



# M1, LAURENCEKIRK MASTERPLAN

Prepared by Ryden LLP on behalf of Kirkwood Homes Ltd and A&J Stephen

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Site Location

Laurencekirk is a town located 29 miles south of Aberdeen and 36.6 miles north of Dundee, on the A90 and main east coast rail line. It is the largest settlement in the Howe o' the Mearns area and forms one of the main service centres in the southern part of Kincardine and Mearns. Laurencekirk is on the east-coast main train line following the recent re-opening of the train station. The opening of the station has enhanced Laurencekirk's status as a commuter town providing good rail and road links to Aberdeen and Dundee.

Given its name in 1701, Laurencekirk was previously known by the Parish name of Conveth which consisted of two settlements, one at Kirkton of Conveth at the north end of the village and the other near Haulkerton Castle sited in the woods adjoining Mill of Haulkerton.

In 1759, Lord Gardenston bought Johnston Estate which included Laurencekirk and part of Garvoch Hill with a view to planning and creating an industrial village. He subsequently introduced various home industries into the locality, including linen weaving and box-making. The original population of 54, then rose to 500 in 1779.

The linen trade changed from a cottage industry once flax spinning mills were built at Blackiemuir and Auchenblae. Consequently, the industry was able to expand and weaving shops were soon established. In parallel to these industrial changes, the general linear grid structure of Laurencekirk was being put in place, again by Lord Gardenston. He laid down the plan of the High Street by selling off one mile of feus which linked the existing crofts and houses into a street pattern as shown in Figure 2, a map of the area from 1863. The High Street, Johnston Street and Garvoch Street set the framework for the built form of the village and have changed very little in terms of layout since.

More recently, the settlement has developed between the main arterial routes of the railway line and the A90 which now sweeps along the edge of the settlement. Modern housing allocations have seen expansion to the west of the railway line at the south west and north west of the settlement.

The population of Laurencekirk in 2004 was 1,971, however the estimated population in 2010 was 2,650. The town benefits from a range of services, including shops, a secondary and primary school, a leisure centre, medical centre and industrial park.



Figure 1: Location Plan

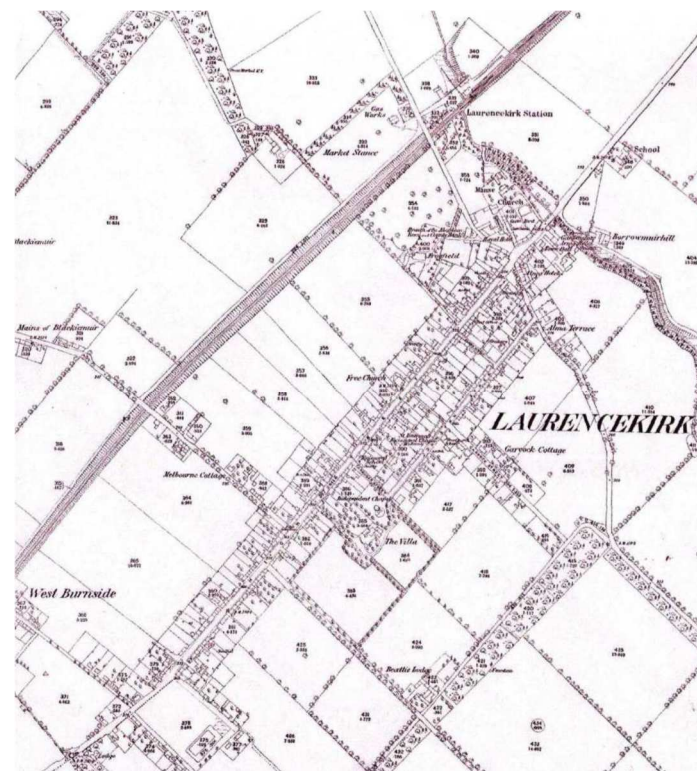


Figure 2: Laurencekirk 1863

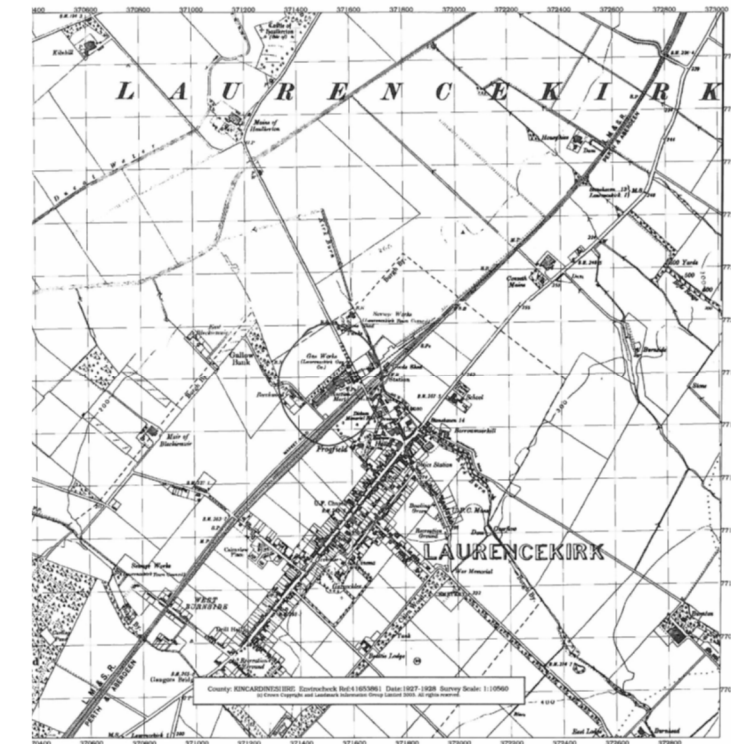


Figure 3: Laurencekirk 1927



Figure 4: Aerial Laurencekirk

## 1.2 Site Description

The Masterplan Area (Figure 5) is situated on the north-eastern periphery of Laurencekirk which is currently used as agricultural land. It extends to approximately 32 hectares (79.1 acres) and in terms of the wider Development Framework area, it lies to the north west.

The Masterplan site is bound to the west by existing mature trees and a timber post and wire fence. To the north the site has no boundary treatment as the site cuts through an existing field, with a burn lying to the western edge. To the east, the Masterplan area is bound by an existing field boundary which is lined by existing planting. To the south the site is bound by the railway line and existing industrial buildings.

In terms of surrounding built development, to the south west of the site lies the Haulkerton housing development, consisting of a range of dwellings, including detached bungalows and two storey properties. They are rendered white, with red brick detailing. The density of this area is around 14 dwellings per hectare.

To the south lie a mix of both residential and industrial buildings, including a grain store immediately adjacent to the railway line. Residential dwellings also range from detached, modern chalet style bungalows to older, and a more traditional 1 1/2 storey red brick detached building.

## 1.3 Site Ownership and Control

The Masterplan area is in various ownerships, with developer involvement by Kirkwood Homes Ltd and A&J Stephen Ltd. The separate land ownerships are shown in Figures 6 and 7.

Kirkwood Homes currently control approximately 18.4 ha, with A&J Stephen controlling 11.7 hectares within the Masterplan area.

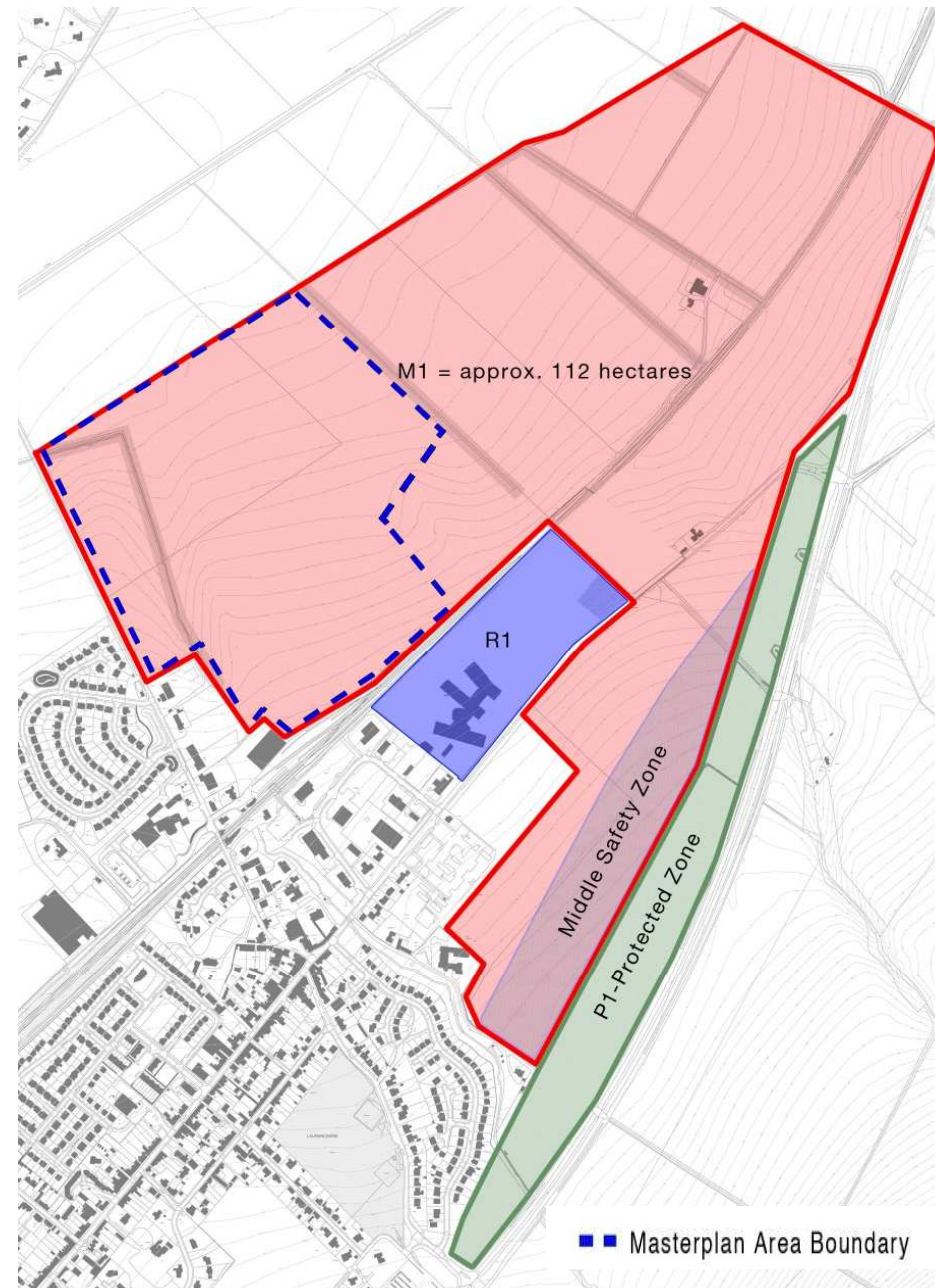


Figure 5: Masterplan Area



Figure 6: Kirkwood Land Ownership Plan



Figure 7: A&J Stephen Land Ownership Plan

#### 1.4 Vision

This Masterplan comprises the first phase of development of a wider Development Framework Area which delivers a mixed use development comprising 885 houses, 11 hectares of employment land and 16 hectares of strategic reserve employment land.

The Laurencekirk Development Framework considered the main issues associated with the site, namely, land uses, infrastructure requirements and phasing.

The Masterplan considers the development of the site in more detail. The aim of the Masterplan is to ensure that development is designed to the highest standard, taking account of specific opportunities and constraints in the area, as well as other factors.

It will provide a vision for the development of the site, analysis and appraisal of the wider area, details of design and layout and procedural requirements. It will be used to inform future planning applications for the site.

The Masterplan sets out how roads, drainage infrastructure and open space will be provided to create a high quality, well planned context for residential development, comprising 471 dwellings to be constructed in a series of phases over the next 7-10 years.

The Masterplan will achieve the following:

- A high quality first phase of expansion (s.5.4)
- The safeguarding and enhancement of watercourses in the area which will integrate with the residential environment, while enhancing biodiversity on the site (s.5.1)
- Creation of meaningful open spaces which will link areas of housing and community facilities (s.5.1)
- Delivery of a range of house types, including affordable housing that will meet a variety of housing needs and market demands (s5.3 and 5.4)
- Integration of the site with the wider community, providing links from the site to the wider area (s5.2 and 5.4)
- Provision of a first phase distributor road which will provide access to the development (s5.2)

#### 1.5 Land Uses

The Masterplan for the site proposes the following mix of land uses:

Housing - 18.92 ha (59%)

Affordable Housing - 25% of the housing allocation

Employment Land - 11 ha (outwith the 32ha Masterplan area)

Open Space/Community Facilities - 12.8 ha (40%)

Drainage - 0.4 hectares (1%)

#### 1.6 Masterplanning Process

This Masterplan has been written in accordance with Planning Advice Note 83: Masterplanning, together with the Council's Local Development Plan, Supplementary Guidance and Planning Advice as detailed in Section 2.

The aim of the Masterplan process is to ensure that the community of Laurencekirk are genuinely engaged in the planning process. The design of the site has evolved through the consultation process, which initially began when the site was promoted through the Local Development Plan process, commencing in 2008.

A Proposal of Application Notice was submitted on 14 November 2012 for the entire M1 site. Aberdeenshire Council confirmed on 22 November 2012 that the consultation proposed was acceptable.

An informal Masterplan meeting was held with Aberdeenshire Council in February 2013 which discussed the requirements of the Masterplan document.

Consultation on the Development Framework, Masterplan and first phase planning application has been ongoing throughout 2012 and 2013. Further details are provided in the Consultation section. This has included the local community, Local Councillors, MSP's, and local groups.

Opportunities for stakeholder involvement will continue throughout the planning application process. It is important that the local community are confident that they have helped shape their local environment and continued public involvement will achieve that.

# 2. CONTEXT

This Masterplan interprets guidance from a wide variety of sources.

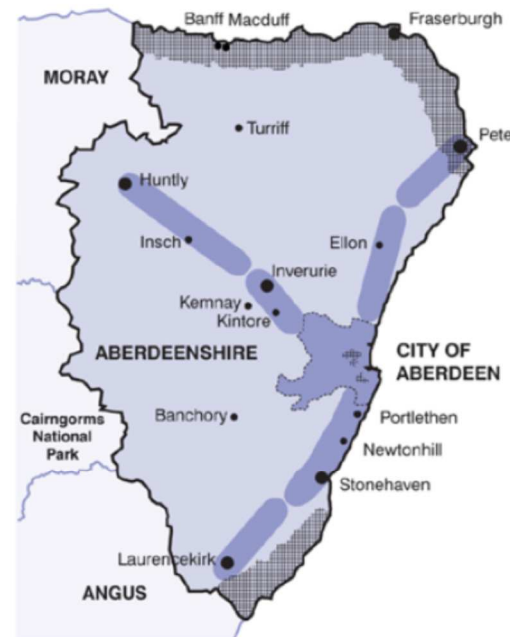
## 2.1 Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)

Scottish Planning Policy is Scotland's national land use policy statement and provides high level development guidance. Designing Streets (March 2010) and Designing Places (June 2010) also provides specific policy in relation to place making.

## 2.2 Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan

The Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan was approved by Scottish Ministers in August 2009. That plan identified Laurencekirk within a Strategic Growth Area within the Drumlithie to Laurencekirk area and allocated 1,000 houses to the area for development in the period between 2007 and 2030.

In terms of employment land, in the Huntly to Laurencekirk Strategic Growth Area, a minimum of 40 hectares of land is required at all times, with 105 hectares of new land allocations between 2007 and 2023. A further 70 hectares of strategic reserve land is required between 2024 and 2030.



KEY	
	Structure Plan Area
	Strategic Growth Areas
	Local Growth & Diversification Areas
	Regeneration Priority Areas
	Aberdeen City Boundary

Figure 8: Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan extract

## 2.3 Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan

The Masterplan area lies within a larger site which was promoted through the Local Development Plan process and has now been identified in the adopted Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan (2012) as site M1 for 885 houses, 11 hectares of employment land and 16 hectares of strategic reserve employment land. The LDP identifies the requirement for a Development Framework and Masterplan for the site.

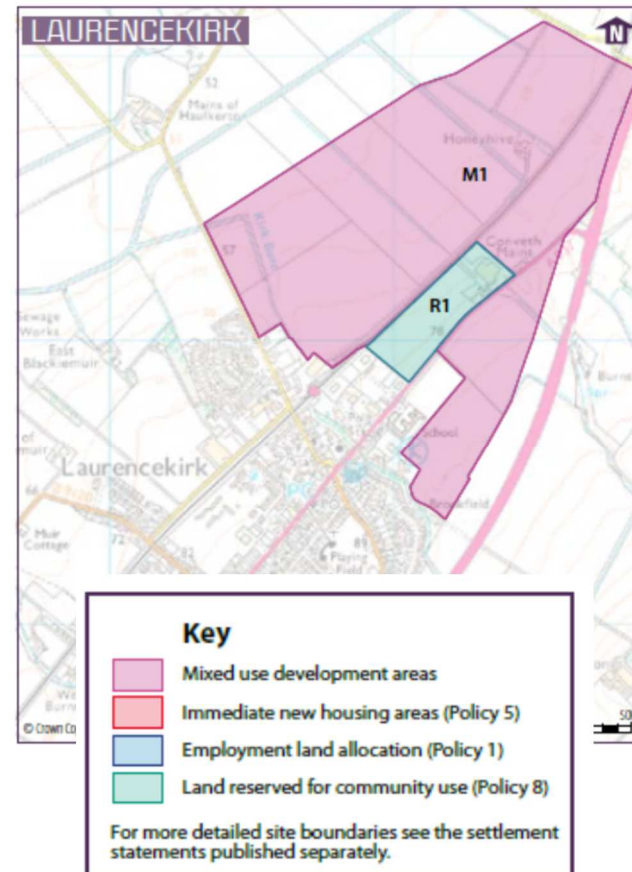


Figure 9: Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan extract

## 2.4 Proposed Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan

The Proposed Strategic Development Plan, published in February 2013, maintains the spatial strategy of the Structure Plan and therefore continues to identify Laurencekirk as a Strategic Growth Area.

The housing land allocations are unchanged, with 1,000 houses identified up to 2035. This includes 500 existing allocations to 2016; 400 houses between 2017 and 2026 and a further 100 houses between 2027 and 2035. In terms of employment land, the requirements are unchanged from the Structure Plan.

## 2.5 Supplementary Guidance

Aberdeenshire Council have produced a range of Supplementary Guidance as part of their Local Development Plan. The Masterplan will consider the following guidance:

- Affordable Housing 1: Affordable Housing
- LSD1: Masterplanning
- LSD2: Layout, siting and design of new development
- LSD5: Public open space
- LSD6: Public Access
- LSD7: Community Facilities
- LSD8: Flooding and Erosion
- LSD11: Carbon Neutrality in New Development
- Developer Contributions 1: Developer Contributions
- Developer Contributions 2: Access to New Development
- Developer Contributions 3: Water and Waste Water Drainage Infrastructure
- Developer Contributions 4: Waste management requirements for new development
- Natural Environment 2: Protection of the wider biodiversity and geodiversity
- Landscape 1: Landscape character
- Safeguarding 1: Protection and conservation of the water environment

## 2.6 Planning Advice

As well as Supplementary Guidance, this Masterplan will consider Planning Advice prepared by Aberdeenshire Council, including:

- 2/2011: Buffer Strip Guidance
- 1/2012: Opportunities for biodiversity enhancement in new development
- 6/2012: Implementation of Policy SGLDS2
- 7/2012: Implementation of Policy SG LSD1
- 8/2012: Aberdeenshire Settlement Characterisation Reports
- Outdoor Access and Development

# 3. SITE ANALYSIS AND APPRAISAL

## Introduction

A range of analysis has been carried out during the Masterplanning process. As the Masterplan and Development Framework are closely related, this analysis also takes account of the wider area. The development of the site and layout, which is considered in Section 5 is informed by this analysis,

## 3.1 Climate

The mesoclimate of the area can be summarised as follows:

- Mild summer temperatures and colder winters due to elevation, 96 metres (300ft) and distance from the coast 8km (5 miles).
- Relatively dry climate, sheltered by the hills to the west, but liable to snow and frost through the winter months.
- Prevailing wind is from the south-west as shown in Figure 10 with few physical features to provide shelter. Also, little physical protection from northerly winds.
- Good average hours of sunshine figures helped by the distance from the coast thus reducing the prevalence of haar. Freezing mist prevalent in winter months.
- Opportunities for passive solar gain from south facing properties

## 3.2 Local Landscape Characteristics

Aberdeenshire Council's Landscape Character Assessment (1998), identifies Laurencekirk in the Howe of the Mearns area. It is almost uniformly flat and is characterised by its intensive agricultural area and corridor for road and rail links.

The distinctive character of the area derives from its large pattern of fields, crops and woods. While it is obscured from low level views it can be seen from elevated positions such as the Garvock hills to the south.

The current land use of the Masterplan area is agricultural land with very few physical features or landscape character. There is little tree cover other than along some field boundaries. Laurencekirk effectively sits within a valley between the Cairn O' Mount and the Hills of Garvock.

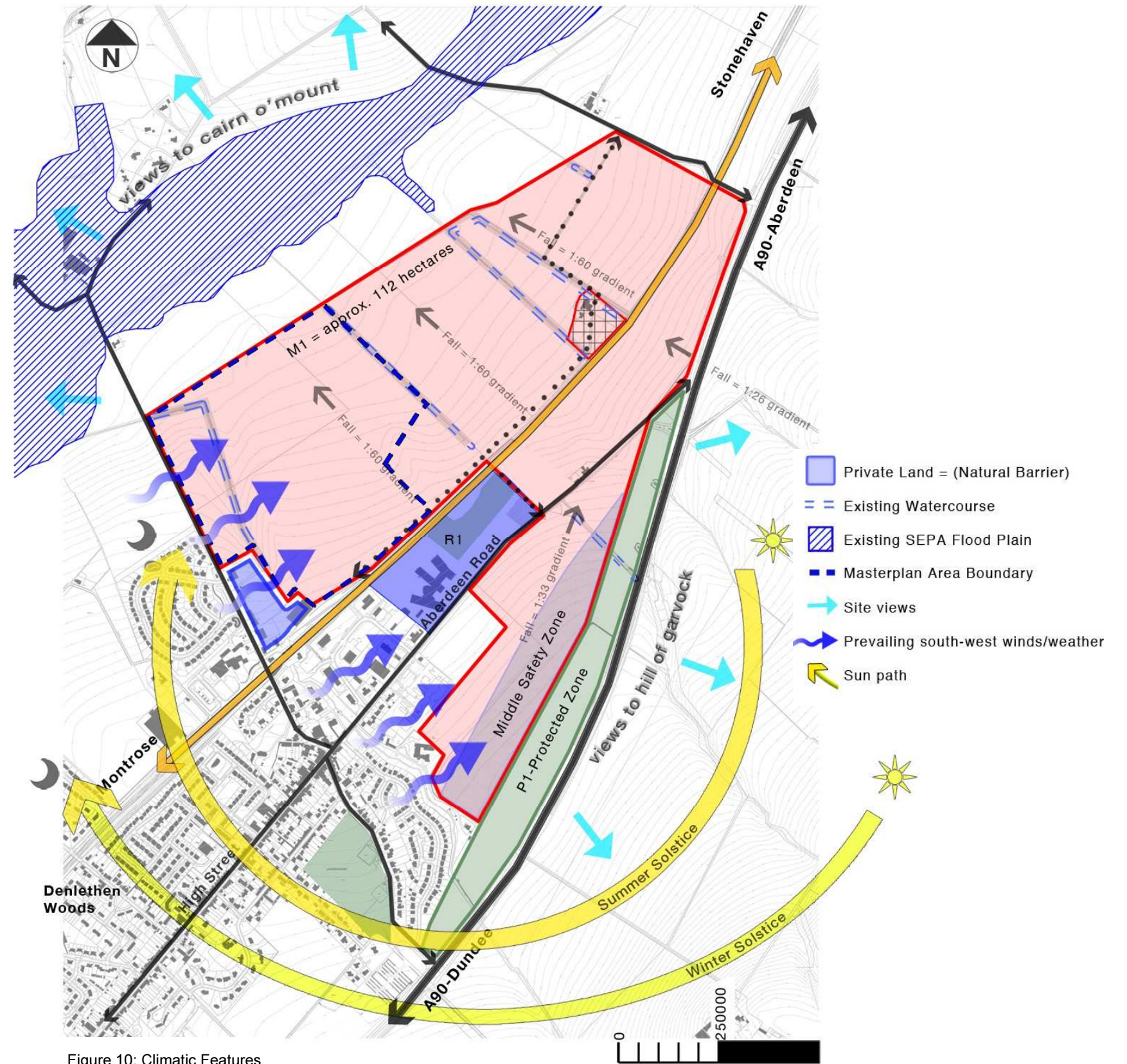


Figure 10: Climatic Features

## Topography

This area of Aberdeenshire, the Howe of the Mearns, is characterised by the rich red soils derived from the underlying Old Red Sandstone. The glacio-fluvial outwash has created one of the flattest and most fertile of all agricultural heartland areas of Aberdeenshire.

This lack of relief is accentuated even further by the steep moorland slopes rising up in the north west denoting the line of the Highland Boundary Fault. Similarly, the Garvock Hills to the east provide further physical restraint to the broad flat plain that makes up the Howe of the Mearns.

The surrounding higher land offers spectacular views out across the historic landscape in almost every direction. From the east, the ground falls steeply off the Garvock Hills to the A90 trunk road and the boundary of the wider Development Framework area. This slope westwards becomes somewhat more gentle as it falls towards the railway line. Thereafter, the site gradient eases from 1 in 20 to 1 in 80 from east to west.

Within this overall landform pattern, four significant watercourses have carved out steep gullies that drain westwards to the Luther Water. In terms of landform, these will have an impact on development and its layout.

The Slope Analysis Diagram in Figure 11, which is added to the site in Figure 12, illustrates the pattern and distribution of the landform as this affects the potential land uses. In developing the Masterplan for the site, the following approach has been adopted:

- Minimise the need for cut and fill by working with the opportunities presented by the contours
- Enhance the character of the development by retaining the shape of the landform
- Maximise solar gain by focusing on south facing land

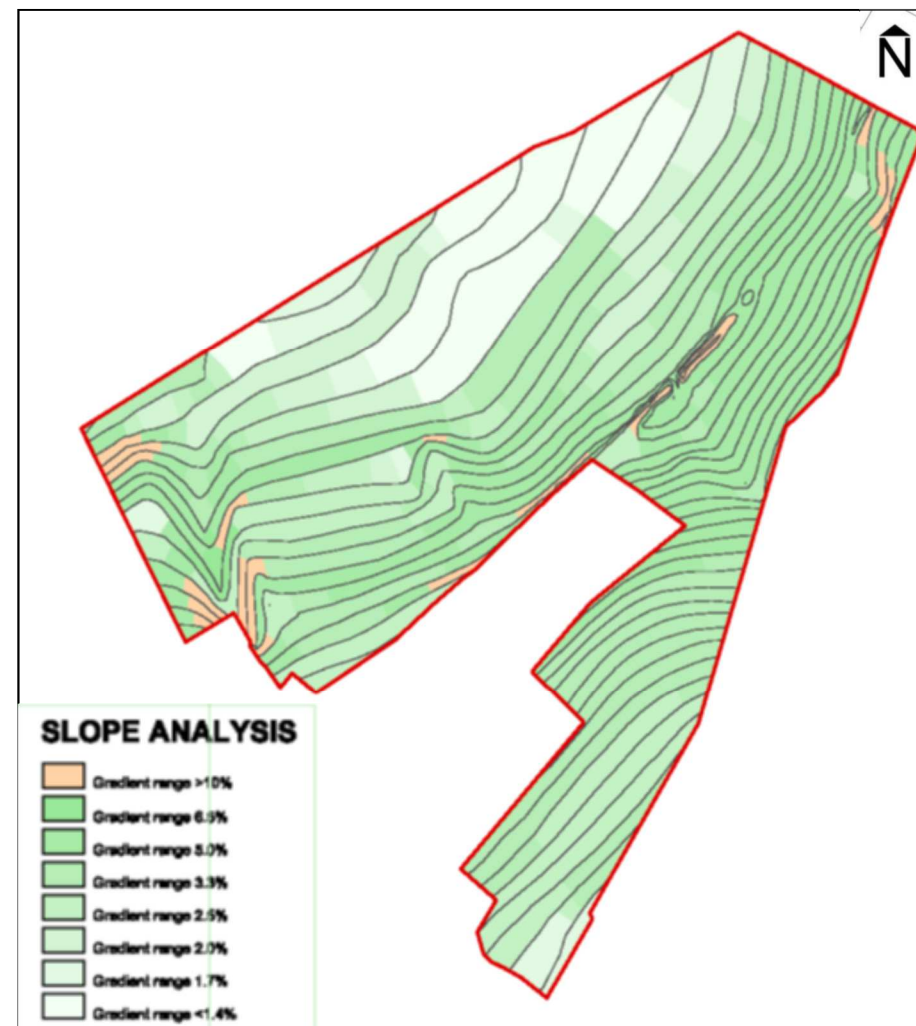


Figure 11: Slope Analysis



Figure 12: Topography on Aerial Plan



## Landscape and Visual Assessment

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been carried out for the site. The area is defined as being uniformly flat land contained by hills to the east and west, an ideal transport and infrastructure corridor for the A90 trunk road, main north/south railway line and major oil and gas pipelines.

Figure 13 demonstrates that much of the character of the site derives from the large mosaic pattern of agricultural fields. Whilst this distinctive tapestry is obscured from most low level viewpoints available in such flat terrain, it can be enjoyed from elevated locations such as the moorland ridge to the north and west or the Garvock Hills to the south and east.



Figure 13: Photograph Viewpoints



Figure 14 identifies significant views to and from the site. These include views to Cairn O' Mount to the north and the Hill of Garvock to the south.

Given the agricultural nature of the site, there are no woodlands and few pockets of trees and areas of shelter belts within the site. The few trees that do exist are located along some site boundaries, and there are some low level shrubs along the edges of the watercourses within the site and along field boundaries. Boundaries are enclosed by post and wire fences. None of the trees on the site are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

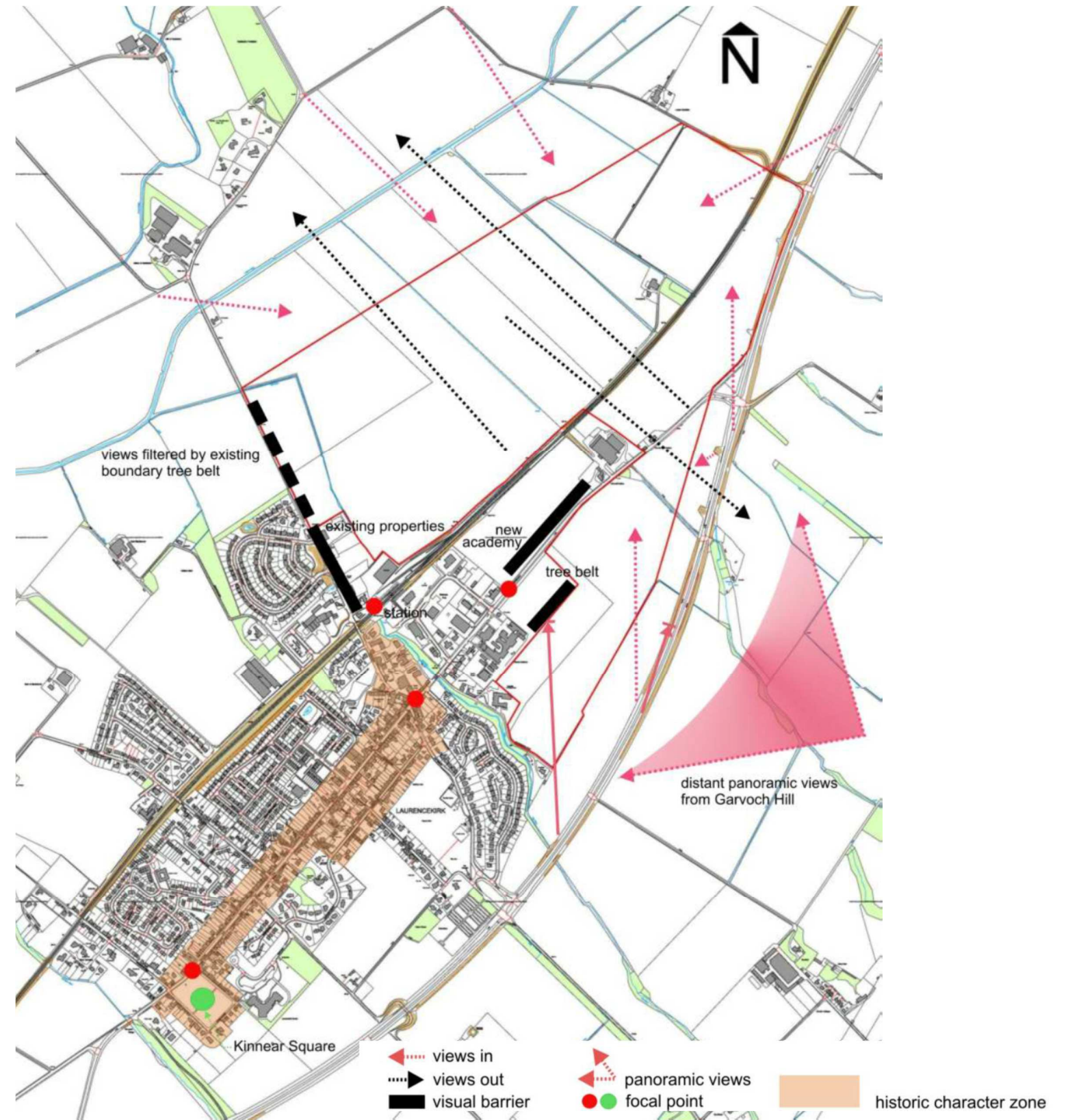


Figure 14: Visual Appraisal

### 3.3 Ecology

The site is currently in agricultural use with the land classified for arable/horticulture use, as demonstrated by Figure 15.

Due to its rich soils, the Howe of the Mearns area is extensively and intensively used for both agriculture and horticulture, growing cereals, bulb flowers and softfruit of national repute. As a result, the land only has minimal biodiversity.

Within the Masterplan area, there are a number of existing hedgerows, some incorporating mature trees along Fordoun Road. As can be seen on the Forest Inventory map in Figure 16, even outwith the site, there is very little natural or semi natural woodland in existence. On the lower slopes of the Garvock Hills some of the burns have vegetated banks such as the Kirk Burn which continues on into the masterplan area and past the railway.

Figure 17 identifies that there are no areas of woodland within the Masterplan or Development Framework area. The only example of long established woodland is just north of Mains of Haukerton.

The only notable features in the wider area are a number of water courses which traverse the site, draining westwards towards the Luther Water. The location of these are identified in Figure 10 on page 7. Only one of these lies within the Masterplan area to the north west.

A biodiversity check has concluded that the watercourses are not of great significance. However, with little or no naturally regenerating areas and no particular combinations of neutral grassland, hedges, shrubs or trees, these existing watercourses take on a greater importance as potential wildlife corridors.

These will be enhanced to provide pedestrian and wildlife corridors, which will increase biodiversity on the site. The watercourses are therefore seen as a positive aspect on which to build the layout of the Masterplan area around. This will be discussed in more detail in Section 5.

There are no designated sites within the Masterplan area. NESBReC data as identified in Figure 17 identifies that there is a Wych Elm located to the west of the Masterplan area. The Kirk Burn represents the nearest location for any sightings of designated species, namely the Red Squirrel., however, no evidence is found within the Masterplan area.

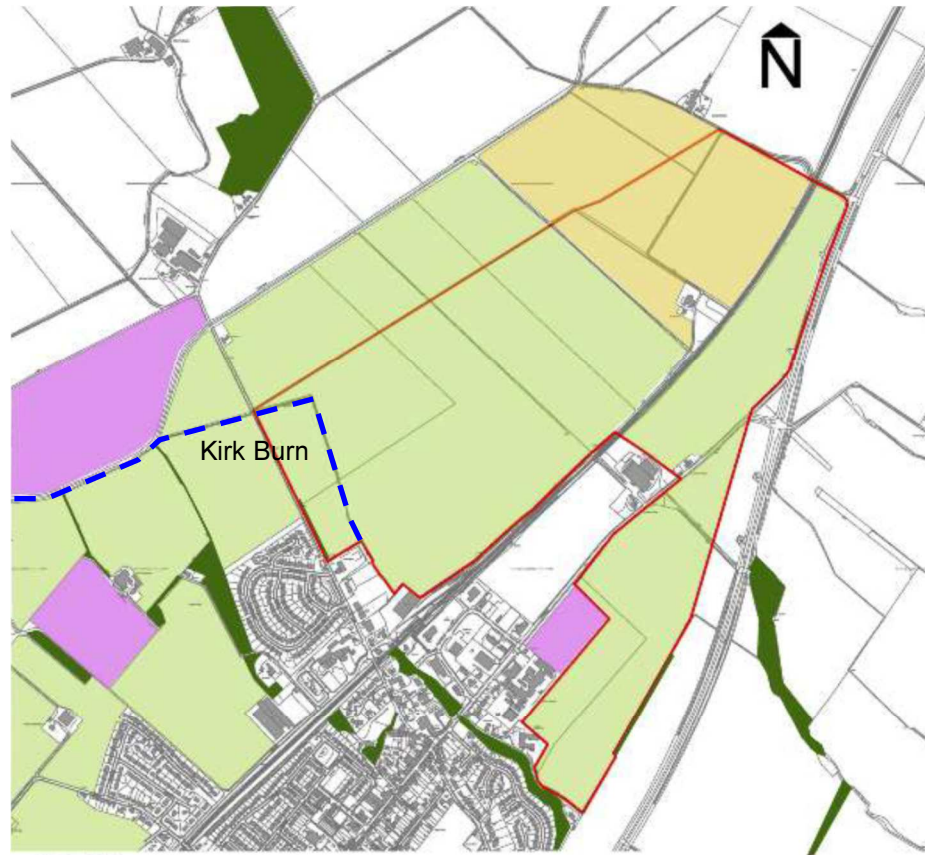


Figure 15: Land Classification Map

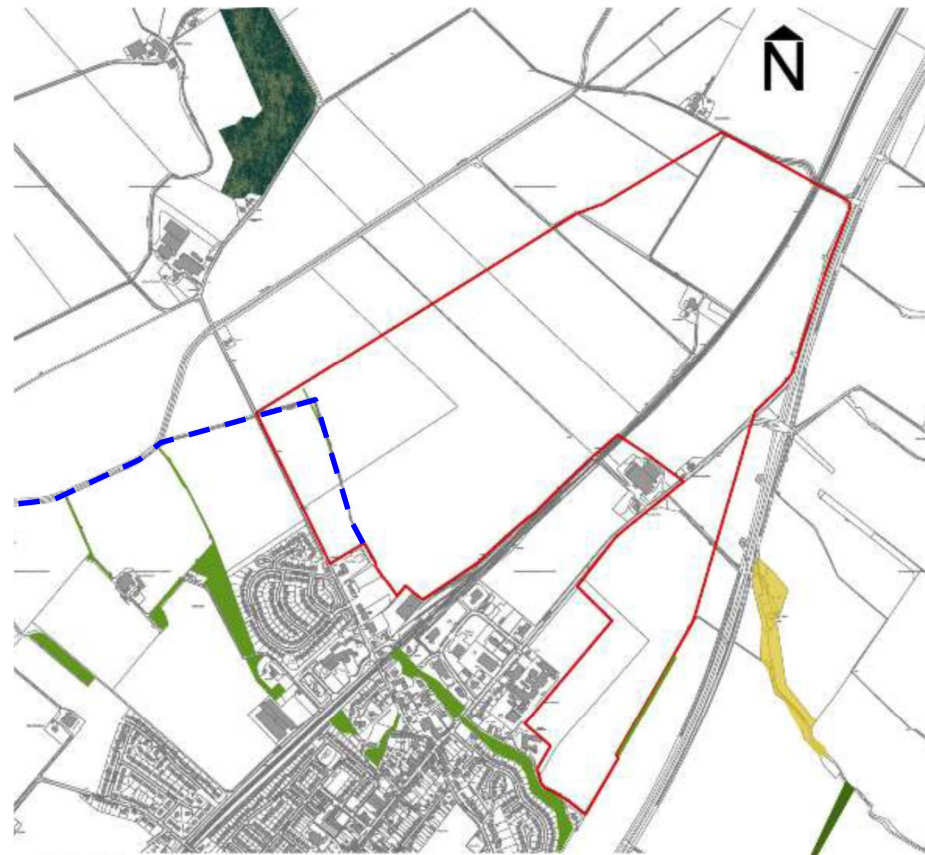


Figure 16: National Forest Inventory Map

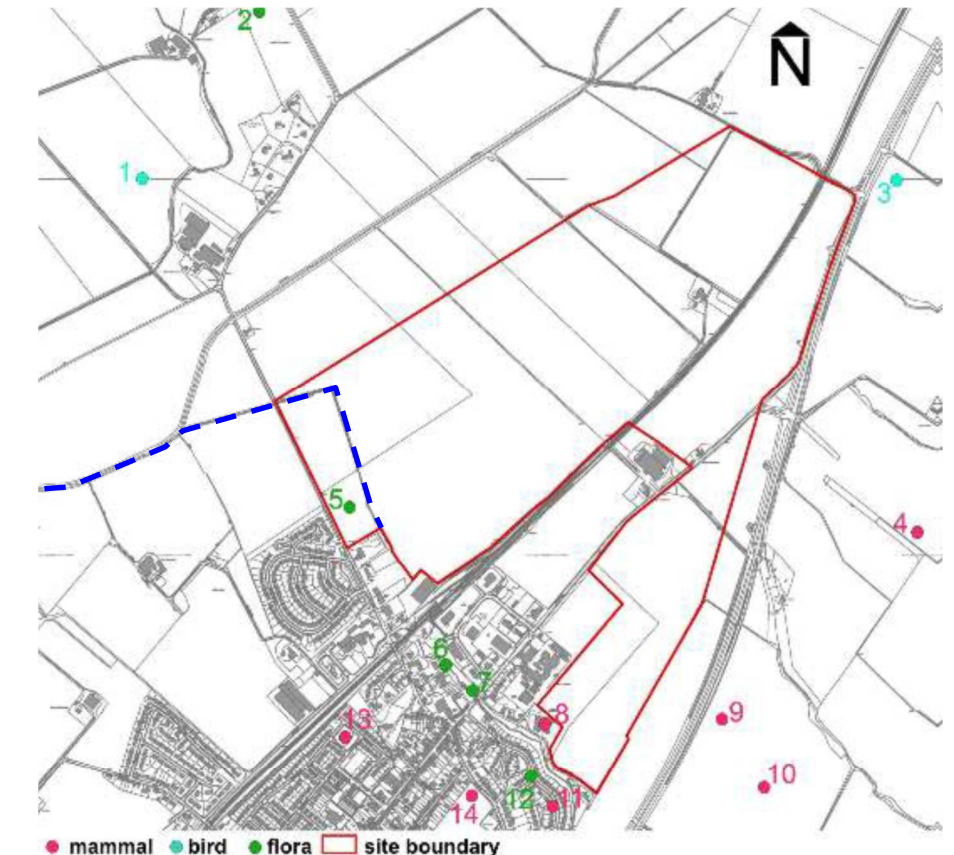


Figure 17: Designated Species Map

### Existing Open Space in Laurencekirk

There is a range of open spaces in Laurencekirk, including public parks at Garvock Road, Kinneare Square and behind Provost Robson Drive, as well as open space associated with the Primary and Secondary Schools. A cemetery lies to the south, adjacent to the A90 and amenity areas lie around the business park and council depot. Semi natural areas line Beechwood Road behind the Haulkerton residential development and there are a number of green corridors in the area.

Gaugers Burn and Kirk Burn run north west to southeast at either end of the village. A path along Gaugers Burn connects the old road at the southern end of Laurencekirk to Denlethen Woods. The woods, managed by the Forestry Commission, provide a focus for informal access in the area. Section 5 considers a hierarchy of open space within the new development to complement the existing network.

### 3.4 History and Archaeology

The general landform of the Howe of Mearns has dictated the linear nature in the growth of Laurencekirk. This was then accentuated by the laying down of the streets. The linear nature of the street was however broken up and given great diversity in its built form by varying building height, building line and by introducing marker buildings regularly along the length of the High Street. These are still important landmarks along such a straight road and take the form of churches, civic buildings, banks or inns.

As the main thoroughfare of the village, there are numerous connections on to the High Street. These include lanes, courtyards and particularly the public open space of Kinneare Square. This is an important arrival point into the village from the south and from an urban design point of view, is a microcosm of so many design features of the village.

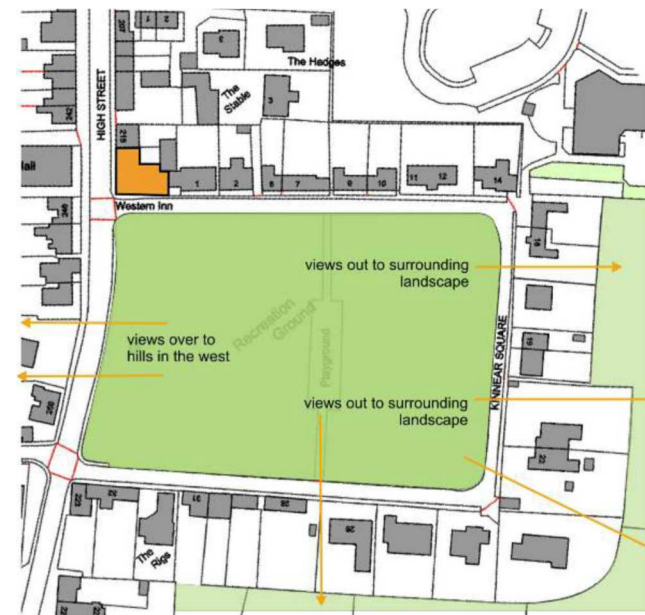
Kinneare Square is the main, formal green space in the village and was laid out as part of the original planned village. Open on its western boundary to High Street, the square is otherwise enclosed by a mixture of buildings, primarily housing.

There is a marker building on the visually prominent north-west corner, a fine red sandstone building, formerly the Western Inn. The northern elevation of tightly abutted buildings is articulated by varying the building heights to create a lively and interesting roofline. This terminates at the eastern corner with another large 2 storey property.

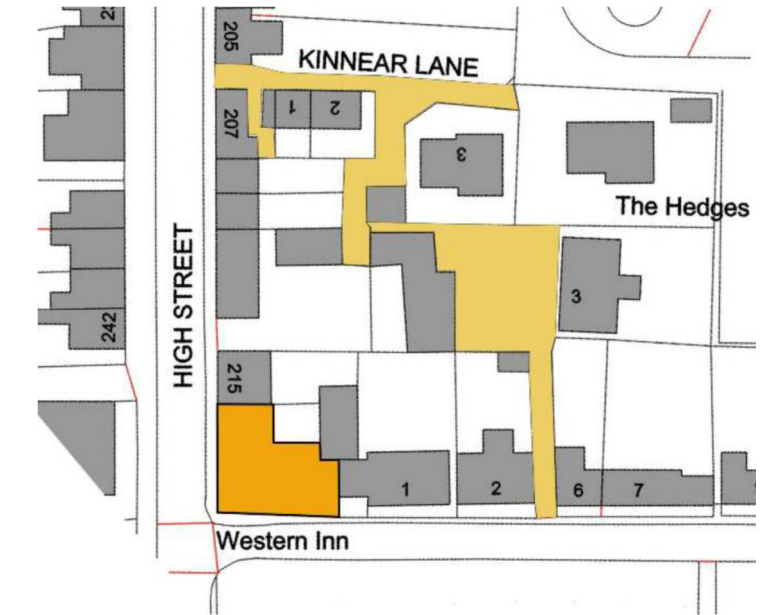
Within this tight fit of houses there are lanes and courtyards providing sheltered access to other properties and affording good permeability for pedestrians. In contrast, the properties along the eastern and southern boundaries are less densely grouped affording views out from the square to surrounding fields and the landscape beyond.



Kinneare Square



Kinneare Square



Lanes and Courtyards



Street Elevations

There are no listed buildings or Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the Masterplan area. However, there is currently one known archaeological site lying partly within the masterplan boundary at NO77 SW0028. This comprises a circular enclosure of possible prehistoric date but the absence of visible surface remains negates the need to acknowledge the site within the overall design. Any planning application for development of the site will require to be accompanied by an archaeological evaluation of 7-10%. There is one Scottish Sites and Monuments Record, within the wider site. Honeyhive, a farmstead still in use that is depicted on the 1867 1st edition OS map lies to the north east of the site as shown in Figure 18. This is however, under separate ownership and will not form part of the proposals.

In terms of the wider context, Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Advice 8/2012 provides Settlement Characterisation Reports. It highlights that Laurencekirk has a number of landmarks, including the church hall, which has a prominent spire and clock tower; the war memorial in Garvock Street playing fields; and, the pavilion in Kinnear Park to the south west.

Red sandstone properties are predominant within the historic part of the settlement along the High Street, with some roughcast finish. 1 1/2 storey cottages fronting directly onto the street with set back dormers are common. To the north of the High Street, larger 3 storey hotels and banks exist with greater architectural detail.

There are also detached red sandstone town houses with bay windows and splay dormers to the South East, with gardens enclosed by stone walls. Dormers are characteristic and are commonly set back but flush.

Either side of the High Street, modern housing developments in cul-de-sacs and curving roads have been built. Modern houses are simple in style and vary from semi-detached council housing, detached bungalows and 2 storey houses, 1 1/2 storey cottages, which are dark brown or dark grey in colour.

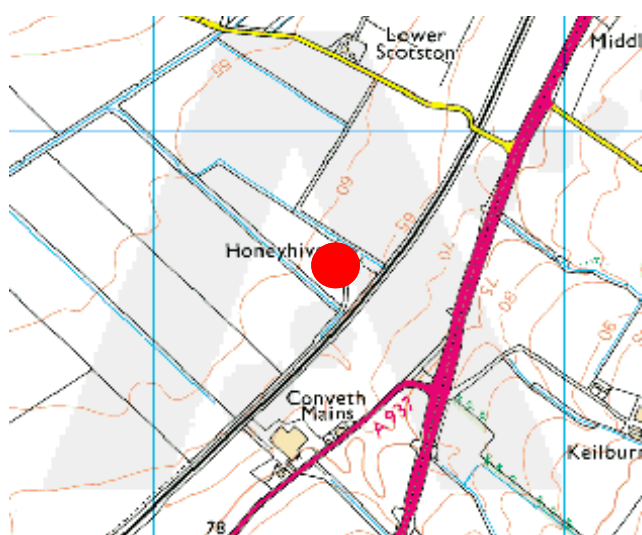


Figure 18: Scottish Sites and Monuments Record—Honeyhive

### 3.5 Drainage and Water Supply

#### Flood Risk

There are a number of watercourses in the vicinity of the site. The Luther Water runs in south-westerly direction to the north-east of the site. A number of minor tributaries of the Luther Water originate in higher ground to the south-east and run in a north-westerly direction across the site.

SEPA's Indicative River and Coastal Flood Map shows an area of flood risk outwith the site to the north west associated with the flood plain of the Luther Water as demonstrated in Figure 19. This flood plain has been taken into consideration in the preparation of the Masterplan. The north-west boundary of the site is set back from the watercourse such that the area of flood risk is not shown to affect the site. The minor tributaries have catchment areas that are too small to be considered in the SEPA map.

Flood Risk to the site, including risk from the minor tributaries and other potential sources of flooding, including run-off from adjoining land, will be addressed in a full Flood Risk Assessment to be submitted with any planning application. Flooding issues associated with the Luther Water to the north-west was highlighted during the public consultation process. This will be taken into account in the Flood Risk Assessment.

The development provides the opportunity to enhance the existing watercourses and fully incorporate them within the development layout as part of the network of Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDs) and core public spaces and re-naturalise them for the benefit of biodiversity.

Informal open space will be provided on minor watercourse corridors, which will address the risk of flooding to new development. This will also provide recreational and biodiversity opportunities which will benefit the local community. This is in line with the Council's Planning Advice 2/2011: Buffer Strip Guidance.

#### Drainage

Ground conditions are typical of the Mearns area, clayey loam on red clay sub-soil resting on old sandstone. A Drainage Impact Assessment will consider these conditions and provide drainage solutions for the site.

As a greenfield site, there is currently no existing drainage infrastructure within the Masterplan area. Connections are anticipated as being available on the main routes leading to the site on Fordoun Road and Aberdeen Road terminating at the existing urban edges.

As part of any planning application for development on the site, Drainage and Water Impact Assessments will be carried out in order to assess the existing capacity within the local networks. These assessments will feed into the detailed design of a drainage network for the site and identify requirements for potential off-site infrastructure upgrades.

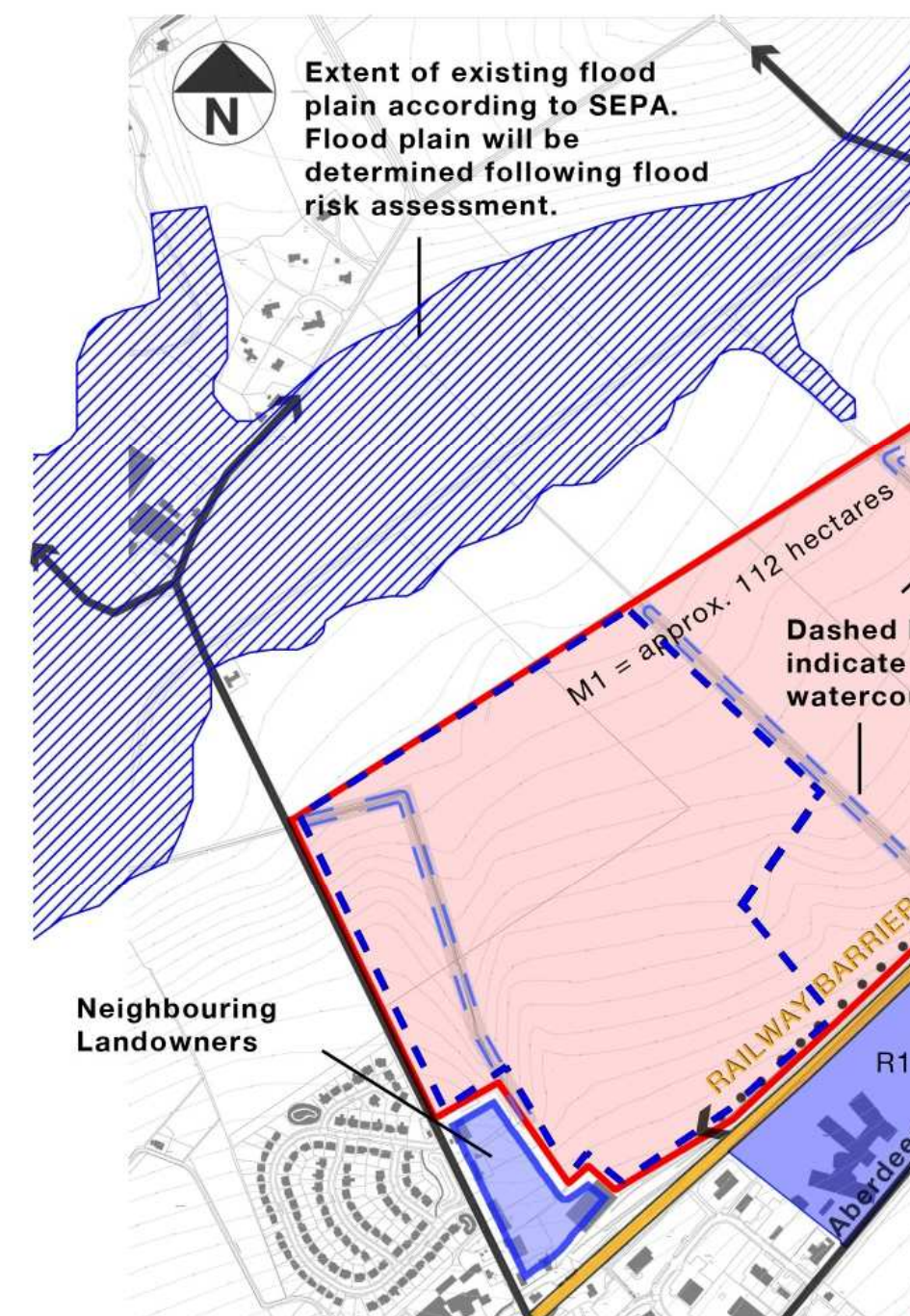


Figure 19: SEPA Map and watercourses in relation to Masterplan

- — Existing Watercourse
- ▨ Existing SEPA Flood Plain
- ■ Masterplan Area Boundary

### 3.6 Services and Linkages

Laurencekirk benefits from a range of facilities including the following:

- Police station
- Post office
- Library
- Health centre
- Day care facilities
- Pre-school and after school facilities
- Community centre
- Youth drop in centre
- Churches
- Public parks
- Memorial park with bowling green and skateboard park
- Denlthen Woods
- Re-cycling centre
- Primary School
- Secondary School
- Railway station

The location of those closest to the Masterplan area are plotted in Figure 20. The existing train station and the recycling centre are the closest two specialist facilities on the Masterplan side of the railway barrier. A replacement Mearns Academy is currently under construction on the west side of Aberdeen Road, shaded blue in Figure 20. The initial capacity will be for 640 pupils but with potential future expansion to a maximum of 840 pupils. Additional community facilities, including a library, as well as sports facilities will be available to the whole community as part of the new school.

Links to these routes are via existing footpaths along existing local road networks. New linkages will be considered as part of the Masterplan process and are identified in Section 5.

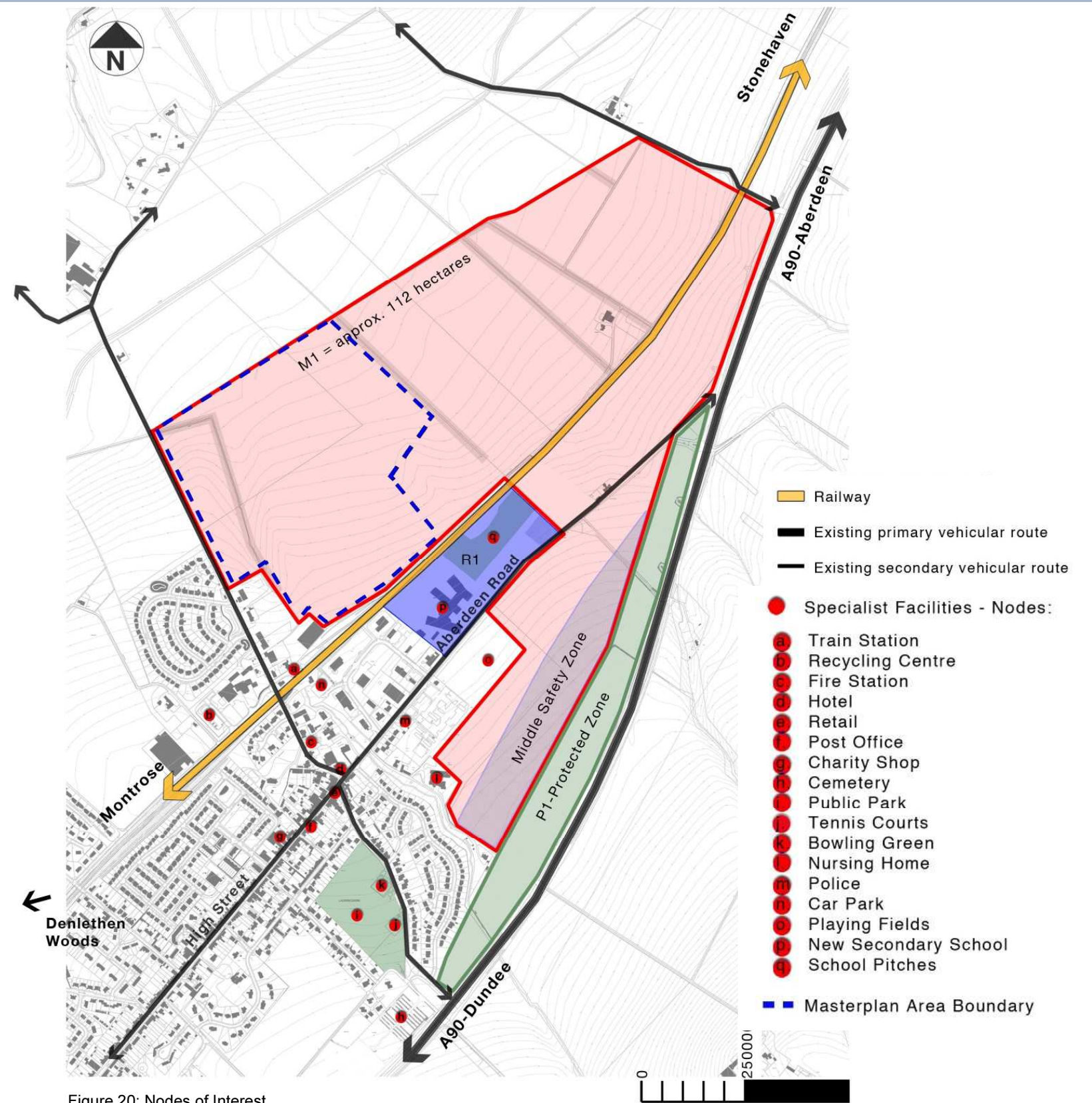


Figure 20: Nodes of Interest

Laurencekirk is served by a range of bus services, operated by MW Nicoll Coaches Ltd. These include the following:

- No. 8 & 9: Laurencekirk to Montrose, which operates daily
- No. 102: Stonehaven to Laurencekirk, which operates on a Friday only
- No. 103: Aberdeen to Laurencekirk, which operates Monday to Saturday
- No. 24: Stonehaven to Brechin, which operates Monday to Saturday
- No. 29 & 29A: Brechin to Laurencekirk, which operates Monday to Saturday

The route of these services is plotted on Figure 22 which also identifies the location of existing bus stops on the High Street in Laurencekirk. It is proposed that a footpath through the site will link the Masterplan area with the public transport provision in Laurencekirk.

Laurencekirk railway station was re-opened in May 2009. It is located within close proximity of the Masterplan area as shown on Figure 20 on page 14. It is an unstaffed station, but benefits from self service ticket machines, car parking and cycle storage and CCTV. Trains run daily, with approximately 10 northbound trains to Stonehaven, Portlethen, Aberdeen, Dyce, Inverurie, Inch and Huntly and 9 southbound trains to Dundee and beyond to Glasgow and Edinburgh Monday to Saturday, with a reduced service on a Sunday.

Given the proximity of the station to the development area the scope for direct pedestrian linkages, particularly with the site to the north, should be explored through the planning application process.

### Core Paths

There are no core paths crossing the Masterplan site, however, Figure 21 below identifies the location of core paths in the area. These are concentrated to the south of Laurencekirk. Linkages will be provided from the site to the network of on road links which will connect to existing routes. This is considered in more detail in Section 5.

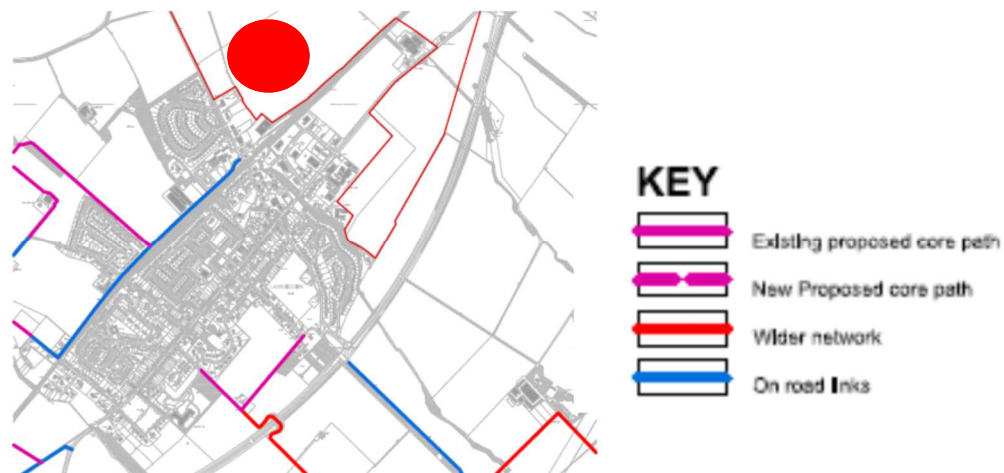


Figure 21: Core Paths Plan

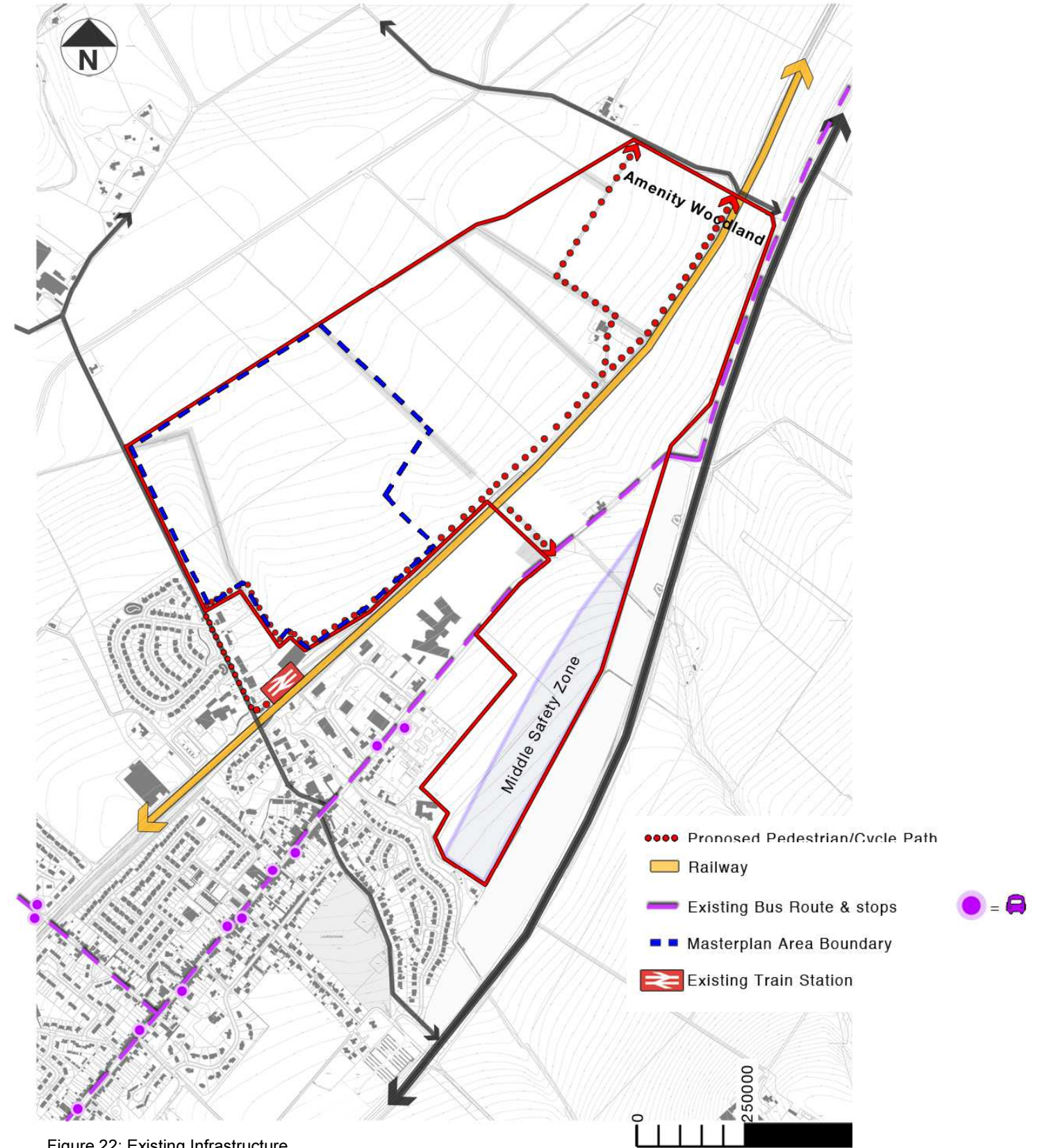


Figure 22: Existing Infrastructure

### Cycle Networks

Fordoun Road forms part of a cycle route and is designated by Sustrans as the 'Laurencekirk to Fettercairn Circular' which is a lightly trafficked route recommended for cycling. The route combines with Laurencekirk High Street and the B9120 to link Laurencekirk with Fettercairn. National Cycle Network Route 1, which follows the coast between Dundee and Aberdeen, is located approximately 9km to the east of the site.

### 3.7 Constraints and Opportunities

The Masterplan area is generally constrained by the following issues which are plotted in Figure 23 below:

- The main east coast railway line which effectively bisects the Masterplan Area. This will be given due consideration in the design and layout of the development.
- The capacity of existing infrastructure, including the road network and schools which will influence the capacity of the first phase of development.
- Private land in the form of neighbouring landowners will affect the layout of the first phase of development.

There is a watercourse within the Masterplan site to the far west as shown on Figure 23. A Flood Risk Assessment will require to be submitted with any planning application(s) for the site. This is not considered to constrain the site, but provides an opportunity to incorporate it into the design and layout to create attractive features which will contribute to a high quality residential environment.

Noise from the adjacent railway line has been taken into consideration and a buffer strip provided between the railway and housing areas to minimise the impacts of passing trains. A Noise Impact Assessment will require to accompany any applications for residential development adjoining the railway. This is considered in more detail in Section 5.

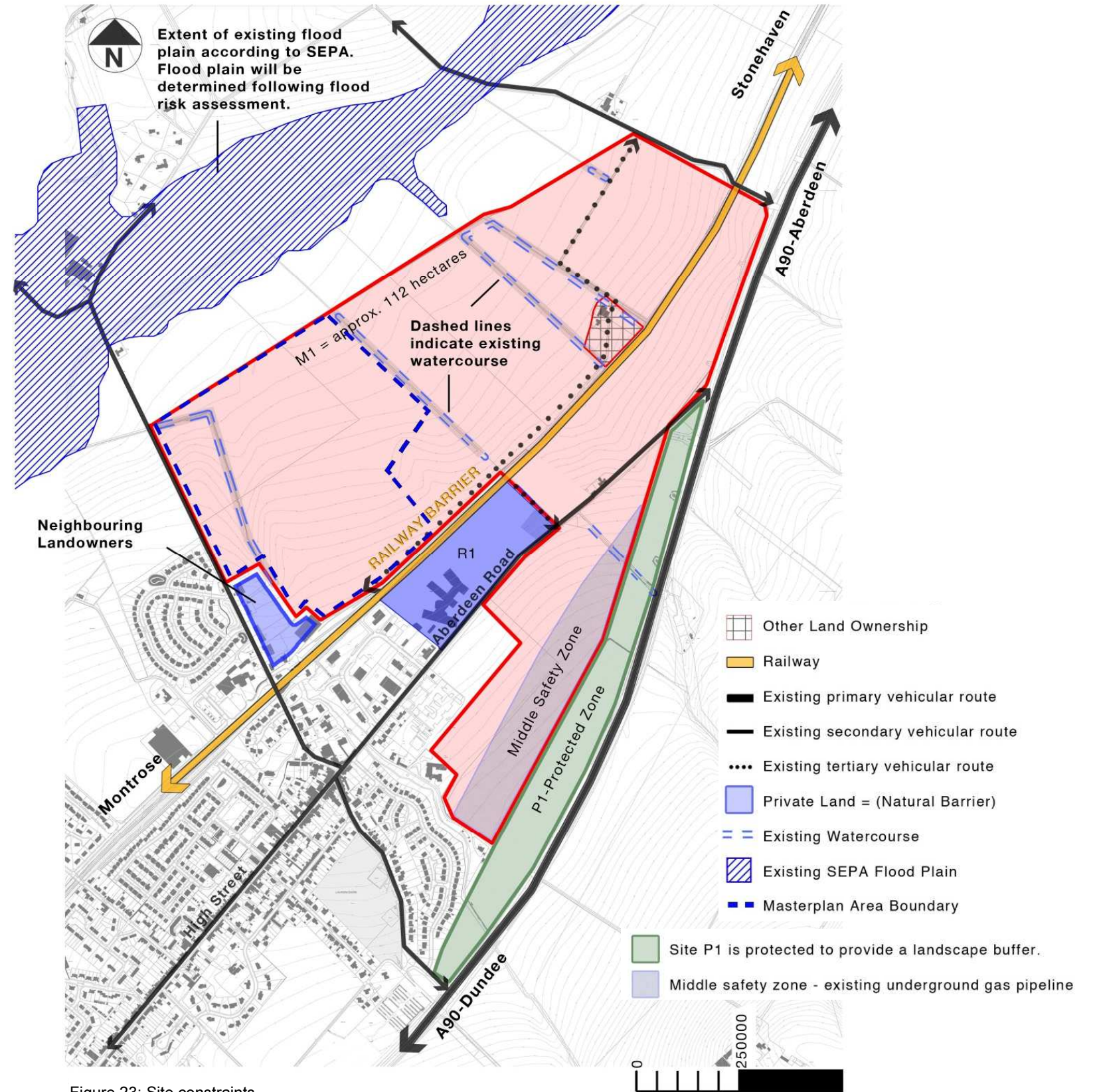


Figure 23: Site constraints



## Contamination


A site walkover and brief review of historical mapping was undertaken to identify any significant contamination issues associated with the site. The results of this are plotted on Figure 24.

Within the Masterplan area, a 'mound' of material was recorded. This may be a natural feature, but its exact composition is unknown. Overhead services also cross the site.

There are no contamination or pollution issues directly associated with the Masterplan or wider Development Framework area. However, the following features in the wider area were noted:

1. Historical gas works (south west) - this area has now been redeveloped
2. Railway goods yard/railway station (south west)
3. Council depot with two tanks present (south west)
4. Former refuse site (south west) - due to its size, this is more likely to be a waste transfer or treatment station than a former landfill
5. Small industrial estate (south west) - with various light industrial activities
6. Oil/gas pipeline (north)

These are not considered to affect the development of the Masterplan area. However, a more detailed desk-based review will be undertaken of the site for submission in support of any planning application. This should consider the risk of land fill gas and recommend any further investigations or remedial works considered necessary.

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Historical gas works               |
| 2.  | Railway goods yard/railway station |
| 3.  | Council depot with two tanks       |
| 4.  | Former refuse site                 |
| 5.  | Small industrial estate            |
| 6.  | Oil/gas pipeline                   |
| 7.  | Mound                              |
| 8.  | Overhead services                  |
| 9.  | Railway cutting                    |
| 10.   | Station                            |
|  | Masterplan boundary                |

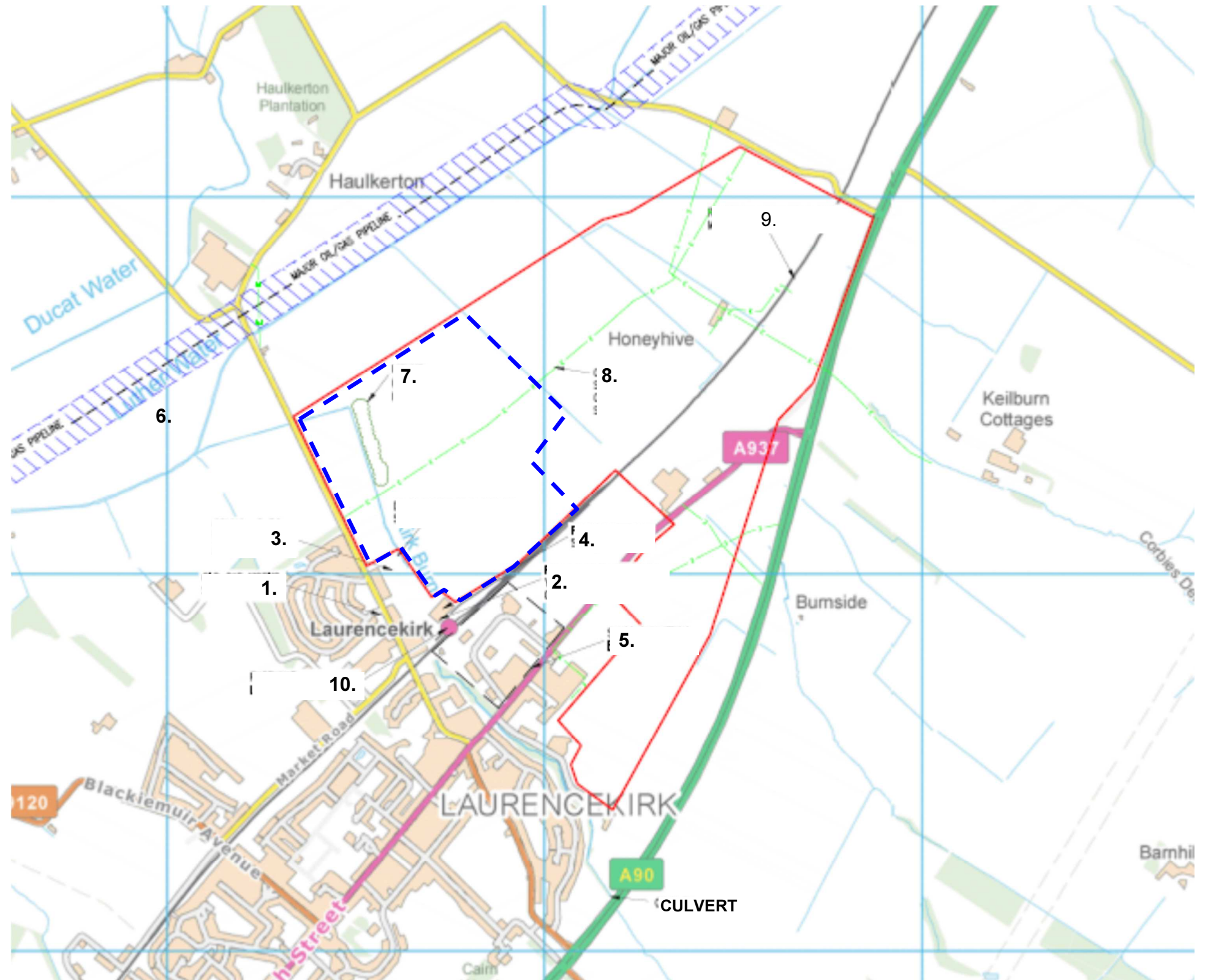


Figure 24: Contamination issues

# 4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

An essential element of the preparation of the Masterplan for the site is public consultation. Details were provided in the Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) which was submitted to Aberdeenshire Council on 14 November 2012.

Due to the extent of public consultation already carried out for the site during the Local Development Plan process, one public event was proposed. Aberdeenshire Council approved the PoAN on 22 November 2012, but encouraged the developers to hold an additional public event. This was taken on board and a second event held.

Throughout the design process, the project team has been committed to involving members of the public, the Community Council and others with an interest in development in Laurencekirk. This has been important in shaping the proposals for the site.

Consultation has been carried out following best practice guidelines contained in Planning Advice Note 81: Community Engagement and Circular 4/2009 Development Management Procedures.

The following public consultation has taken place in relation to the site:

- Contact with: Local MSP and MP's
  - Villagers in Control Committee (VIC)
  - Mearns Community Council
  - Local Ward Members
  - Kincardine and Mearns Area Committee
  - Area Manager
  - Regional MSPs
- 25 February 2013—Means Community Council
- 28 February 2013—First Public Exhibition
- 13 March 2013—Meeting with Villagers in Control
- 28 March 2013—Second Public Consultation
- 29 April 2013—Mearns Community Council

## 4.1 First Public Consultation Event

A public consultation was held at Dickson Memorial Hall between 4pm and 8pm on Thursday 28th February 2013 to seek the views of the public in relation to the Development Framework and Masterplan.

Adverts were placed in the Kincardineshire Observer and Aberdeenshire Edition of the Press and Journal on the 21st February 2013. Subsequent articles appeared in the Kincardineshire Observer, Courier and Press and Journal regarding the proposed exhibition. Advertising material and press cuttings for the first exhibition is contained in Appendix 1.

Exhibition invites were also sent to the VIC, Mearns Community Council, Area Manager, Kincardine and Mearns Area Committee and the local MSP's and MP's. Posters were displayed in Laurencekirk Post Office and Community Education Centre.

At the event, representatives from the site, developers and members of the design team were in attendance to provide information and discuss issues with the local community. A feedback form was available to collect the views of those in attendance.

Approximately 100 people attended the first event, including members of the Community Council, Local Councillors and representatives from the Villagers in Control Committee. A total of 12 responses were returned. These highlighted the following issues:

Issue	Response	Action
Concerns about the delivery of infrastructure in line with housing timescale	A number of supporting studies are being undertaken which will determine the timing of infrastructure requirements. Specific infrastructure will be provided at the appropriate time in order to deliver development to ensure that there is no detrimental effect on existing infrastructure.	s3.1 s5.5
Concerns about surrounding streets becoming gridlocked and dangerous to cross.	A Transport Assessment is currently being undertaken which will identify the capacity of surrounding streets. Appropriate mitigation measures will be provided.	p28
What sort of 'Employment' on Middle Safety Zone?	In terms of the Health and Safety Executive's PADHI guidance, employment in the middle safety zone ranges from offices providing for less than 100 occupants in each building, hotel accommodation of up to 100 beds, developments for use by the general public extending from 250 to 5000 square metres, for example, restaurants, shops, community facilities. The exact employment use on this site will depend on market demand.	s5.3 s6.1

Issue	Response	Action
Concerns about drainage and previous flooding on the site	The site lies outwith SEPA's flood risk area, however, a Flood Risk Assessment will be submitted with any planning application(s) for the site and no development will be located on any areas at risk of flooding	s3.5
Concerns about the narrowing of the road outside the new Mearns Academy	The Development Framework and Masterplan do not propose any narrowing of the street outside the new Mearns Academy. Traffic calming is proposed by Aberdeenshire Council, however, this would not involve the narrowing of the street	
Concerns about the amount of traffic on Station Road onto High Street	The Transport Assessment for the site will consider the capacity of Station Road and High Street and appropriate mitigation measures will be provided, if required.	s5.2 s6.2
Disappointed about the removal of green land behind nursing home (Burnside)	As this land is included within the Development Framework area, some development is expected. To alleviate concerns, a buffer strip will be provided behind the nursing home to reduce any impacts.	Fig 25
Flyover	A Grade Separated Junction is a requirement of the Local Development Plan. The Transport Assessment will provide further details as to when it is to be provided in relation to the phasing of the site.	Dev't FW
What other benefits will this bring to the village? Fears of it becoming a commuter town	The Development Framework proposes a range of uses, including housing, employment and community facilities.	s5.3
Flooding	The Development Framework area lies outwith the area considered to be at risk from flooding. However, a Flood Risk Assessment will be carried out and submitted with any planning application(s) for the site to ensure that no development is at risk from flooding.	s3.5

Issue	Response	Action
Development will have an enormous impact on Laurencekirk, essentially a "new town"; Commuter traffic will increase; Proposal does not meet the Accessibility Objectives of the Proposed Strategic Development Plan; it will reduce the supply of prime farmland. This development is an example of irreversible environmental destruction.	This site is allocated in the LDP for housing and employment use. As such the principle of development is already accepted. The merits of the site were considered through the LDP and as Laurencekirk lies within a Strategic Growth Area, this was considered to be the most appropriate location for development to meet the Structure Plan requirements. The purpose of allocating housing and employment land is to create a self contained settlement. The development will be sustainable in terms of access to services within the settlement itself.	s2.2 s2.3  s5.3
Increased demands on infrastructure would include: the main trunk route (A90): this already has safety issues at the three unimproved junctions; local roads; Schools: Primary and secondary; Health services: GP and emergency services; Sewerage and water supplies; Social services; Public transport	The LDP requires improvements to existing infrastructure in the area, including a distributor road, Grade Separated Access onto the A90 and upgrades to the Reservoir and Waste Water Treatment Works. Contributions in scale with the development will be made towards education, health and waste. A TA will consider the impact on existing junctions and mitigation measures provided as appropriate.	Dev't FW  s5.2 s6.1 s6.2
Any additional development would only add to congestion, risks to pedestrians and road users	The TA will consider this junction and mitigation measures will be provided as necessary.	s5.2 s6.1 s6.2
Careful and early consideration be given to alternative access routes, eg, the possibility of a new railway crossing route from the A90 Laurencekirk North junction and Aberdeen Road	A second access across the railway will be provided as and when required. The timing of this will be determined by the TA. Unfortunately, the cost to provide this upfront at the start of the development is prohibitive.	Dev't FW s6.1
The correct name of the farm is "Conveth Mains". The name "Conveth of Mains" is essentially incorrect and confusing.	Noted	

Issue	Response	Action
The phasing of the development needs to be linked with the capacity of the local primary and secondary schools and the road network – specifically the requirement for a grade separated junction with the A90. No development allowed beyond the established thresholds unless the capacity is available.	The phasing of the development will be linked with the capacity of existing infrastructure in Laurencekirk and supporting studies are being carried out to identify this.	s6.1
The fields to the west down to the burn flood regularly. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems need to be provided to ensure that this current drainage problem is not exacerbated and preferably alleviated – evidenced through a comprehensive drainage impact assessment submitted with the application	SEPA's flood risk map identifies the extent of flooding, which lies outwith the Development Framework/Masterplan/planning application area. However, a Flood Risk Assessment will be carried out to confirm the position. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems will be provided to ensure drainage is adequately dealt with on the site.	Fig 10  s3.5  Fig 19
Crucial is a suitable landscape buffer along the western boundary of the new development informed by a landscape and visual impact assessment. It is important that the new housing sits in the landscape and there isn't a hard edge to the settlement when viewed from the Auchenblae Road	A landscape buffer will be provided along the western boundary of the new development to integrate housing in the landscape.	Fig 26, 27, 28  Section 5
Opportunities should be taken to provide small convenience store to serve new housing until a trigger point in number of houses	A site is identified adjacent to land set aside for the primary school which could accommodate a small convenience store.	Fig 38  s5.3

Issue	Response	Action
Opportunities should be taken to enhance and maximise connectivity with cycle and pedestrian routes through peripheral landscape areas.	Cycle and pedestrian routes will be maximised throughout the site and this has taken place at an early stage. Footpaths and cycle ways will be provided as part of the first phase of development, which will link to existing networks and future development areas within the Development Framework area.	s5.2
The entrance to Laurencekirk from the north should be celebrated with a landscape feature or sculpture.	This is noted and will be investigated.	s5.4



## 4.2 Second Public Consultation Event

A second public consultation event was held at Dickson Memorial Hall between 4pm and 8pm on Thursday 28th March 2013 to update the local community on progress made with the Development Framework, Masterplan and first phase planning application and seek their views on this.

Adverts were placed in the Kincardineshire Observer and Aberdeenshire edition of the Press and Journal on the 22 March 2013. Advertising material for the second exhibition is contained in Appendix 2.

Exhibition invites were sent to VIC, the Community Council, Area Manager, Local MSP's and MP's, Kincardine and Mearns Committee members. Posters were also displayed in Laurencekirk Post Office and Community Education Centre.

At the event, representatives from the site, developers and members of the design team were in attendance to provide information and discuss issues with the local community. A feedback form was available to collect the views of those in attendance. Approximately 45 people attended the follow up event, including members of the Community Council, Local Councillors and representatives from the Villagers in Control Committee. A total of 4 responses were returned highlighting the following issues:

Issue	Response	Action
Concern regarding flooding on and around the site.	SEPA's Flood Risk Map identifies an area of flooding which is outwith the Development Framework and Masterplan area. A number of watercourses run through the site, however, a FRA will consider these and the flooding to the north to ensure that development on the site is not affected. Buffer zones will remain free of development on either side of the watercourses to protect development.	s3.5
Concern about traffic along Fordoun Road and the High Street	A Transport Assessment is being carried out to consider the impact of development on Fordoun Road and the High Street. Mitigation measures, if required will be implemented to ensure that new development does not impact on existing infrastructure.	s5.2 s6.2
Possibility of moving the traffic from this area via the proposed distributor road, with direct access taken over the railway line at the northern end of the site.	A second access will be provided over the railway as and when required. The timing of this will be determined by the Transport Assessment. Unfortunately, the cost to provide this up front at the start of the development is prohibitive. However, the first phase of development will provide a part of the distributor road and further phases will complete this and the access over the railway.	Dev't FW s5.2



## 4.3 Mearns Community Council

From the outset and throughout the consultation, developers have sought to engage with Mearns Community Council.

Mearns Community Council were first contacted on 2 February 2013, introducing the proposals and to make them aware of the public exhibitions. This email was followed by letter on 15 February 2013 formally inviting them to the first public exhibition.

Members of the project team attended a meeting of the Community Council and gave a brief presentation on 25 February 2013, informing them of the plans and once more inviting them to attend the first exhibition.

Representatives attended a subsequent Community Council meeting on 29 April 2013, where the progress of the site was explained.

The Community Council were generally supportive of development.

## 4.4 Villagers in Control Committee

As with the Community Council, the developers, following liaison with the local community during the previous Local Development Plan, ensured that the Villagers in Control (VIC) Committee was treated as an important stakeholder in the development of the proposals.

Members of the project team attended a meeting on 13th March 2013 with representatives of the Villagers in Control Committee. They were supportive of development, but raised a few issues as detailed opposite. These have played an important role in shaping the Masterplan for the site.

Issue	Response	Action
The first stage of a northern distributor road to the west of Laurencekirk was no longer to be permitted in its original form	This is due to changes in Policy, namely Designing Streets which has changed the requirements for streets through residential areas. The route proposed will be capable of taking emergency vehicles and public transport and will continue to be a distributor road around this part of Laurencekirk	s3.5
The addition of employment land to the east of Aberdeen Road was welcomed by the Committee which is keen to support local employment and concerned about the proportion of commuters based in the settlement.	Noted. Employment land is identified within the first phase of development to ensure an integrated settlement.	Fig 38
Concern about the future sustainability of the settlement and are concerned that the current plan fails to provide effective physical links with the existing town. The walking distance is too far and the resulting need to use cars will aggravate an already restricted parking area in and around the High Street	Links will be provided throughout the site linking it with the existing settlement. New routes will link with existing footpaths to ensure the site is not isolated.  The distance from the M1 area to the existing town centre cannot be changed, but new links will ensure walking routes are provided. The M1 area is within walking distance of the Station and new Academy which will reduce reliance on the private car.	s5.2  Fig32

Issue	Response	Action
The use of Auchenblae Road as the main access will add as many as 3000 journeys daily along this road.	The use of Auchenblae Road is for the first phase of development and will not have a significant impact on the existing roads infrastructure. As the site develops in its entirety, additional points of access will be provided. The development will be phased, therefore all new traffic will not be on the network immediately and at the same time.	s5.2 s6.1 s6.2
Traffic will cause severe congestion at Station Road. This will cause a similar problem at the junction of Station Road and the High Street. Has any new monitoring been conducted.	A Transport Assessment is currently being undertaken to measure the impact on Station Road. Mitigation measures will be provided to improve this junction.	s5.2 s6.2
Aberdeen road itself has just been reduced in width adjacent to the new Academy and more than 3000 extra journeys will put a strain on traffic flow.	Again, the development will be phased, therefore, there will not be a significant increase in traffic using the roads infrastructure immediately.	s6.1
An access footpath under the railway at Conveth Mains is a positive element in the design	Noted	

Issue	Response	Action
The building of any kind of bridge across the railway was ruled out due to the massive way leave payments demanded by Network Rail. On the same issue, the road bridge near Lower Scotston Farm has not been included as a possible access route.	A bridge across the railway will be required as the development progresses in order to complete the distributor road, which is a requirement of the Local Development Plan.	Dev't FW
The vision of extending the High Street along Aberdeen Road was accepted as having a real merit but work on traffic impact would be helpful.	Noted	
The failure to adopt a holistic approach to planning a sustainable settlement was recognised as a failing of local government and a real threat to Laurencekirk's future	The Development Framework and Masterplan process goes some way in planning for a sustainable development as the proposed 885 houses are considered at the outset.	
The positive approach of residents was recognised but was tempered with concern as to whether enough consideration was taken of matching the need for expanding both facilities and infrastructure in the existing settlement to cope with an increase in population of approximately 60-70%	The population will not immediately increase by 60-70% and this will be a phased expansion of the settlement. Contributions will be provided through the development of the site to ensure facilities are expanded as the settlement is.  A site for a new school, a neighbourhood facility, as well as employment land is identified in the larger Development Framework area. Further contributions will be made to Aberdeenshire Council for additional facilities and services.	s6.1 s6.2  Fig 38 s6.2

Issue	Response	Action
Planning gain could contribute to improved amenities in the community including a swimming pool and "out of school" accommodation. The extra population will also create a larger critical mass to justify an increase in retail and service businesses in the area.	Noted.	s6.2
We appreciate that 1000 new homes may be regarded as a modest expansion. It is essential to remember that this is not a new town and that any additions should be compatible with the existing settlement.	Noted.	
We would like to see Aberdeenshire Council carry out a master planning exercise for the whole settlement with a 25-30 year vision rather than fill in another field or farm without any reference to the existing settlement.	Noted.	

# 5. DEVELOPMENT OF SITE AND LAYOUT

## Introduction

The Masterplan sets out proposals for the first phases of development, in the context of the wider Development Framework area. It outlines the planning and design principles that should be followed in any planning application(s) for the site.

The aim of the Masterplan is to guide the development to meet the vision for the site as identified on page 5. It will do this by considering the analysis carried out and detailed in Section 3 to produce a Masterplan for the first tranche of development. It is envisaged that this will include up to 471 dwellings. It will respect built and natural features within the site and around it to create a distinctive, high quality environment.

## 5.1 Landscaping and Open Space

An indicative landscape strategy is shown in Figure 25. Recreational space is a fundamental requirement to the success of the Masterplan. The proposed open/green spaces will be designed to ensure ease of public access and provide natural surveillance from the surrounding properties.

A hierarchy of open space is proposed in line with Aberdeenshire Council's Parks and Open Space Strategy. This includes:

- structural planting along the watercourse, to provide a green corridor; a community park; and, pockets of public open space throughout the site.
- A 25m buffer strip will be provided along the railway line and footpaths will be incorporated along the railway line and western boundary of the site. The western boundary of the site along Fordoun Road will also incorporate a landscape buffer zone as identified in Figure 26 on page 23.
- These areas will become principal open spaces and link with the hierarchy of open space in the wider Development Framework Area as far as the proposed new Amenity Woodland to the north east. This was considered appropriate as existing woodland in the area is limited.
- The landscaping network will also link areas of housing and community facilities. This will support and encourage active lifestyles.
- Planting within the Masterplan area will use native trees and shrubs and hedgerows will be planted to provide linkages and shelter. This will result in a net improvement in biodiversity, in line with Planning Advice Number 1:2012.
- The maintenance of these areas will be agreed with Aberdeenshire Council during the planning application process, but given Council Policy on open space maintenance and adoption, responsibility will be passed to residents through a factoring arrangement.

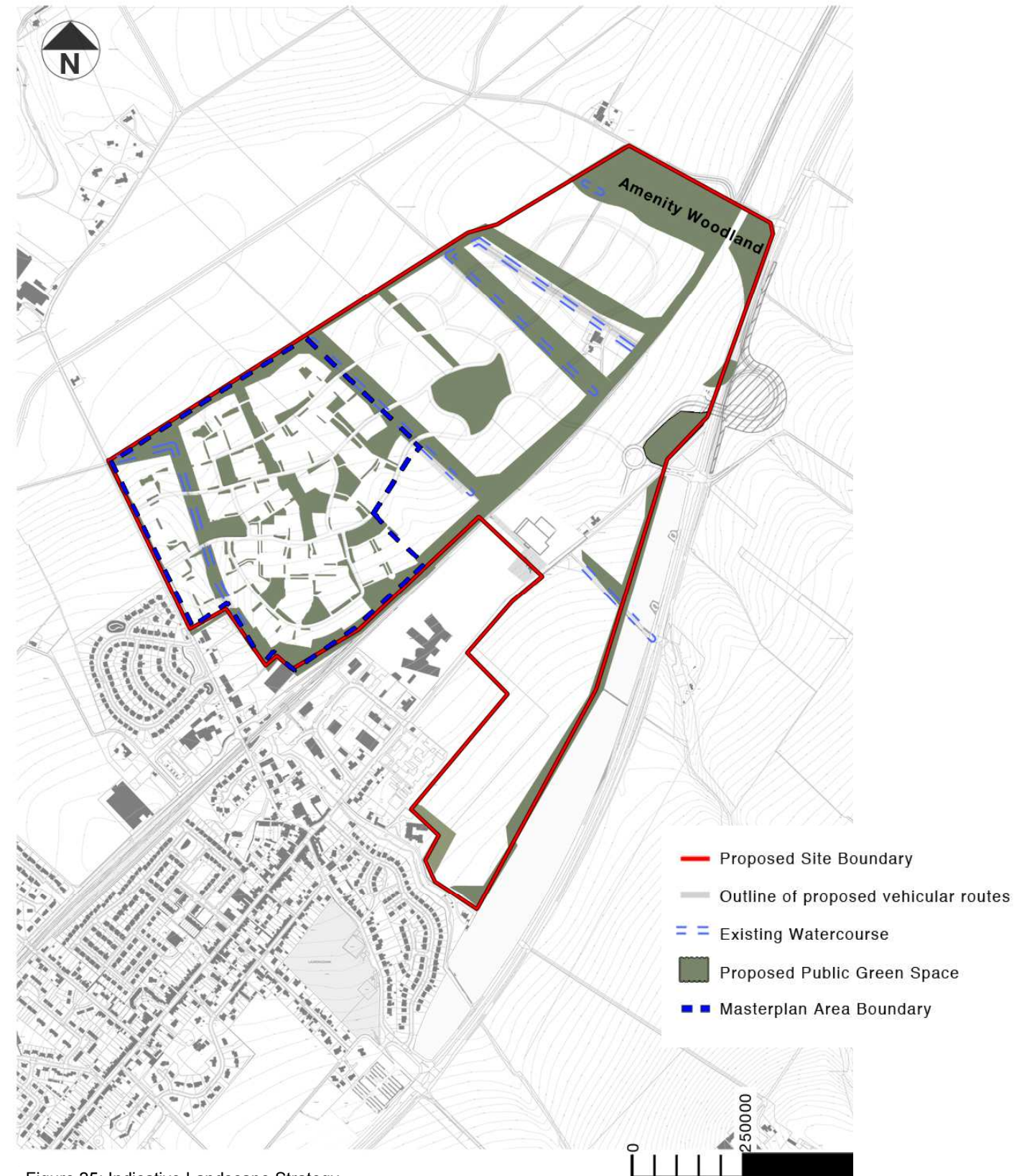


Figure 25: Indicative Landscape Strategy

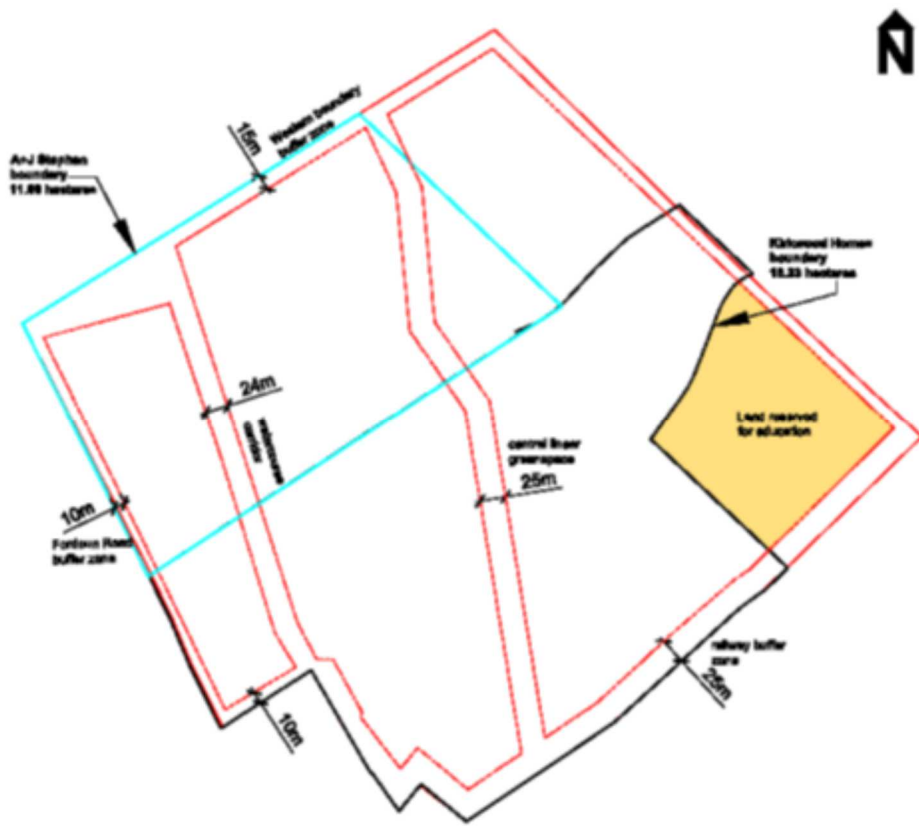


Figure 26: Strategic Landscaping Design Principles—Buffer Zones

Figures 26, 27 and 28 above consider the landscape design principles in more detail. Figure 26 identifies the buffer zones for the site. These include:

1. 25m Landscape and Visual Buffer to Railway—This is a visual and noise barrier from the railway, to accommodate a multi use path route north to south and forms the spine for other key paths and open spaces/
2. 10m Fordoun Road boundary—To accommodate a grass verge, shrub layer and tree planting to replace existing mature trees and hedgerow that requires to be removed to facilitate road junctions and sight lines. A 7m depth of planting of an appropriate matrix of native species will form an effective wind break to the development and an enhanced visual screening of rear fences to properties.
3. 12m Watercourse Corridors—The main purpose of these are to reduce run-off by increasing stormwater infiltration to soil; stabilise soils with plant root systems; reduce bank erosion; mitigate water pollution; enhance biodiversity; and accommodate the main east-west path routes forming a key part of the network of paths across the site.

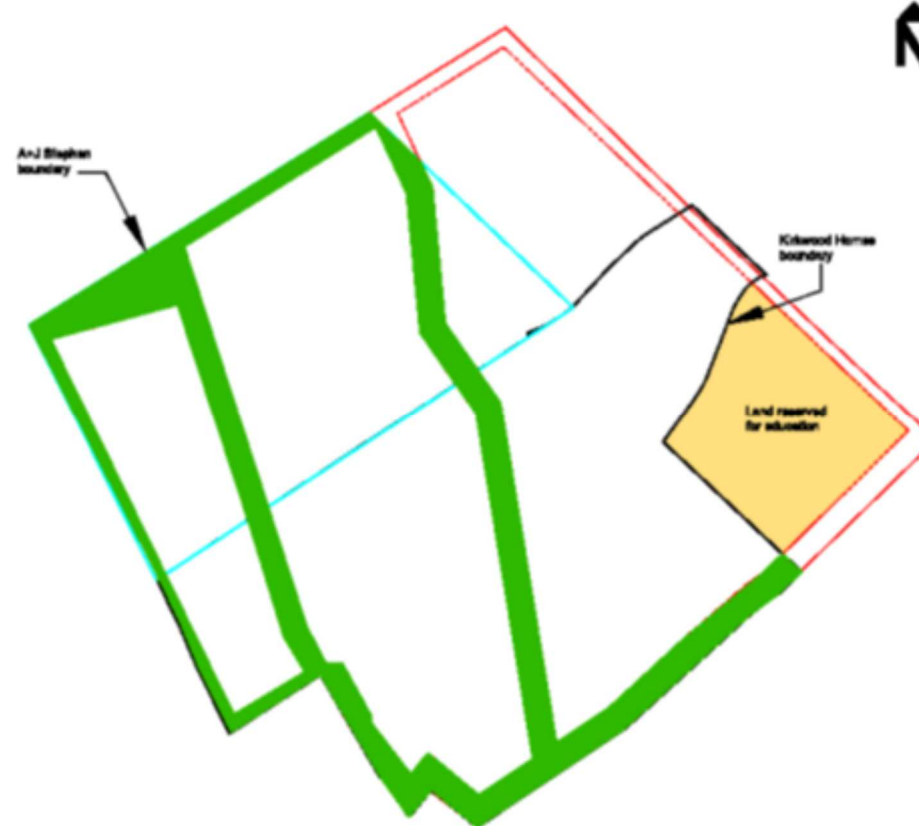


Figure 27: Landscape Framework Open Space Provision

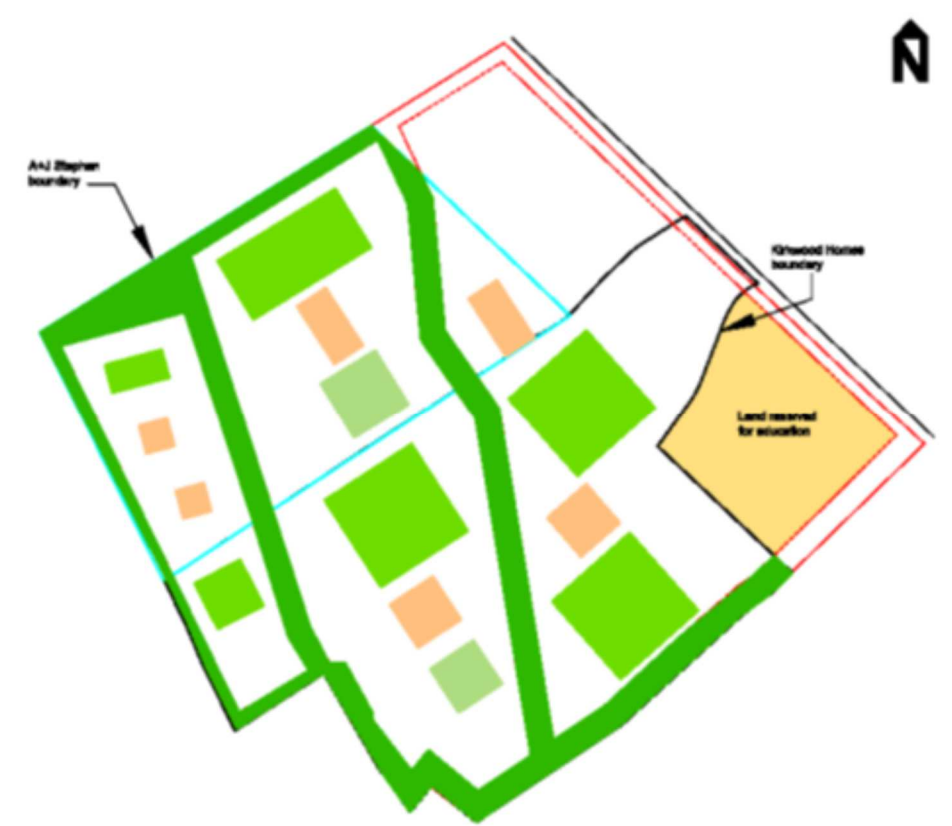


Figure 28: 40% Open Space Requirement

Open space provision is shown in Figure 27. This includes buffer zones, watercourse corridors and SUDS basins.

A&J Stephen site area = 11.66 ha      Kirkwood Homes site area = 18.33ha  
 Open space provided = 2.39ha      Open Space Provided = 3.07ha

In order to meet the 40% open space requirements, additional open space and shared surfaces will be incorporated into the layout as identified in Figure 28. This provides the following across the Masterplan area:

A&J Stephen site area = 11.66 ha  
 Open space provided = 2.39ha  
 Other open space and shared surfaces = 2.27ha

Kirkwood Homes site area = 18.33ha  
 Open Space Provided = 3.07  
 Other open space and shared spaces = 4.26 ha

The main landscape feature in the Masterplan area is the Kirk Burn which runs north-south to west. This will be safeguarded and enhanced to become a green landscape corridor. It will be planted with native species to improve opportunities for biodiversity. Landscape sections are shown in Figure 29 and 30, with Figure 31 Identifying the Kirk Burn Corridor in more detail.

This corridor will act as a buffer strip either side of the watercourse. This is well in excess of the requirements of Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Advice Number 2:2011, Buffer Strip Guidance. It will support and link with the network of pedestrian and cycle routes and integrate and connect areas of housing to create an attractive residential environment.

This will link to other green corridors along other watercourses throughout the wider Development Framework area, providing a network of open space, landscaping and paths.

12 ha of open space is identified for the Masterplan area, comprising 40% of the site. This complies with Aberdeenshire Council's open space requirement contained in Supplementary Guidance.

Within the wider Laurencekirk area, street landscaping takes the form of planting within existing garden boundaries, with no trees planted on footpaths. The Masterplan will reflect this, with planting concentrated along the buffer zones and within the network of open spaces throughout the site.

A series of SUDs will be provided across the site, separate from but interlinked where possible by existing water bodies, so there is integration between drainage, layout and core space. SUDs features will therefore be located within the network of open spaces throughout the site. The location of this is shown in Figure 38 and 40.

In summary, the masterplan has adopted the following approach with regards to landscaping and open space:

- Providing a 25m woodland buffer to the railway boundary, incorporating multi use paths
- Providing a 10m boundary along Fordoun Road incorporating footpaths and landscaping
- Creating green corridors along watercourses on each bank to be planted with native species
- Planting of hedgerows to provide linkages, shelter and to enhance biodiversity
- Providing 40% green space throughout the development

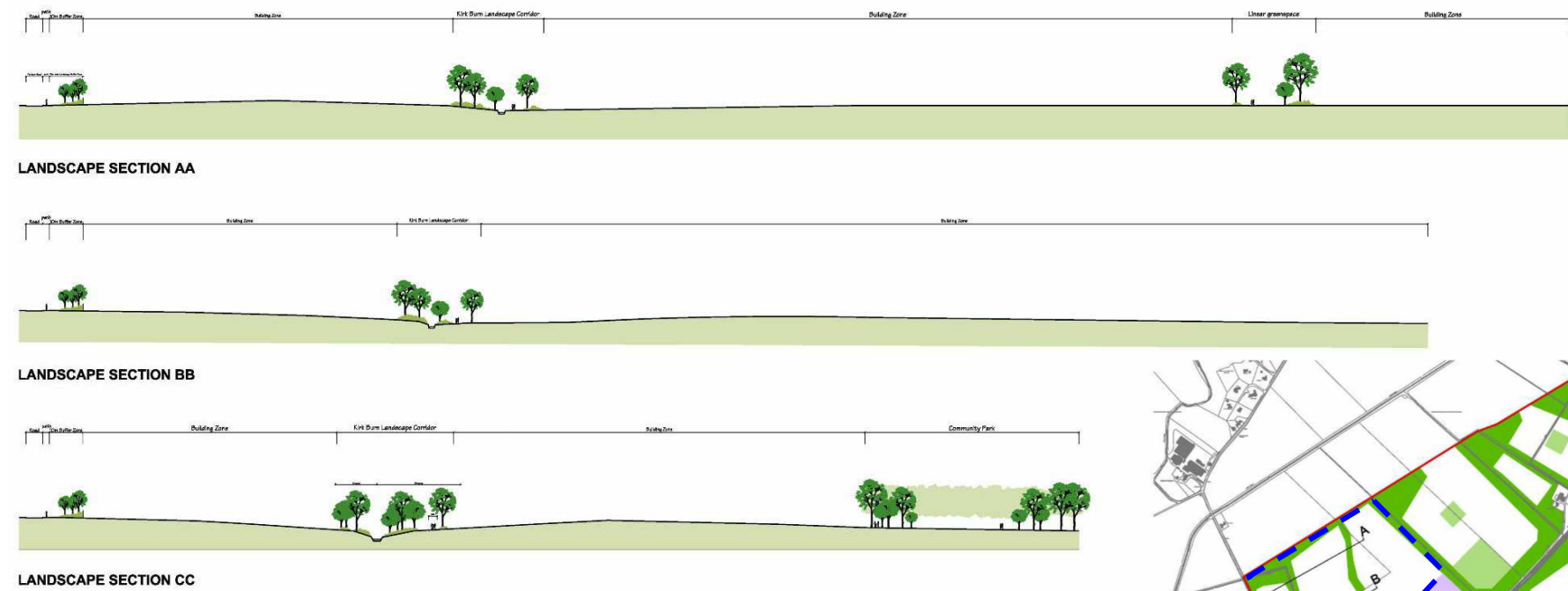


Figure 29: Landscape Sections

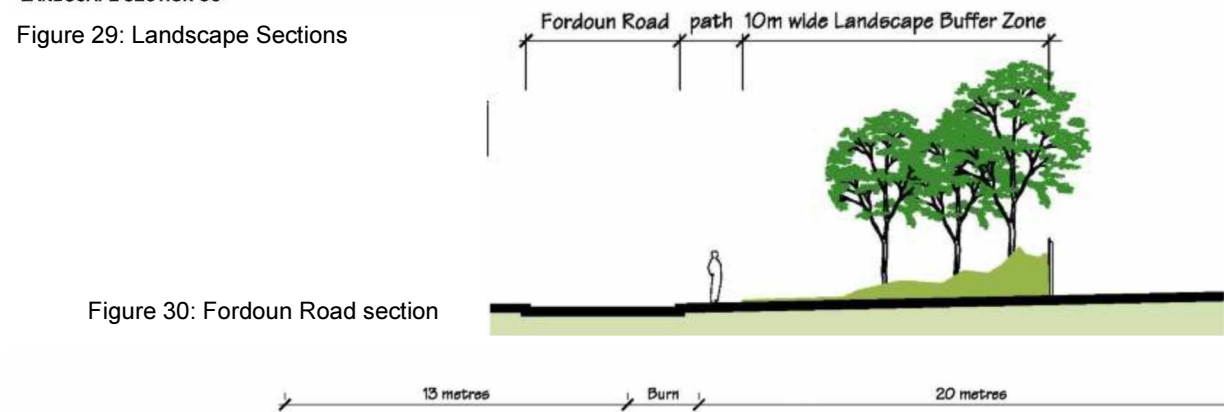


Figure 30: Fordoun Road section

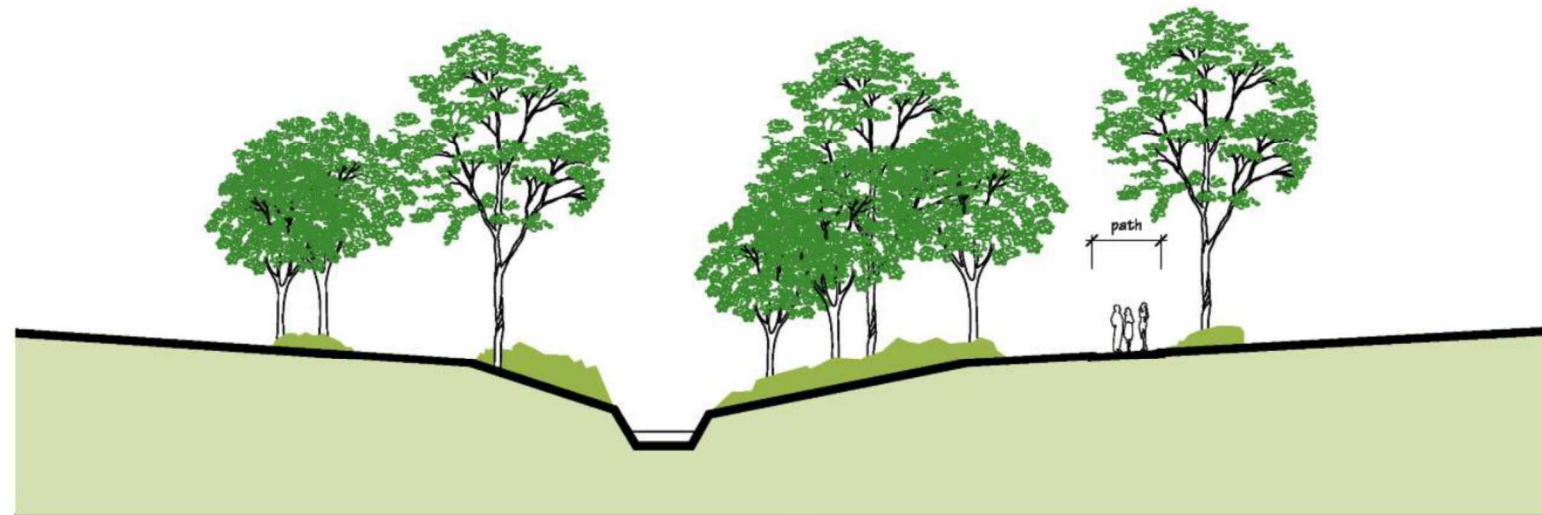
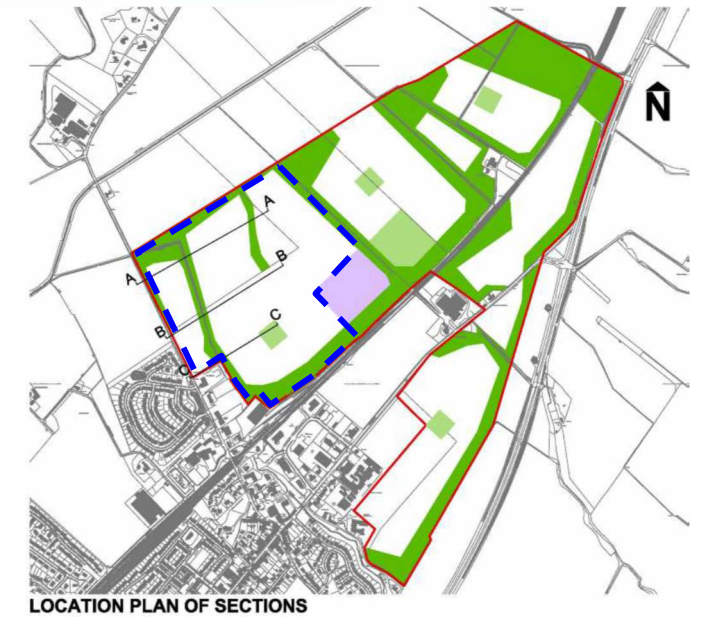


Figure 31: Kirkburn Corridor Section



## 5.2 Connectivity

Integration of the Masterplan area with the wider Development Framework area and the settlement of Laurencekirk is crucial to its success. The site will be fully connected with the surrounding area via existing footpaths, pavements, public transport networks and roads.

### Walkability

One of the issues raised during the public consultation process was the perception that the site is isolated from the centre of Laurencekirk, which would encourage private car use. The Railway Station is the closest facility to the site, which is approximately 400m walk distance. Planning applications will explore the potential for direct pedestrian linkages to the station.

Figure 32 demonstrates the proximity of other facilities in the village. It demonstrates that the site is accessible to existing facilities in Laurencekirk, with the pharmacy being 8 minutes walking distance. The health centre and sports centre lie within a 15 minute walking distance, however, this will reduce due to the footpath link being provided from the site to the existing underpass. The primary school is approximately a 20 minute walk from the site.

### Pedestrians and Cyclists

Ensuring an early high level of accessibility to pedestrians and cyclists of the first phase of the proposed development has been a key consideration for the Masterplan design. Principal consideration for Phase 1 connectivity is to ensure high quality connections directly into the existing path network from the boundary of the site. This will encourage use of walking and cycling given the short distances to local facilities, and provide the setting for lasting sustainable travel behaviour throughout the future phases of development.

East-west connections within the site are defined by the green corridors and north-south linkages are provided by a green buffer space along the railway and western boundary providing an interconnected network. The peripheral landscape zones will provide major conduits for both pedestrian and cycle circulation through the site. An underpass currently exists within the site.

Pedestrian/cycle access will be maintained to connect the old and new parts of Laurencekirk, with significant emphasis on designing routes for people and not vehicles. Routes will be provided to Fordoun Road, as the main connection to and from the town centre, and a connection will be provided westwards from the Masterplan area along the railway line to the existing underpass providing direct access to the new Mearns Academy and beyond to Aberdeen Road.



### Walking Accessibility to Local Amenities

Existing Facility	Fordoun Road Access
Primary School	20 Minutes
Existing Mearns Academy	12 Minutes
New Mearns Academy	15 Minutes
Health Centre	12 Minutes
Sports Centre	12 Minutes
Pharmacy	8 Minutes
Bank	8 Minutes
Co-op	15 Minutes
Library	15 Minutes
Community Centre	16 Minutes

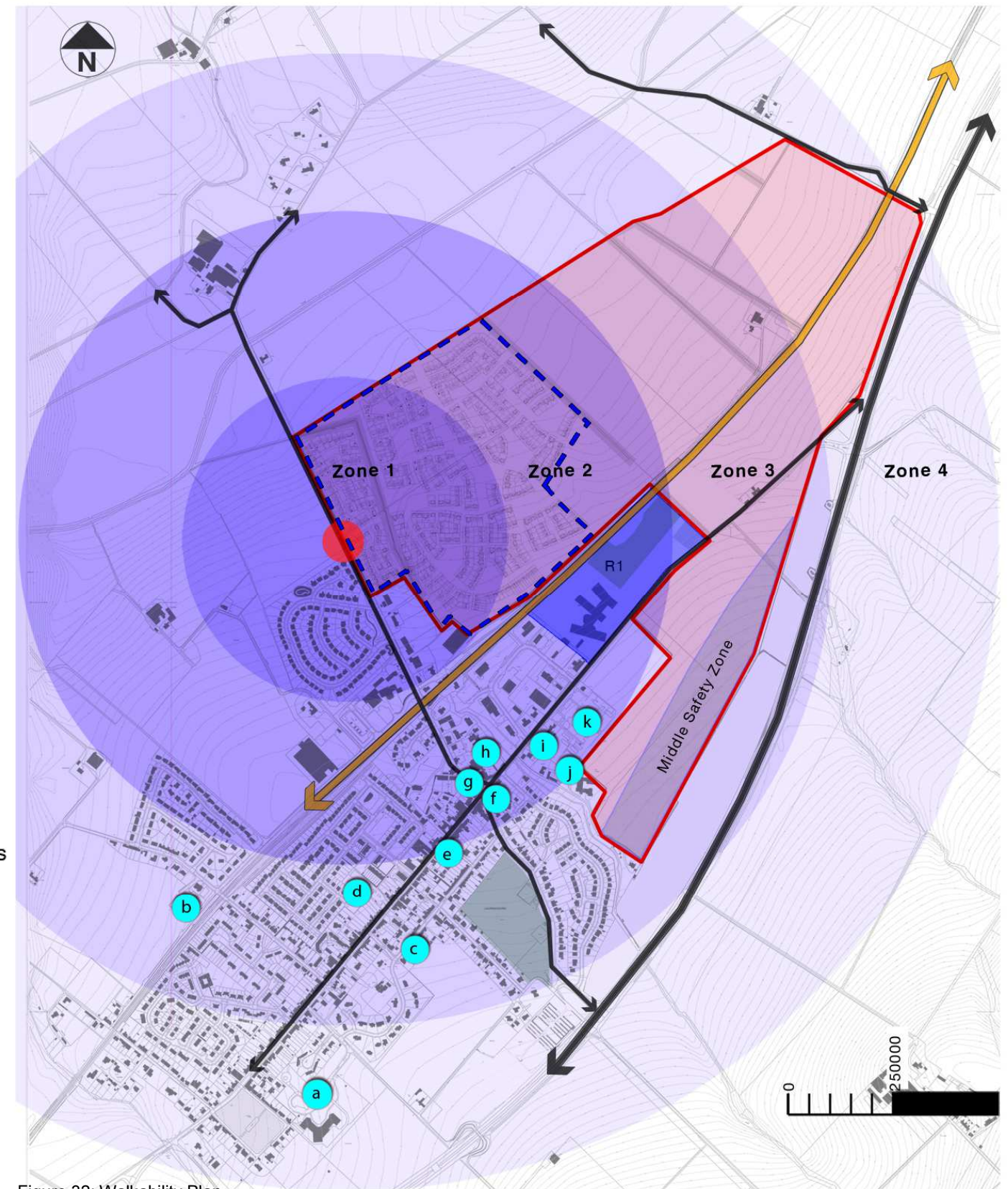


Figure 32: Walkability Plan

This path will continue within the wider Development Framework area along the railway eastwards to the proposed new amenity woodland to the north east of the Development Framework area. The footpath link to the underpass will be provided as part of the first phase of development as shown in Figure 39 on page 32. Landscaping will be provided along this path to increase its attractiveness to users.

Land ownership issues appear to preclude a direct link from the site to the railway station, however, a footpath link will be safeguarded from the site to the boundary of the neighbouring grain store which lies adjacent to the railways station, in order to facilitate a future connection. The scope for this will be investigated further at the planning application stage.

Along the Fordoun Road site frontage, a landscape buffer zone will incorporate appropriate space for a verge which will include a public footpath. Additional footpaths will be provided along the proposed roads within the site which, through the Designing Streets approach, will be intrinsically designed to create a pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment.

Shared surfaces where appropriate will assist in reducing vehicle speeds and create a more pedestrian friendly environment. This will improve the spatial permeability within the site, as well as providing effective links between the site and the surrounding areas to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

### Core Paths

Figure 21 on page 15 demonstrates that there are no core paths through the Masterplan site. There are existing and proposed paths in the vicinity of the Masterplan area and these are concentrated to the south around Denlethen Woods.

The proposed network of paths within the site will link to the network of on road paths which will link to existing core paths. This will ensure the site is accessible in the context of the wider area. These will continue through the site and potentially connect to a new area of amenity woodland to the north east. There is an opportunity for paths within the site to be included within Aberdeenshire Council's Core Path network and this can be agreed with them at the appropriate time.

### Public Transport Connections

Details of existing public transport connections are provided in Section 3.6. The primary access route as shown in Figure 35 on page 27 measures 6.5 metres wide and is wide enough to accommodate buses. The construction of the primary vehicular route through the site will therefore provide opportunities for further public transport routes through the Masterplan area over time and according to demand, as shown in Figure 33.

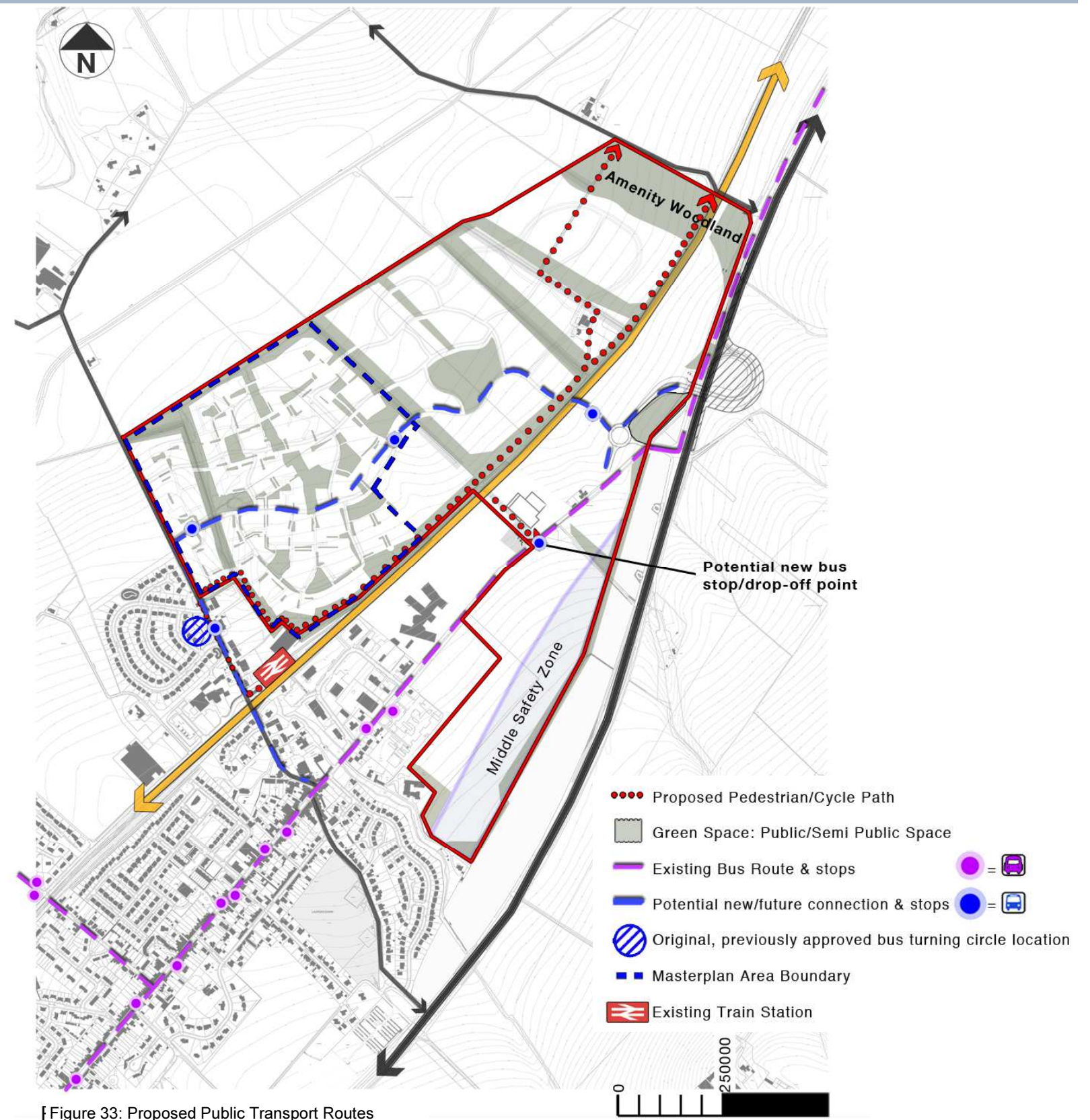


Figure 33: Proposed Public Transport Routes

New bus stops will be provided along the primary access route and will ensure that occupiers of the development have access to public transport links within 400metres of their homes, as required by Scottish Guidance

It is understood that the Haulkerton development to the west of the Masterplan site was constructed to accommodate a bus turning circle and the construction of new dwellings in the Masterplan area may facilitate new public transport services in this area. A proposed new bus stop is identified at this location as shown in Figure 33 on page 26, outwith the Masterplan area, but in close proximity to it.

### Vehicular Access

Fordoun Road is the only current vehicular access route that offers a potential link into the Masterplan area. As such, forming a new junction at Fordoun Road is the only viable option. The location of this junction has been determined taking account of the community's future aspirations for a distributor road to the west and south.

The layout provides for two junctions at Fordoun Road as shown in Figure 34 below. This will be a priority T-junction and provides the appropriate visibility splays required to meet roads requirements. The existing 30 mph speed limit zone, will be extended to include the site access in the interests of road safety.



Figure 34: Proposed Junctions with Fordoun Road



Figure 35: Proposed Vehicular and Pedestrian Routes

## Road and Street Layout

A carefully considered approach has been taken to the road and street layout, clearly setting up a hierarchy of streets, ensuring connectivity and permeability to public spaces and a network of footpath and cycle paths integrated within the landscape amenity spaces.

The Masterplan incorporates a well defined road hierarchy of primary and secondary routes as illustrated in Figure 35. The road layout ensures the site is fully permeable, by all modes, with the primary east-west route through the site protected as a future strategic link between the Aberdeen Road and Fordoun Road. The following hierarchy has been considered in the layout of the Masterplan:

**Primary Road (Distributor Road)** - This is the main road running east/west across the site with access from Fordoun Road. It will provide vehicular access to the first phases of development and eventually exit the site onto Aberdeen Road opposite the new Mearns Academy. This will connect the site to the surrounding area of Laurencekirk as well as provide primary access to the various development areas within the Masterplan site.

**Secondary Roads (linking back to the main distributor road)** - These roads will be narrower than the primary road and they connect the various neighbourhoods within the Masterplan area.

**Tertiary Roads (shared surface/neighbourhood roads)** - These are quiet connecting residential streets to be designed as shared surface for both pedestrian and vehicular use. In many instances, these shared surfaces narrow down to provide pedestrian "access" lanes linking to the wider community; shared green spaces; other neighbourhoods and a network of cycle and pedestrian paths creating total permeability.

The grid patterns proposed accord with Designing Streets and Roads Construction guidance. By providing a framework of hierarchical street layout allows the insertion of various house types to create a variety of neighbourhood spaces.

A Street Engineering Review (SER) will be carried out on the finalised development layout, which will examine the overall function of the street and ensure that the needs of all users are met.

Key points which have been taken into consideration in the design of the Masterplan area are:

- Street dimensions—can have a significant influence on speeds. Keeping lengths of street between junctions short is particularly effective.
- Reductions in forward visibility and road width are associated with reduced driving speeds.

- Physical features—involving vertical or horizontal deflection can be very effective in reducing speeds.
- Materials can reduce speed by both visual perception and by physical characteristics, such as cobbled surfaces.

Development will not compromise or unduly disrupt traffic flows and will be supported by the infrastructure required to sustain the development at each phase. A Transportation Assessment (TA) will be submitted during the planning application process which will examine the capacity of the existing road network and identify the infrastructure requirements and any mitigation measures required.

Concern was raised during the public consultation exercises in relation to the impact of development on Fordoun Road and its junction with the High Street, where the main access to and from the Masterplan site (Fordoun Road) enters the village (Figure 36). The Transport Assessment demonstrates that the development of the Masterplan area has minimal impact on the existing road network. However, whilst sufficient capacity exists at the junction, it is exacerbated by parking within the junction itself, which is restrictive to vehicles, but particularly to pedestrian movements.

The latter use is all the more prominent as the junction lies on the main route for all walking trips to and from Mearns Academy. As part of the proposals to facilitate good pedestrian connectivity within the village, a scheme to upgrade the junction will be designed that improves both vehicle and pedestrian movements. This provision will not only serve the proposed M1 development but be of benefit to all of Laurencekirk as a significant contribution to improving walking routes to Mearns Academy. Mitigation measures have been discussed with Aberdeenshire Council and Figure 37 on page 29 shows an indicative layout. This will be discussed further as the planning process progresses.

### Car Parking

Car parking will be provided in accordance with appropriate Aberdeenshire Council parking standards. This requires 2 spaces per dwelling (3 or less bedrooms), 3 spaces per dwelling (4 or more bedrooms) and 2.5 spaces per 100square metres for employment areas (offices). Garages of less than 6mx3m will not count as a parking space and provision will require to be made for visitor parking in any pockets of high density development.

### Servicing

Lighting will be provided along the network of roads within the site and roads will be designed to incorporate service access, bin lorries, fire engines and maintenance vehicles. Full details will be provided within a Street Engineering Review to be submitted with any planning application(s) for the site.



Figure 36: Station Road / High Street junction

New roadside pavement to be formed from the development site to High Street with a minimum width of 1.2 metres.

Further detail to be provided once survey is obtained of the full extent of Fordoun Road

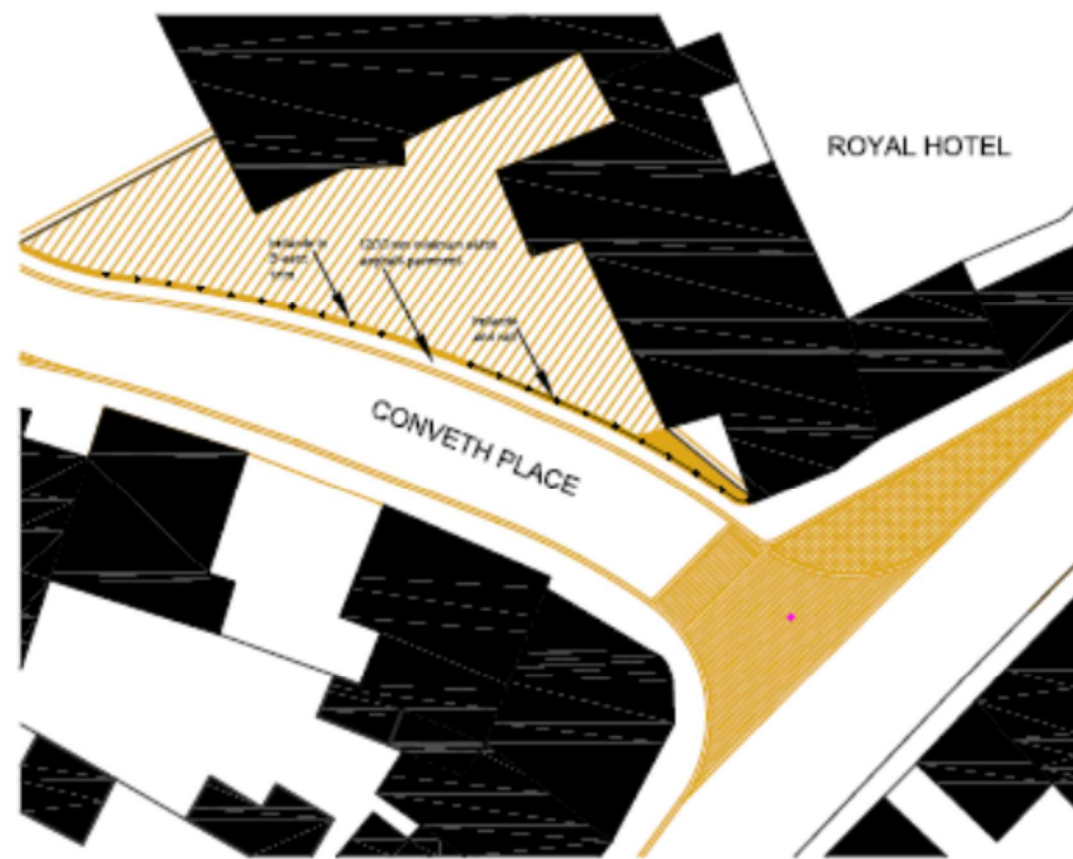
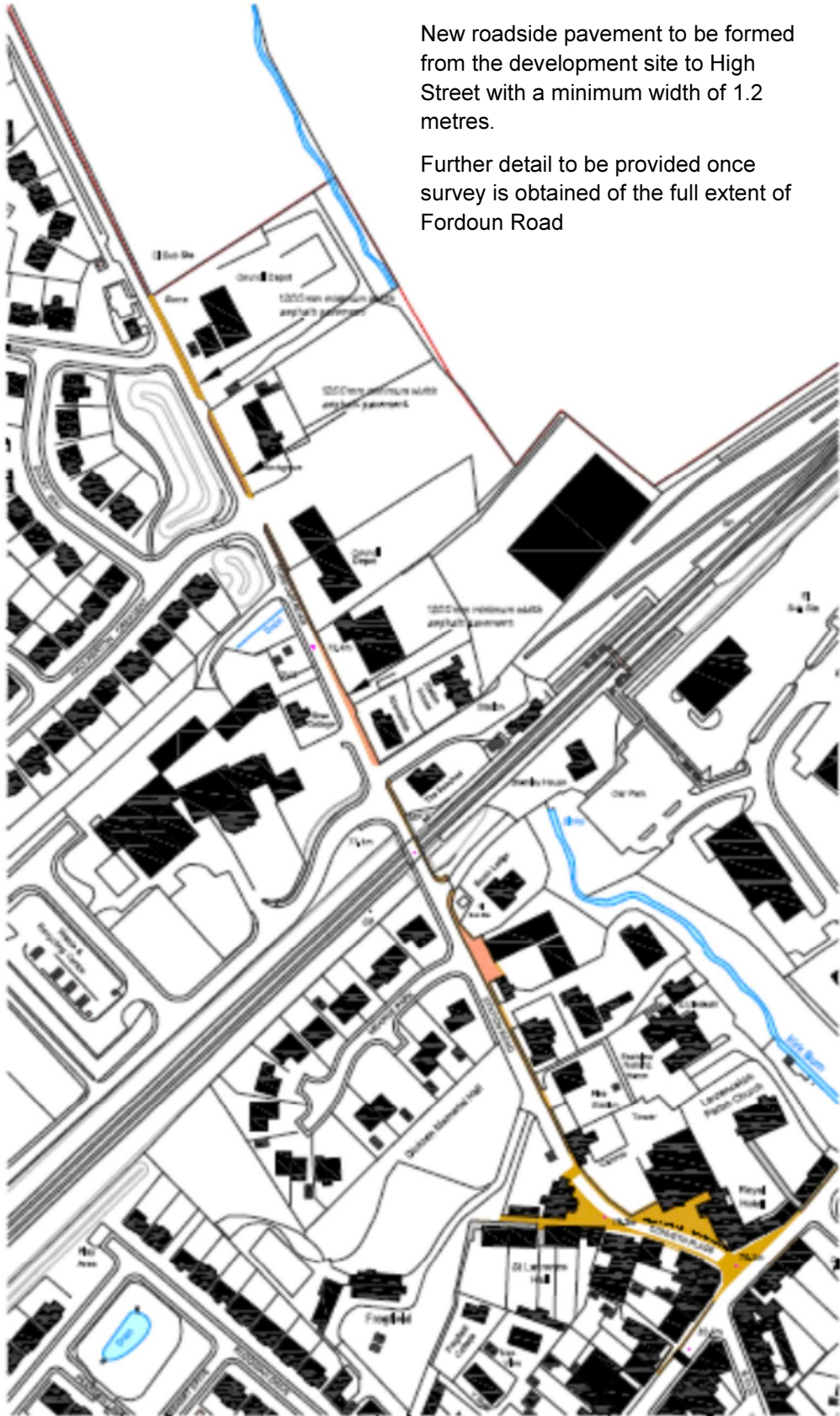


Figure 37: Junction Improvements

### 5.3 Land Use

Figure 38 identifies the proposed land use allocation as set out in the Development Framework. The Masterplan area covers approximately 32 hectares of mixed density **housing**. The Masterplan site will be developed from its western boundary in an eastern direction as far as the major green corridor running north—south along the middle of the site. This feature creates a defensible boundary for the Masterplan area.

Adjacent to this, outwith the Masterplan area, is land set aside for a new primary school and neighbourhood facility, although this will be delivered with future phases of development if the need arises. Figure 38 on page 30 shows the layout of the Masterplan area in more detail.

25% **affordable housing** will be provided. The exact details of the tenure, mix and delivery mechanism is to be agreed through the planning application process in consultation with Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Gain department, housing and the relevant Housing Associations. The affordable housing should be distributed throughout the development and carefully integrated with mainstream housing.

**Employment land** covering approximately 11 ha is also allocated within the first phase of the Local Development Plan. This is located to the south of Aberdeen Road and will ensure the integration of housing and employment land early in the development process to encourage a sustainable settlement. This has been provided in response to the public consultation exercise which raised the desire of locals for provision of land uses in tandem to prevent Laurencekirk becoming a commuter town.

**Community Facilities** are being provided as part of the new Mearns Academy and pedestrian links will be provided to and from the site. Community facilities within the Masterplan area include **open space** and the network of footpaths which will provide opportunities for informal recreation for the local community. This will link the site with the wider area, including the land set aside for the Primary School and Neighbourhood Facility located within the wider Development Framework area.

A comprehensive **drainage** system will be provided across the site. Drainage features across the site will be given prominence within open spaces and within the street design. They will be designed to maximise their aesthetic and ecological value. Further details are provided in Section 5.5.

Land will be provided on site for a small recycling point along with provision of glass only recycling facilities. The site lies within close proximity of the existing waste and recycling facilities in Laurencekirk. A contribution will be made to their improvement through the Planning Gain requirements for the site.

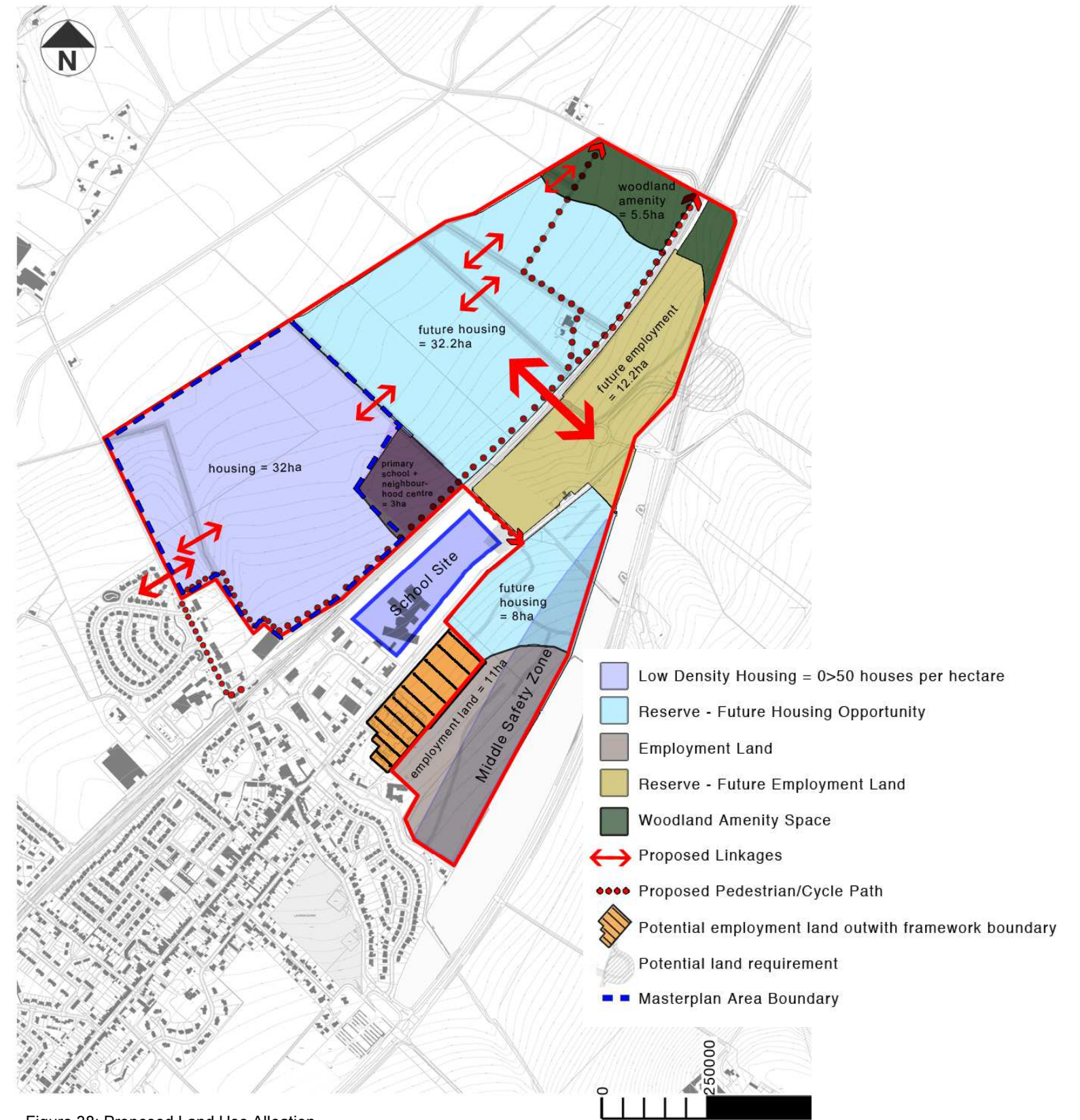


Figure 38: Proposed Land Use Allocation

## 5.4 Built Form

Figure 39 on page 32 develops the land use allocation, landscape strategy and pedestrian and vehicular routes a stage further by showing an indicative layout for the Masterplan area, identifying housing plots set in a network of open spaces, demonstrating their relationship with this open space and the pedestrian and vehicular routes through the site. Links to future areas are also made clear.

The concept is focused on the design of a new neighbourhood quarter which seeks to create a sense of place, encompassing a number of aspects, most notably:

- Local distinctiveness
- Visual quality; and
- Potential to encourage social and communal activity.

This will be achieved by the considering the following:

### Climate/orientation

Landscaping along the western boundary of the Masterplan area will protect housing from the prevailing south westerly winds. Where possible, properties will have habitable rooms facing south to maximise passive solar gain.

### Design code/urban design

The Masterplan area will create a high quality residential environment and by responding to specific site characteristics, existing boundary conditions, including agricultural edges, paths, tracks and existing natural site features. Links will also be provided from the site to neighbouring areas to create a well connected residential environment.

The design offers a clear hierarchy of shared surface spaces, streets, paths and a public green space, all of which assist in reducing vehicle speeds and create a more pedestrian friendly environment. These will act as focal points within the development. Indicative visuals of the site are shown on page 32.

Housing will provide the opportunity to live in an affordable, low energy, well landscaped, diverse and socially rich neighbourhood.

Details of street furniture, surfacing and signage will be agreed at the planning application stage as discussions are ongoing with Aberdeenshire Council in this respect.

Public art, if considered necessary will be agreed through discussions with Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Gain department and final details provided at the planning application stage. Should it be required, the developers will engage with local community representatives to agree an appropriate way forward.

### Scale, massing, materials

Housing will range in floorspace from 59 square metres to 200 square metres, offering a variety of accommodation and styles, in keeping with the surrounding area.

The materials utilised within the village are based upon sandstone, harling/ render, slate roofs and timber windows. The overall aim of the development is to utilise a pallet of materials and colours which reflect the colour and texture of the village. Planning applications will require to be supported by a Design Statement explaining the design and use of materials, finishes and colours. The following should be considered;

- Use a small range of compatible materials rather than a wide ranging mix of materials, textures and colours;
- Synthetic stone should resemble the local red sandstone and the use of render and harling should compliment the colours of the area;
- Concrete roof tiles should resemble slate (e.g. Marley Duo Modern) and clay pantiles (e.g. Marley Mendip) found in the area and black downpipes and guttering should be used.

### Height, density and housing mix

The site lies within a Strategic Growth Area and the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan considers that all housing developments over 1 ha in the SGA's should generally have no less than 30 dwellings per hectare.

Due to the size of the overall allocation set out in the Development Framework area, a range of densities is appropriate across the site. The Masterplan area covers land identified in the Development Framework for mixed density housing (Figure 38 on page 30). The density of this area will average around 14 dwellings per hectare with pockets of higher density development close to the neighbourhood centre and railway station. Lower density development to the north and on Fordoun Road will provide a softer approach to the development entrance. This is similar to existing residential densities in the area.

The Masterplan area will deliver a range of house types, suitable to the Laurencekirk locality. It is envisaged that a variety of styles will be adopted from 1, 1 1/2 and 2 storey dwellings. These will range from 2—4 bedroom semi detached and detached houses located on a range of plot sizes across the site. The site will accommodate 25% affordable housing, therefore meeting a variety of housing needs.

### Adaptability

The Masterplan area allows for flexibility and adaptability in that the low density houses are built in generous plots which will allow for future expansion/ renovation of the properties that will be beneficial to all potential residents.

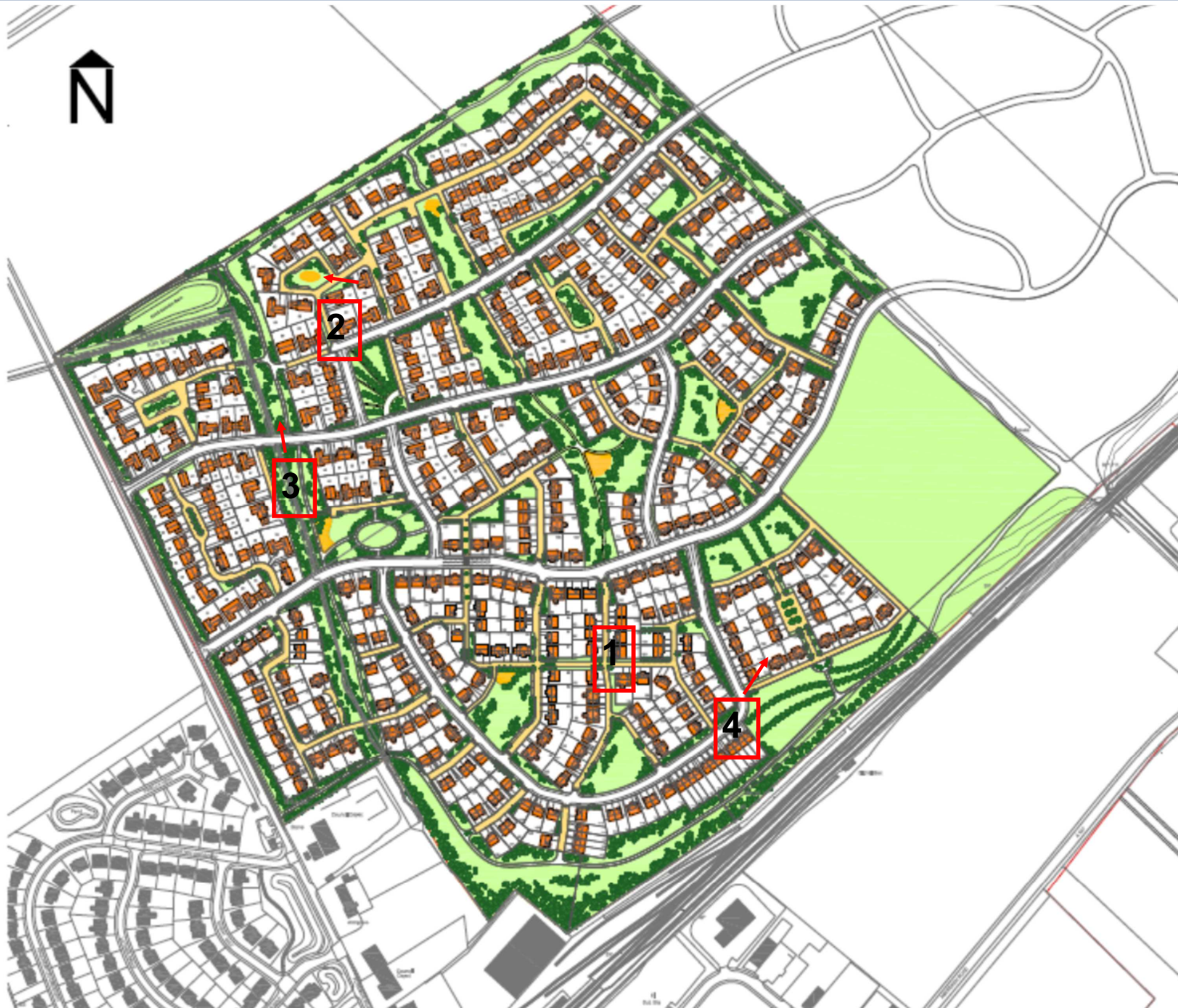


Figure 39: Indicative Masterplan Layout







### Security

The Masterplan area aims to provide a range of safe and pleasant neighbourhoods that encourage public interaction. New footpaths and public open spaces are overlooked by housing, therefore providing surveillance of public areas.

The footpath to the underpass will provide a safe route to school for those walking to the new Mearns Academy and links will be provided to existing public footpaths in the area to provide safe routes for children walking to the primary school.

The design and layout of the buildings will meet current standards of sustainability promoted by Aberdeenshire Council as required by Building Regulations. The implementation of carbon reducing technologies will be discussed with the Council at the planning application stage, should they be required.

### Sustainability

The developers widely promote the “fabric first” approach which looks at how the careful use of materials, design and construction of the houses can reduce energy consumption. This is achieved by improving the airtightness and thermal efficiency of the building envelope which can then be supplemented in the future, where necessary, with proven and efficient renewable technologies. Their clear objective is to build high quality houses that will last. Houses that are easy to use and comfortable to live in whilst delivering excellent energy performance in the process.



### 5.5 Infrastructure

The development of the Masterplan area will facilitate the first phase of the delivery of the Distributor Road. Details of this and the network of internal roads is provided in Section 5.2.

A comprehensive drainage system will be provided across the Development Framework site, improving water quality and managing the flow of water from the site. The aim of the drainage strategy is to create a visible and legible system which reveals the process to residents, allowing them to understand the function of these elements.

To achieve this, drainage features have been given prominence within open space and the street design. Given the prominence of these, it is therefore essential that the elements of the drainage system are designed to maximise their aesthetic and ecological value, creating sustainable elements that are fully integrated within other urban design features within the development.

### Foul Drainage

New foul sewers will be provided to serve the development and will be located within roads and areas of open ground where necessary. Sewers will be designed and installed in accordance with “Sewers for Scotland, Second Edition, November 2007”, published by WRc plc.

Proposed foul sewers will connect to the existing public drainage system serving Laurencekirk and each plot will discharge to the new sewer via a single disconnecting chamber located within its own curtilage. Upgrades are required to the Waste Water Treatment works, the details of which will be agreed during the planning application process.

### Surface Water

The development provides the opportunity to enhance existing watercourses and fully incorporate them within the development layout linked by open space to areas of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs). There will be a full range of solutions to help manage and control site drainage which will include:

- Prevention—reducing the amount of runoff by minimising impermeable surfaces etc
- Source Control – rain water harvesting, permeable paving etc
- Site Control—swales, detention basins, overland conveyance etc, and
- Regional Control—basins, wetlands, ponds etc

In accordance with the requirements of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and to meet guidance of CIRIA 697—the SUDs Manual, a Surface Water Management Strategy has been prepared.

It is proposed to attenuate all future surface water development run-off, so that existing greenfield run-off rates are not exceeded. In more detailed design and approvals a discharge rate in litres/second/hectare will be agreed with Aberdeenshire Council, as the rate at which surface water can be discharged to existing watercourses in and around the site extents.

Due to topography and anticipated phasing, a series of SUDs features will be developed across the site, separated from existing watercourses but interlinked where possible by open space, so that there is integration between drainage, layout and core open space, with drainage requirements being an integral feature of the overall design.

The Indicative Masterplan Layout on page 32 Identifies this to the north east of the site, within the first phase of development as shown in more detail in Figure 39. It is anticipated that this will lie within the wider Development Framework and Masterplan boundary, however, for technical reasons, this may require to be located just outwith the boundary area. The final location will be determined through the Drainage Impact Assessment which will be submitted with the planning application(s) for the site and will ensure adequate separation from existing watercourses.



Figure 40: Indicative SUDs Location

Attenuation and treatment, up to two levels, will be required, which could be provided by a combination of detention basins, ponds and conveyance swales. Linear SUDs will be created in the form of filter trenches and cellular storage units running adjacent to, but separated from, the burn.

All the SUDs features will be designed as integral parts of the core open space network as demonstrated in Figure 40. These will be designed as part of the open spaces in which they are located, in accordance with the Design Principles of Core Spaces.

# 6. PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

## 6.1 Phasing

Figure 41 identifies a phasing plan for the Masterplan area. This envisages the development of 471 dwellings across the site in 6 distinct phases, over the next 7-10 years approximately.

**Phase 1**—is located in the western most part of the Masterplan area and provides access to the site from Fordoun Road to the west. It extends to approximately 6.5 hectares and a total of 87 houses are to provided within this area between Fordoun Road and as far as the first watercourse to the north of the distributor road and just east of the watercourse to the south of the distributor road. The first phase of the distributor road is also provided, along with landscaping, open space and SUDs

Aberdeenshire Council have commissioned a study to consider employment uses in Laurencekirk, including the former Mearns Academy site. This site could provide access to the 11 hectares of employment land identified in the Development Framework area as part of the first phase of development. Should the redevelopment of the former Academy not progress alternative access can be provided from Aberdeen Road to the employment land. This would ensure the integration of land uses early in the development process in response to issues raised at the consultation stage.

Phase 1 of the housing will be developed by A&J Stephen to the north and Kirkwood Homes to the south. It is anticipated that this phase will commence in Spring 2014. At the appropriate stage in the development process, the joint developers will discuss the detail and practicalities for the provision of the required infrastructure.

Phase 2 and 3 housing will also be developed jointly by A&J Stephen and Kirkwood Homes as demonstrated in Figure 41, with the remaining phases under the control of Kirkwood Homes. The exact unit numbers to be delivered in each phase will be driven by market conditions at the time of development. The development will be phased in conjunction with advice from Education and Planning Gain services, however, indicative housing numbers are provided below:

Phase 2—7.94 hectares—106 houses

Phase 3—7.46 hectares—108 houses

Phase 4—4.12 hectares— 55 houses

Phase 5—4.45 hectares—67 houses

Phase 6—3.24 hectares—48 houses

The exact infrastructure requirements to deliver each phase will be determined through the Transport Assessment, Drainage Impact Assessment and through discussions with Aberdeenshire Council's planning gain department. Landscaping and open space will be provided in line with the requirements of the Local Development Plan.

A Delivery Statement will be submitted with Planning Application(s) for the site providing further details of how the proposed development and supporting infrastructure will be delivered and when.

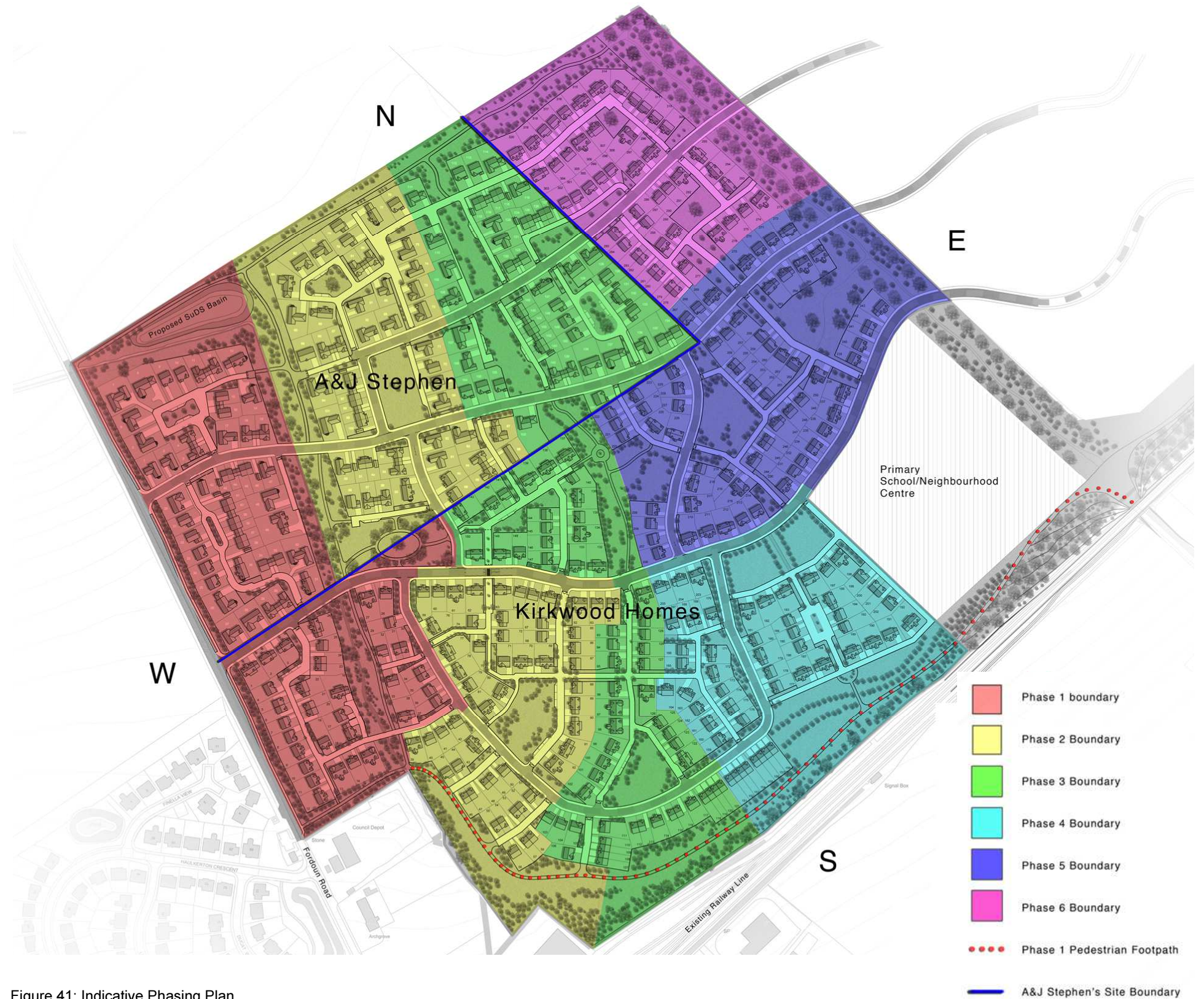


Figure 41: Indicative Phasing Plan

## 6.2 Developer Contributions

Aberdeenshire Council identified the infrastructure requirements for Laurencekirk during the Local Development Plan process. This includes:

### Transportation

A section of distributor road around Laurencekirk is required (from the Fordoun Road to the A90): This will be phased to coincide with the northward expansion of development. Any development beyond 300 houses to the west of the railway will require the formation of a new railway crossing and connections to Aberdeen Road unless it can be demonstrated through further assessment that the existing road network has the capacity to accommodate further development.

Grade separated access onto the A90: The Transport Assessment will establish the scale of development that can be accommodated by minor improvements to the existing 'at grade' junction. NESTRANS however, are currently assessing access options for Laurencekirk and a contribution to a Grade Separated Junction may be necessary.

### Water

Upgrades are required to the water main, Causeywell Service Reservoir and Laurencekirk Waste Water Treatment Works.

### Education

A new primary school and contributions the new academy may be required: Aberdeenshire Council are currently proposing an extension to the primary school capable of accommodating an additional 50 pupils. Developer contributions will be required towards the cost of this extension. Further extensions and/or a new primary school may be required depending upon the pace of development. This will be reviewed following completion of the first 100 houses.

A new Mearns Academy has recently been completed and has capacity to accommodate the first 100 houses. However, an extension to the Academy may be required to accommodate development beyond this. Again this will require review following the completion of the first 100 houses.

### Health

A contribution to an extension to the health centre is required: Contributions will require to be agreed through the planning application process and developers are encouraged to contact NHS Grampian to determine the potential scale of those.

### Recycling and Waste

An additional recycling point and extension of the household waste recycling centre (or replacement) is required.

### Open Space

Open space contributions should include two community grass pitches and

changing facilities and allotments.

These contributions are required for the settlement of Laurencekirk as a whole and not all will apply specifically to the Masterplan area.

The Transport Assessment identifies the need to provide certain improvements, including upgrades to the (A90) Trunk Road junction and upgrades to the Fordoun Road/High Street junction. Appropriate trigger points are highlighted above and will be agreed with the relevant authorities through the application process.

The impact of the development of the Masterplan area on the Fordoun Road/High Street junction has been assessed through the Transport Assessment. This demonstrates that there is no capacity concern at the junction. However, in order to facilitate good pedestrian connectivity, improvements will be made to this junction to improve both vehicle and pedestrian movements. This could potentially include a formalised pedestrian crossing of the High Street, to safely link footpath provision on both sides of the carriageway.

Any improvements will be designed and agreed with Aberdeenshire Council as part of the planning application(s) for the site.

The amount and type of contributions for the Masterplan area will be commensurate with the scale and impact of development as required by Scottish Government Circular 1/2010: Planning Agreements.

Discussions have taken place with Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Gain, Housing, Education and Roads departments in relation to Developer contributions. This is ongoing and will evolve through the application process.

Developers will not be expected to make good existing shortfalls and contributions will be the subject of negotiation and agreement at the planning application stage. The developers will enter into a Legal Agreement with Aberdeenshire Council to ensure the delivery of all financial contributions. It is envisaged that each developer will contribute a pre-determined amount per completed house.

Additional requirements for the Masterplan area include:

### Affordable Housing

Affordable Housing will be provided in accordance with the approved Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. 25% of the total housing allocation will be identified as Affordable Housing. A range of options for Affordable Housing will be provided which will comply with the requirements of the local area.

Initial discussion have been held with Aberdeenshire Council's Strategic Development Officer (Affordable Housing) and indicative proportions have been identified. This is expected to comprise 60% social rented, 20% mid market and 20% low cost home ownership, however, the delivery of social rented accommodation is constrained by funding and these figures are a guide only.

Aberdeenshire Council have also indicated the range of sizes considered appropriate and these are as follows

1 bed - 33%

2 bed - 30%

3 bed - 35%

4 bed - 2%

There may be a requirement for particular needs properties, however, this will become clear as the planning application(s) progress. The exact type, style and location will therefore be agreed with Aberdeenshire Council and the appropriate Affordable Housing provider in due course. Discussions in this regard are ongoing.

### Education

A Primary School capacity review has been undertaken by Aberdeenshire Council and an extension to the primary school is proposed. Contributions will be required to this.

Land has been set aside within the wider Development Framework area for a new primary school should it be required.

Discussions are ongoing with Aberdeenshire Council in relation to education contributions and these will be agreed, in scale with the Masterplan area during the planning application process.

### 6.3 Management arrangements

The responsibility for on-going management arrangement for communal areas, such as landscaping and play areas will be discussed with Aberdeenshire Council as part of the planning application process. It is likely that responsibility will be passed to residents through a factoring arrangement.

It is anticipated that SUDs measures will be of a standard and type suitable for adoption by either Aberdeenshire Council or Scottish Water. Appropriate management and maintenance of the SUDs will be essential to the success of the SUDs components as an effective and attractive element of the development.

### 6.4 Further Information

For further information, please contact:

Infrastructure Services  
Woodhill House  
Westburn Road  
Aberdeen  
AB16 5GB

This Masterplan has been prepared in consultation with Aberdeenshire Council by:



# APPENDIX 1

## Press Advert

### Public Exhibition for Proposed Development Framework & Masterplan

#### Conveth of Mains, Laurencekirk

Kirkwood Homes Ltd and A&J Stephen Ltd invite you to a public exhibition where proposals for a Development Framework and Masterplan for the Conveth of Mains site in North Laurencekirk (designated as M1) in the adopted Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan, will be on display.

#### The exhibition will be held at the following time and location:

Thursday 28th February 2013

Dickson Memorial Hall, AB30 1BE (4pm-8pm)

At the exhibition, members of the public will have the opportunity to discuss the Development Framework and Masterplan with the project team and provide feedback via the questionnaire provided. Forms can be completed on the day or returned FREEPOST as per the details below, and should be returned no later than 14th March 2013.

(Please note that comments made will be to the prospective applicant, not the planning authority. There will be an opportunity to submit representations to the planning authority upon submission of the Development Framework and Masterplan.)

For further information on the exhibition or any aspect of the Development Framework and Masterplan, please call 0131 226 1951; email [ewan.glen@ppsgroup.co.uk](mailto:ewan.glen@ppsgroup.co.uk) or write to FREEPOST RTAG-ZUJB-HSKC, c/o PPS Group, 27 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2PA.



## Newspaper Articles

Friday, February 22, 2013

### News

## Have your say on Laurencekirk vision

SAUCHEN based housing developer, Kirkwood Homes Ltd, in conjunction with A&J Stephen of Perth, will be hosting an initial one-day public exhibition in the Dickson Memorial Hall next week.

The exhibition on Thursday, February 28, from 4pm-8pm will seek feedback and input to the preparation of a development framework and masterplan for the 278-acre site at Conveth of Mains, North Laurencekirk.

Conveth of Mains already has been the subject of substantial consultation dating back to 2008 when it was considered as a potential allocation within the then proposed Local Development Plan (LDP).

The site is now allocated for future mixed-use development in the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan, which was adopted in June 2012.

Allan Rae, land director at Kirkwood Homes Ltd, said: "Having taken this site through the LDP process, we are happy to provide the local community with a further opportunity to shape the design and vision for the future development of Laurencekirk through the Conveth of Mains site."

"The Development Framework and Masterplan will provide an essential platform for both Kirkwood Homes Ltd and A&J Stephen, to work with the local community in taking forward deliverable and viable development whilst fully taking on board the aspirations and comments of all stakeholders."

"We hope that the local community grasp this opportunity to attend the exhibition and play an important part in the future strategic expansion of the town."

## Locals get chance to shape venture

### DEVELOPMENT

Mearns residents will get the chance to shape a major development earmarked for Laurencekirk next week.

Nearly 900 homes could be built at Conveth of Mains, in the north of the town, along with scores of business units.

Developers Kirkwood Homes and A. & J. Stephen will host a public exhibition on Thursday to get feedback from locals to help them prepare their masterplan for the 278-acre site.

The land has been allocated for a mixed-use scheme in the local development plan, with space for up to 885 houses and 27 acres of employment land.

Before the official plans can be lodged however, the

### "Strategic location with excellent public transport links"

developers need to draw up a framework and masterplan outlining the infrastructure provision and how the scheme will be phased.

The public consultation will give people the chance to have their say, with the opinions fed into preparatory work.

Allan Rae, land director for Sauchen-based Kirkwood Homes, said: "Having taken this site through the local development plan process, we are happy to provide the local community with a further opportunity to shape the design and vision for the future development of Laurencekirk through the Conveth of Mains site."

"We hope that the local



Allan Rae: invites locals to attend exhibition

community grabs this opportunity to attend the exhibition and play an important part in the future

strategic expansion of the town."

John Stephen, of Perth-based A. & J. Stephen, added: "We believe the entire site, with its strategic location on to the A90 and excellent public transport links via the train station at Laurencekirk is well placed to provide a sympathetic and importantly planned extension of the town while fully respecting and complementing the existing development pattern."

The event will run from 4-8pm at Dickson Memorial Hall, Laurencekirk.

## Mearns residents give feedback on homes plan

### PLANNING

More than 100 Mearns residents flocked to an exhibition to share their vision for the future of their town this week.

Nearly 900 homes could

be built at Conveth of Mains, north of Laurencekirk, with scores of business units.

Developers Kirkwood Homes and A&J Stephen hosted an event on Thursday to get feedback from

locals to help them draw up their masterplan for the 278-acre site.

The land has been allocated for a mixed-use scheme in the local development plan, with space for up to 885 houses and

27 acres of employment land.

Before the official plans can be lodged, the developers need to draft a framework and masterplan - but wanted to get the views of locals first.

Allan Rae, land director at Sauchen-based Kirkwood Homes, said: "We will now analyse this feedback which will importantly help inform the design process for the site going forward."

A follow-up event will be held on March 28 in the town's Dickson Memorial Hall to show further detail on the plans, and to give the local community a further chance to have their say.

## 01 WELCOME

Kirkwood Homes Ltd, in partnership with A&J Stephen Ltd, welcome you to today's Public Exhibition, where we are seeking feedback and comment on the preparation of a Development Framework and Masterplan for the 278 acre site at Conveth of Mains, North Laurencekirk.

The proposed site at Conveth of Mains has already been the subject of substantial consultation dating back to 2008, when it was considered as a potential allocation within the then proposed Aberdeenshire Council Local Development Plan (LDP). The site is now allocated (site M1) for mixed-use development in the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan, which was adopted in June 2012. The Development Framework and Masterplan will therefore look to set the principles of both planning and design philosophy, which would guide the future development of the entire M1 site.

### KIRKWOOD HOMES LTD

Seuchen based Kirkwood Homes is one of the longest established independently owned new house builders in Scotland. Established in 1985, Kirkwood has a strong track record of building family homes in the North East, and is pleased to be bringing forward these plans for Laurencekirk.

### A&J STEPHEN LTD

Established in 1995, Stephen is a family firm with over 75 years' experience, building high quality developments in outstanding locations throughout Scotland. Having long held a desire to build homes in the North East, Stephen see Laurencekirk as the perfect location to do this and have worked closely with Kirkwood Homes to help achieve this ambition.



### Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan

The Conveth of Mains site at Laurencekirk is included within Aberdeenshire Council's Local Development Plan as site M1. The M1 site provides an allocation for a mix of uses, including 885 houses in two phases - with 485 houses in the first phase and 400 houses in the second phase; approximately 11 hectares of employment land; and approximately 16 hectares of strategic reserve employment land.



AERIAL VIEW OF SITE



## 02 CONVETH OF MAINS SITE ANALYSIS



SITE LOCATION & ANALYSIS PLAN



The Site is generally constrained by the following:

- The main East Coast railway line divides the site into two distinct areas
- Gas pipeline safety zone running parallel to the A90
- The A90 trunk Road
- Existing Road Network

It should also be noted that land reserved for delivery of the new Mearns Academy; the private land to the immediate North West of the new Academy; as well as the Train Station and the existing watercourses on the North West of the Site are also barriers to the proposed development.



## 03 DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND MASTERPLAN

### Development Framework

The Development Framework is a broad and over-arching document. The aim is to provide a clear framework to guide the future development of the site. It will consider the main issues associated with the site, including; Land Use, Infrastructure and Phasing.

### Masterplan

The Masterplan will take the Development Framework a step further and consider the development of the site in more detail. This will cover the first phase of development. The aim of the Masterplan will be to ensure that this development is designed to the highest standard, taking account of specific opportunities and constraints in the area. It will provide a vision for the development of the site, a site analysis and appraisal, design and layout and procedural requirements. Importantly, it will be used to inform future planning applications for the site.



DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN



## 04 DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND MASTERPLAN

### Outline Framework Proposals



- The initial housing phases will be serviced from the existing Fordoun Road. As the phased development progresses, it is envisaged that a new road will have to be provided across the railway line to link in to the new trunk road network.
- The link road will form an integral part of the layout design for the individual housing phases.
- Each phase of the development will be defined by the proposed green space corridors which provide the landscape framework for the site, creating and easily accessible open space network that includes greens, parks, play spaces and to the north of the site a community woodland.
- East-west connections are defined as green space corridors and the north-south linkages are provided by a significant green buffer space alongside the railway corridor and similarly along the western boundary providing a completely inter-connected network.
- Connections will be made at the site boundary to enable linkages to the town facilities.
- A potential site has been identified within the layout for a new primary school should this be required in the future.
- In the initial phases of development, links will be provided from the housing areas to the new Mearns Academy, either from the existing town footpath network or via the existing railway underpass.
- To the south-east, it is envisaged that there will be employment land and future employment land allocation.
- Also within this sector, there will be an allocation of medium density housing, with some dwellings fronting on to the existing Aberdeen Road, and designed to reinforce the townscape form of the existing High Street.
- Traffic calming measures will be introduced on this Aberdeen Road in the vicinity of the new housing and the new Mearns Academy.
- As the development continues on the site, the Development Framework envisages that a new trunk road grade separated junction may be provided off the A90, which could open up potential sites for facilities such as a hotel and additional employment land.
- The Development Framework envisages that the North-West sector of the site will essentially be for residential development.



## 05 NEXT STEPS

### Thank you very much for attending



(Please note that comments made will be to the prospective applicant, not the planning authority. There will be an opportunity to submit representations to the planning authority upon submission of the Development Framework and Masterplan.)

Kirkwood Homes Ltd and A&J Stephen Ltd will be hosting a follow up public exhibition in March 2013 to display refined proposals for the M1 site.

We are therefore keen to obtain feedback from the local community and would be grateful if you could fill in a questionnaire to let us know what you think about the proposed Development Framework and Masterplan. Members of the project team are on hand to answer any questions that you may have.

We do hope that you will take this opportunity to play an important part in shaping the vision for Convent of Mairns and the future development of Laurencekirk.

Forms can be completed on the day or returned FREEPOST as per the details below, and should be returned no later than 14th March 2013.

For further information on the exhibition or any aspect of the Development Framework and Masterplan, please call 0131 226 1951; email [ewan.glen@ppgroup.co.uk](mailto:ewan.glen@ppgroup.co.uk) or write to:

FREEPOST RTAG-ZUJB-HSKC,  
c/o PPS Group,  
27 George Street,  
Edinburgh, EH2 2PA



### WE WELCOME YOUR FEEDBACK

Don't forget to complete our feedback form, so your views can help shape the future development of Laurencekirk.



## Feedback Form

### Introduction

Kirkwood Homes Ltd and A&J Stephen Ltd would like to take this opportunity to thank you for visiting the exhibition and viewing the initial thoughts and ideas for the preparation of a Development Framework and Masterplan for the 278 acre site at Convent of Mairns, North Laurencekirk.

It is very important to us that we receive feedback on the Development Framework or Masterplan. We would be therefore grateful if you could complete the brief questionnaire below, which will help inform the design and future development of Laurencekirk.

1. Gender: Male / Female
2. Age: 16 or under 16-29 30-39 40-49 50-65 over 65
3. Are you: Employed Self-employed Student Retired Other

We welcome your comments on any aspect of the Development Framework or Masterplan.

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### Thank you for completing our questionnaire.

Name: .....

Signature: .....

Home address: .....

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Email: ..... Date: .....

Telephone Number: .....

Would you like to be kept informed of the proposals?  
Yes  No

If you answered 'yes' please ensure you have left a suitable contact address/email address.

If you have any further comments please get in contact:

Email: [ewan.glen@ppgroup.co.uk](mailto:ewan.glen@ppgroup.co.uk)  
Phone: 0131 226 1951  
Post: Freepost RTAG-ZUJB-HSKC  
Kirkwood Homes Ltd  
c/o PPS Group  
27/2 George Street  
Edinburgh, EH2 2PA

All Feedback must be received by 14th March 2013

Please note that comments made will be to the prospective applicant, not the planning authority (Aberdeenshire Council). There will be an opportunity to submit representations to the planning authority upon submission of the Development Framework and Masterplan.  
Disclaimer: Your comments may be passed on to Aberdeenshire Council who will consider it when considering any planning proposals in due course. Under the Data Protection Act 1998, we have a legal duty to protect any personal information we collect from you. We will only use personal information you supply to us for the reason that you provided it for. We will only hold your information for as long as necessary to fulfil that purpose. We will not pass your information to any other parties unless this is made clear to you at the time you supplied it.



# APPENDIX 2

## Newspaper Advert

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been, in real consensus with regard to  
improving the situation on the Buse.  
A letter from Roads Manager Stuart  
McFarlane said: "In order to assess the  
opinion of the wider community groups  
I will consult with the local councillors  
safety in this age of  
Safety awareness, someone should be  
carrying out a risk assessment and taking  
preventative action before an accident  
occurs"

### Public Exhibition for updated Development Framework, Masterplan and First Phase Development Proposals

#### Conveth Mains, Laurencekirk

Kirkwood Homes Ltd & A&J Stephen Ltd invite you to a public exhibition where an updated Development Framework, Masterplan and first phase development of up to 300 houses and associated infrastructure will be on display for the Conveth Mains site in North Laurencekirk.

**The exhibition will be held at the following time and location:**  
Thursday 28th March 2013  
Dickson Memorial Hall, AB30 1BE (4pm-8pm)

At the exhibition, members of the public will have the opportunity to discuss the Development Framework, Masterplan, and first phase development proposals with the project team and provide feedback via the questionnaire provided. Forms can be completed on the day or returned FREEPOST as per the details below, and **should be returned no later than 14th April 2013.**

Please note that comments made will be to the prospective applicant, not the planning authority. There will be an opportunity to submit representations to the planning authority upon submission of the Development Framework, Masterplan and first phase development proposals.

For further information on the exhibition or any aspect of the development proposals, please call 0131 226 1951, email [ewan.glen@ppsgroup.co.uk](mailto:ewan.glen@ppsgroup.co.uk) or write to

FREEPOST RTAG-ZUJB-HSKC,  
c/o PPS Group,  
27 George Street,  
Edinburgh, EH2 2PA.



andtodd.com

KIRKWOOD HOMES LTD / A&J STEPHEN LTD - LAURENCEKIRK

## 01 WELCOME

Kirkwood Homes Ltd, in partnership with A&J Stephen Ltd, welcome you to this evening's exhibition. Following feedback received from the local community at the previous exhibition held on the 28th February 2013, we have on display an updated Development Framework, Masterplan, and a proposed First Phase development for the Conveth Mains site.



We would welcome further comments from you on the mixed-use proposals outlined in the following boards and should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask members of the project team.

### KIRKWOOD HOMES LTD

Sauchen based Kirkwood Homes is one of the longest established independently owned new house builders in Scotland. Established in 1985, Kirkwood has a strong track record of building family homes in the North East, and is pleased to be bringing forward these plans for Laurencekirk.

### A&J STEPHEN LTD

Established in 1935, Stephen is a family firm with over 75 years' experience, building high quality developments in outstanding locations throughout Scotland. Having long held a desire to build homes in the North East, Stephen sees Laurencekirk as the perfect location to do this and have worked closely with Kirkwood Homes to help achieve this ambition.



### Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan

The Conveth Mains site at Laurencekirk is included within Aberdeenshire Council's Local Development Plan as site M1. The M1 site provides an allocation for a mix of uses, including 885 houses in two phases - with 485 houses in the first phase and 400 houses in the second phase; approximately 11 hectares of employment land; and approximately 16 hectares of strategic reserve employment land.



KIRKWOOD HOMES LTD / A&J STEPHEN LTD - LAURENCEKIRK

## 02 FEEDBACK FROM THE PREVIOUS EXHIBITION



We welcome the feedback from the previous exhibition and below you will find a synopsis of the main points raised, and where possible how we have tried to address these within the Development Framework and Masterplan.

**Connectivity - Walking & cycling to and from the site**  
Cycle and pedestrian routes will be maintained throughout the site. Footpaths and cycle ways will be provided as part of the first phase of development, which will link to existing networks and future development areas within the Development Framework area.

**Desire to see retail in the site**  
A site is identified adjacent to land set aside for the primary school which could accommodate a small convenience store.

**Flooding/drainage**  
The site lies out with SEPA's flood risk area, however, a Flood Risk Assessment will be submitted with any planning application(s) for the site and no development will be located on any areas at risk of flooding.

**What other benefits will this bring to the village? Fear of it becoming a commuter town.**  
The Development Framework proposes a range of uses, including housing, employment and community facilities to ensure that Laurencekirk has the potential to be a self-contained settlement.

**The site is already agricultural land and so forms of development should take place**  
This site is already allocated in the Local Development Plan for both housing and employment use. As such the principle of development is therefore already accepted.

**Delivery of infrastructure**  
The planning of the development will be linked with the capacity of existing infrastructure in Laurencekirk and supporting studies are being carried out to identify this.

**Landscape**  
The proposed landscape strategy comprises a landscape buffer along the western boundary of the development to integrate housing into the landscape. A proposed network of paths across the development site will also connect to a new area of woodland in the north, whilst also creating a significant landscape feature that will sit the development naturally into the wider landscape.

**Changes to the distributor road from the initial LDP allocation consultation**  
This is due to changes in Policy, namely Designing Streets which has changed the requirements for streets through residential areas. The route proposed will be capable of taking emergency vehicles and public transport and will continue to be a distributor road around the part of Laurencekirk.

**Grade Separated Junction**  
A Grade Separated Junction is a requirement of the Local Development Plan. The Transport Assessment will provide further details as to when it is to be provided in relation to the phasing of the site.

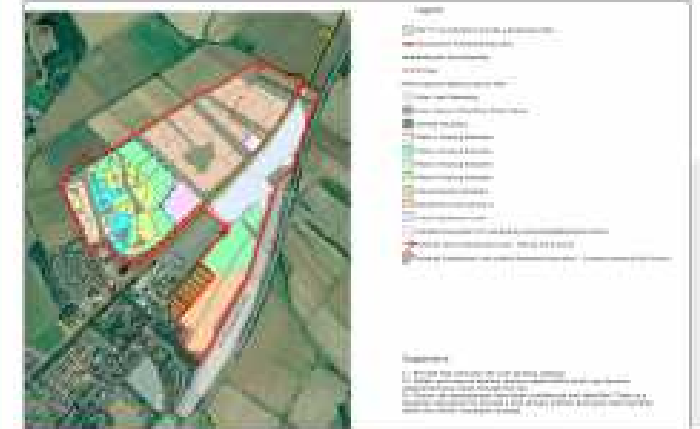
**Traffic & Transport**  
A Transport Assessment is currently being undertaken which will identify the development impacts on the surrounding streets. Appropriate mitigation measures will be provided to ensure streets are safe and congestion is minimised.

**Improved amenities for the community**  
Land has been set aside in the Development Framework area for a new primary school and neighbourhood facility, as well as land for employment use. Developer contributions will also be provided in agreement with Aberdeenshire Council at the planning application stage which will contribute to improved amenities for the community.

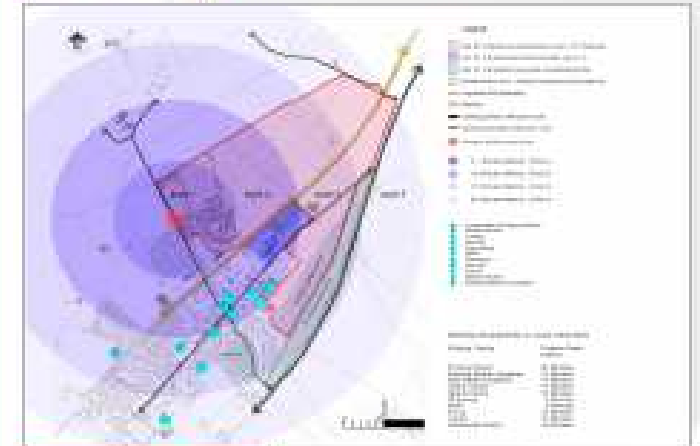


KIRKWOOD HOMES LTD / A&J STEPHEN LTD - LAURENCEKIRK

## 03 DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



CONNECTIVITY & DESIGNATING ROUTES

### Development Framework

The Development Framework is a broad and over-arching document. The aim is to provide a clear framework to guide the future development of the site. It considers the main issues associated with the site, including Land Uses, Infrastructure and Phasing. The Framework has been refined to address issues raised at the previous consultation. Land has been identified for a neighbourhood facility and a buffer strip identified behind the core house and an indicative location for a Grade Separated Junction is identified.



## 04 MASTERPLAN & FIRST PHASE DEVELOPMENT



MASTERPLAN



### Masterplan

The Masterplan takes the Development Framework a step further and considers the development of the site in more detail. This anticipates up to 300 houses and associated infrastructure. A landscape buffer along the western boundary, employment land and the footpath link to the underpass is included within the first phase of development in response to the consultation feedback.

### First Phase Development

The first phase application will lie within the Masterplan area, developed from the western boundary inwards, taking access from Fordoun Road. Indicative junction and housing layouts have been considered and plotted on a plan to give an indication of how the site can be developed.



## 05 NEXT STEPS

### Timescales

Upon approval of the Development Framework and Masterplan, the developers will submit planning application(s) for the first phases of development. This is likely to take place mid-2013, with approval expected late 2013 with a view to commencing development early 2014.

### Thank you very much for attending

Kirkwood Homes Ltd and A&J Stephen Ltd would like to thank you once again for taking the time to attend this evening's exhibition. As previously, we are keen to obtain feedback from the local community and would be grateful if you could fill in a questionnaire to let us know your thoughts on the Development Framework, Masterplan and First Phase development proposals.

We do hope that you take this opportunity to play an important part in shaping the vision for Conveth Mains and the future development of Laurencekirk.

Forms can be completed on the day or returned FREEPOST as per the details below, and should be returned no later than 14th April 2013.



### WE WELCOME YOUR FEEDBACK

For more information, please contact us in the following ways:

Email: [ewan.glen@ppsgroup.co.uk](mailto:ewan.glen@ppsgroup.co.uk)  
Telephone: 0131 226 1951

FREEPOST RTAC-ZUJB-HSKC,  
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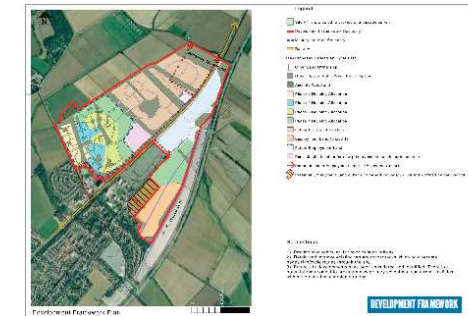
**\* Please note that comments made will be to the prospective applicant, not the planning authority. There will be an opportunity to submit representations to the planning authority (Aberdeenshire Council) upon submission of the Development Framework, Masterplan, and First Phase development proposals.**



## Feedback Form

### Questionnaire

Kirkwood Homes Ltd and A&J Stephen Ltd, thank you for attending this second public exhibition, presenting an updated Development Framework, Masterplan, and proposed First Phase development for the Conveth Mains site, Laurencekirk. It is very important that we receive feedback on all elements of the proposals, and we would therefore be grateful if you could complete the brief questionnaire overleaf.



We welcome your comments on any aspect of the Development Framework, Masterplan, and proposed First Phase development

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 .....

### Thank you for completing our questionnaire.

Name: .....  
 Signature: ..... Date: .....  
 Home address: .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 Postcode: .....  
 Email: ..... Telephone Number: .....

Would you like to be kept informed of the proposals?  
 Yes  No

If you answered 'yes' please ensure you have left a suitable contact address/email address.

If you have any further comments please get in contact:

Email: [ewan.glen@ppsgroup.co.uk](mailto:ewan.glen@ppsgroup.co.uk)  
 Phone: 0131 226 1951  
 Post: Freeport RTAC-ZUJB-HSKC  
 Kirkwood Homes Ltd  
 c/o PPS Group  
 27/2 George Street  
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All feedback must be received by 14th April 2013

Please note that comments made will be to the prospective applicant, not the planning authority (Aberdeenshire Council). There will be an opportunity to submit representations to the planning authority upon submission of the Development Framework and Masterplan and First Phase development.  
 Disclaimer: Your comments may be passed on to Aberdeenshire Council who will consider it when considering any planning proposals in due course. Under the Data Protection Act 1998, we have a legal duty to protect any personal information we collect from you. We will only use personal information you supply to us for the reasons that you provided it for. We will only hold your information for as long as necessary to fulfil that purpose. We will not pass your information to any other parties unless this is made clear to you at the time you supplied it.