



*Inchmarlo Continuing Care
Retirement Community*



INCHMARLO

Masterplan Report

April 2015

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Inchmarlo Continuing Care Retirement Community

The Inchmarlo Continuing Care Retirement Community offers a unique, specialised facility within Aberdeenshire's Royal Deeside. Established in 1986, Inchmarlo was the first such Continuing Care Retirement Community in Scotland and the first in Britain to be opened in 100 years. The development is based on the concept of independent living for those aged 55 and over, but in close association with the Care Home facilities, which can provide support and nursing care as the needs of the ageing home owners change.

Operating to the highest level of standards, the site combines a settlement that provides housing for varying needs in the attractive setting of Inchmarlo's Historic Garden and Designed Landscape.

The Local Development Plan has stated that a masterplan should be prepared for the future development of the Inchmarlo Estate, specifically to demonstrate how an existing allocation for housing development will be delivered. As a result, Skene Enterprises have taken the opportunity to consider the future needs of the community in relation to changing care standards, operational costs and staffing implications, the vagaries of the property market and the evolving expectations of home owners. These considerations have identified a need to make plans for the future management and expansion of the community with flexibility at their core to ensure that any long term strategy is sufficiently adaptable so as to respond to changing demands.

Skene Enterprises consider that some of the following range of new accommodation and facilities will be required in the future:

- New private residences
- Community Centre
- Assisted Living facilities; and,
- Additional Care Home rooms

1. Introduction



Purpose of the Masterplan Report

This Masterplan Report has been prepared by Barton Willmore Planning and Design Consultants on behalf of Skene Enterprises in partnership with Susan McFadzean Partnership, Landscape Architects and Designers. It has been produced in response to a requirement by Aberdeenshire Council for a masterplan which details the proposed development of land herein referred to as 'the Estate' at Inchmarlo Continuing Care Retirement Community, Banchory.

This Report has been prepared in compliance with the terms and provisions of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan (ALDP) 2012 and its Supplementary Guidance and the Council's Planning Advice No. 6/2012: Implementation of Policy LSD2: Layout Siting and Design of New Development and Planning Advice No. 7/2012: Implementation of Policy LSD1: Masterplanning.

Skene Enterprises (Aberdeen) Ltd have owned and managed the Estate for 30 years. Barton Willmore have been advising Skene Enterprises for around 10 years on planning and landscape planning matters. Dr. Susan McFadzean has provided advice to Skene Enterprises for around 20 years and has an intimate knowledge of the Estate.

The ALDP identifies the Estate as being subject to an allocation for 60 residential units, under the reference H1. The H1 allocation at Inchmarlo is unique when compared to a traditional development plan allocation, in that the allocation covers an entire 'settlement' as opposed to a single site within or adjacent to a settlement. The allocation will be delivered across a number of parcels within the settlement and as such a traditional masterplan and layout may not represent the best solution to masterplanning for this allocation.

We consider that a framework approach which identifies the ability of each parcel to accommodate development, with broad parameters as to what this might comprise, represents a more appropriate response to the requirement to masterplan the site.

This document therefore seeks to create a masterplan which meets the requirements of the ALDP and which can be used to influence future detailed proposals for developments within the Estate. It explains how the Estate has evolved, and seeks to set a flexible but clear framework for its future development to assist in securing a long term future for the Estate as an exemplar Continuing Care Retirement Community.

This masterplan report is structured as follows:-

SITE APPRAISAL An assessment, evaluation and illustration of the site context, and existing opportunities and constraints on the Estate.

DESIGN AIMS AND PRINCIPLES Establishing a set of guidelines from which detailed designs will be developed.

DESIGN SOLUTION – DELIVERING THE H1 ALLOCATION
An outline of the proposals for the masterplan, including a description of the site layout, scale, appearance, landscape and access of the proposed developments. Details of the approach to land form, building performance, mitigation, adaptation to climate change and suggested development phasing are also included in this section.

APPENDIX – ASPIRATIONAL AND LONG TERM OPTIONS
In a similar format to the design solutions for the masterplan sites, Skene Enterprises have identified and set out a number of additional sites which could have development potential in the longer term. These sit outwith the masterplan required to meet the H1 allocation and the merits of any proposals identified as such would be tested either through future local development plans or individual planning applications.

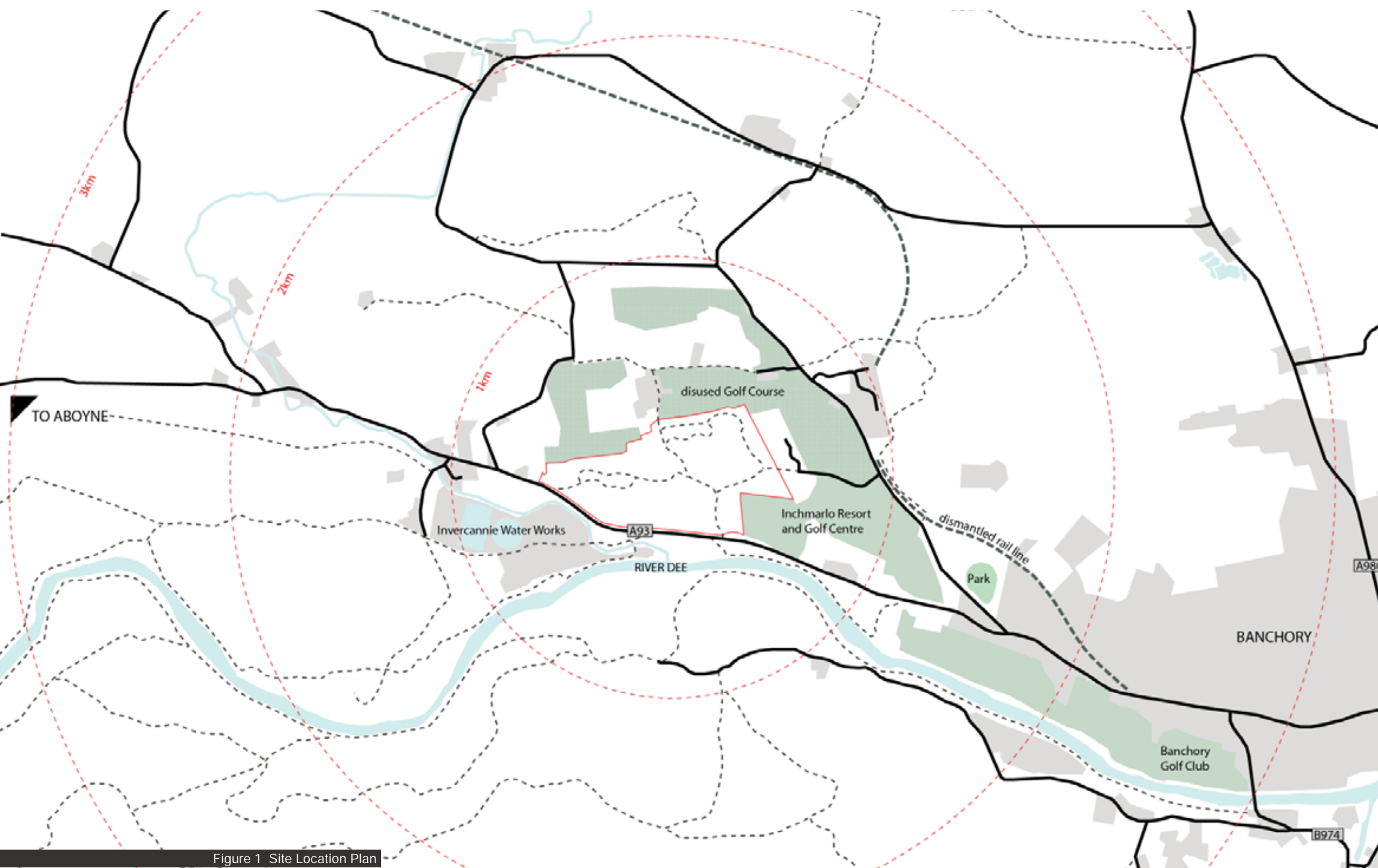
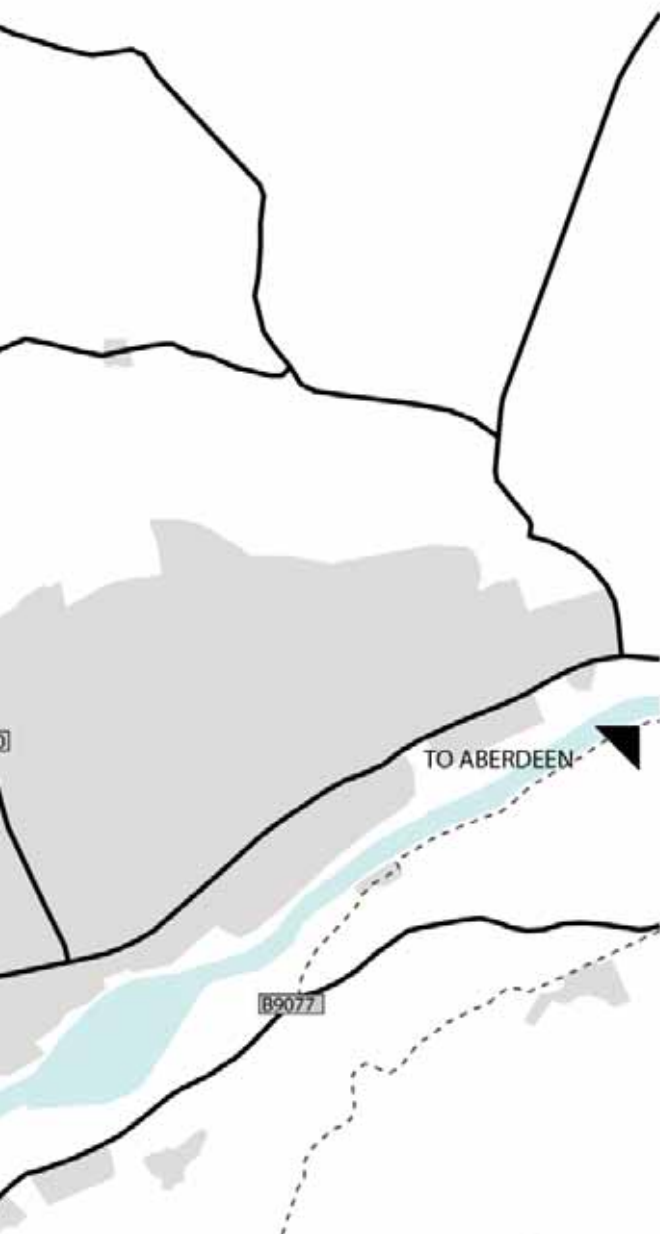


Figure 1 Site Location Plan



Estate Location and Description

The Estate is located approximately 2 kilometres west of Banchory High Street and comprises a site area of c. 37 hectares. It lies to the north of the A93, an arterial route which runs from Aberdeen City Centre westward towards Braemar and into the Cairngorm National Park. The Inchmarlo Golf Resort, which includes a 9-hole golf course, holiday apartments and villas, a driving range, bar and restaurant, stretches along the eastern boundary of the site. To the north and west of the site lies a disused 18 hole golf course, and several residential buildings.

The Estate is located on the lower, south-facing slopes of the River Dee and parts of it enjoy extensive views across the valley to Scolty Monument and the forested ridges to the south. To the north of the Estate the ground rises to forested ridges which form a backdrop to Inchmarlo House and its associated residential developments.

There were originally two access points from the A93 into the Estate, at the West and South Lodges, but only the South Lodge entrance is currently used. In the Victorian era, when the Queen drove through the Estate on her way to Balmoral, there was an eastern access from the Glassel Road via

the Queens Drive which entered half way down the eastern boundary, passed in front of Inchmarlo House and then headed for the West Lodge exit. As the land to the east is in separate ownership, only small sections of the original Queen's Drive continue to exist within the Estate, in the narrow unsurfaced tracks to the east of Garden Wood, to the west of Inchmarlo House and in front of West Lodge. A similar unsurfaced track exists to the north which extends from the Estate boundary to the former Home Farm and its associated residences adjacent to the former golf course. There are gates across both the eastern and northern tracks on the Estate boundary.

There are a number of buildings already present on the Estate of which the most notable is Inchmarlo House. This Georgian B Listed building is located within the centre of the Estate and, following its conversion into a luxury Care Home in 1987, now forms the focus for the Community. Eight retirement neighbourhoods have been approved within the Estate since 1986. With the completion of the eighth, south of Queen Victoria Park, these neighbourhoods will make up 169 homes of varying sizes

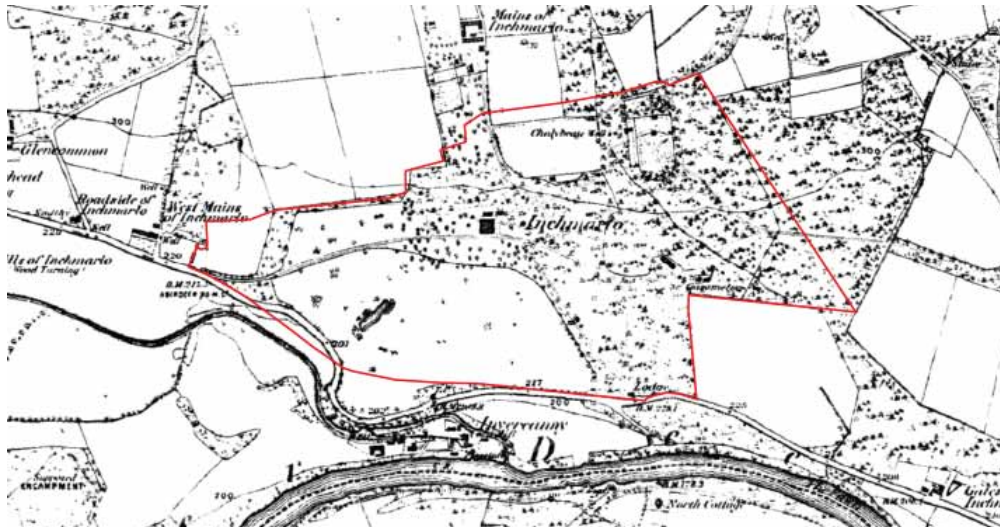


Figure 2 1860 Historical Map



Figure 3 1920 Historical Map

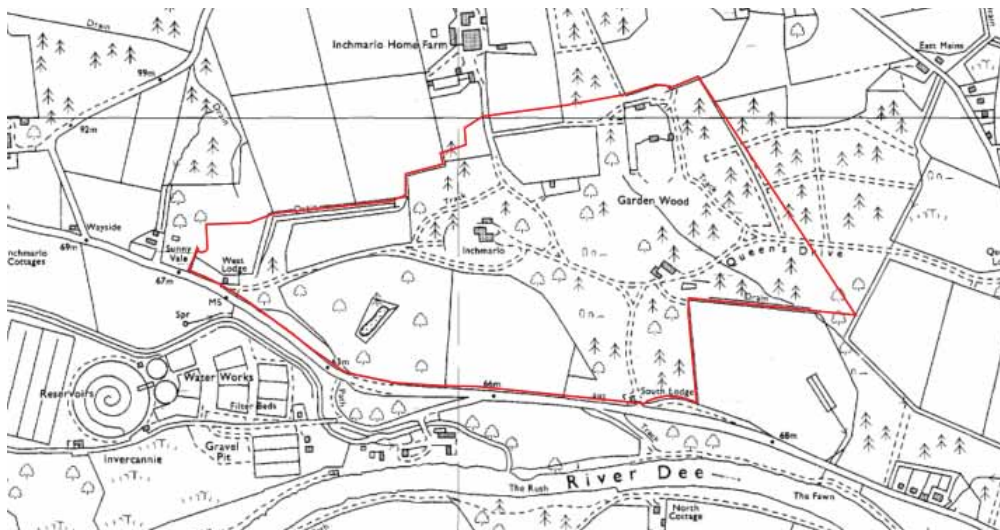


Figure 4 1980 Historical Map

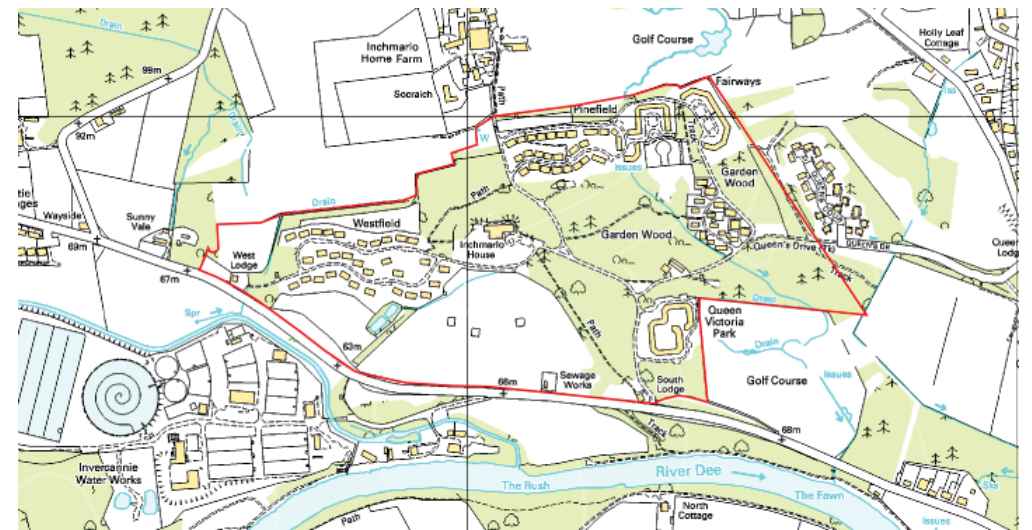


Figure 5 2013 Map

The Historic Estate

Historical maps indicate the changes which have taken place in and around the Estate between 1860 and the present day.

Between 1860 and 1980, the most notable change was the realignment of the A93 which resulted in the loss of an area of pasture land to the southwest of Inchmarlo House. However, a comparison of these two maps shows that the extent and location of woodland and open space - a mix of garden, pasture and parkland - remains the same over the 120 years.

The character of the woodland areas, however, changed significantly during that period, as is evident by the symbols used on the maps. Whereas mixed woodland was found throughout the Estate in 1860, major areas had been felled and replaced by coniferous plantations by 1980. This change appears to have occurred shortly after the end of World War II when the Estate was briefly in the ownership of a timber merchant. There are still substantial stands of mature trees and conifers to the east of the South Lodge, to the west of the entrance drive, within the arboretum and walled garden, around Inchmarlo House and the Heronry pools to the south

west, to the north of the Westfield development and as small groups and isolated specimens in the parkland. These were protected from future development when a Tree Protection Order was made in June 1996.

The coniferous plantations of Pine, Larch and Spruce were established after World War II around the kitchen garden, along the eastern boundary, in the area to the south of the more recent Garden Wood development, along the northern boundary above Inchmarlo House and to the west of the present Westfield development.

By 1986 a development of flats and bungalows had been completed in Queen Victoria Park to the east of the access drive. This was followed by areas of detached housing in Garden Wood to the east of the arboretum and in the Courtyard and at Pinefield in the northern field. These developments each required varying degrees of tree removal and a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) was made by Aberdeenshire Council in June 1996 to protect certain trees within the Estate from any future development.

The TPO document identified eight areas of remaining ancient mixed woodland, two clumps of trees and 37 individual specimens which should be safeguarded from future development. It did not include the areas of coniferous plantations at the northeast corner and along the east and southeast boundaries, or the areas of trees along the west and southwest boundaries, including the overgrown Beech hedge along the Ha-ha wall. Although the Westfield development has resulted in the loss of a number of the individually identified trees to the west of Inchmarlo House, the more recent eastern developments on the 2013 plan have been confined to the stands of mature conifers or self-seeded trees which are not included in the TPO.

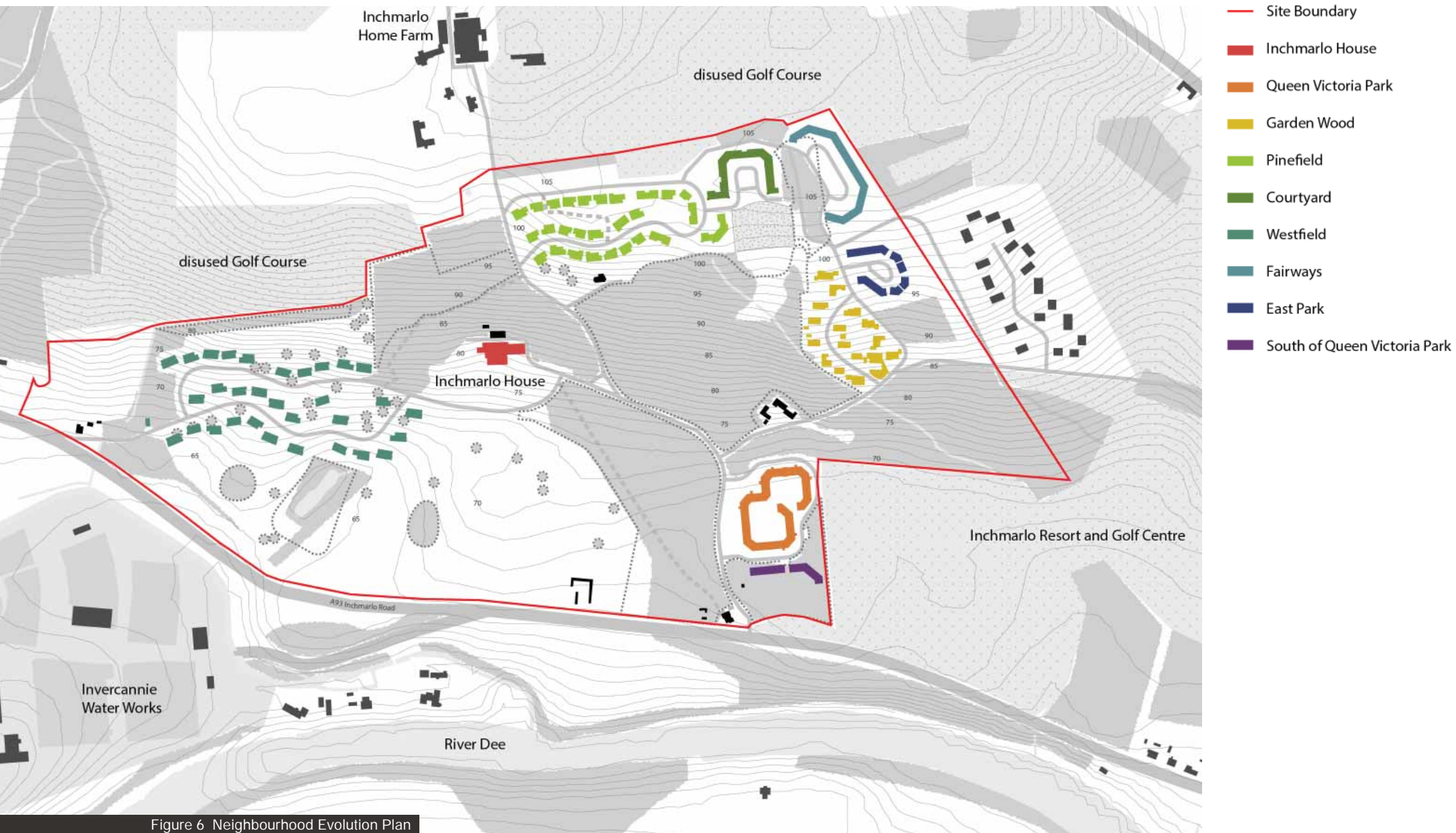


Figure 6 Neighbourhood Evolution Plan

The Evolution of Inchmarlo Continuing Care Retirement Community

The Central Focal Point

Inchmarlo House was extended and converted into a Care Home in 1987. The east wing and the rear extension were carefully and sensitively designed to respect the Georgian appearance of the main house. The Care Home was originally designed to accommodate 60 but in order to comply with new legislation, a number of multi bedded rooms were changed to single occupancy. Accommodation now comprises of 10 twin-bedded companion rooms and 37 single rooms. On the upper floors within the main house there are two small sitting rooms in addition to the ground floor facilities which include a 60-seat dining room, a bar and three lounges. Facilities for a visiting hairdresser and physiotherapist are also provided. There are two respite rooms, one reserved for home owners and the other for a person from outside the Community.

Visitor parking is available on the approach to the house and staff parking has been created in an adjacent woodland area.

The South Loop Road

The Queen Victoria Park development was constructed in 1986 on a relatively flat site to the east of the main access drive. There are open views east over part of the golf course but groups of ancient trees and conifers close views to the south, west and north. The development provides 41 dwelling units formed from a mixture of flats on two floors and linked bungalows with garages. They have been arranged around 2 private courtyards. Parking bays for flat owners and visitors have been provided along the loop road which surrounds the buildings.

In October 2009, full planning permission was granted for a further six linked, 2 bedroom, single storey dwellings on the flat land to the south of the loop road. Construction has started. Each unit will have an integral garage and additional parking spaces will be provided for visitors beside the loop road.

The East Spur Road

The second development on the Estate was Garden Wood, a group of sixteen 2 bedroom detached houses each with a garage and private enclosed garden. The site to the north of the East Spur road was relatively steep and the houses are all set parallel to the contours and linked by a loop road. These houses were designed for the more able-bodied members of the retirement community, however, meals, social and medical support are provided from Inchmarlo House if required.

In 2013, the East Park development of 7 linked, single storey houses and 2 blocks of 4 flats have been constructed to the east of Garden Wood. The houses and ground floor flats have garages and the upper flats have spacious sun rooms. Due to the steepness of the site, the layout had to reflect the original contours and the requirement to minimise the extent of cut and fill and tree loss in the Pine and Larch plantation which formerly covered the development area.



The site layout at East Park has allowed the creation of a central landscaped area which has provision for visitor parking. Designated parking spaces have also been provided for the owners of the upper flats.

The final development at the north end of the East Spur Road is a reversed C-shaped group of linked houses with garages, known as Fairways. Each house faces the central green space but many have views over the former golf course to the rear. Visitor parking is provided around the loop road.

The North Loop Road

The main drive splits on the eastern approach to Inchmarlo House with the northern branch leading to the highest part of the Estate. Just south of the gated track towards the former Home Farm, a one-way road loop extends eastwards into the Pinefield and Courtyard developments which were completed in 1996-7. The group of 31 single storey detached and semi-detached houses with garages which form the Pinefield neighbourhood occupy the south-facing field to the northeast of Inchmarlo House that appeared on both the 1860 and 1980 maps. The eastern end of the Pinefield and Courtyard developments occupy the former kitchen garden and wooded area on the east side of the field. A spur from the loop road

gives access to the Courtyard group of 17 linked houses with garages. The buildings surround a central landscaped space to the north of the walled garden into which there are several access points.

The West Loop Road

The drive to Inchmarlo House has a branch to the south at the east end of the parking area for the Care Home. The 31 well spaced detached dwellings with garages all face south and were completed in 2003. The original site was the parkland and fields on either side of the original Queen's Drive and contained both tree groups and individual specimen trees which were identified in the TPO. Although a number of the specimen conifers and broadleaves had to be removed for the development, replacement trees and conifers were included in the landscape designs for the amenity areas within the site. As the Westfield houses are remote from the developments in the eastern part of the Estate, the house style and choice of building materials are different to provide interest and variety.



2. *Planning Context*

Planning History

The establishment of the Inchmarlo Continuing Care Retirement Community was initiated through planning consent 517/1984 with full understanding by Kincardine and Deeside District Council of the aim for the development to at least reach a minimum level of 200 units. To date, a total of 163 units have been completed and the six linked bungalows to the south of QVP, which already have Planning Approval, will shortly take this total to 169.

The Aberdeenshire Local Plan (2006) effectively removed the site from the countryside and defined a "Settlement Boundary" for Inchmarlo. This was later continued in the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan (2012) Supplementary Guidance with some amendments to the settlement boundary and Inchmarlo being subject to an allocation of an additional 60 units. An extension to the western edge of the settlement boundary was proposed as an 'officer preference' in the Main Issues Report (2013) for the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2016.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

At a national level Scottish Planning Policy (June 2014), Designing Places (2001) and Designing Streets (March 2010) provide a policy framework against which development plans are prepared and proposals for individual developments are assessed. The guidance contained in these publications is extensive and in the interests of brevity is not repeated in this Masterplan Report, but has informed the design process undertaken to date.

Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2012 (ALDP)

As referred above, Inchmarlo is defined in the adopted Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan Supplementary Guidance and is the subject of an additional allocation of 60 houses within area H1 on the plan. This states (Marr Area Settlement Statements - Page 40):

"Site H1 is allocated for up to 60 houses, on a phased basis, as part of the Inchmarlo Continuing Care Community, subject to an appropriate masterplan being approved. The site is within the Inchmarlo Garden and Designed Landscape."

With the Site H1 allocation of up to 60 houses, plus the 169 built and/or previously approved, effectively this takes the total above the original 200 units which were considered the minimum operational level which was envisaged at the outset.

It goes on to confirm the site's proximity to the River Dee Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and that the masterplan or planning statement will need to contain a construction method statement to take into account the potential impacts to the qualifying interests of the SAC.

Policy 8 of the ALDP states (Page 12) that:

"Aberdeenshire Council will support new development on sites we have allocated within this plan, where they conform with a

previously agreed development framework and/or masterplan (whichever is appropriate) for the site. We will assess all development, whether on sites we have allocated or elsewhere, using a process that includes appropriate public consultation and appropriate standards for design, open space, accessibility, safety, sustainability, and the provision of associated services."

It goes on to refer to supplementary guidance SG LSD1: Masterplanning and SG LSD2: Layout, siting and design of new development.

SG LSD1 requires that for certain types of development a masterplan or development framework be submitted to and approved by Aberdeenshire Council and that any subsequent proposals for development for areas covered by these masterplans should demonstrate compliance.

SG LSD2 reiterates the need for compliance with an approved masterplan, and requires that proposals for new development takes cognisance of a number of factors, including;

- Local climate
- Setting
- Resource efficiency
- Privacy/Amenity/Security

- Support Systems (sustainability of heating, lighting, water and waste systems over the design's lifetime, including the use of water-saving technology)
- Connectivity
- Flexibility to adapt to changing needs of occupants
- Creation of local identity, including:
- Balance of development (mixture of house types and land uses)
- Creation of sense of place
- Aesthetics
- Visual appeal

Policy 13 Protecting, improving and conserving the historic environment states (Page 15) that:

“Aberdeenshire Council supports the protection, improvement and conservation of the historic environment. There will be a presumption against development that would have a negative effect on the quality of these historic assets. Different parts of the historic environment require to be subject to specific guidance and controls to make sure that we maintain and improve their value.”

This goes on to refer to SG Historic Environment 1: Listed Buildings and SG Historic Environment 3: Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes.

SG Historic Environment 1 confirms that extensions or alterations to listed buildings and development within their curtilage must be of the highest quality, and respect the original structure in terms of setting, scale, design and materials and that the proposed development is essential to securing the best viable use of the listed building without undermining its architectural or historic character, or its setting.

SG Historic Environment 3 states that development that would have an adverse effect on an historic garden or designed landscape will only be approved where:

1. the objectives of designation and the overall integrity and character of the designated area will not be compromised; OR
2. any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by long term strategic social or economic benefits of overriding public importance, for which no other alternative site is available.

Replacement Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan

Work has commenced on the replacement Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan with the Main Issues Report having been published in November 2013. This states that the planning objectives for the settlement are:

- Meet specific retirement housing needs of the Continuing Care Community.
- Sustain local services associated with the Continuing Care Community.

The MIR proposed that land at the western edge of Inchmarlo could be included within the settlement boundary as an ‘Officers Preference’ for future expansion if additional capacity is required. This area is referred in the MIR as Site Ma031 having been presented to the Council by Skene Enterprises during the MIR Bid Consultation.

In their report to the Marr Area Committee in June 2014 however, officers recommended that Site Ma031 be omitted from the Inchmarlo settlement boundary for the time being. Historic Scotland stated in their representations to the MIR that they are intending to remove Inchmarlo from the Inventory of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes. It was therefore considered that the downgraded level of protection afforded to the designed landscape may offer additional scope for increasing densities within the current boundary. However, it was conceded that should this not prove feasible, then Ma031 might be included during in the next LDP. The Committee upheld this recommendation and agreed that officers begin to prepare the Proposed LDP on this basis.

Notwithstanding discussions with planning officers in Aberdeenshire Council have established that the masterplan should consider aspirational development beyond the original 200 unit optimum operational level. Furthermore, this masterplan requires to be flexible and take a long term phased approach to the realisation of the H1 allocation and for these reasons, Site I on Fig 9 page 38 is considered as a potential future development prospect in the appendix to this masterplan.

3. *Site Appraisal*

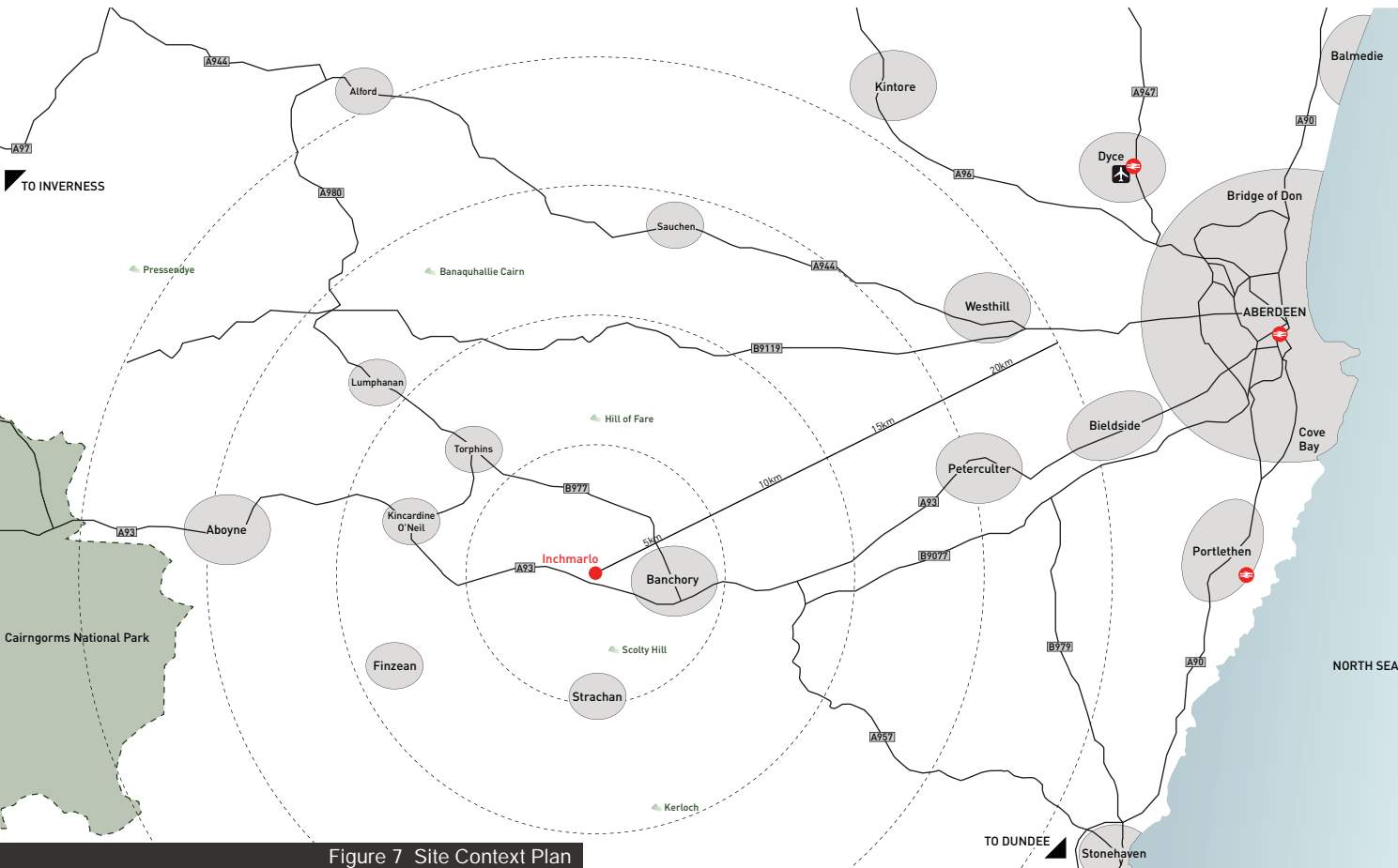


Figure 7 Site Context Plan

Site Context

To ensure the physical, social and economic integration of development proposals, the area immediately adjacent to the site, together with the wider surroundings, has been the subject of appraisal. This focused on retail, leisure and community facilities, open space, linkages and transport. In response to the findings from the site context appraisal, the proposals for development will be designed to integrate, supplement and complement the adjacent development and where possible bring benefits to the local community.

Linkages & Transport

The Estate has good access to the strategic road network as it is located and accessed north of the A93, an arterial route which runs from Aberdeen City Centre, west as far as Braemar, then heads south towards Blairgowrie.

The internal road network within the Inchmarlo Continuing Care Retirement Community is wholly private and non-adopted. The principal access onto the A93 is supplemented by another at the south western end of the Estate adjacent to West Lodge. This access leads to/from the Westfield development and is available for use as an emergency access in the event that the principal route is unavailable.

There may also in future be scope to create a new access to the north from Inchmarlo Home Farm dependent on the implementation or otherwise of an extant planning permission for a hotel to the north of the Estate.

Bus stops are located close to the Estate entrance on each side of the A93 and Stagecoach bus services 201, 202 and 203 run east to Banchory and Aberdeen City and west to Aboyne, Ballater and Braemar approximately every hour. Stops are located directly opposite the South Lodge entrance to the Estate as well as further along the frontage onto the A93.

The Care Community has two minibus vehicles with wheelchair access for day trips and shopping and are available for journeys within the Estate including to bus stops for those properties beyond reasonable walking distance.

Aberdeen City is just over 20 miles east of Inchmarlo along the A93, and offers bus, train and ferry services to the wider area.

Aberdeen International Airport lies approximately 25 miles northeast of the Estate.

The Inchmarlo Continuing Care Retirement Community is not a traditional housing development and as such results in different travel patterns than would be expected from a mainstream development. In the first instance, the majority of residents are retired, therefore trip generation tends to be off peak.

Given the advanced age of many of the residents, the proportion of adults who drive is lower than in a standard market development. Similarly, as there are no young adults living at home with parents, a three or four bedroom property will only accommodate at most two residents on a permanent basis

Retail

Banchory is a bustling market town with a vibrant town centre. A large number of local shops can be found on or in close proximity to the High Street. The High Street is approximately 2 kilometres east of the Estate along the A93.

The closest supermarket to the site is Morrisons approximately 3 kilometres east of the site in the town centre.

Leisure and Community Facilities

The Inchmarlo Continuing Care Retirement Community offers a range of facilities to its residents and home owners, these include meals in the dining room or bar, hairdressing, physiotherapy and chiropody. There are also a number of activities available including golf, fishing, tai chi, therapy, a dining club, village club, and Crathes Vintage Car Rally to name but a few.

Inchmarlo Resort and Golf Centre which abuts the eastern boundary of the site, includes a 9 hole golf course, holiday apartments and villas, a driving range, bar and restaurant.

Further leisure and community facilities can be found in Banchory, less than 2 kilometres east of the site. The Woodend Barn on the east of the town, 4.5 kilometres away, offers a wide range of entertainments including, theatre, music and film. Going further afield, the small towns of Peterculter, Milltimber, Bieldside and Cults, all of which are located along the A93 also offer a wide range of leisure and community facilities.

Open Space

There are numerous walks scattered throughout the 37 hectare Estate, with several attractive gardens. These include the Woodland Garden which features 100-200 year old Scots Pines, Douglas and Silver Firs, Yews and Beeches; the walled garden which features a putting green around the Keyhole Garden which contains rainbow planting designed by Billy Carruthers of Binny Plants in Edinburgh; a Sensory Garden, adjacent to the dining room of Inchmarlo House, designed by local school children in 2013; an Oriental Garden within Queen Victoria Park which was designed by Peter Rodgers, a Chelsea Gold medalist; and the Heronry and duck ponds to the west of the Parkland which attract local wildlife from the River Dee. The Estate also contains deer, herons, red squirrels and pine martins.

The site also benefits from being in close proximity to several beautiful hill walking routes. The closest of these is Scolty Hill, a short but steep waymarked route on good paths. Other routes include Hill o Fare, Benaquhallie, Pressendye, as well as a vast selection within the Cairngorm National Park.

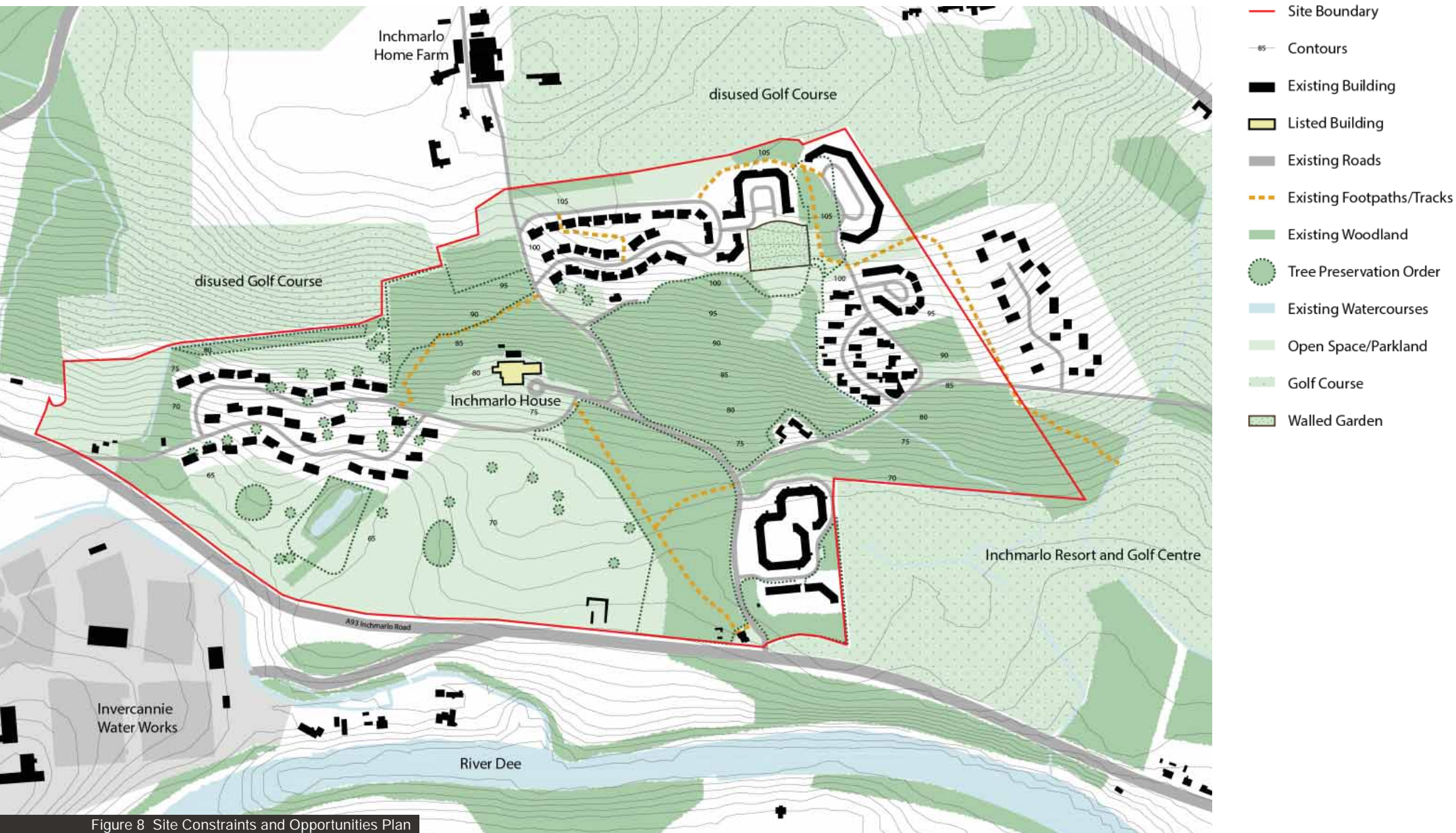


Figure 8 Site Constraints and Opportunities Plan

Site Constraints and Opportunities

As part of the comprehensive review of the site, existing constraints and opportunities have been identified as illustrated in figure 8. The key issues affecting development are set out as follows:

Topography

In the area surrounding the Estate, the topography is strongly undulating and there are several forested ridgelines farther to the north and on the south side of the River Dee. Much of the Estate lies on south-facing land which slopes steeply from c.105 metres AOD down to c.70 metres AOD in the northern section of the Parkland. Closer to the A93, gradients decrease and ground becomes gently undulating to levels of c.65 metres AOD along the main road. Levels continue to decrease south from the A93 to c.55 metres at the River Dee.

Within any areas proposed for future development the presence of steep slopes and the close proximity of rock under the ground surface will affect not only the impact on existing landforms but also building methods and costs. This could in turn influence the type of development that can be considered. For example it may be easier to accommodate detached houses with their smaller individual footprints on such a site rather than linked buildings or larger scale flatted structures where a much larger area of level ground might need to be created. Conversely, if land engineering is considerable, it may be necessary to develop a larger, higher density development so as to create an economy of scale to offset engineering costs. Larger buildings may need either to follow the contours to minimise cut and fill or to step down the slope to respond

more closely to existing ground level changes. In the latter case several lifts would be required to ensure that flat owners would be able to access all parts of the building.

Trees and Parkland

The Estate contains mature woodland and parkland which was designed and laid out in the 19th and early 20th century. The parkland lies to the south and southwest of Inchmarlo House on gently undulating ground with terracing in front of the house as the gradient steepens. A pond known as the Heronry is located to the south west of the house and identified in figure 8. Mature parkland trees comprising lime, oak and sycamore species, dating from around 1800, are also located around this pond. Other parkland species within the site comprise sycamore, copper beech, larch and Norway spruce, dating from around 1850.

There are two types of woodland within Inchmarlo Estate – the older 18th and 19th century woodland in the Woodland Garden to the north and northeast of the House, on the west side of the drive between Inchmarlo House and South Lodge and to the south of Queen Victoria Park, and younger 20th century forestry plantations to the east and south of Garden Wood, on the upper slopes to the north of the House and west of Westfield.

The older woodland contains large specimens of exotic conifers which were imported by Victorian plant hunters – some recognised as among the tallest in Britain – grouped informally with stately broadleaved trees such as Beech, Oak,

Lime and Maples. These older plantings also contain a large variety of ornamental shrubs, perennials and ground cover plants which support a range of wildlife including red squirrels and birds of prey.

The forestry plantations contain more uniform stands of conifers – Pine, Larch and Spruce – which were planted in rows during the 1940s and 1950s. Due to their dense evergreen cover few ground cover species can survive within the plantations.



It has been noted already that a Tree Preservation Order dated June 1996 sought to protect 37 individual trees, two tree groups and eight areas of trees within Inchmarlo Estate. Already trees have been lost due to both natural decay through reaching maturity and through wind damage as well as through felling to clear space for development since 1996. As further planned development is implemented there is likely to be further pressure to remove additional trees and the location of protected trees should therefore influence the future development potential of any site.

The Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland - Volume 3: Highland, Orkney and Grampian states that Inchmarlo House and its parkland is significant from the A93 and that Inchmarlo has high value as a work of art in its present form. Its historic value is limited but its horticultural value is high due to the range of, often unusual, trees and shrubs in the Estate. Although it is noted that the parkland and woodlands have little nature conservation value, the parkland is identified as having high architectural value, as it provides the setting for a B listed building. It is also of high scenic value, as Inchmarlo is identified as having a significant impact on the surrounding landscape.

Historic Scotland have confirmed their intentions to review the Inventory status of the Historic Garden and Designed Landscape associated with Inchmarlo, indicating in successive development plan representations that it is proposed to remove Inchmarlo from the Inventory. It is anticipated that this review will be complete in March 2015. Aberdeenshire Council, in light of these intentions, have proposed not to extend the settlement

boundary of Inchmarlo in the emerging LDP and have instead indicated that densities within the current settlement boundary should be maximised.

Heritage

Since 1750 there have been significant alterations to the original two-storey Classical mansion. In the mid 19th century a third storey and balustraded parapet were added but, following the purchase of the Estate by Skene Enterprises in 1983, the house was further enlarged to provide the accommodation required for a Care Home. In 1987 the east and rear extensions were completed and the style chosen echoed the materials and details of the Georgian house. The house has been designated as a B Listed building and, therefore, the impact of future development on the woodland and parkland setting together with features within the Estate, such as the walled garden and Ha-ha boundary wall near the Heronry, has to be given careful consideration.

Existing Buildings

Several buildings have been present on the site since the mid 19th century including Inchmarlo House, West Lodge, South Lodge, Garden Cottage and a large steading type building currently used for staff accommodation, garaging for the vehicles used by gardeners, canteen and toilet facilities.

The company wish to improve facilities for outdoor staff and propose to replace the old sheds to the west of the South Lodge with new modern accommodation.

As the new neighbourhoods were developed existing access roads and tracks had to be extended and connections made to power supplies and telephone lines, as well as water and sewage pipes. When sites are being considered for future

development those that are near to existing neighbourhoods are likely to be serviced more easily than those in more peripheral areas.

Services & Utilities

The sewage treatment works for the Estate was constructed beside the A93 c.175m west of South Lodge. It was designed for a community of 200 homes plus a Care Home for 60 residents. However, space was allowed in the design for a second Klargestep plant to be set in parallel with the first to increase the capacity for future developments within the Estate.

Although most of the current neighbourhoods lie on higher ground than the sewage plant so that advantage can be taken of gravity flow within the pipes, parts of Westfield development are at a lower level and a pumping station has had to be constructed to overcome this problem. Future development on ground that is lower than the sewage plant may need to utilise this pumping station or a similar pumping facility would need to be provided elsewhere on the Estate.

When the East Park neighbourhood was constructed in 2013 the latest regulations had to be met with regard to the handling and treatment of surface water. All future developments would also need to include the provision of an approved SUDS system to meet SEPA requirements.

4. *The Future
of Inchmarlo Estate*



Changing Demographics

Inchmarlo is already a diverse and successful community but its future will depend on its ability to adapt to changing demographics, revision in Care Home Legislation and the rising expectations and needs of the residents and home owners. It already offers a variety of living accommodation and, when required, additional care assistance can be provided by Care Home staff enabling home owners to stay in their homes, living independently, for as long as possible. If the health of any of the home owners deteriorates to such an extent that more constant nursing care is required, there is the option to move into one of the rooms in Inchmarlo House, on a temporary or more permanent basis. Priority admission is given to home owners. When flats or houses become vacant feedback from sales will reflect not only the market and financial trends but also the changing requirements of potential purchasers. This information is invaluable when new developments are being planned by Skene Enterprises.

As people live for longer and their expectations increase there will continue to be a demand for investment in new buildings, enhanced provision of services and additional staff. Although the Inchmarlo Continuing Care Retirement Community

presently offers independent living in individual houses and flats, together with Care Home facilities, it is likely that there may soon be a demand for additional or enhanced assisted living facilities within the Estate. This is an intermediate solution to the needs of the elderly whereby people can still live in their own apartments but would have the support of staff who would be on call 24 hours a day. Kitchen and dining facilities would be available for those unable or unwilling to cater for themselves, lounges and computer rooms to enable them to keep in touch with neighbours, friends and family and treatment or activity spaces to aid mental and physical fitness.

One of the many considerations with an ageing population is the incidence of loneliness and depression. Inchmarlo House has a 60 seat dining room, a bar lounge and various sitting rooms where home owners can meet and socialise, however, these are nearing functional capacity with the existing population of the community. A Community Centre was included in the initial development Agreement of 1984 between Skene Enterprises and Kincardine and Deeside District Council, when a single development of 80 apartments on the site of the existing Courtyard had been completed. This

component of the original concept was postponed due to the economic climate in Aberdeen in the mid 1980s. Since that date the number of houses and flats has more than doubled and with the forthcoming implementation of the H1 allocation, the provision of a Community Centre and associated apartments should now be considered again.

As Care Home Legislation changes it will be increasingly difficult to adjust the accommodation offered within Inchmarlo House to meet the new standards. With increasing pressure on the existing facilities it may be necessary to consider the construction of a new, purpose-built extension or stand alone building, using modern building materials and techniques on a site either adjacent to or near to Inchmarlo House.

With the regional economy continuing to enjoy an extended period of vitality, with associated high accommodation costs, there may be a need for additional on site staff accommodation to attract and retain a skilled workforce capable of providing the service necessary for the needs of residents and homeowners in the future.




















-  ESTABLISHED SITE BOUNDARY
-  GREATER INCHMARLO
-  CAPACITY AREAS CONSIDERED FOR DEVELOPMENT
-  EXISTING WOODLANDS, PLANTATION, COPSES AND TREE BELTS
-  CLEAR-FELLED WOODLAND
-  INDIVIDUAL TREE PROTECTED BY TREE PRESERVATION ORDER *
-  GROUP OF TREES PROTECTED BY TREE PRESERVATION ORDER *
-  AREA OF TREES PROTECTED BY TREE PRESERVATION ORDER *
-  EXISTING WATER COURSES
-  EXISTING BUILDINGS
-  EXISTING ROADS
-  EXISTING FOOTPATHS/ TRACKS
-  LAND FOR AGRICULTURAL USE/ PARKLAND
-  GOLF COURSE
-  RESIDENTIAL GARDENS
-  CONTOURS/SPOT HEIGHTS (METRES AOD)
-  LISTED BUILDING **

Figure 9 Capacity Area Study Plan (2006)

RIVER DEE

Sensitive Development

New housing to meet the extant H1 allocation, the provision of a Community Centre, the construction of an Assisted Living facility and a possible Care Home extension have been identified by Skene Enterprises as desirable and potentially essential for the future development of the Continuing Care Retirement Community at Inchmarlo. While the masterplan seeks to realise and optimise the opportunity for continued development it is essential to recognise that one of the key aspects that makes the Community unique is the quality of the landscape setting.

The process of identifying appropriate parcels of land for future development commenced with a Landscape Capacity Study in 2006 at the request of Aberdeenshire Council. This provided recommendations on the most suitable areas for development. Fig 9 shows the areas considered in the Capacity Study - two areas to the west and south of Westfield (A & B), three linear sites to the west, south and east of the Parkland (C,D and E), the area South of Queen Victoria Park (F), the area around the staff house and garages southeast of the woodland garden (G), the conifer plantation south of Garden Wood (H), the conifer plantation east of Garden Wood (U), the fields north and west of Pinefield (K & J) and a field to the north of the West Lodge (I).

Planning Approval for housing developments on Sites U and F was received in 2009. The East Park development of 7 single-storey linked houses and two, two-storey blocks of 4 flats was completed in 2013 on Site U. Construction has commenced on 6, single-storey linked houses on Site F.

Area H1 as defined in the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2012 (ALDP), which includes the open fields and all the woodland areas in the rest of the Estate, was allocated for development of up to 60 additional houses. Since that date the field north of the West Lodge (Site I) has also been identified as a potential future addition to the settlement limits as described previously and as such has been included in the area of search for development.

The ALDP indicates the Parkland (P1) adjacent to and south of Inchmarlo House is to be protected from future development so area P1, within the wedge of open space, was originally discounted due to the Council's consideration that this could be seen from Inchmarlo House or from the A93. However, it is believed that in some areas sensitive landscaping could mitigate this impact and the Landscape Capacity Study found that there was capacity in Site E for development without adverse landscape impact. In the context of the updated position of Historic Scotland regarding the Inventory status of the site and need to increase densities within the H1 allocation, we consider that these sites should be revisited.



- Site Boundary
- Primary Road
- Secondary Road
- - - Access Road
- · - · - Pedestrian/Cycle Path
- Developable Area
- Existing Building
- Listed Building
- Open Space/Parkland
- Existing Woodland
- Tree Preservation Order
- Walled Garden
- ⊗ 2006 Capacity Study Areas

Figure 10 Indicative Masterplan

The Opportunities

The Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan states that the additional 60 houses should be developed on a phased basis. Analysis of the opportunities presented by Sites A/B, the woodland fringe next to Site E, Sites H, I, J and K, together with the woodland north and northwest of Inchmarlo House has resulted in the identification of a minimum of seven possible development phases. These phases would comprise the realisation of the current allocation of 60 dwelling units as well as potential future requirements for ancillary and complementary uses referred to earlier in this report.

For each of the possible sites the constraints and opportunities have been considered. This involved analysis of the impact of development on topography and trees, the location of each site in relation to the B-Listed Inchmarlo House and existing neighbourhoods, the ease of access and availability of connections to water and drainage systems, power supplies and telephone lines

It is recognised that Assisted Living facilities, a Care Home extension and a Community Centre would require larger sites than groups of houses or small blocks of flats. Where ground is steep individual houses might be accommodated more easily on the existing landforms than would larger blocks

of apartments. It has already been noted that an extension to the existing Care Home should be close to Inchmarlo House so that staff and shared facilities could operate with maximum efficiency and minimum cost. In order to maximise the use of a Community Centre it should be in a fairly central location between the eastern and western neighbourhoods. An Assisted Living facility would require the most extensive development site but, as it would be relatively self-contained, could be considered for the peripheral areas of the Estate.

Analysis showed that there are only two sites that would be large enough to accommodate Assisted Living Apartments. These are Site H, a steep slope largely covered by coniferous plantation to the east and Site I, a south-facing field on the west side. As the woodland area to the west of the main drive is included in the H1 development zone, the woodland edge next to the Parkland might provide a suitable location for a Community Centre and flats above without any major encroachment on either the open space or the area of trees protected under the Tree Preservation Order. Such a location would be relatively close to Inchmarlo House and could be accessed easily from most of the neighbourhoods. There would also be green space close to the building for outdoor recreation which could encourage spectator activity. Parking areas could be provided between the trees.

The smaller sites adjacent to existing neighbourhoods are considered to be the most suitable for future housing. Currently the Westfield houses are proving the most popular type of houses and Sites A/B/I could be developed for additional detached houses in a similar style. Towards the north boundary of the Estate the smaller Sites J and K might need more compact housing similar to that in Fairways and East Park.

Despite pressures associated with provision of rooms that do not meet current care commission recommendations, Inchmarlo House has one of the highest occupancy rates of Care Homes in Scotland because of the high quality of the services and the caring atmosphere provided for its residents. The provision of an Assisted Living facility with additional care when required, similar to that provided to existing home owners would help to deal with the results of increasing longevity. As a result, the provision of an extension to the Care Home might be considered for a later development phase.

5. *Design* **A**ims
& **P**rinciples

Design Principles

In order to achieve these aims it is necessary to establish a number of **Design Principles** as follows:

A Build in an appropriate size and style in order to minimise the impact on existing landforms and the landscape setting of each development site.

B Concentrate development on more open sites, areas of plantation conifers and poorer woodland to reduce the impact on healthy ancient or rare trees and conifers mentioned in the Tree Preservation Order and The Tree Register.

C Integrate new housing with existing residential neighbourhoods in order to reduce infrastructure costs and increase community cohesion.

D Arrange buildings with a southern aspect wherever possible to maximise solar gain and benefit from attractive views.

E Use subtle variations in colour and materials to reduce the visual impact of larger structures.

F Ensure that the siting, scale, proportion, materials and detailing of any Care Home extension takes into consideration those on Inchmarlo House.

G Take into account changing care requirements and the need to future proof wherever possible.

H Ensure that all buildings meet Building Regulations and Local Authority requirements for sustainability and reduced carbon dioxide emissions.

I Use modern waste disposal methods and surface water treatment to limit the impact on the environment.

J Create areas of new, low maintenance, planting to provide all year interest in order to enhance the setting of each new development and to maintain the amenity value and character of Inchmarlo Estate overall.

K Design relevant features within and around the buildings – lifts, meeting places, hand rails, pull cords, etc and specialised gardens, smooth-surfaced paths and ramps, sitting places, focal points – to maximise the enjoyment of all home owners and residents, including wheelchair users and the visually impaired.

L Provide a facility which will offer a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities to reduce loneliness, increase social interaction, and provide physical and mental stimulation for the home owners.

M Use only forms, materials, colours, textures and details that are sympathetic to the scale and function of each building

N Use only boundaries, surfacing materials, garden structures, seating and plant species that are in character with the historical setting of the Estate and the wider rural environment.

There are numerous ways by which the design aims and principles might be achieved but much will depend on the development regulations, sustainability requirements and economic climate current at the time of each phase of construction.



Sustainability

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainability refers not only to the use of renewable energy sources and materials but also to the reduction of emissions that will be harmful to the environment.

The Government has set targets for the reduction of waste, water usage and CO2 emissions. There is also a requirement to reduce the impact on the environment and the use of non-renewable resources, and to increase the energy efficiency of buildings.

There is a recycling area behind the staff house and waste bins at the Sales Office.

Recent changes in Building Regulations now require different categories of domestic waste to be collected separately, for recycling wherever possible, to reduce the environmental impact of landfill. This will mean that new houses and blocks of apartments will need to use separate bins for paper and cardboard, bottles, tins, food waste and general refuse. Houses would require a covered area to accommodate these bins.

Water conservation is also essential and this may be achieved by the use of new sanitary fittings such as dual flush or low volume flushing WC cisterns, timer controls on showers, shallower baths, as well as by recycling rain water and grey water or the installation of water meters. Surface water treatment would be necessary, using appropriate SUDS techniques, to reduce excess run-off and the pollution of existing water courses.

CO2 emissions could be reduced by the increased use of renewable energy sources, such as wind and hydro power, solar thermal or photovoltaic panels, ground-source and air-source heat pumps, or stoves that burn wood rather than fossil fuels. The use of locally sourced materials will not only reduce transport costs but also reduce carbon emissions into the atmosphere.

Modern building techniques are also starting to address the problem of energy efficiency in buildings but without the need for expensive and often unsightly 'bolt-ons' such as photovoltaics and renewable energy generators.

It is now possible to reduce the energy requirements of a building by the use of a sustainable building material such as timber in combination with a 'fabric first' approach to construction. This uses a high performance building fabric that maximises thermal performance and minimises air leakage thus resulting in an overall reduction in the need for energy from other sources. The technique depends on a number of factors:

- The careful orientation of the building and the use of large south-facing triple pane or double low-e glazing to maximise solar gain.
- The use of recycling methods for heat from sources such as cookers, fridges, kettles, etc within the building.
- The use of high levels of insulation in roof spaces, walls and under floors, using renewable sources such as recycled newsprint or sheep's wool, together with minimal thermal bridging, to reduce heat loss.
- The use of offsite manufacturing processes to produce sealed units which will produce an airtight building where heat loss is minimised.
- The use of a mechanical ventilation system with a highly efficient heat recovery method to provide good indoor air quality.

The use of renewable resources and energy efficient houses will not only create a healthier environment but also would significantly reduce energy costs.

However, in the case of accommodation for elderly home owners one might question the ability of the elderly to adapt readily to such high tech buildings and alternative energy sources. The owners might prefer to be able to open a window for fresh air and not need to learn how to operate the unfamiliar and often complex control systems associated with the new technologies. A more restrained approach to modern methods might be required especially when the design of individual houses is being considered.

Summary

The indicative masterplan and individual design possibilities recognise that the primary defining feature of the Estate is the natural landscape. Inchmarlo House, the historic entrance Lodges, Walled Garden and Arboretum were inserted into the landscape and introduced a human scale and order into the landscape which focused on creating key nodes and vistas. Links between these elements and the boundary wall added to the definition of the Estate.

As retirement housing was introduced, the initial focus has been on locating buildings in clusters within the trees, seeking to minimise impact where possible. This has created attractive pockets of living environments which accommodate over 55's of varying ability and creates a strong community.

The masterplan report recognises future development involves more challenging sites in terms of sensitive integration. The proposals describe how the intention is to work with the landscape wherever possible to create individual buildings appropriate to their site and contributing to the overall mix within the community.

Combined with this there needs to be a coordinated masterplan vision for the architectural and landscape character.

Inchmarlo House is a formal house with a grand scale, large windows and stone materials responding to the overall scale of the Estate and the large space it addresses. The South and West Lodges are of smaller scale but complementary in character in terms of window and materials and they respond to the landscape as part of a boundary definition, with walls, fences and trees.

The more recent developments have been tucked within the woodland and were less critical to the original family of forms, proportions and materials, however, the introduction of new buildings and their locations provides an opportunity to widen the Estate family of buildings.

Any buildings proposed should have similar considerations in terms of scale, character and materiality. i.e. larger buildings, such as an extension to the care home and/or assisted living apartments, would need a particular approach and smaller individual houses may require a different approach. Any proposal should make reference to the historic approach which is one of simple forms, a limited palette of materials and simple detailing. However, this requires to be appropriate to the current period.

In terms of building form, individual houses would be linked or detached to suit the different sites within the Estate. The forms should be simple and read together they would create streets and groups with distinct character at an appropriate scale.

6. *Design Possibilities*
Delivering the H1 Allocation



Site K | First Phase of Development: North Pinefield

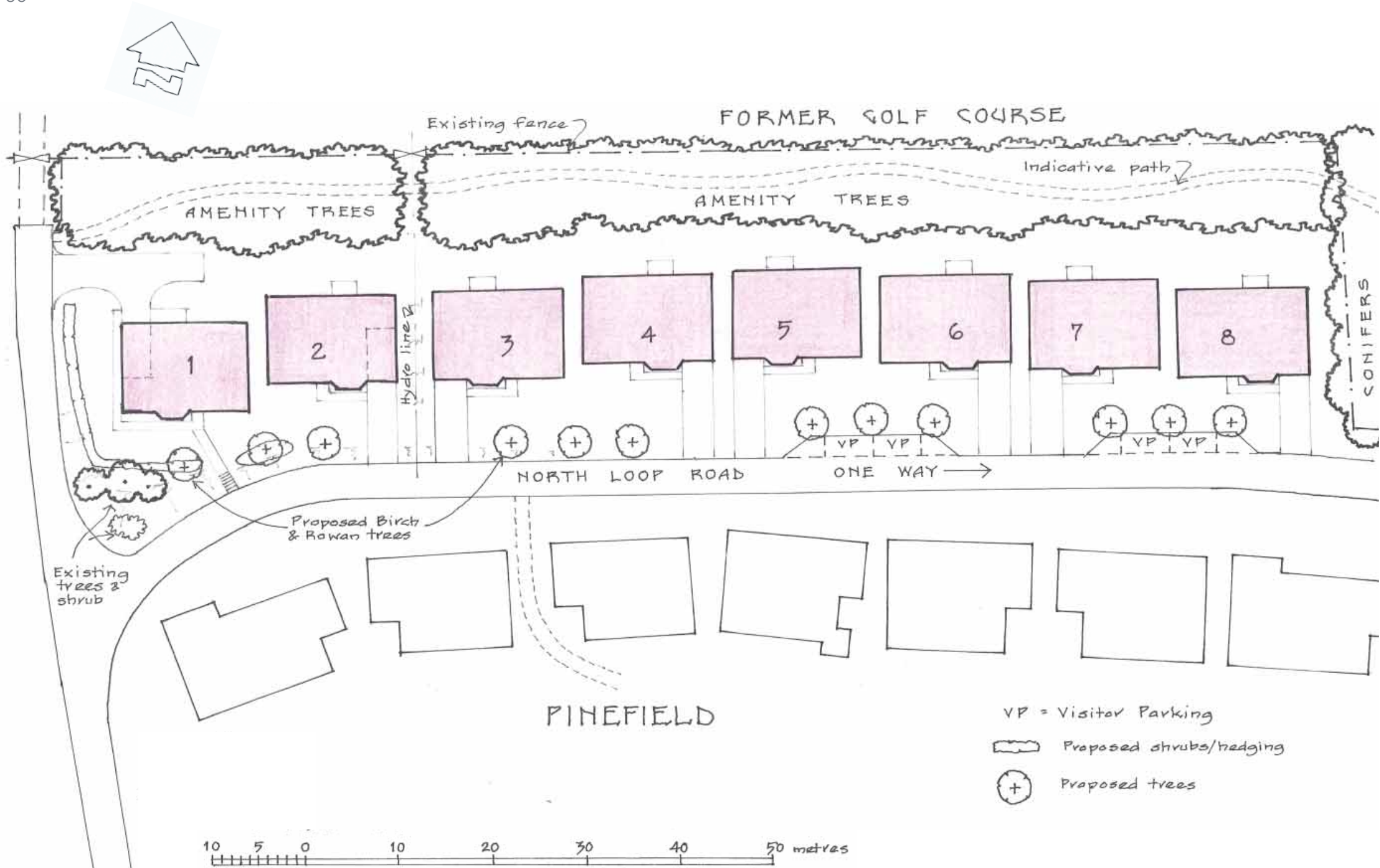
- 8 detached dwellings
- Similar colours, materials, fenestration and details to those used in the existing East Park and South Queen Victoria Park houses would be adopted for the new dwellings
- Construction should conform to the latest ideas on sustainability, insulation and energy efficiency
- Planting in front gardens to give extra privacy
- Visitor car parking to be incorporated
- Potential to create an informal footpath within the amenity woodland
- Respect window to window distances
- Individual accesses onto existing road network

Figure 11 Site K: North Pinefield - Location Plan

Site K: North Pinefield

The site is a relatively level, elongated field c. 135m x 23m, on the north side of the Pinefield loop road. It is bounded by two mixed plantations on the north side adjacent to the former golf course, and a belt of mature conifers to the east. These trees provide shelter from north and east winds. There is a post and wire fence to the south and west. At the west end of the road the grass verge slopes up to field level but half way along the site the road is more or less at the same level as the field and there are visitor parking places within the verge. There are three Birch trees to the south of the field fence – towards the west end, centre and east end of the roadside verge - which may need to be removed. However, it should be possible to retain the line of 3 small trees and the azalea shrubs at the southwest corner of the site. An underground cable runs north to south from the gap between the two plantations towards the loop road and a gap c. 4m wide would need to be left to ensure no building occurs within the wayleave of this cable.

Although the linear form and restricted depth of the site limits the disposition and size of any new buildings, a development of eight detached, East Park or South Queen Victoria Park style houses could be accommodated on the site. There would be 8 two-bed single storey dwellings with a further 3rd bedroom/study in order to accommodate the possibility of live-in carers. Each house would have an integrated garage accessed from the loop road with the exception of house 1 which would take access from the road to the west. The new houses would be set back from the edge of the loop road so that there would be a minimum of 18m between opposing windows on the front facades of the new and existing Pinefield houses. There would be a 2m gap between adjacent houses, with a 4m wide wayleave between house 2 and 3 on either side of the buried power cable. As the ground levels towards the west end of the site are slightly lower, the use of detached houses would allow level adjustments between the houses in the row as necessary.



VP = Visitor Parking
 [wavy line symbol] Proposed shrubs/hedging
 (+ in circle symbol) Proposed trees



Figure 12 Site K: North Pinefield Indicative Layout

Although it is the intention to retain the existing tree belt to the north, the deciduous planting has reached a size when overcrowding will occur unless selective thinning is carried out. Such thinning would remove dead, diseased, weak and misshapen trees and reduce the impact of the rigid planting within the existing plantation. It might also allow the creation of an informal footpath within the amenity woodland.

The construction would conform to the latest ideas on sustainability, insulation and energy efficiency. Figure 12 shows where planting might occur in front gardens to give extra privacy from the houses opposite. Visitor parking will be provided.

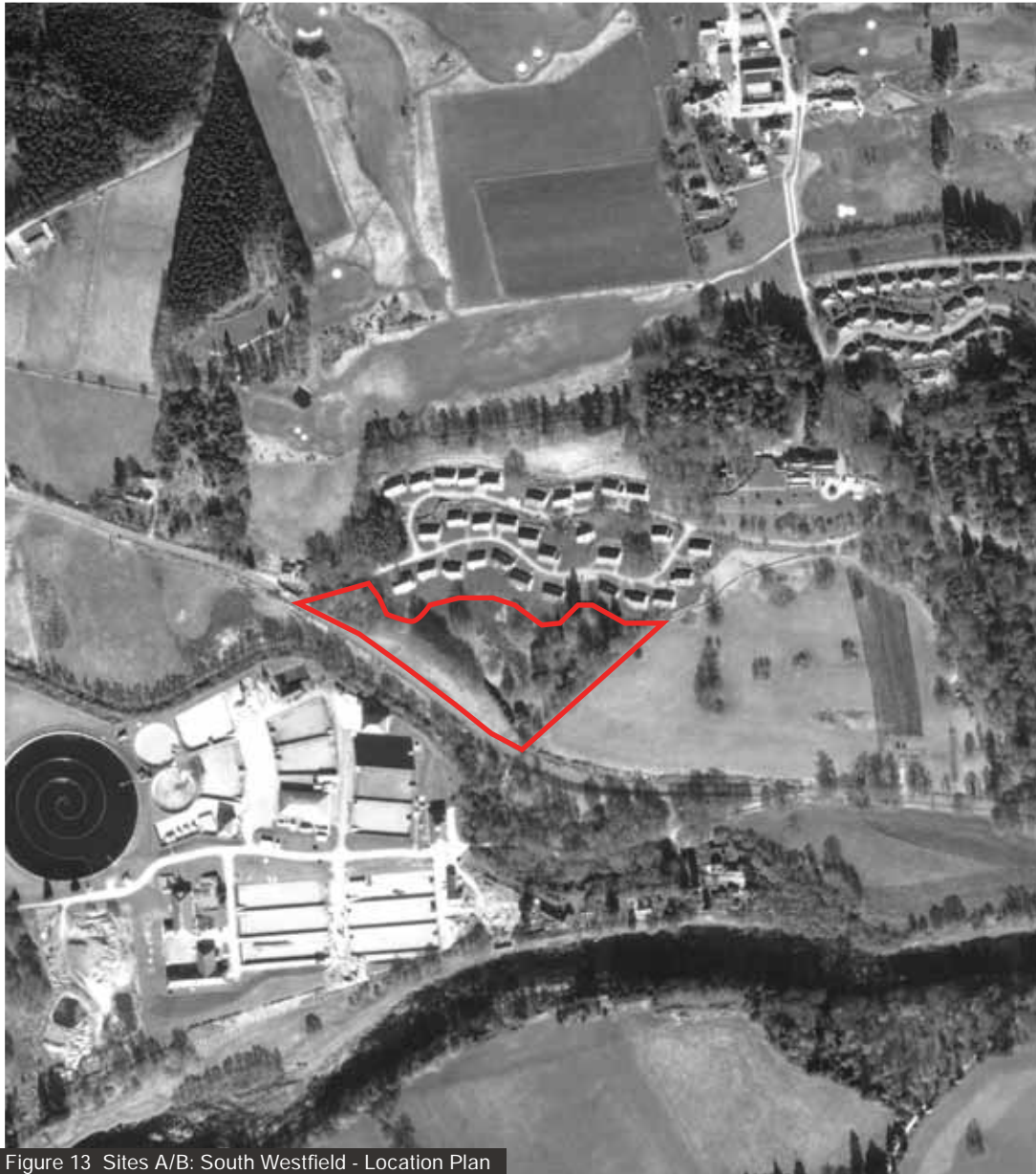
This development site has no topographic problems or areas of protected trees within its boundaries. It is located beside an existing road and there should be few difficulties in connecting to existing drainage networks, water supply pipes, electricity cables and telephone lines. Capacity exists in the private sewage treatment plant within the Estate to accommodate the site.

A construction method statement will accompany future planning applications for planning permission to demonstrate through mitigation that there will be no adverse impact upon the River Dee SAC. Similarly, excavation to enable construction will be monitored through an archaeological watching brief with the extent agreed in advance with Aberdeenshire Council.

A Phase 1 Habitat survey with specific reference to red squirrels will be provided at application stage and if necessary, upon request of Aberdeenshire Council and Scottish Natural Heritage a Red Squirrel Protected Species Survey would follow.

A tree Survey to assess and mitigate any impact upon the root structure of adjacent trees would also accompany any planning application.

This site is recommended as the first phase for development in the masterplan following the completion of the approved linked houses south of Queen Victoria Park.



Sites A/B | Second Phase of Development: South Westfield

- 12 detached dwellings
- Replacement of the Beech hedging and repair of the Haha wall to the south, in order to free up developable land and create more extensive views south across the Dee Valley
- New ground modelling could allow significant areas of new trees, conifers and shrubs to be planted
- Introduction of a new themed garden
- Materials and form similar to those used in the existing Westfield development
- Buildings should face southwest or southeast to follow the contours and ensure that there would be no direct views between windows in the new and existing houses
- Building orientation will maximise solar gain
- Access taken at the east and west of the site onto the existing road network



Figure 13 Sites A/B: South Westfield - Location Plan

Sites A/B: South Westfield

To the south of the existing Westfield development and west of the Heronry is an area of ground which slopes south with increasing steepness towards the overgrown Beech hedge along the top of the old Ha-ha wall. It is bounded on the north by a post and wire fence, to the east by the fencing around the Heronry pools, to the south by the Ha-ha wall and to the west by the garden ground belonging to the West Lodge. Within the site there is a large Beech tree and a clump of 6 trees – 3 Lime, 2 Beech and an Oak – which are protected by the Tree Preservation Order. The mature trees around the Heronry are also included within the TPO. An area of trees to the south and west of the westernmost Westfield house (No 22) includes multi-stemmed Lime trees together with a small number of Maple, Birch, Beech and Willow trees south of the track. The space between the trees has long been used for the storage of discarded equipment, sand, gravel and possibly salt and this may have contributed to the poor condition of many of the trees in this location. Like the overgrown Beech hedge, this woodland is not included in the Tree Preservation Order and tree removal may allow the construction of up to two detached houses.

Although the ground slopes south, from levels of c. 83.5m at the fence to c. 76.5m along the wall, the height of the Beech hedging ensures that much of the site is in shadow and southerly views are restricted. In addition the Ha-ha wall is being damaged by the tree roots.

During the construction work for the Westfield development it was envisaged that additional houses would be built within this area and potential access points were left between houses 6 and 9 and to the west of house 22. As this area received a substantial amount of fill material from the Westfield site the ground has been compacted and the surface vegetation, including rushes, thistles and nettles, is now unsuitable for grazing and the site looks neglected.

The Ha-ha wall is an important historical feature in the Estate but in order for it to be repaired the overgrown Beech hedging would need to be removed completely, including roots. As the low northern canopy of the Beeches extends c. 12m into the site, not only would a considerable amount of developable land be gained by the removal of the hedge but also the home owners could enjoy more extensive views south across the Dee Valley.

The existing 2-4 bedroom Westfield houses are proving to be very popular and demand outweighs supply at present. This potential development site to the south is too small to be used for large scale structures but would be capable of accommodating up to 12 Westfield-style detached houses.

In order to construct a 5.5m wide road, to an acceptable gradient between the east and west access points the existing landforms would require to be altered. However, this would present an opportunity to set the new houses at levels below those of the existing southern line of dwellings in order to



Figure 14 Sites A/B: South Westfield Indicative Layout

retain their views. Although this could mean that a number of trees would need to be removed only two individual specimens and the old tree group are included within the Tree Preservation Order. New ground modelling on this site could allow significant areas of new trees, conifers and shrubs to be planted as replacements. It would also be possible to introduce a new themed garden, into this part of the Estate which would provide additional interest to home owners and visitors.

The materials for the new buildings should be similar to those in the existing Westfield development but construction should conform to the latest ideas on sustainability, insulation and energy efficiency. Buildings should face southwest or southeast to follow the contours and this would ensure that there would be no direct views between windows in the new and existing houses. The chosen orientation should maximise solar gain.

The curving road should be shared by vehicles and pedestrians as is the case for all the non-adopted roads within the Estate. Visitor parking would be available at various points along the access road. New path networks should be part of the landscaping proposals and a link should be provided to the existing path around the Heronry pools. Once the Ha-ha wall has been repaired and reinforced a new hedge and trees would be planted to replicate the original feature and to provide screening for the new houses from the A93 farther south.

As new development on this site would be close to the existing road network and houses, connections to services should be relatively easy. However, the lowest parts of the existing Westfield development are at levels below that of the sewage treatment plant and a pumping station was required to deal with the waste from this part of the Estate. Proposals to set new houses even lower down the south-facing slopes would mean that foul drainage would either need to pass through the existing pumping station or a separate facility would need to be constructed.

The positioning and design of any infrastructure to accommodate this will be agreed through discussion with Aberdeenshire Council and an archaeological watching brief applied during construction for any works outwith the site. For the site itself, due to previous tipping activity from the construction of Westfield, it is not considered that any archaeological watching brief would be necessary.

In order to meet current requirements with regard to surface water drainage it would be the intention to use a permeable surface for the driveways together with a SUDS basin or underground filtration system either in the area to the south of the Heronry or in the field to the south of the Ha-ha wall.

A construction method statement will accompany future planning applications for planning permission to demonstrate through mitigation that there will be no adverse impact upon the River Dee SAC. A Phase 1 Habitat survey with specific reference to bats and red squirrels will be provided at application stage and if necessary, protected species surveys

will also be provided upon request of Aberdeenshire Council and Scottish Natural Heritage. A tree survey to assess the impact of removal of trees and replacement planting would also be provided.

A landscape and visual impact assessment including heritage assessment will be provided to assess and mitigate against any impact upon Inchmarlo House and its policies.

As the market for the dwellings within the existing Westfield development is currently buoyant, it is likely that redevelopment of this site for similar properties could represent an appropriate early phase of development in response to market demand.

Site H | Third Phase of Development: South of Garden Wood

- Assisted living facility comprising 40+ flatted properties subject to planning and the requirements of Britain's ageing population
- Building orientation should minimise the amount of cut and fill required in the construction process
- Extensive southerly views over the Dee Valley
- A terraced central garden
- The existing burn could be developed into a water feature within the central garden area
- Two points of vehicular access on western edge of site onto existing road network



Figure 15 Site H: South of Garden Wood - Location Plan

Site H: South of Garden Wood

Site H lies on the east side of the Estate, south of the Garden Wood development of detached houses. It is bounded on the north by a track which once formed a section of the Queen's Drive, on the east by the unmarked southern continuation of the fence line east of Fairways and East Park through the conifer plantation, on the south by the boundary wall of the 9-hole golf course and on the west by the existing road to Fairways and East Park.

The site is roughly triangular and widens from c. 80m along the Queen's Drive track to 230m along the southern boundary wall. At its maximum it is 124m N-S. The topographic survey shows that the ground slopes steeply to the south from c. 99.5m adjacent to the northern track to c. 81m on the southern boundary. Almost the entire area has gradients between 1 in 4 and 1 in 8. There is only a limited area towards the golf course where gradients ease to 1 in 12. The entire surface seems to be rocky and the soil cover is generally thin.

A small burn within the Woodland Garden to the northwest continues diagonally across the middle of the site towards the southeast corner. Initially it occupies a narrow but fairly deep

channel but this becomes shallower towards the southeast. This burn often dries up in hot summers. There is an existing track from the east boundary which extends southwest through the site before crossing the burn and then turning south into the golf course. There are the ruins of a small building close to the road and opposite the group of old buildings used for staff accommodation and gardeners' vehicles. The short track south of the ruin and adjacent areas of hard standing are used by the gardeners for materials storage.

The only area without trees is a clearing c 40m x 60m on the north side of the burn where conifers were felled several years ago as a possible development area. This area now has a dense cover of self seeded and regenerating vegetation. Apart from the mature beech trees to the south of the Queen's Drive track, and a small number of broadleaved trees along the south boundary, the rest of the site is covered by conifers, mostly Spruce, that were planted in the years just after the end of World War II. None of the trees on the site are included in the Tree Preservation Order. There appear to be no services within the site but connection points into the existing pipe work and cable runs to East Park and Garden Wood are relatively close.

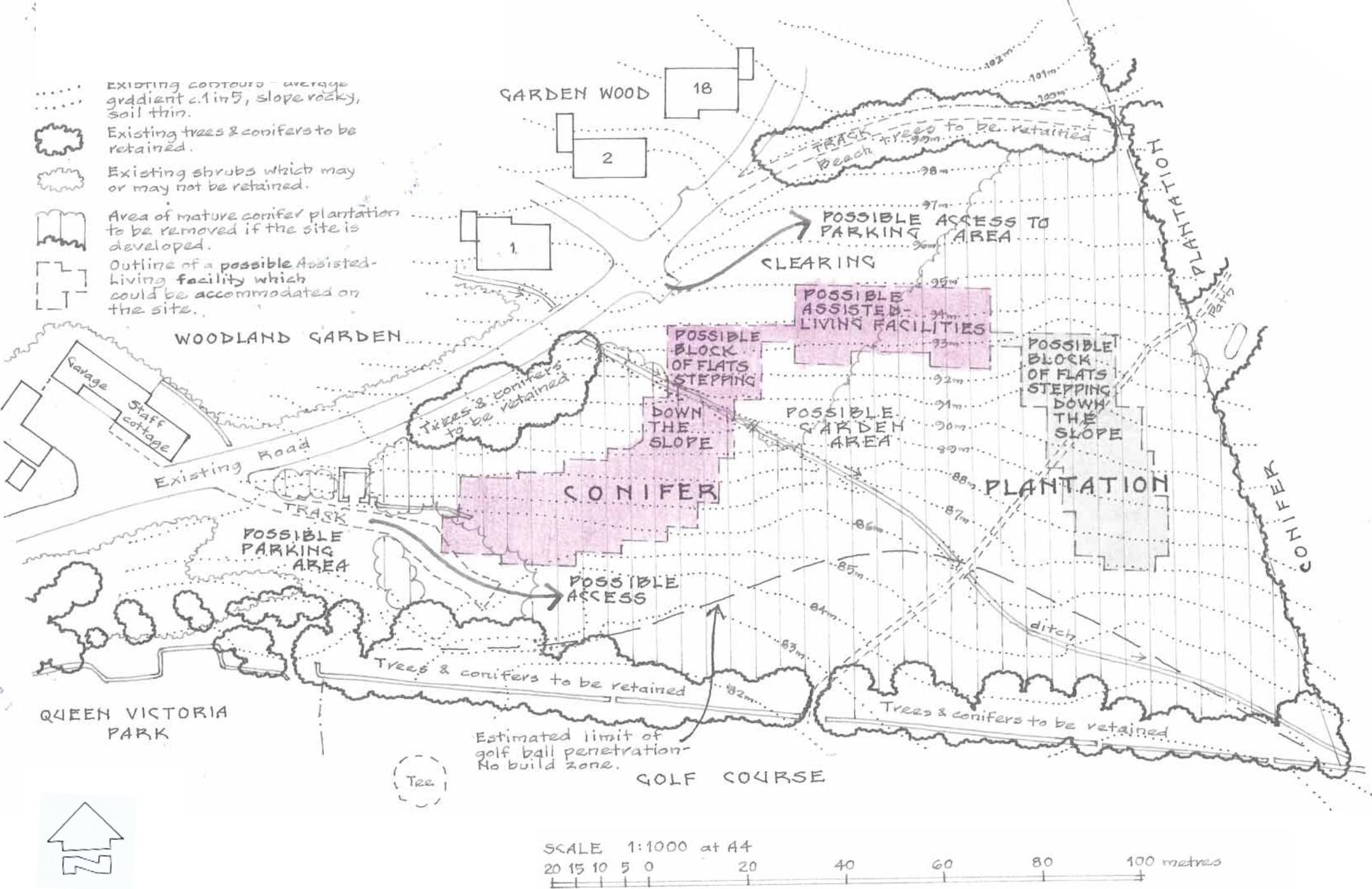


Figure 16 Site H: South of Garden Wood Indicative Layout

Site H is the largest potential development site within the Estate. The conifers are mature but, because of their tall and spindly form, it would be necessary to fell them all in order to clear a safe space for any building work. There are two possible access points – one a short distance north of the burn and the other from the track south of the ruin. The slopes are too steep to link these two access points into a single road as it would be difficult to achieve acceptable gradients. However, as the demand for Assisted Living apartments grows, as expected, it therefore may be necessary to bring this development forward. The site has considerable potential for this purpose. The slope is rocky and the costs of re-grading should be borne in mind when assessing the viability of developing this site. It is anticipated that a critical mass of development would be required to offset construction costs. The areas of the site where the gradient eases are close to the golf course and as misdirected golf balls have been found lying a considerable distance into the plantation the lower part of the site may not be suitable for development without appropriate mitigation through planting and high fencing.

A single large structure could be placed higher on the slope and Fig 16 indicates the form and location of an Assisted Living development with two wings which step down the slope, at both foundation and roof level. The western wing and centre block could provide around 40 flatted properties with assisted living facilities. An eastern wing could be added at a later date as part of a future phase with up to 30 further properties, subject to acceptability in planning terms. This orientation of the wings could reduce the amount of cut and fill required in the construction process. Although many of the flats would face west or east, balconies would allow views to the south. There would be extensive southerly views from part of the

development. A northern access point would provide a route to a main parking area north of the central building but the southern access could provide parking closer to the flats at the ends of the two wings and access for emergency vehicles. The burn may need to be culverted under the west wing but could be developed into a more interesting water feature within the central garden areas. The central garden would require to be terraced so that parts of the open ground would be accessible from the different floors as the wings step down the slope.

Capacity exists in the private sewerage network within the site to accommodate the proposed development. As it lies downhill from the plant, a pump may be required. The positioning and design of any infrastructure to accommodate this will be agreed through discussion with Aberdeenshire Council.

Discussions with SEPA and Aberdeenshire Council will be held in advance of the preparation of detailed proposals for the site, to agree how to address the minor watercourse which traverses the site.

A construction method statement will accompany future planning applications for planning permission to demonstrate through mitigation that there will be no adverse impact upon the River Dee SAC. Protected species surveys will also be provided upon request of Aberdeenshire Council and Scottish Natural Heritage. For this site, these are likely to include Red Squirrel and Bat surveys as well as an arboricultural/tree survey to assess and mitigate the impact of tree loss and identify areas suitable for replacement planting. A landscape and visual impact assessment including heritage assessment will also be provided to assess and mitigate against any impact upon Inchmarlo House and its policies.

Summary

The Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2012 identifies an additional allocation of 60 housing units for Inchmarlo Continuing Care Retirement Community. Through the delivery of the 8 houses in North Pinefield and 12 in South Westfield, together with an Assisted Living development of 40+ flats on the site South of Garden Wood the H1 allocation could be achieved.

**BARTON
WILLMORE**