

Supplementary Guidance

Fire Station

North Anderson Drive

January 2013

The Fire Station North Anderson Drive Planning Brief was first produced prior to the adoption of the Local Development Plan. However the document remains valid, and the guidance derived from this still informs the City Council's decisions on such development in Aberdeen. The new Local Development Plan calls for appraisals of such reports and as part of this process the policy references within the supplementary guidance has been reviewed and updated. Therefore any queries concerning the text of the Supplementary Guidance should be directed to Planning and Sustainable Development for possible clarification

planning and design brief

fire station site, north anderson drive, aberdeen

prepared for :-

Grampian Fire Board



“Create a bold and imaginative residential development for one of Aberdeen’s and Scotland’s most prominent sites. The development should be stimulating. It should be a place of distinction characterised by the quality of building accommodation, landscape and open space.

The development should be designed to take maximum advantage of the unique characteristics of the site; incorporating the very best of modern design to provide a new landmark for Aberdeen and Scotland. The development should provide a benchmark for future architecture in the City and Scotland, as a whole.”

by :-

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Urban Design Futures



Halcrow



in association with:-

Aberdeen City Council



February 2005

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Fire Board Headquarters and Fire Station on North Anderson Drive, Aberdeen has become surplus to requirements. In order to facilitate the orderly disposal of the site, this planning and design brief has been prepared by FG Burnett, Urban Design Futures and Halcrow in collaboration with Aberdeen City Council.

2. In preparing the brief full consultation, in accordance with Aberdeen City Council's policy, was undertaken with surrounding residents in order to ensure that their views have been fully considered. Consultation involving leafleting properties in the surrounding neighbourhood on the draft brief, placing an article in the Press and Journal and holding a surgery (including exhibition) was undertaken. This ensured that the local community is fully aware of the proposals and that reasonable opportunity has been provided to discuss the brief and its impact.

3. The Planning and Sustainable Development Service of Aberdeen City Council are satisfied with the contents of this brief.

4. Figures 1 and 2 provide location and site plans for the site.

PURPOSE AND STATUS OF BRIEF

5. The purpose of this brief is to provide planning and design guidance for the development of the Fire Board Headquarters and Fire Station site at North Anderson Drive, Aberdeen. Guidance provided includes appropriate land use, development form and density, materials, accessibility, developer contributions, etc. This will allow an appropriate development proposal to be prepared that meets the brief's requirements. Such a proposal will be considered by Aberdeen City Council through the determination of a planning application.

6. The guidance is set within a vision and objectives for development, a site context and the policy framework affecting the site.

7. This brief is supplementary planning guidance. Developers are not constrained from proposing alternative schemes. However, the brief provides a clear indication of the requirements and expectations that Aberdeen City Council will take into account in determining development proposals.



VISION AND OBJECTIVES FOR DEVELOPMENT

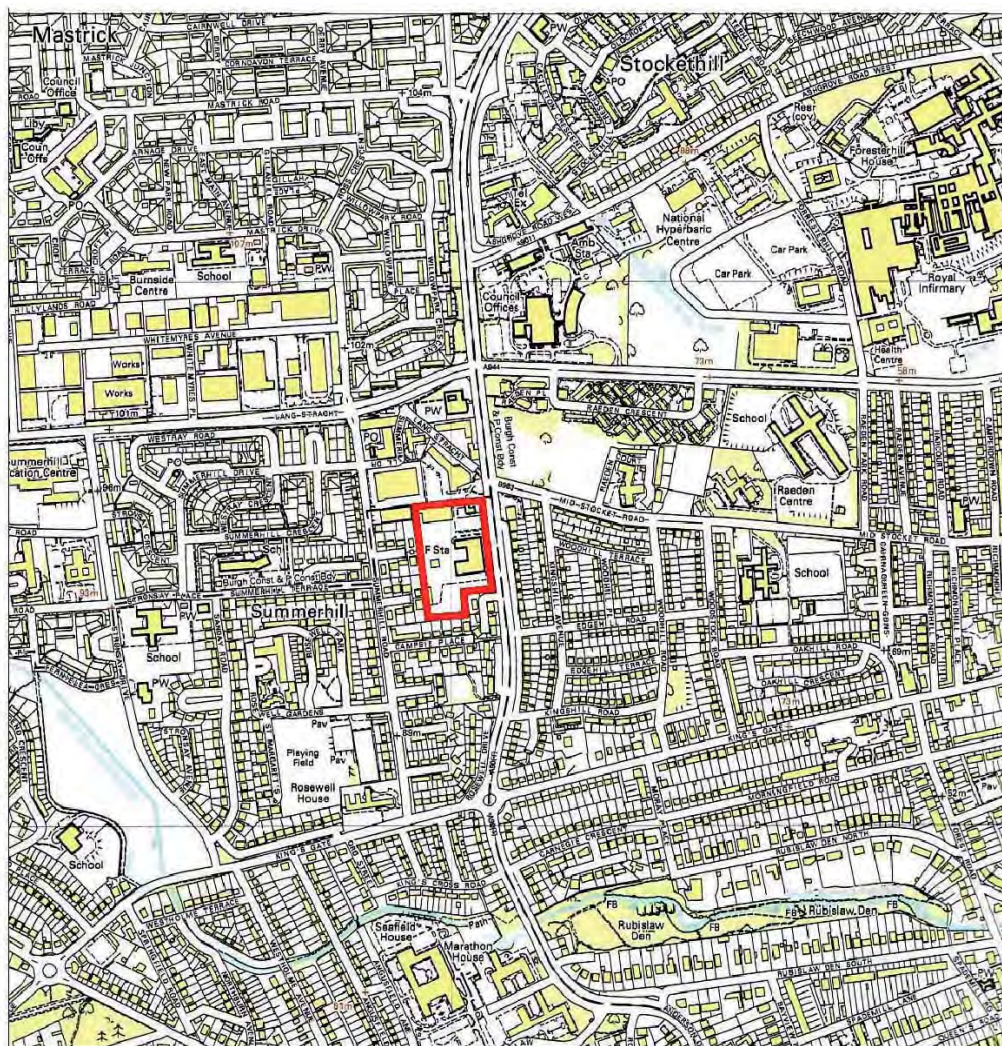
8. The brief's vision for the development of the site is to create a bold and imaginative residential development for one of Aberdeen's and Scotland's most prominent sites. The development should be stimulating. It should be a place of distinction characterised by the quality of buildings, accommodation, landscape and open space. The development should be designed to take maximum advantage of the unique characteristics of the site; incorporating the very best of modern design to provide a new landmark for Aberdeen and Scotland. The development should provide a benchmark for future architecture in the City and Scotland, as a whole.

9. To achieve this, proposals will have to prove that they meet the following objectives:

- | |
|---|
| • Achieve healthy and enjoyable housing. |
| • Achieve attractive surroundings that people can enjoy and move around safely. |
| • Achieve a high quality and distinctive residential environment in terms of scale, variety, density and layout. |
| • Take full advantage of the opportunities provided by the site's location and prominence; particularly in responding to views across the City. |
| • Ensure that energy conservation is maximised within the development and that the development is sustainable. |
| • Deliver appropriate provision of special needs and affordable housing. |

SITE DESCRIPTION

10. The site extends to 2.6 hectares (6.42 acres) or thereby and is roughly rectangular in shape. It is flat. Its eastern boundary is defined by North Anderson Drive; a dualled inner ring road for Aberdeen. To the north of the site are commercial developments including a hotel and a restaurant. At the southern and western boundaries of the site are residential bungalows with gardens.



location plan

1



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11. Existing access to the site is from North Anderson Drive on a left in/left out basis. An emergency all turns egress from the site is available for Fire Engines.

12. There are a number of undistinguished buildings on the site. The northern area of the site contains sheds for vehicle maintenance. In the eastern part of the site is the Fire Station and supporting office accommodation contained in a large two storey building. This building has an associated car-park to its north. A large expanse of open tarmac extends into the site. At the centre of this is a tall four storey tower used for fire fighting training. None of the existing buildings are considered worthy of retention. The western boundary contains some outbuildings and mature landscape. To the south of the site is a large grassed area that meets the gardens of the adjoining residential properties. This area contains some trees.

13. Figure 3 provides a plan of the existing development constraints.

SITE HISTORY

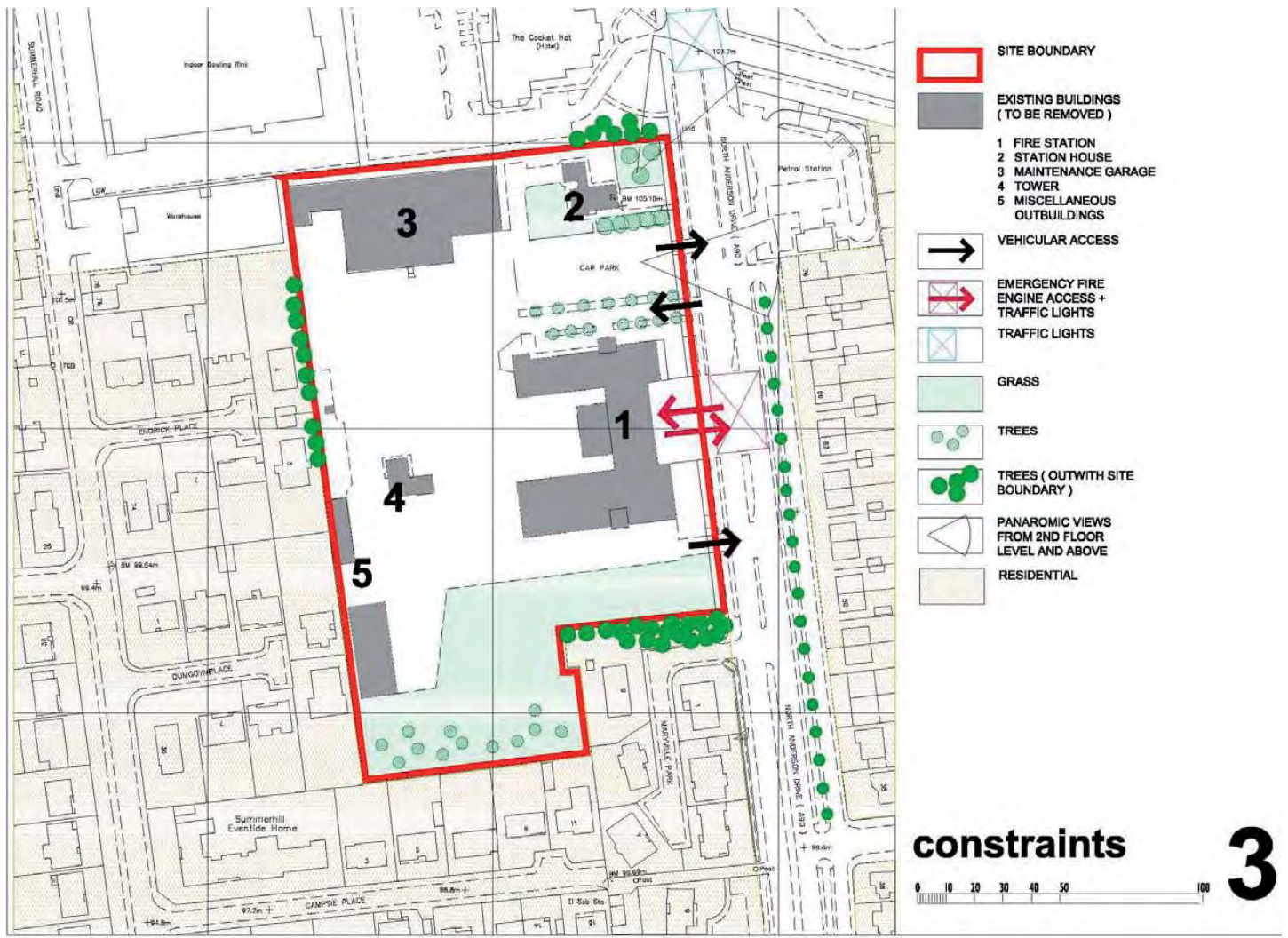
14. The site has been used for its current purpose since the 1960s. The most recent planning history concerns a proposal for a superstore and car park. This was refused in outline by Aberdeen City Council in June 2001 on the basis that the proposal would have a detrimental impact on residential amenity. An appeal was made to the Scottish Executive and a public local inquiry was held in January 2002. This appeal was dismissed in May 2002.



Aerial photograph from the southwest showing the site's location



Aerial photograph from the south showing the site



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PLANNING POLICIES

15. Planning policy is determined through national guidance; particularly Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (September, 2009) and the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (February, 2012). Supplementary Planning Guidance must also be taken into account when consideration is given to the redevelopment of this site. The following paragraphs briefly outline the requirements of policy.

SPP

16. National policy clearly establishes that new residential development should use previously developed land (para 80).

17. It also places considerable emphasis on creating attractive residential developments. In particular, SPP indicates that the siting and design of new housing should take account of its setting, the surrounding landscape, topography, character, appearance, ecologies and the scope for using local materials (para 78). It continues that the aim should be to create places with a distinct character and identity, promoting a well integrated mix of land uses including well designed homes of different types and tenures. Development plans should encourage and enable the creation of successful places which contribute to the identity of the area. Further policy and advice on design is provided in Designing Places, Designing Streets and PAN 67 Housing Quality.

18. SPP also promotes the integration of new housing developments with public transport and active travel networks such as footpaths and cycle routes, rather than encouraging dependence on the car (para 79). In addition to this new housing should connect well with existing streets and with active travel networks. Links should also be made to allow for connections into future areas of development.

19. Landscape should be considered at an early stage and although the protection of the landscape and natural heritage may sometimes impose constraints on development, with careful planning and design, the potential for conflict can be minimised and the potential for enhancement maximised (para 131).

20. Policy establishes that density should be determined in relation to the character of the place and its relative accessibility, with higher densities appropriate at central and accessible locations (para 83). SPP continues that through good design it is possible to achieve higher density living environments without overcrowding or loss of amenity.

21. Supplementing national policy is advice contained in Planning Advice Note 67 - Housing Quality. This provides clear and concise advice on achieving quality design for residential developments.

ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE STRUCTURE PLAN

22. Paragraph 4.25 recognises that in the past new development has too often not been sustainable, mixed or focused on meeting the needs of the community. Therefore new development must be of a high standard in terms of urban design, have a mix of land uses and make sure that land is used more efficiently including the re-use of previously developed land. Paragraph 4.26 continues that future communities must be mixed in terms of type, size, tenure and cost. Buildings must be designed to a high standard and respect and improve the existing qualities of an area. The Plan continues that the re-use of brownfield sites should be given priority and that new development should focus on the creation of sustainable mixed communities.

23. The Plan also seeks to promote the link between land use and transport to make sure that all new development is conveniently located to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport (para 4.34).

ABERDEEN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

24. The site sits within a residential area where policy H1 of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2012) applies. This policy says:

“Within existing residential areas (H1 on the Proposals Map) and within new residential developments, proposals for new residential development and householder development will be approved in principle if it:

1. does not constitute over development;
2. does not have an unacceptable impact on the character or amenity of the surrounding area;
3. does not result in the loss of valuable and valued areas of open space. Open space is defined in the Aberdeen Open Space Audit 2010;
4. complies with Supplementary Guidance on Curtilage Splits; and
5. complies with Supplementary Guidance on House Extensions.

Within existing residential areas, proposals for non-residential uses will be refused unless:

1. they are considered complementary to residential use; or
2. it can be demonstrated that the use would cause no conflict with, or any nuisance to, the enjoyment of existing residential amenity.”

ASSOCIATED SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE

25. Relevant Supplementary Guidance should be taken into consideration when development of this site comes forward.

FUTURE USES AND POTENTIAL

26. The future use of the site for residential use is clearly established and accepted.

27. There is an opportunity to provide a development that imaginatively responds to the opportunities provided by the site and the requirements for development guidance as outlined below.

ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND CAR PARKING

28. A Transport Assessment (TA) will be required and should address the requirements of Scottish Government guidance stated in SPP paragraph 168. The scope of the study should be agreed with the Council prior to its commencement. This TA should be prepared in the context of a Green Transport Plan for the proposed development. Further, Transport Scotland as Trunk Road Authority will have an interest in the proposal and access arrangements. They should be included at an early stage in developing proposals and scoping for a TA.

29. The site is situated on a key public transport corridor with easy access to the city centre. Local shopping is within easy walking distance.

30. Vehicular access to the site should be taken from North Anderson Drive at the centre or to the south of the site's eastern boundary. North Anderson Drive is a dual carriageway which forms part of the trunk road network. Traffic signals are likely to be acceptable to allow right turning into the site for traffic approaching from the north and right turning on exiting the site heading south. These would require to be linked in with the existing signalised junctions to the north of this access junction. A Transport model of the access junction and the local network including the three signalised junctions north of the proposed site access on North Anderson Drive will be required. The junction would be required to be included in the SCOOT system as well as being linked in with the existing junctions on North Anderson Drive to minimise delays to traffic on the main road. However, alternative solutions for the principal access arrangements will be considered.

31. Attention should be given to the needs of cyclists and pedestrians; particularly to wider links to community facilities and public transport. This should aim to make such links safe and attractive. Cycle stores should be provided within flatted developments. Motorcycle parking spaces are also required.

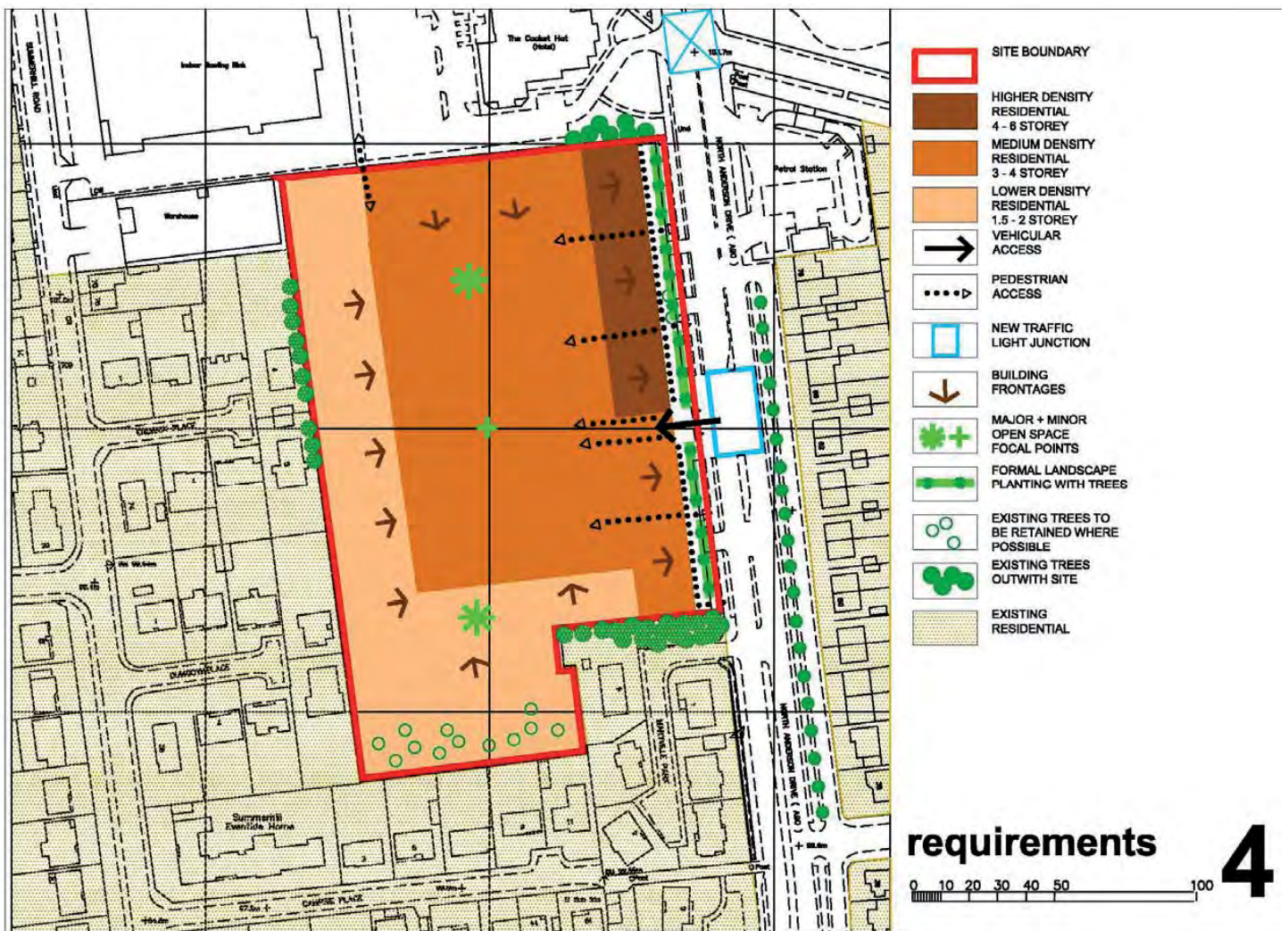
32. Car parking should conform to Council standards.

33. Road and parking layout should consider the Council's standards as provided in Guidelines and Specification for Roads within Residential Developments. In particular, the requirement for a road serving up to around 300 dwellings to have two points of access should be addressed. Moreover, proactive consideration should be given to internal road layout that places an emphasis on pedestrian friendly and home zone solutions. These requirements are reflected, in the context of urban design considerations, as part of Figure 5 - Conceptual Layout where a dualled access solution is promoted (i.e. dualled access up to a point where separate access to around 100 houses can be provided).

DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

34. Figure 4 indicates requirements for development of the site. These emerge from the planning policy framework and the specific opportunities afforded by the site itself. The site offers the opportunity for contemporary development to a high design standard. The following should apply:

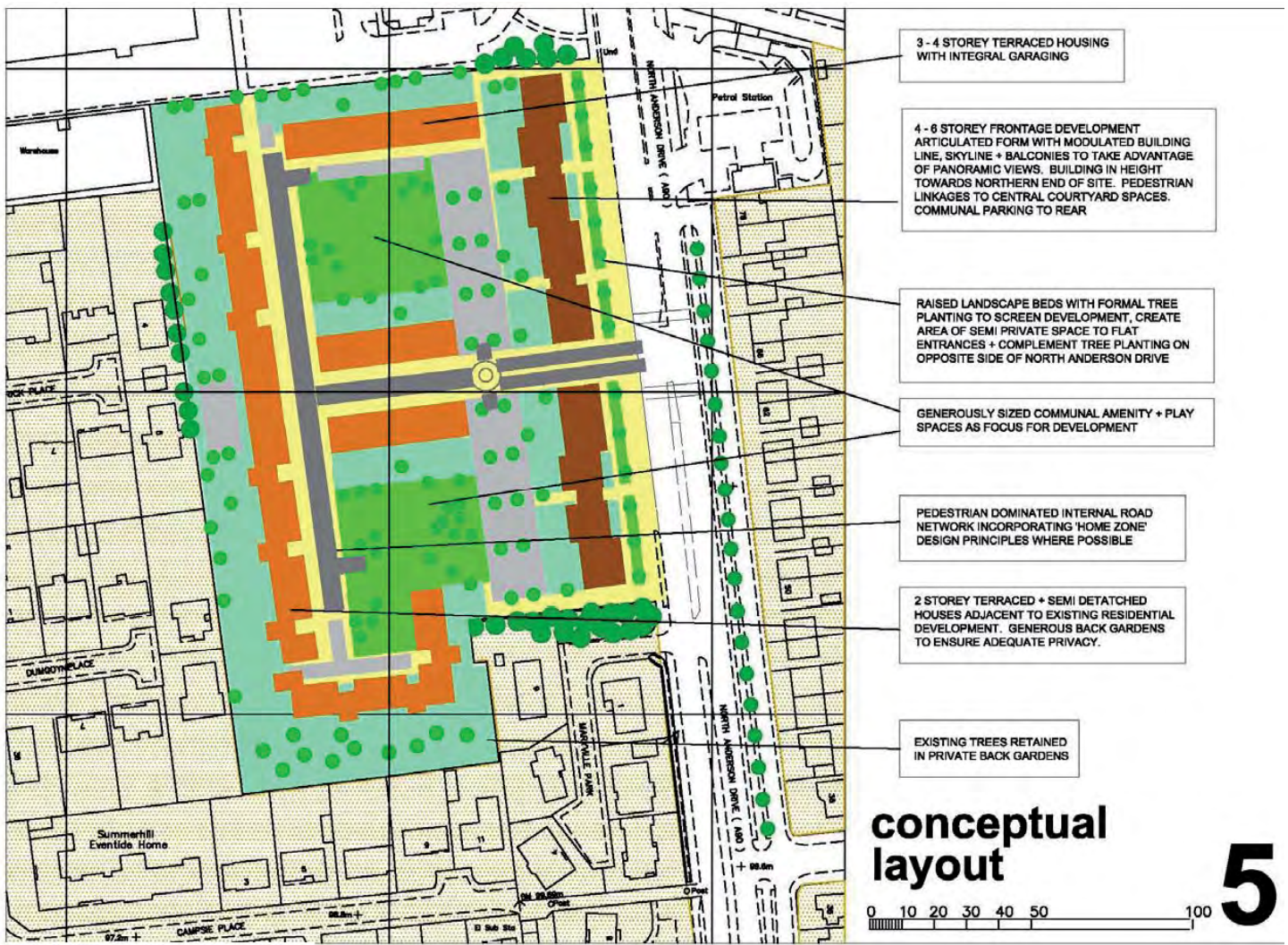
Potential for high density development on the site's eastern and northern boundaries should be pursued. Lower density development, with good sized back gardens, should be located along the southern and western boundaries of the site.
The elevation to address North Anderson Drive must provide an imaginative and well designed frontage that provides definition for the development as it relates to the road.
Views to the north and east should be maximised to take advantage of the site's prominent position.
Design should maximise the benefits of sunlight for future residents of the site.
A range of housing type and size should be provided including a significant proportion of family housing.
Sensitive boundaries to the south and west should be respected and development proposals should respond appropriately.
The privacy of existing residential property adjacent to and surrounding the site must be respected.
Open space should be provided to create a positive focus for development. It should not be dominated by car parking with no more than 50% of courts taken up with car parking. Basement/ integral parking could be provided in order to minimise the amount of open ground level parking provision.
Landscape provision should seek to add character to the development. Opportunities to introduce trees within the site (including car parking areas) should be maximised. Consideration can be given to introducing tree planting to the front of the site at North Anderson Drive.
Existing mature trees and landscape in and adjacent to the site should be retained, where possible.
Vehicular access should be taken from North Anderson drive at around the central point of the site's eastern boundary. This will require appropriate traffic modelling.
Pedestrian and cycle access to local shops should be taken directly from the site's northern boundary.
Buildings should be modern in style and incorporate a range of complementary materials to provide interest through their application. Avoidance of substitute granite is recommended.
Garden space (incorporating play areas) should be a minimum of 20m ² per bedroom for flatted development. For dwelling houses private gardens should be around 50% of the plot.
For a development proposal of up to 199 dwellings a total of 3,500m ² of public open space (with 1,000m ² equipped play space) should be provided. For proposals over 200 dwellings, provision should rise commensurate with the proposed number of dwellings.
The development should be barrier free. Accessibility and circulation for people with disabilities should be pro-actively considered. This would include at grade circulation provision and clear use of materials.



35. Surface water run-off should be dealt with using a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) incorporated within the design of any proposal. A Drainage Impact Assessment will be required that demonstrates that foul and surface drainage conforms to current best practice.

36. Advice contained in Planning Advice Note 77 - Designing Safer Places should be taken into account in preparing a detailed development proposal. Prospective developers should discuss proposals with Grampian Police Force's Architectural Liaison Officer prior to finalising detailed design proposals.

37. Figure 5 - Conceptual Layout provides a broad interpretation of how development requirements of the brief could be met. This clearly shows the site's character split with high density development to the north and east and medium density dwelling houses to the south and west. Open space acts as a focus for development and provides for passive and active recreation with an equipped play areas.



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DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

38. The precise level of infrastructure requirements and developer contributions will need to be agreed with the Council, and other statutory agencies. The level of provision or contribution required will relate to the development proposed either directly or to the cumulative impact

39. It is likely that developer contributions will most likely be required in four areas. These are:

Affordable housing.
Traffic management.
Green transport
Safe pedestrian routes

40. Affordable housing requirements are set out in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan Policy H5 Affordable Housing and the Supplementary Guidance document on Affordable Housing This determines that housing developments of five units or more are required to contribute no less than 25% of the total number of units as affordable housing.

41. In order of priority affordable housing can be provided through on-site provision, off-site provision or commuted payment.

42. A signal controlled junction (with pedestrian phases) will be required to control ingress and egress to the development. This will require modelling and incorporation into the SCOOT system.

43. Green transport plan requirements will need to be met. It is anticipated that this will include visitor cycle parking provision, annual bus passes for each dwelling and a car club managed through a property factor.

44. Safe and direct pedestrian/cycle routes will be required to the following locations:

Schools in Summerhill (Holy Family and Fernielea).
Summerhill Shopping centre
Raeden Park

DESIGN STATEMENT

45. A design statement should be prepared for any development proposal. This will follow the requirements of Planning Advice Note 68 - Design Statements issued by the Scottish Executive in 2003. Importantly, the statement should clearly set out how any development proposal has responded to the requirements of this brief. Further, a clear guide to how any proposal has responded to Planning Advice Note 67 - Housing Quality should be addressed in the design statement.

CONSTRUCTION ARRANGEMENTS

46. During development of the site, construction nuisance to neighbouring residential and other property should be minimised. In particular, all reasonable precautions should be taken to minimise the intrusion of noise, dust, grit, etc. Reasonable time restrictions on hours of work will be set.

PREPARING AND SUBMITTING A PLANNING APPLICATION

47. In preparing a proposal for the site, the developer is advised to hold pre-application discussions with the Council. For this sensitive site a number of meetings will be required. Compliance with this brief should not be interpreted as ensuring automatic approval of a proposal. Any application will be judged on its merits. Prospective applicants are advised to obtain the services of a design team with proven skills for this important and prestigious site.

Further detailed advice should be obtained from the Council's Masterplanning, Design and Conservation Team.

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