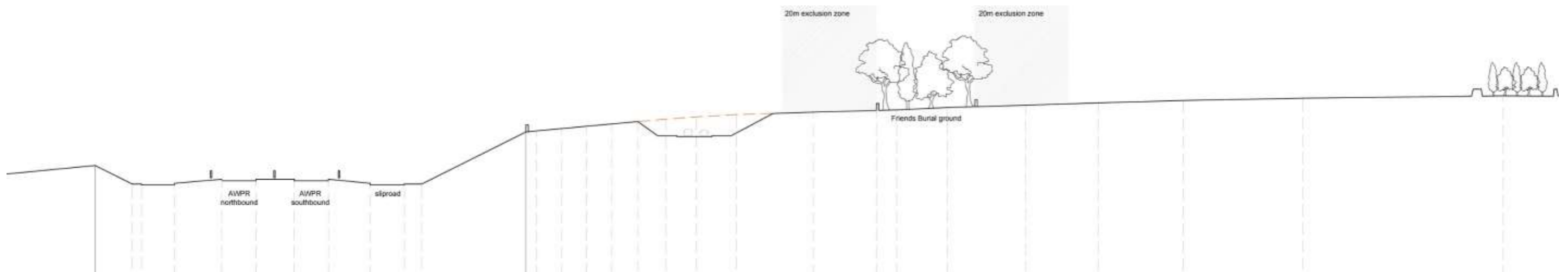


fig 44. Section B:B through AWPR

Ancient Woodland

The ancient woodland forms much of the eastern boundary of the site. Within the site there lies opportunities to address the woodland and promote its enhancement, protection and future management. These opportunities will be explored further before assessing the most appropriate course of action, and a woodland management plan would be provided as part of any planning application.

Along the southern woodland boundary there will be a requirement for a minimum standoff distance of 10m from the fence line in order to minimise root disturbance (fig. 47). A similar offset is recommended around trees extending south from the south east corner of the wood. In order to provide additional areas of foraging for wildlife with habitats within the ancient woodland opportunities for this to be increased, to encourage and promote ecology should be investigated at detailed stage. These will be based on detailed ecology investigations.

Areas including SUDS basin and drainage swales if designed correctly can provide additional areas of natural landscape adjacent to the ancient woodland. This will create the effect as a more natural boundary and further embed the development within then landscape as opposed to a defined edge (fig. 47).

Due to the height of the ancient woodland (generally 20m, some trees reaching 24m), it has the opportunity to form a landscaped backdrop of mature trees to any potential buildings in this area.



fig 45.inside Friends Burial Ground



fig 46. southern boundary of Ancient Woodland

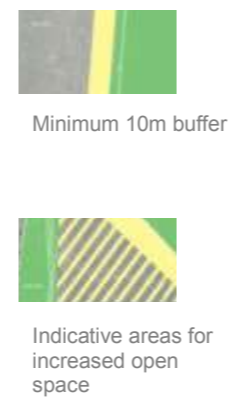


fig 47. 10m exclusion zone to woodland

6.4 Landscape

Introduction

The Landscape Framework derives from the analysis of the site and the wider area, including the earlier development phases. The aspirations and objectives for this phase of development are similar to the earlier phases, namely to incorporate new buildings into the landscape in a manner which is sympathetic to the rural character of the area.

The existing landscape features such as the ancient West Hatton Wood, the Friends Burial Ground, the dykes and tree belts provide both constraints and opportunities to construct a Framework within which the office development can be sensitively located.

Although the West Hatton Wood and The Friends Burial Ground need to be protected and treated with respect and care, they will provide a valuable asset in terms of amenity value, visual interest and a backdrop of mature trees; to be enjoyed by local residents and the future workers and visitors at the Business Park.

Additionally, there are two linear walled enclosures that extend south from West Hatton Wood; although these consist of old stone wall and scrub they must be acknowledged for their historical value, ecological importance as focal points for wildlife both as habitat and as corridors for dispersal across the greater landscape. These links are also noted as links within the Aberdeen City's Green Space Network. Again, these can be treated as assets which will add to the character of the Business Park, creating a unique sense of place and adding to the overall amenity and enjoyment of working in and visiting the Business Park.

Whilst the site contains numerous drystone dyke field boundaries, in varying state of repair, they do not form the same distinctive north–south aligned features within the landscape as the dykes within the previous Phases 2 and 3. However, they do lend themselves to the creation of development rooms within which the proposed buildings can be located.

Finally, it needs to be acknowledged that there will be elements within the existing landscape of the site that will be altered or removed as a result of the development. Due to the topography and terrain it will be necessary to undertake some cut and fill to create development platforms and road embankments or cuttings where necessary; this will inevitably result in the removal of some stone dykes or the felling of trees. However, wherever possible it is intended that the stone from any removed dykes will be re-used to refurbish existing dykes elsewhere on the site or to create new dykes. Likewise, using the Tree Survey report and recommendations, it is intended to try and retain the trees in good or fair condition wherever possible. Where trees are to be felled, they will be replaced with specimens and species that are suited to the characteristics of the site. Best practice guidance as defined within BS 5837 'Tree Protection During Construction Works' will also be followed.

Looking in turn at the revised character zones defined earlier, the high level strategies to be applied to the three zones that fall within the development site are considered in turn.



fig 48. Phase 1 landscaping



fig 49. Phase 1 landscaping



fig 45. landscape strategy plan

Open Space

Open space and amenity space is provided through a connected network of informal areas. The improved access up to the burial ground contributes a significant part of this. The informal paths leading from here connect through the landscape, using existing features to define routes. The woodland periphery, with its perimeter buffer zone provides the opportunity to create an informal path network. This will need to be established working with the ecologist to ensure the buffer zones remains suitable for wildlife.

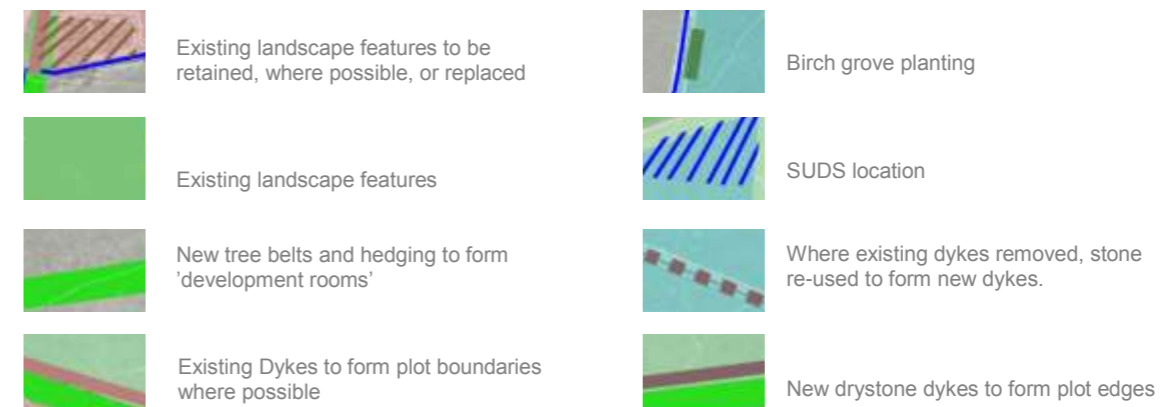
Existing landscape strips with boundary wall enclosure link the formal path network to the informal path network offering a range of options for the office staff. The retention of these existing features will help define character of this phase of development and contribute to its sense of place.

The proposed SUDS basin in the northern section has the opportunity to provide a high degree of amenity. A similar approach to that adopted in phase one will be adopted here.

Green Space Network

Although the West Hatton LNCS / Ancient Woodland (which forms part of the Green Space Network in this area) is to be protected from development it is acknowledged that some of the Green Space Network connecting this LNCS may be altered by the proposals.

However, beyond the LNCS, the predominant land cover is semi-improved or improved grasslands, which according to the ecological report has generally low ecological value. Therefore to mitigate the alteration of the network it is proposed to provide additional tree and shrub planting using appropriate native species to enhance the biodiversity value of this section of the Green Space Network. Additional species rich grassland can also be added to further enhance the ecological value of the network. These changes, will in turn, enhance the seasonal interest of the vegetation within the area, and increase the amenity value and the enjoyment of people using the network for recreational purposes.



Northern Zone

This zone is on north facing ground which slopes down towards the West Hatton Woods. The woodland provides a backdrop of mature trees to the north and east, forming two boundaries to this zone. To the west lies the AWPR and associated earthworks.

There are a number of existing dry stone dykes that enclose a series of fields. It is proposed that this general arrangement of enclosures could be replicated in the creation of 'development rooms' within which the buildings will be located; with boundaries between individual plots formed by reinstated stone dykes or tree belts and hedging or a combination of the two.

Due to the topography of the site it is within this zone that it is also anticipated that a SUDS basin will need to be located. Using current best practice and guidance, the intention – as demonstrated with the Phase 1 SUDS basin adjacent to the A944 – would be to create a SUDS basin that is multi-functional and would also offer amenity value and the creation of a new habitat type (fig. 51).

Suitable tree species within this zone would replicate and supplement the historical precedent of the Beech trees within West Hatton Wood; with additional species added for habitat value, such as Scots Pine; and seasonal interest, such as Field and Norway Maples.

Plateau

The Friends Burial Ground is located within this landscape zone. As mentioned previously (within the Constraints chapter), it is to be afforded a "no development" buffer to protect and retain the existing mature trees and the stone dyke walls. The intention would be to retain the Burial Ground as a separate and distinctive component within the Business Park.

As a unique and interesting feature it provides a valuable opportunity to provide a connection with the local cultural heritage of the area. There will be potential for a footpath connection to the Friends Burial Ground and modest seating, perhaps to allow for contemplation and reflection, in keeping with the history of the site.

Currently there is only a small plaque attached to one of the central trees within the Burial Ground, and there may be scope for the installation of a sensitively designed interpretation board explaining the history of the site and the connection between the Friends movement in this area and Kingswells. (fig. 48)

There is potential for a tree belt to be planted between the proposed building plots and the Burial Ground to provide visual screening, and therefore reduce the visual impact of any proposed buildings on the setting of the Burial Mound. The development within the Plateau zone will be contained within plots, defined and bounded by stone dykes and/or tree belts and hedging.

There is an existing strip of land that extends southwards from West Hatton Wood into the Plateau zone. This strip is defined by low drystone walls, gorse, scattered trees and boulders, and it is proposed that the integrity of this habitat and the landscape links that it provides will be maintained as this strip can also contribute to the formation of the 'development rooms'. It is acknowledged that a section of this strip will need to be breached to allow road access into the site. However, the character of the proposed road can be designed so that the road is not enclosed, thus allowing connectivity across it. Likewise, any proposed lighting scheme may need to be designed to minimise light disturbance across this area.



fig 51. indicative image of northern SUDS basin



fig 47. indicative image of Friends Burial Ground



fig 53. Example Birch Grove Planting

Central Zone

This zone is on the south facing slope and forms the natural continuation and connection with the previous development phases. Currently, this zone contains open fields bounded by stone dyke walls or enclosures with remnant shelterbelts and scattered scrub cover. Due to the topography and terrain, it is necessary that the existing road, currently terminating within Phase 3, will continue westwards to connect to this site. It is acknowledged that a stone dyke will need to be breached to achieve this and that some trees will need to be felled. However, as with the Plateau area, the character of the proposed road can be designed so that the road is not enclosed, thus allowing connectivity across it. Likewise, any proposed lighting scheme can be designed to minimise light disturbance across this area.

To preserve the existing character of these old sections of tumbled down stone dykes it is intended that there will be minimal intervention within the remaining sections of walled strips. The existing boulders, rocks, gorse and abandoned coppiced trees are to be retained where possible to preserve the existing character and ecological value of these walled feature. There may be scope for supplementary wildflower or species rich grassland to enhance biodiversity and for an informal footpath connection.

The general alignment of the existing stone dyke walls and enclosures lend themselves to the formation of 'development rooms'. As mentioned previously, the boundaries between individual plots will be formed by reinstated stone dykes or tree belts and hedging or a combination of the two.

The resulting landscape pattern will allow new buildings and associated car parks to be effectively located within a recognisable landscape pattern, allowing for a balance between development and nature. Where existing shelterbelts remain, it will be a management aim to reinforce the integrity of these strips with additional successional planting.

Western Edge

The western edge of the OP63 is defined by the AWPR. This provides an opportunity to create visibility into the park. However this visibility must be considered along with minimising the visual impact of the development and its integration in to the landscape.

The edge of the AWPR is delineated by a new drystone dyke. It is proposed to create a 'soft' boundary behind the new drystone dyke through a series of intermittent birch groves (fig. 53). The birch groves will provide an degree of screening when viewed from distance and will embed the development into its context. However when viewed from closer up a degree of visibility through the birch groves will be available and between the groves selected views of the buildings will be delivered.

Birch grove planting has been used elsewhere in the park and the use of it in this location will provide a well coordinated approach.

6.5 Connectivity & Circulation

It is important to note that this Phase is primarily an integrated, logical extension to the previous phases of the business park and that the connectivity and circulation character will be a continuation of the strategy implemented in Phase 3, this new phase of development will sit adjacent to the new AWPR (fig. 54). This strategic location next to what will become one of the key distributor routes in the area allows for the opportunity to create visually dynamic and striking developments.

From this phase a strategic connections to the A944 to the south will be investigated and a roads solution will ultimately connect the Plateau, Northern and Central zones to this part of the network. The Local Transport Strategy 2016-2021 will be a key consideration in the development of the proposals.

A hierarchy of routes within the site is outlined below.

Footpath Network / Cycle Routes.

It is essential that a cohesive pedestrian / cycle path network be provided within the site. This should connect seamlessly into Phase 3 and where possible, provide future connections into the later phases of development.

Emphasis should follow the east-west access laid out in Phase 3, however in order to access all parts of the site it is recognised that a north – south approach will be required in some areas. In this situation the network should respect the ancient woodland and existing field boundaries.

A combination of formal and informal footpaths is envisioned. Formal footpaths following the main vehicle roads will offer easy access to the main areas of the park. A network of informal paths has the potential to provide pleasant safe and secluded walks connecting the northern park to this phase. These informal paths will deliver a valuable contribution to the open space

Public Transport

Facilities for public transport have been installed in Phase 2. Discussions are ongoing with operators and once the Phase 2 roads are completed it is expected buses will navigate through the park. It is essential that provision is made for these bus routes to extend into this site.

Once potential connections are realised through future phases to the wider network via the A944 or AWPR Kingswells south junction the opportunity exists for public transport to use the park as a through route, fully integrating the development into the network.

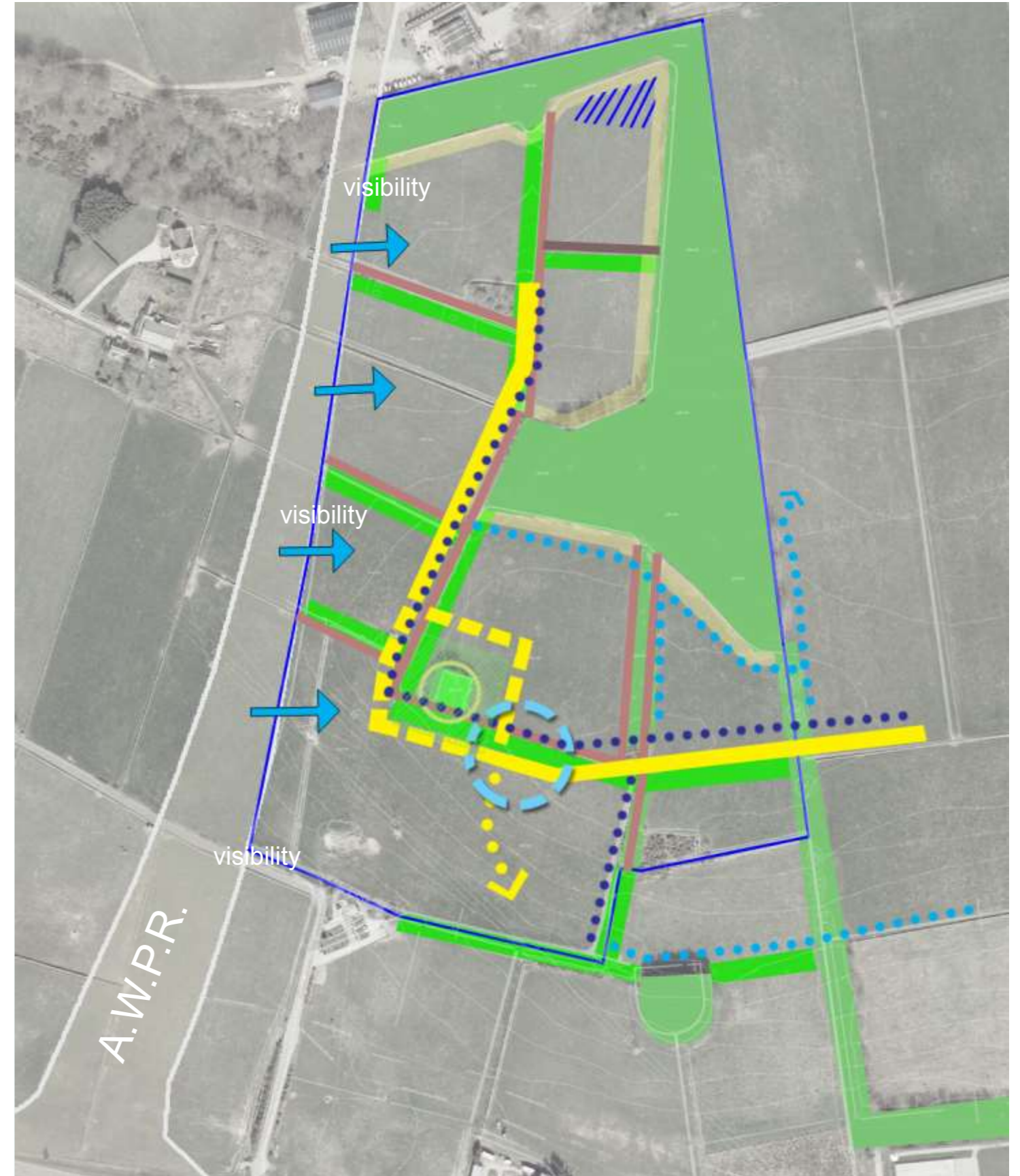


fig 54. connectivity strategy drawing

Vehicles

Initially vehicular access to the site will be provided through the continuation of the Phase 2 primary access which runs east-west. The road will run adjacent to Friends Burial Ground, and it will be important as to how this is dealt with (refer to page 31) . Opportunities exist for this to act as focal point at the end of the road, or as the road turn north-south (fig. 56).

Due to topography there is likelihood that this key junction will be visible when viewed from the AWPR. Given the prominence of this particular area there are opportunities for this to act not only as a focal point at the end of the phase two road from within the park but also to be the area for a landmark development that signifies the prominence of the prime four business park from the AWPR.

From this point a continuation of this road will potentially lead to future phases to the south. Should future phases to the south become realised, then it should be recognised that this may form the main approach to this site and the roads network should be designed accordingly, the junction between Phase 4 and 5 could act as a gateway to the north section of the road.

How junctions from the primary street should be dealt with has already been established within Phase 2. Any secondary roads from the primary street should aim to create areas of public space around them, and where appropriate provide areas of shared surfaces and enhanced hard landscaping.

Wide sloped verges should be provided either side of the primary street. Footpaths running adjacent should sit behind verges or retained existing dykes. The surfaced dressing of the adjacent footpath should be of bound crushed gravel or similar. The primary street will provide easy access to the fourcourt area (fig. 55).



fig 55

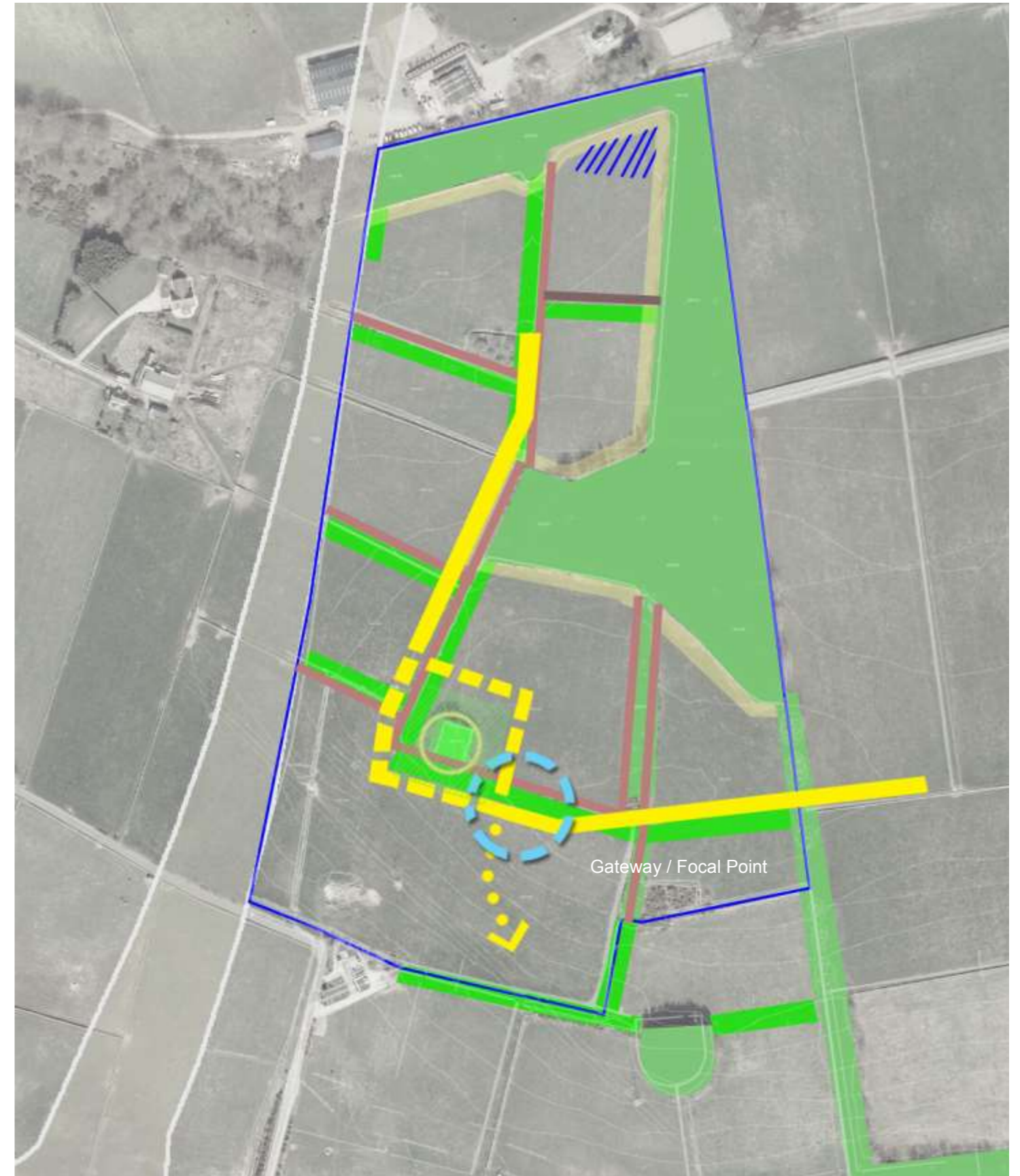


fig 56. vehicular circulation including 'focal point'

6.5 Connectivity & Circulation

Parking

Phases 1-3 established key principles in relation to the treatment of parking which were

1. as a general design principle, parking areas will, where possible, be discrete.
2. Surface parking should be carefully considered and dealt with in a sympathetic manner.

These well established principles should be maintained within this site.

Alongside the key principles certain design principles were set

- Car parking will, where possible, be located to the rear or side of buildings, with disabled spaces close to main entrances.
- The length of car parking runs will be limited and broken with areas of soft landscape.
- Car parking areas must not be treated as merely car parks, and consideration given to the arrival experience into buildings.
- Where landform allows, the creation of ha-ha's or the use of slopes to help conceal car parking will be investigated.
- Generally car parking will be located away from "The Street" wherever possible, and be arranged parallel with the existing field patterns.

Phases 1-3 have shown how parking within the building curtilage can be satisfactorily designed to provide an important arrival experience to the buildings (fig. 57). Strong north-south access has been placed on soft landscaping and clear access routes to enhanced surface drop off areas have been provided. These themes should be continued within this phase.

Where topography allows, decked structures should be investigated to minimise the surface area of parking, if these can be provided without prejudicing the key principles above (fig. 58).



fig 57. Parking and landscaping



fig 58. Parking strategy

6.6 Buildings

Form

Phases 1-3 employed a consistent approach to building design; the aim being to create a quality business environment. This approach should be carried through to this site in order to deliver a cohesive overall development. While a consistent form can deliver a sympathetic masterplan, it has been demonstrated by the Statoil development that there are opportunities to provide visually striking buildings with a unique approach, within the parameters of the overall framework.

It has also been successfully demonstrated through the success of Fourcourt area that larger buildings can be accommodated within the masterplan if suitable amenity space and considered landscaping are provided. With that, the opportunity for a larger, taller building could be accommodated toward the end of the phase two / three road if appropriately designed. This hub / focal point zone to the west would mirror that Fourcourt area to the east and provide visual landmarks signalling the extents of the Prime Four Business Park. There is opportunity for the west end to be larger than the hub due to vastly increased scale of infrastructure and lack of residential properties around the area.

These two key hub zones will be linked by a strong tree lined boulevard of the phase two road and provide a highly legible layout (fig. 59).

At this stage it is difficult to be precise about what is to be included within the hub, however it will provide amenity to the users of the park and could take the form of an eatery or convenience unit.

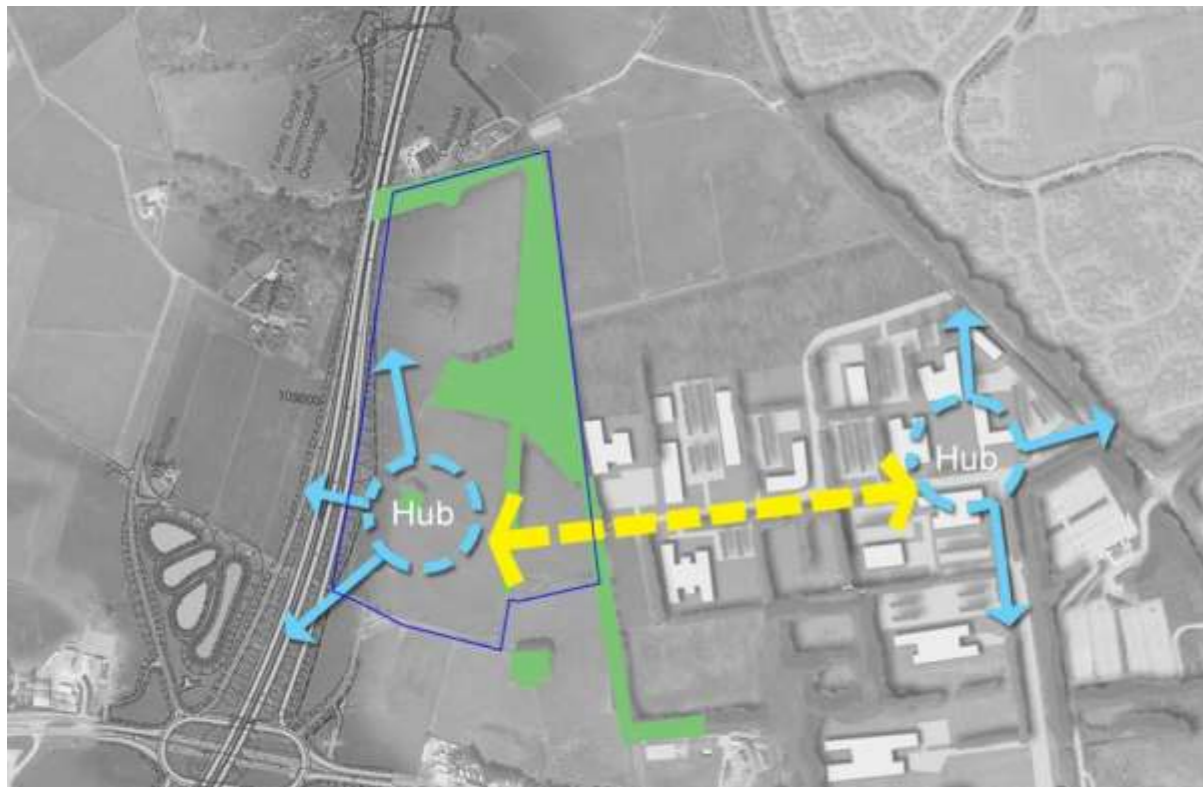


fig 53. Hub strategy drawing

Buildings

As per phases 1-3 Building orientation and position will be an important factor in delivering a quality and legible environment. The OP40 Framework set guidelines for the creation of building clusters, and set the guidelines for the relationships between neighbouring plots. A similar approach is proposed for this phase. Buildings sitting within the plateau zone and the southern zone should run predominantly north—south and those sitting in the northern zone should run east / west to address the AWPR and utilise the Ancient Woodland as a mature tree setting.

Buildings should, where possible, cluster together to form relationships and force interaction. Pedestrian routes between the buildings will encourage interaction and activity at street level. The buildings will provide screening to the parking which will be located to the north or south of the building cluster (fig. 60).



fig 60. Building layout option

6.6 Buildings

Frontages

Opportunities to create frontage to the street should be considered when orientating the buildings. It is acknowledged however that in most areas of the site the buildings will have dual aspect. Along the southern edge of the site, there is potential for these buildings to be visible from the A944. In order to minimise visual impact consideration should be given to a north-south axis. This contradicts an east-west orientation for maximising street frontage to the street.

This changes at the plots on the western edge of the site, where an east-west orientation of the buildings would be preferred when viewed from the AWPR.

This should be considered at detailed stage and will be dependent on the actual building requirements.

Heights

Building heights will be determined by a number of factors; however the three main considerations are visibility, topography and existing tree heights. Over the entirety of the site there is a range of topographical situations, which broadly align with the differing character zones (fig. 61).

The main consideration to take into account is the prominence of the site when viewed from the AWPR. Given the impact that this major piece of infrastructure will have on the surrounding landscape any assessment on height will need to take this into account.

As a major interchange along the AWPR the Kingswells south junction will act as key node into the city. Given this and the proximity of Prime Four to this junction there is opportunity to provide a visual marker or statement signalling the ambition and aspirations of the city of Aberdeen and the important role it plays globally through the many international tenants of Prime Four Business Park.

A building of height in the correct location within this phase could act as this marker. If designed sensitively to the site and with the appropriate integration in to the surrounding landscape there is opportunity for this to be a positive addition to the area.



fig 61. Indicative Building Heights Strategy drawing

6.6 Buildings



fig 62. indicative section BB

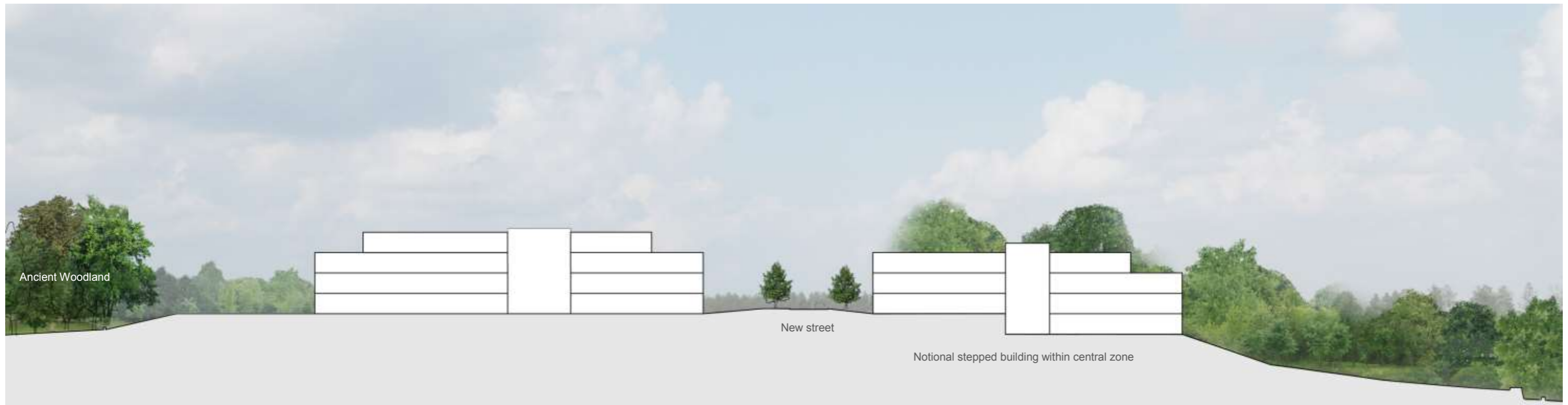
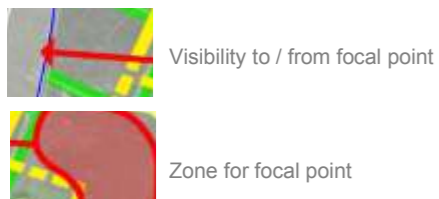


fig 63. indicative section AA



fig 64. Potential locations for Focal Points



Focal Points

Topography and existing landscape features suggest that there are two opportunities for creating a focal point. (fig 56.)

Zone 01 sits to the north of the burial ground in the plateau zone and uses the ancient woodland to create a mature tree backdrop. This protects the open setting to the Friends Burial Ground to the south. In order to function as a focal point any building in this area will require to be higher than the ancient burial ground. The existing tree belt running north south from the ancient woodland to the east of this plot could proceed screening to the car parking associated with this landmark development.

Zone 02 uses the land to the south east of the site. This area works with the topography to create a focal point whilst maintaining the open aspect of the Friends Burial Ground. The site levels are such that a building with two distinct frontages could be created. One that faces into the park and is accessed from the main distributor road and one that faces the south and west and looks over to the AWPR.

Either option will require a detailed study in massing in order to establish the correct strategy.

Massing

Although predominantly driven by market forces, the scale and massing of buildings is an important consideration. As such key principles can be established in order to realise the most appropriate location for any future requirements.

The Plateau, as the highest part of the site, could be one of the most visually prominent when viewed from the south, making it the most logical position for statement buildings. The back drop of the mature ancient woodland of approximately 15-20m high trees could provide a green backdrop and mature setting for an exemplary development. Individual applications around the Friends Burial Ground will require to be subject to different obligations to ensure that the Friends Burial Ground is sensitively incorporated into any proposal and that the historical importance of the monument is not lost.

The Central Zone is a steep south facing slope, as has been demonstrated within Phase 1 a building of reasonable size could be accommodated in this zone if sensitively designed. In order to make most use of topography it may be that buildings in this zone, depending on size, may require to be stepped to minimise the visual impact.

The northern zone will have a back drop of mature trees 20-24m high. The AWPR runs immediately to the west of this zone. Larger buildings could comfortably be accommodated in the plots immediately adjacent to the woodland, in order to maintain visibility from the AWPR.

6.7 Framework Drawing

The diagrams opposite (fig. 65 & 66) show how combining all of the principles outlined in the preceding pages can be combined to provide a sustainable integrated extension to Prime Four

This conceptual drawing illustrates the following key principles that will have to be addressed in future development:

- How existing landscape features and planting could be enhanced.
- How existing landscape features can be used as design inspiration.
- How existing infrastructure can be easily extended into site OP63.
- How the footpath, cycle, and road networks and how they support and encourage sustainable travel to and around the site, as well as how they link to the surrounding infrastructure.
- How proposed phases 4 and 5 can connect.

This layout is however only a guide, and must be flexible enough to respond to market requirements and changing economic circumstances.

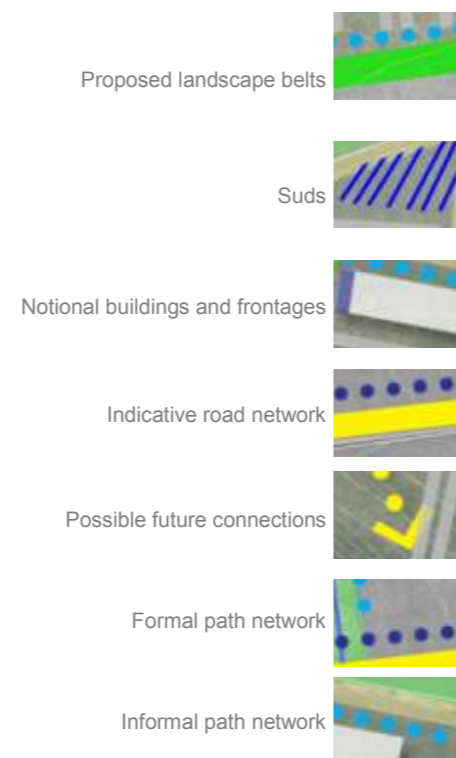


fig 65. Indicative framework drawing



fig 66. OP40 framework drawing extended

6.8 Drainage

Foul Drainage

The proposed foul infrastructure (fig. 67) is to be split into two catchments due to the proposed falls across the development site. The southern area of the development will be served via new gravity foul sewers which will gravitate to the south of the development prior to being connected into the existing combined sewer which is located within the bounds of the development at this area. Each plot within this catchment will be connected into the new gravity foul sewers via a disconnection chamber. All of the proposed foul sewers will be located within the proposed access roads and areas of open space.

The north catchment will again be served via new gravity foul sewers which will carry the foul flows to a new Waste Water Pumping Station located at the north of the development. Each plot located within the northern catchment will be connected into the new gravity foul sewers via a disconnection chamber. The flows from the new Waste Water Pumping Station will then be pumped via a new rising main and be connected into the new gravity sewers which will be installed to serve the southern area of the site.

All foul drainage within the bounds of each plot will remain private and will be designed and constructed in accordance with the current building regulations.

All of the proposed foul sewer infrastructure including the Waste Water Pumping Station will be adopted by Scottish Water and be designed in accordance with the regulations noted within Sewers for Scotland 3rd Edition.

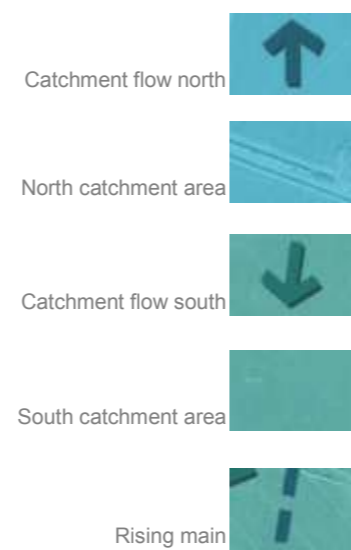


fig 67. foul drainage schematic

Surface Water Drainage

Due to the falls across the site, the proposed surface water infrastructure will be divided into two catchments. (fig 68.) The southern area of the development will be served via new gravity surface water sewers, which will be located within the access roads and areas of open space. These surface water sewers will gravitate to the south eastern corner of phase five and discharge into an extended detention basin, the flows from this extended detention basin will be discharged at a restricted rate which will not exceed the greenfield situation into a grass conveyance swale prior to discharging into the open Den Burn channel.

As with the southern area, the northern area of the development site will be served by new gravity surface water sewers, which will be located within the access roads and areas of open space. The new surface water sewers will gravitate to the north eastern corner of the development and discharge into a detention basin which will restrict the surface water discharge to a flow rate which will not exceed the existing greenfield situation. The drainage system will need to avoid impact on the adjacent Ancient Woodland. The restricted flows from the extended detention basin will discharge into a downstream grass conveyance swale prior to discharging into a new surface water sewer. This surface water sewer will gravity drain the surface water flows through the green fields to the east towards the C89 access road. The new surface water sewer will discharge the restricted surface water flows into the existing surface water infrastructure.

The new detention basin and swales have the opportunity to provide additional buffer zones to the ancient woodland and provide areas of foraging to wildlife. As well as provide recreational open space to the workers within the park.

Each proposed plot will be connected into the proposed surface water sewer via a disconnection chamber. The surface water flows from each plot will be restricted to the pre development greenfield run off rate. The drainage will be designed to ensure that all surface water flows are treated with the required levels of treatment prior to discharging into the proposed surface water sewers.

The proposed surface water sewers will be adopted and maintained by either Scottish Water, with the proposed extended detention basins and grass conveyance swales being subject to a Section 7 agreement between Scottish Water and Aberdeen City Council's Roads Department. All drainage within the bounds of each individual plot will remain private.

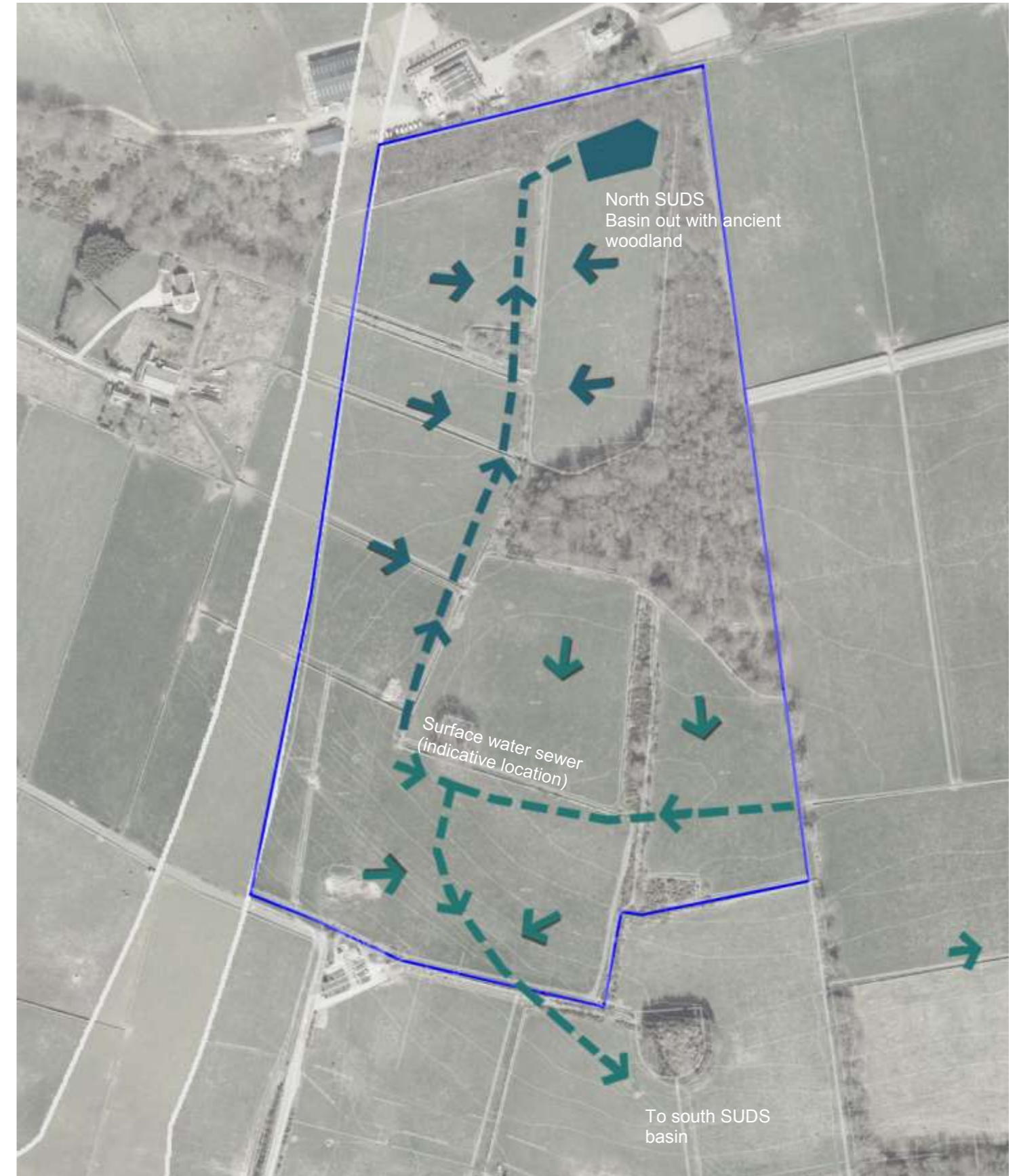
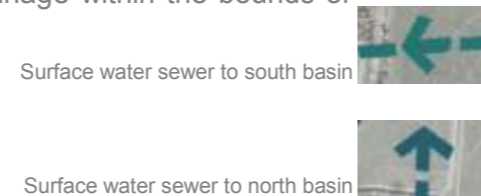


fig 68. surface drainage schematic

6.9 Accessibility

Prime Four Business Park has been developed in a responsible manner giving regard to the surrounding highway network to ensure that the site is accessible, and that there is no detriment to through flow on surrounding roads. Where a need for improvements to the surrounding highway network has been identified agreement has been reached with Aberdeen City Council on the infrastructure requirements and delivery strategy. Site OP63 would be developed in the same manner, as the success of Prime Four as a Business Park is reliant on good accessibility.

To support the development of Phases 1 and 2 infrastructure improvements have already been made to the A944 and C89 corridors, and to Kingswells Roundabout. Agreement has been reached with Aberdeen City Council on a further package of infrastructure improvements in order to allow additional development in future phases of Prime Four, some of which could be in this Phase. The agreed improvements include a new access from the C89, modifications to the A944 and Cults Road approaches to Kingswells Roundabout, major improvements to the A944 / B9119 junction, improvements to the Queen's Road / King's Gate roundabout, and various improvements to the Lang Stracht corridor.

The agreed package of infrastructure improvements will enable the initial stages of site OP63. A further Transport Assessment process would be undertaken to determine the capacity of the road network and its ability to accommodate full development of the site. This would be carried out to present up to date analysis, based on a comprehensive understanding of travel demands that are associated with Phases 1 and 2 now that they are occupied. Any further infrastructure improvements required to support development of the site would be identified through the Transport Assessment. The requirements, including a delivery strategy, would be agreed with Aberdeen City Council replicating the way that Prime Four Business Park has been developed to date, so as no maintain accessibility to the site, and on the surrounding roads.



fig 61. Phase 1—Kingswells Causeway



fig 69. Cycle path along A9444

6.10 Infrastructure

General

The substantial investment in infrastructure under the Phase 1 works has already delivered a robust network of new utility services within the Business Park which now need to be extended and supplemented where required to serve this site. These utility services have been strategically co-ordinated and planned to ensure flexibility yet ensuring maximum efficiency of distribution with minimum visual impact.

Easy access shall be provided to site services and communications infrastructure, with minimal disruption and need for reconstruction, allowing for future growth in services.

Wherever possible a single point of access shall be provided for each service running through the public realm. This should be remote from footpaths, cycle ways or roads to allow minimal disruption for maintenance and upgrade. Wherever possible additional ducting is also to be provided to allow for future expansion of services.

Natural Gas

A new gas supply was established to serve the site under the Phase 1 development and low pressure main distribution pipe work, with capacity to the overall development, has been laid underground following the main roadway routes. It is proposed to extend this distribution pipe work into this site again following the route of main roadways with individual gas meter kiosks being provided for each development plot so the supply of gas to the site will not be a constraint to development.

Electricity

A new electricity supply was established to serve the site under the Phase 1 development and an 11kV ring circuit for improved resilience with 7MVA capacity has been laid underground following the main roadway routes. It is proposed to extend this circuit into site OP63 following the main roadway routes with individual substations being provided for each development plot. When this capacity is exhausted it is proposed to bring in a second 11kV ring circuit which it is anticipated would serve the remainder of the development so the supply of electricity will not be a constraint to development.

Water

A new water connection was established to serve the entire site under the Phase 1 development and it was taken from a branch connection off the existing water main crossing the site as recommended in the WIA report by Scottish Water. The new water main has been laid underground following the main roadway routes and it is proposed to extend this distribution pipe work into site OP63 following the main roadways with individual water meters being provided for each development plot so the supply of water will not be a constraint to development.

Telecommunications

New telecommunication connections were established to serve the entire site under the Phase 1 development and these comprise of connectivity from the existing Openreach network as well as new infrastructure from the SSET network. These networks have been extended into the site by means of underground ducting laid underground following the main roadway routes but with diverse routing to give a resilient telecommunications solution. It is proposed to extend these networks into site OP63 following the route of main roadways with individual draw boxes being provided for each development plot.

With the calibre of occupier at Kingswells (such as those in the oil and gas industry) often requiring cutting edge telecommunication technology, the development has delivered 'future proofed' technology to ensure the vision of a world class Business Park is maintained.



fig 70. plot one landscaping and external lighting



fig 71. plot one solar panels

6.11 Sustainability

Energy Management

BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) Scheme guidance was incorporated within Phase 1. The aim was to increase the overall efficiency of the development through energy efficient design and management. This will be considered in this Phase and a minimum BREEAM rating of 'Very Good' shall be the target for each applicable building on the development. An energy strategy has been developed to optimise the incorporation of energy efficiency measures into the buildings on the site – including as a minimum the following design principles and studies:

- A lean mean green approach utilising passive solutions wherever possible
- Option appraisals utilising virtual environment modelling ensuring a holistic approach
- Minimising energy demand for the site through orientation and passive solar design
- Maximising the thermal efficiency of building envelopes
- Minimising consumption of energy used for water heating, space heating and cooling, lighting and power in individual buildings through efficient equipment and controls
- Harnessing of natural daylight and presence detection to reduce artificial lighting loads
- Use of Low or Zero Carbon (LZC) technologies
- Compliance with Building Standards and Carbon Reduction Planning Policy
- The strategy will also consider the requirements of the Scottish Planning Policy in respect of carbon emissions and Proposed Local Development Plan Policy R7 which requires a percentage of the buildings energy to be met by low and zero carbon technologies.

Sustainability should be investigated at the initial stages of design including building orientation and layout and opportunities for passive sustainability measure should be investigated. The high-performance buildings currently constructed at Prime Four use the right blend of passive and active design strategies to minimize energy, materials, water, and land use.

Passive measure include direct solar gain, massing and orientation, thermal mass and shading for excess solar gain. Intelligent systems such as automatic daylighting sensors controlling lighting, as currently used on earlier phases, will be promoted here.

Dedicated spaces for recycling storage will be provided, as per earlier phases, in compliance with Breeam guidelines.

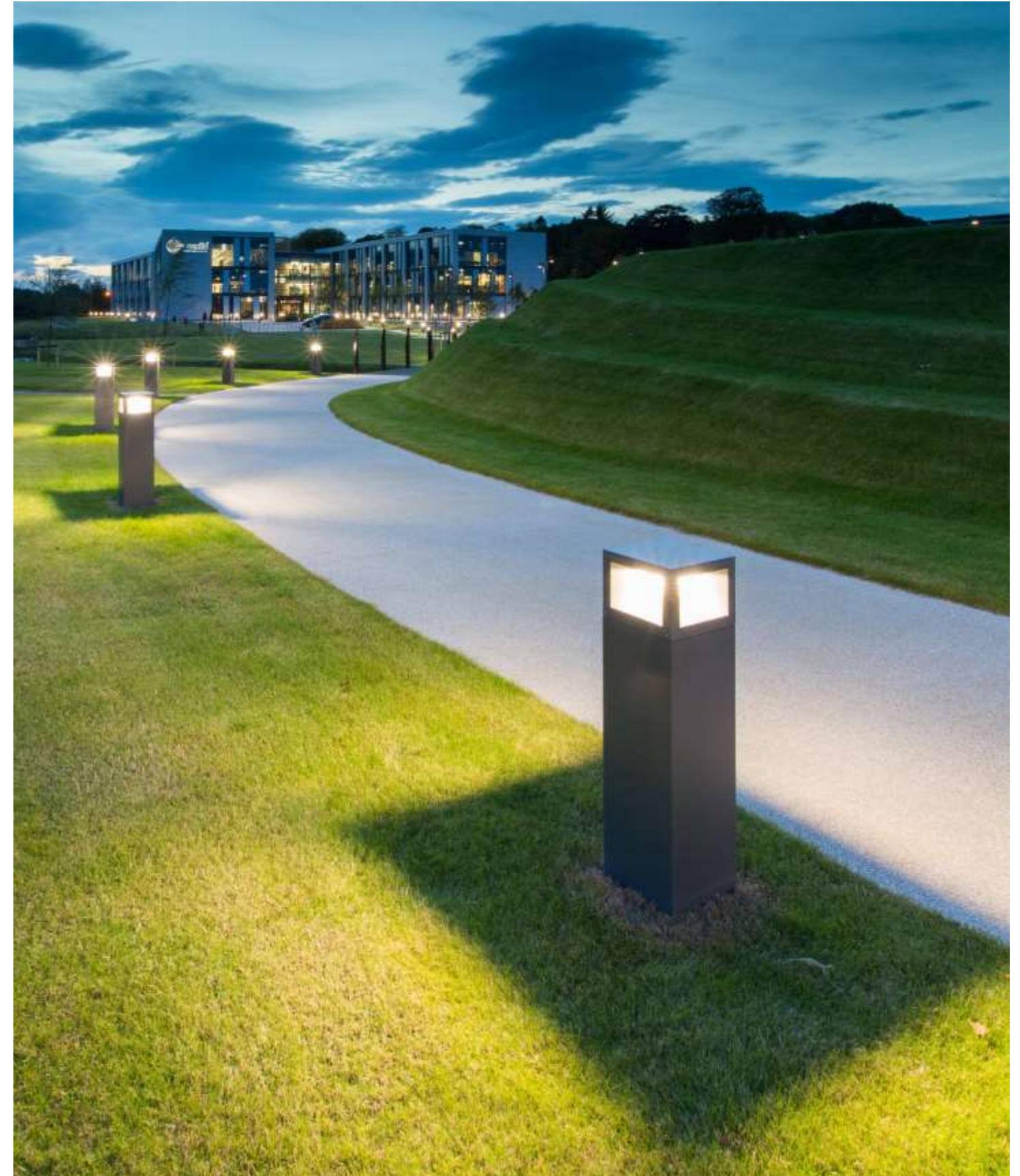


fig 72. plot one landscaping and external lighting

6.12 Phasing

The indicative phasing strategy presented in the Development Framework and Phase 1 Masterplan document was established in order to ensure a sustainable development solution can be achieved in a logical and coherent manner.

However, as a purely indicative proposal, its sole purpose was to present a preferred growth strategy, the original delivery schedule and phasing plan, now needs to be reviewed.

Some key principles of the original phasing strategy still apply and must be retained in order to deliver a successful masterplan.

Each Phase should have the ability to function independently of the development of future phases, without being prejudicial to overall growth.

The overall approach to phasing must integrate within each Phases' landscape improvements, connections, open space areas and development rooms.

Upon completion of the development, the cumulative effects of all phases will fulfil the aims and objectives outlined within the Development Framework.

Phase One

Phase 1 consists of plots 1-4 and the main entrance boulevard. This includes the vehicular and pedestrian connections into the park and ride. Phase 1 was effectively completed in December 2013, with full occupation taking place in January 2014.

Phase Two

Phase 2 consist of the main amenity offering of the park so far, the fourcourt. This area sits to the north of Phase 1. Phase 2 includes the entire buildings that surround the fourcourt, aside from plot three. Two of the buildings are completed and occupied, the third, plot seven (Statoil) is due to complete in March 2016. This will complete the fourcourt area. Plot 8, a nursery concludes the Phase 2 area. This is complete and opened in April 2015. Phase 2 also includes the provision of a secondary access to the park. This link road is timed to coincide with the completion of the Plot Seven proposals.

Phase Three

Phase 3 is a western expansion of Phase 2 towards the ancient woodland. Currently three buildings are either under construction or have planning consent applied for. Plot 9 (A²+B) is under construction and due to complete May 2016. Plot 10 (LR Senergy) has begun on site and due for completion in July 2017.

Phase Four

This phase (site Op63) is to be brought forward as phase 4 due to servicing and connectivity reasons. Phase 4 will read as a westward expansion of Phase 3. Phase 4 will include a number of development plots, the exact number will be determined by market factors. Plots within the Plateau and the Central Zone will be the first to be developed from the western boundary eastwards. Connections may be provided to Phase Five prior to the development of the northern zone depending on timing and size of requirements.

Phase Five

Phase Five (previously Phase 4) is to be the final phase taking into account the need to agree an access strategy for this site. This final phase is expected to cover the southern area of the site, adjacent to the proposed line of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route. This Phase will include any potential connections to the wider road network either at the A944 or the AWPR Kingswells South Junction.



fig 73. Phase 1 Art Work

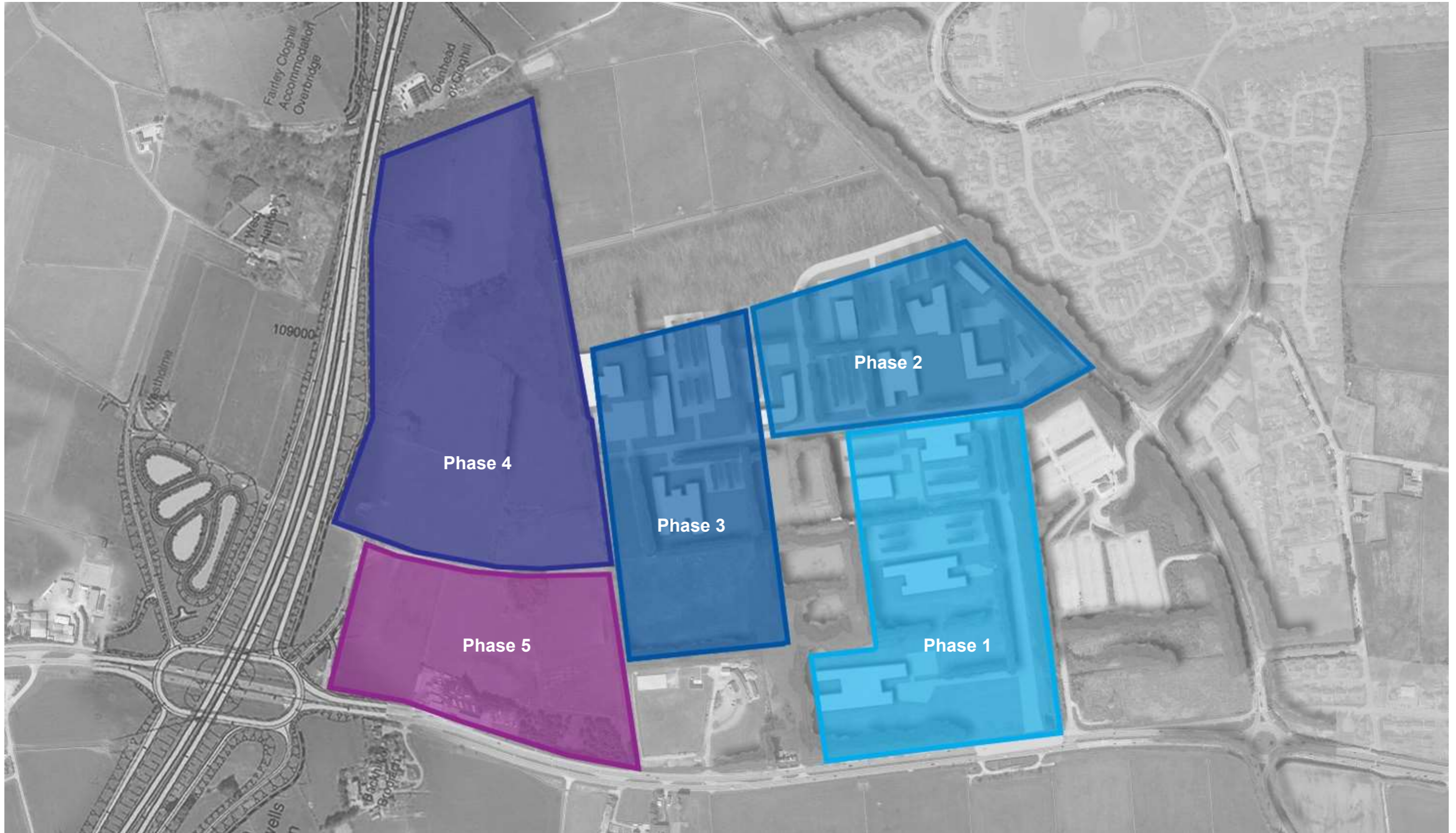


fig 74. Phasing Plan

6.13 Delivery

Introduction

Drum Property Group are committed to delivering the proposals for the entire OP63 designation, as set out within the Development Framework.

Drum are aware that the high quality of development envisaged will require them to adopt a strong leadership and management role to ensure that the overall vision is maintained, and the success of the first three phases of the Business Park is built upon.

This final section of the document outlines the proposed Development Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery Plan in order to ensure the aspirations outlined in the proposed Local Development Plan Action Programme can be fully considered as early as possible.

It is expected that any off site contributions which shall be required will be concluded through negotiations with Aberdeen City Council during the determination of planning applications for the phase/individual buildings.

Phasing

Phase 4 of the Prime Four Development shall cover the most Western area of the site, lying adjacent to the proposed line of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route. Phase 4 shall consist predominately of Class 4 office use buildings with complimentary facilities. This further phase shall follow the precedent set by the existing development at the park and integrate successfully. The speed at which development shall be undertaken shall be largely dictated by market forces and the delivery programme shall be flexible enough to allow the acceleration of certain aspects of the phase following the necessary consents being granted.

Infrastructure Delivery

The Aberdeen Local Development Plan Proposed Action Programme, along with the infrastructure and Developer Contributions Supplementary Guidance, provides guidance for the delivery of future infrastructure. This guidance, and our response, is summarised below.

Cumulative Transport Infrastructure:

Proposals shall comply with the emerging Local Development Plan Policy and the Structure Plan Supplementary Guidance for delivering Identified Projects through a Strategic Transport Fund. This is a major development area which shall require to contribute to the Strategic Transport Fund.

Local Transport Infrastructure/Public Transport/Walking and Cycling/Core Path Network:

The Development Framework demonstrates a high level strategy for the delivery of the key transport infrastructure, internal and external pedestrian cycle links and transport for the site. A Transport Assessment shall be developed for the delivery of Phase 4 and shall be subject to agreement with Aberdeen City Council as Roads, Access and Transport Authority.

Education:

As this is an employment development, there is no impact on education provision.

Water:

As with previous phases, Scottish Water shall continue to be consulted. Both a Drainage Impact Assessment and Water Impact Assessment shall be undertaken which shall be specific for Phase 4.

Health:

The development will not create more residents within the area, however there does exist an opportunity to provide facilities for the benefit of Kingswells. Discussions with the Kingswells Community Council shall progress to investigate requirements.

Open Space/Green Space Network:

Open Space shall be provided in accordance with the principle established within the Framework and in reference to Supplementary Guidance produced by Aberdeen City Council. The aims and objectives of the Green Space Network must be considered in detailed design proposals. Trees and woodlands, and nature conservation will be key considerations.

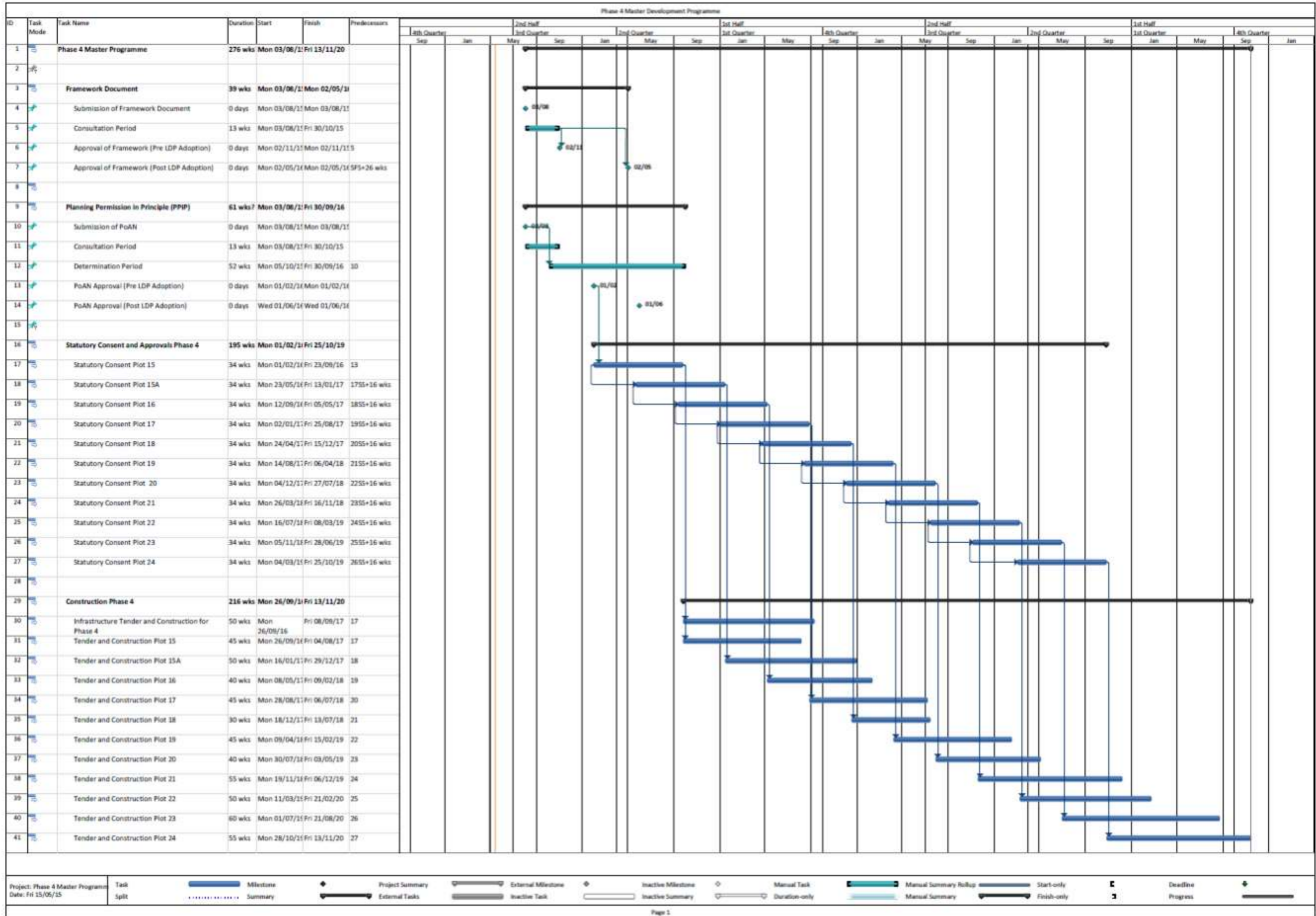
Air Quality:

Any requirement for an Air Quality Assessment shall be discussed with Aberdeen City Council.

6.14 Next steps

It is currently the intention of Drum Property Group that a Proposal of Application Notice shall be submitted concurrently with the Framework Document. Ongoing consultation with both the Aberdeen City Council and the local community remain pivotal to the commencement of Phase 4. Thereafter, a planning permission in principle application will be submitted for the entire phase, followed by AMSC applications for each of the individual plots within the phase.

In order to support such applications, a series of supporting documentation shall be required. This shall include, for instance, Drainage Statements, Transport Assessments, Design and Access Statements, and a report on how each of these phases complies with the design criteria identified in the Phase 4 Framework.





Drum Property Group

12 Rubislaw Terrace Lane

Aberdeen

AB10 1XF

HALLIDAY FRASER MUNRO

CHARTERED ARCHITECTS • PLANNING CONSULTANTS

ABERDEEN • BELFAST • DUNDEE • EDINBURGH • GLASGOW

Halliday Fraser Munro

Carden Church

6 Carden Place

Aberdeen

AB10 1UR

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Infrastructure
DATE	17 May 2016
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Draft: Site OP63, Prime Four Business Park Development Framework
REPORT NUMBER:	CHI/16/083
CHECKLIST RECEIVED	Yes

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report outlines the Site OP63, Prime Four Business Park Development Framework, prepared as a strategy for the future development of land identified in the Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2015) as Opportunity Site 63 (OP63).
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Site OP63, Prime Four Business Park, Development Framework to be issued for public consultation over a six week period; and
- 1.3 For the Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure to be instructed to report to a subsequent Committee with the findings and any revisions proposed as a result of the public consultation.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
 - (a) Approves the Draft Prime Four (OP63), Development Framework for public consultation over a six week period, and;
 - (b) Instructs the Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure to report the results of the public consultation and any proposed revisions to the Draft Development Framework to a subsequent meeting of this Committee.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The design team have met the cost for the preparation of the Development Framework including all consultation and engagement to

date. The proposals will result in efficiencies in the determination of future planning applications related to the Development Framework, leading to a reduction in Council staff time to assess future detailed proposals.

- 3.2 The costs associated with the proposed six week statutory consultation exercise will be met within existing budgets.

4 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Development Framework reduces the risk of piecemeal and inappropriate development and ensures that the development will be fully integrated into its surroundings. Placemaking and the efficient use of land will contribute towards the Council's aim of promoting sustainable economic development.
- 4.2 The Development Framework will contribute to efficiencies in determining future planning applications and a reduction in Council staff time to assess future detailed proposals. By encouraging acceptable forms and uses of new development to be agreed publicly, it allows more informed decision making to be made earlier, saving time and resources for staff, applicants and the public.
- 4.3 In accordance with the Aberdeen Local Development Plan: Action Programme and the Infrastructure and Developer Contributions Manual, the Development Framework references how the development will address requirements for cumulative and local transport infrastructure; public transport along with walking and cycling in accordance with the Local Transport Strategy 2016.
- 4.4 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been undertaken on OP63 as part of the preparation of the Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan.

5 BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 The full Development Framework is a large document containing a lot of illustrative material and can be viewed by via the following link:
www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning
- 5.2 The Development Framework has been made available to the Kingswells Community Council for information prior to this report being considered.
- 5.3 The Development Framework has been produced by Halliday Fraser Munro on behalf of Drum properties. The Development Framework aims to create an extension to an existing high quality business park to the west of the City.

Site Description

- 5.4 The site is currently an agricultural site to the west of the existing Prime Four Business Park and Kingswells. The AWPR will be located immediately to the west of the site.
- 5.5 The site is 12.7 hectares in size and is currently eight varied sized fields, largely set out for pasture with dry stone boundary walls. The site also includes a number of tree belts and the Ancient Woodland, located immediately to the east. Finally within the site the Friends Burial Ground is located to the south west.

Policy Summary

- 5.6 The site is identified in the proposed Local Development Plan 2015 as Opportunity Site 63 (OP63) for Specialist Employment. The Local Development Plan identifies the need for a Masterplan for the site along with a Transport Impact Assessment. The proposed plan also confirms the requirement of an adequate buffer to be identified in the Masterplan for the Quaker Burial Ground and the ancient woodland.
- 5.7 The proposed Local Development Plan is going through an examination at present. Three representations for OP63 are currently with the reporter for consideration. It is expected that the reporter's recommendations will be submitted to the Council by 10 August 2016.
- 5.8 The additional area of land has been allocated in the Proposed Local Development Plan and a schedule 4 has been submitted to the reporter. The schedule 4 confirms that: "The south west corner of the existing prime four business park is constrained and undevelopable at present due to access issues. The Prime Four Business Park has been exceptionally successful, bringing a significant positive economic impact to Aberdeen over the last 3 years. The developable land has been built out and demand for plots is continuing. There is therefore a strong argument for allocating more land for the Prime Four Extension now to allow for the continued growth and success of the site in order to capture this current demand."

Development Framework

- 5.9 The Development Framework covers a site that is an extension to the existing Prime Business Park. The broad principles and the quality of the development will be carried through from the existing site to this proposed extension.
- 5.10 The document provides an update on the previous phases of the Prime Four development and how the site has been developed. Updates on circulation around the site, the development zones and the previous Development Framework are shown on pages 6 to 12. It is important within this new Framework to confirm the links and existing roads to

ensure that the appropriate connections between the different phases are made.

Key Objectives

- 5.11 The Development Framework sets a number of key objectives for the site. These objectives cover the topics of:
- **Distinctive** – landscape strategy utilising existing natural features while creating a sense of identity.
 - **Movement** – clear orientation around the site, development will provide visual markers and strong pedestrian links to existing facilities.
 - **Safe and pleasant** – creation of frontages to streets, activity at all times of day and well-designed public spaces.
 - **Adaptable** - provide a range of plot sizes and the flexibility to adapt to market changes.
 - **Easy to get to and move around** - pedestrian and cycle friendly streets, good access to public transport, well integrated car-parking and opportunities to incorporate enhancements to biodiversity.
 - **Resource efficient** – improving habitats and increasing building performance.

The key objectives can be read in full on page 30 of the Framework document.

Response to Historic Environment

- 5.12 The friends burial ground is a C listed building located to the south west of the site. The Framework identifies a 20 metre buffer around the burial ground to prevent direct impact on the listed building. Consideration will also be given to the surrounding context and how best to integrate it into the site. It is noted in the Framework that the main setting for the Burial Ground is to the south and this setting should be protected. The proposals can be viewed on page 31 of the draft document.
- 5.13 Page 32 of the Framework shows sections through this site and how buildings and roads could fit within the site and relate to the existing landscape features.
- 5.14 The ancient woodland is located outwith the allocated site but has been included within the site boundary for the purpose of this document. The woodland is also in the ownership of the applicant so can be managed or enhanced as deemed appropriate. A minimum 10m buffer around the ancient woodland has been identified and in some location

this will be increase to allow greater protection, increased open space and the opportunity for enhancement. Page 33 shows the potential areas for additional buffers.

Landscape

- 5.15 The landscape framework builds on the existing tree belts, field patterns and boundary walls. Retention of these features is a key element of the document and it is proposed that these are retained wherever possible. A landscape framework has been shown on page 35 of the Framework document.
- 5.16 Key views to and from the site have been identified and are shown on page 37 of the document.
- 5.17 The SUDs scheme for the site will be divided into two catchments due to the topography of the site. This can be seen on page 48 of the Framework.

Connectivity and circulation

- 5.18 This section highlights the need for a cohesive cycle/ pedestrian network. The Framework also identifies the need for a Transport Assessment to include the potential cycle improvements to the A944 cycle lane.
- 5.19 Public transport will access this area of the site to discourage the use of cars and encourage more sustainable modes of transport. Discussions are currently ongoing with bus operators.
- 5.20 Parking will be discreet and where possible to the rear of the buildings and integrated into the site using landforms. Surface parking should be carefully considered and dealt with in a sympathetic manner. The themes introduced in the earlier phases of development such as appropriate landscaping and enhanced surface drop off areas will be carried forward into this site. The plan on page 40 identifies where decked structures may be possible given the topography.
- 5.21 The initial access into the site will be via the existing road from the east. A Transport Impact Assessment is required to determine whether an additional access could be accommodated onto the A944.

Buildings

- 5.22 The approach to the earlier phases will be carried forward into this site. The previous development has accommodated large buildings with appropriate amenity space. A further hub is proposed within the new site, though at this time no uses are confirmed, these could include uses such as eateries or a convenience unit. The two hubs would be

linked with a strong tree lined boulevard providing a highly legible layout.

- 5.23 The proposal is to cluster buildings together and ensure pedestrian connections to encourage interaction.
- 5.24 Massing of the buildings is an important consideration in particular given the topographical differences and the landscape context. On the plateau careful consideration will be required to buildings in proximity to the friends burial ground and the visual prominence of this area. The central zone will also require sensitive design and consideration and possible breaking up of the massing of some of the buildings to provide variety in design and scale. Page 42 of the framework identifies where the different heights of buildings could be located. Sections through the site and the AWPR and are shown on page 43.

Phasing

- 5.25 The phasing for the whole of Prime Four (including the adjacent existing site) is shown on page 46 of the document. Phases 1-3 have largely been constructed and are occupied. The area that was identified as phase 4 within the OP40 – Kingswells Development Framework and Phase 1 Masterplan has now been moved to phase 5 due to access issues and the new site OP63 is to be phase 4 of the Prime Four development.

6 IMPACT

Improving Customer Experience - The Development Framework sets out principles and options for OP63, Prime Four Business Park Development Framework site. It also highlights what further surveys and detailed information will be required as part of any planning application. In doing so the Framework provides certainty for the public, agencies and development industry.

Improving Staff Experience - The Development Framework will contribute to efficiencies in determining future planning applications and a reduction in Council staff time to assess future detailed proposals.

Improving our use of Resources - By demonstrating acceptable forms, siting and uses of new development on the site, it allows more informed decision making to be made earlier, saving time and resources for staff, applicants and the public. The Development Framework also highlights the expected improvements required to infrastructure, services and resources as a result of the proposed development.

Corporate - The proposal contributes to the following Single Outcome Priorities: 1 – People feel safe throughout Aberdeen’s communities; 2 –

economic growth – the city is recognised as a good place to invest, live, work, visit and export from; 3 – Health and wellbeing – reduced inequalities in healthy life expectancy and improved physical and mental health through increased physical activity.

The proposal contributes to the 5 Year Business Plan in terms of objective – Communication and Community Engagement; sharing our plans and aspirations for the city, – delivering an up-to-date plan, – facilitating new development projects to improve Aberdeen’s living environment and, – support open space initiatives.

The proposal contributes towards the Council’s vision for Aberdeen: 2012 – 2017, particularly creating a City which is a great place to live, bring up a family, do business and visit. It specifically contributes to the follows objectives: Governance – encouraging citizens to participate in design and development; Living – improving opportunities for physical activity; Environment – energy efficient design and construction, attractive streetscapes and access to green space; Economy – improve access to range of affordable housing; Mobility – encourage cycling, walking and promoting a sustainable transport systems which reduce carbon emissions.

The proposal is consistent with the Council’s Corporate Plan in particular with regard to delivering high levels of design from all development, maintaining an up-to-date planning framework, sustainable development and open space provision.

The proposal will assist in the delivery of the Council’s Strategic Infrastructure Plan by helping to achieve the key goal of ‘The skills and labour that Aberdeen needs to thrive’

Securing the Future of the North East Economy – A 20 Year Vision for the Well-being of the Place & Our People” was approved by the Council in December 2015. A key objective of the Investment in Infrastructure Programme is to enable the city to realise the development opportunities in the City Centre Masterplan. These proposals and development of a 21st Century public realm are a vital component of the ‘development mix’. High value jobs and skills are globally mobile, and competing for these high value ‘clusters’ of activity is a key part of the Strategy, and the Council’s inward investment plans. In doing so, it becomes easier for Aberdeen to maintain and attract world class talent and business, which in turn delivers positive indirect and induced impacts across the city economy as spend supports jobs in retail, tourism, leisure and other services. However to remain globally competitive, the quality of the ‘place’, the commercial space and the public realm around it all have a role. Developers and subsequent occupants/ employers base their location decisions on being able to attract the best talent and skills to work in their businesses, and they recognise the positive correlation between their business competitiveness and the quality of the public realm.

The proposal is consistent with the Planning and Sustainable Development Service Plan, in particular engaging the community in the planning process, and the delivery of Masterplans/Development Frameworks in line with the Aberdeen Masterplanning Process.

Public – An EHRIA will be carried out for the Development Framework once the consultation exercise has taken place.

7 MANAGEMENT OF RISK

- 7.1 Development Frameworks and Masterplans contribute to efficiencies in determining future planning applications and a reduction in Council staff time to assess future detailed proposals.
- 7.2 If the recommendations are accepted the Council will have to manage the planning application process for the development of the site in line with the Development Framework. Going out to consultation ahead of the reporters decision on the Local Development Plan is a risk because there is no certainty that the site will be included in the land allocation.
- 7.3 If the recommendation is not accepted the risk is that no development will take place on the site. There are strong benefits in early engagement with the community; there is a risk that this will not be the case if the recommendation is not accepted. There is also a risk that the employment allocations in the Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2016) will not be met. There would also be no clear parameters set for the site resulting in the potential of piecemeal development on the site.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Draft Site OP63, Prime Four Business Park Development Framework

<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning/>

- Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2015

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/planning_environment/planning/local_development_plan/pla_2016_proposed_plan.asp

- Aberdeen Masterplanning Process 2008 (article 22, Planning Committee Minute, 6/11/08)

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Planning/pla/pla_planningbriefs.asp

- Aberdeen Masterplanning Process: Update Report EPI/12/231 (agenda item 1.1, article 4, Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee, 6/11/12)
<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=140&MId=2523&Ver=4>
- Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan:
http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/planning_environment/planning/local_development_plan/pla_2016_proposed_plan.asp

7 REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Laura Robertson

Senior Planner – Masterplan, Design and Conservation Team

☎ 01224 (52)2246

✉ larobertson@aberdeencity.gov.uk