

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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| COMMITTEE | Development Management Sub Committee |
| DATE | 14 June 2012 |
| LEAD HEAD OF SERVICE Margaret Bochel | DIRECTOR Gordon McIntosh |
| TITLE OF REPORT | Former Davidson's Mill, Mugiemoos, Phase 1 Masterplan Report |
| REPORT NUMBER | EPI/12/134 |

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the Phase 1 Masterplan for the Former Davidson's Mill, Mugiemoos, which meets the requirements of condition 5 of the consent for Planning Permission in Principle for the site. A summary of the Phase 1 Masterplan is appended to this report. The full Phase 1 Masterplan document can be viewed by accessing the following link:

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning

- 1.2 A hard copy of the Masterplan is also available in the Member's Library and within the Planning and Sustainable Development Service at Ground Floor North, Marischal College.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

(a) Approve the Phase 1 Masterplan as interim planning advice,

(b) Agree for officers to implement the process to ratify the Masterplan as Supplementary Guidance by the Scottish Government.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report outwith normal officer time to evaluate the Masterplan. The developers have met the cost of preparation of the Masterplan, including all consultation and engagement.

4 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no known property, legal or equipment implications arising from this report.
- 4.2 The Masterplan reduces the risk of piecemeal and inappropriate development within the site, by setting out design principles, policies, opportunities and constraints up front.
- 4.3 Approving the Masterplan will contribute to efficiencies in determining future planning applications by giving clear guidance on planning and design matters.
- 4.4 A Strategic Environmental Assessment has been undertaken on the Mugiemoos site as part of the preparation for the proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan.

5 BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 The Davidson's Mill site is a 29.5 hectare Brownfield site, much of which was home to a former paper mill. It is bounded to the north by the River Don, to the south by the railway line and Mugiemoos Road cuts across the site from east to west. It is largely derelict and the buildings are in poor condition with limited development potential. In addition to the River Don the site includes key landscape features such as Dander's Hill and the Bucks Burn.
- 5.2 The site was originally identified as suitable for mixed use development in the Aberdeen Local Plan (2008). This designation continues in the adopted Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2012) where it is identified as opportunities site OP22
- 5.3 A Development Framework for the Former Davidson's Mill was approved by the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee on 24 May 2011 as supplementary planning guidance to the then Aberdeen Local Plan (2008). This Development Framework was taken forward as Supplementary Guidance to the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2012).
- 5.4 The Phase 1 Masterplan follows the clear vision, guidance and design principles set out in the approved Development Framework. A summary of the key principles can be viewed in the appendix and includes:
 - development south of Mugiemoos Road
 - environmental improvements to Bucks Burn corridor
 - mix of low and medium density housing - around 261 units.
 - business starter units
 - environmental improvements to Bucks Burn to south of Mugiemoos Road,
 - open space and ground for allotments.
 - pedestrian/cycle bridges over Bucks Burn

- path links to existing bus stops on Auchmill Road and Oldmeldrum Road

- 5.5 The Phase 1 Masterplan satisfies the requirements of Condition 5 of the consent for Planning Permission in Principle for the Davidson's Mill site. In due course each of the 3 further phases will be presented for consideration to build up a full picture of the programme of development on the site. Condition 5 states "*that, unless the planning authority has given written approval for a variation, no development pursuant to any of the four individual Phases of the development hereby approved (as shown in the Indicative Phasing Strategy within the adopted Development Framework for the site) shall take place other than in full accordance with a detailed masterplan for that particular Phase that has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority*".
- 5.6 As with all masterplanning, the Former Davidson's Mill Development Framework has been the subject of significant consultation and engagement throughout its preparation and since publication. There is no obligation at this stage to present the Phase 1 Masterplan for public consultation as it is simply purifying a condition. However, a copy of the document and summary paper has been forwarded to both the Bucksburn Community Council and the Bucksburn Futures Group for their information.
- 5.7 The Phase 1 Masterplan has been prepared in accordance with the principles identified in the adopted Aberdeen Masterplan Process. As part of the process to endorse as supplementary guidance to the Aberdeen Local Development Plan, the Phase 1 Masterplan will be the subject of forthcoming public consultation prior to the document being submitted to the Scottish Government for endorsement, with feedback from the consultation incorporated.

6 IMPACT

- 6.1 The Masterplan supports the community planning aspirations that Aberdeen will be an attractive, clean, healthy and safe place to live and work, a forward looking City which values its heritage, provides improved access to walking, cycling and public transport provision.
- 6.2 The Masterplan contributes to the following Single Outcome Priorities: 1 – We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe; 2. we realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people; 10. We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need; 12 – We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect and enhance it for future generations.
- 6.3 The proposal contributes to the 5 year Business Plan in terms of working with our partners to attract visitors, workers and investment to

protect the economic future of the city, encouraging the growth of local businesses through support of existing business sectors and development of new sectors and facilitating new development projects to improve Aberdeen's living and working environment.

- 6.4 The proposal is consistent with the Council's Corporate Plan in particular delivering high levels of design from all development, maintaining an up-to-date planning framework, sustainable development and open space provision.
- 6.5 The proposal is consistent with the Planning and Sustainable Development Service plan, in particular engaging the community in the planning process, and the delivery of masterplans/development frameworks in line with the Aberdeen Masterplanning Process.
- 6.6 An Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment has already been prepared for the overarching Former Davidson's Mill Development Framework when the document was presented to EP&I Committee in May 2011.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Aberdeen Local Development Plan (Feb 2012)
http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Planning/ldp/pla_local_development_plan.asp
- 7.2 Aberdeen Masterplanning Process (July 2010)
<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning/>
- 7.3 The Former Davidson's Mill (Bucksburn) Development Framework
http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/planning_environment/planning/planning_sustainable_development/pla_masterplan_davidsons_mill.asp
- 7.4 Planning Permission in Principle Decision Notice
<http://planning.aberdeencity.gov.uk/docs/showimage.asp?j=110786&index=60677>

8 REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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THE FORMER DAVIDSON'S MILL, BUCKSBURN

Phase 1 Masterplan

SUMMARY



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Phase 1 Masterplan

SUMMARY

Introduction

The redevelopment of the former Davidson's Mill is one of the most significant regeneration opportunities of a large brownfield area in Aberdeen City. This regeneration will help improve the environment, develop a distinctive place to live and provide benefits to adjacent communities integrating positively to become part of Bucksburn. As befits a project of such significance, a comprehensive process of masterplanning and design evolution has already been undertaken which has led to the production of a number of policy and guidance documents. This suite of documents will continue to expand as further design detail emerges and is critical in order to develop and control the required quality and character of the proposed redevelopment of the site.

This Phase 1 Masterplan document is specifically structured to meet the requirements of Condition 5 of Aberdeen City Council's consent for Planning Permission in Principle. The key requirements of the condition are for the masterplan to show in detail how the principles and criteria laid down by the approved Development Framework, and also how national guidance such as "Designing Streets" and "Designing Places", are considered in terms of, for example: block structure, access and connectivity, land use, density,

and character. In particular, the latter half of the guidance document seeks to set out in three-dimensions the required architectural and urban design quality that future detailed planning applications will have to generate. An indicative masterplan using typical housing typologies has been generated to test the design principles and demonstrate the potential for the Phase 1 area. Any departure from this indicative masterplan will have to demonstrate compliance with the underlying principles and aspirations for both Phase 1 and the overall Davidson's Mill development.

The document is set out in the following sections which are summarised on the following pages:

Section 1: Introduction

Section 2: Suite of documents

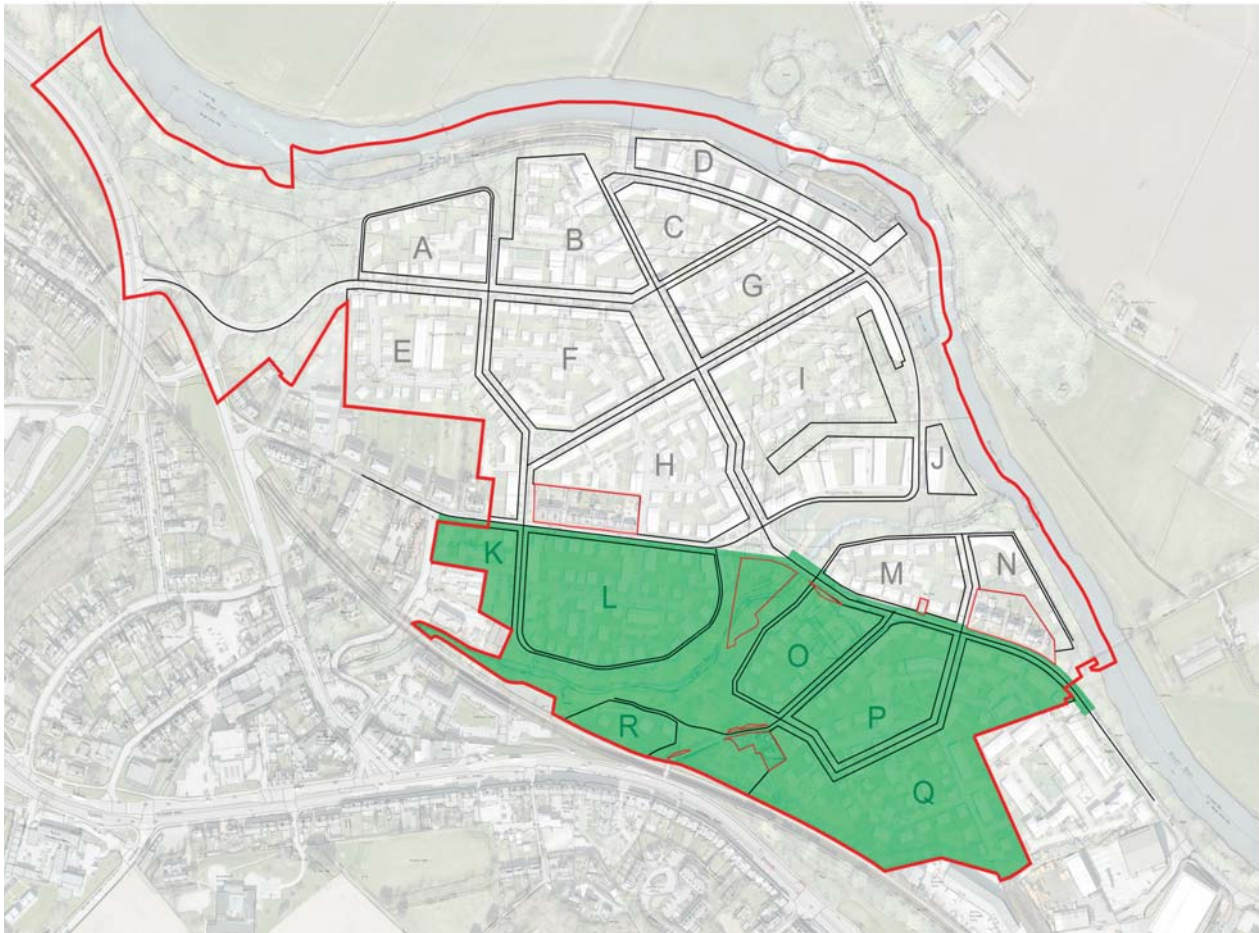
Setting the Phase 1 Masterplan document in context with other existing policy documents and future detailed planning material.

Section 3: Phasing

Four phases were initially set out within the PPIP and these have been further developed and refined as further site information has become available. This summary document illustrates Phase 1 only.

Phase 1 Area

(For further phases please refer to Development Framework)



Phase 1

The first phase of the development will focus on development south of Mugiemoss Road, including environmental improvements to Bucks Burn corridor. Mugiemoss Road will remain on its existing alignment providing access to the development.

- Development south of Mugiemoss Road.
- Demolition of existing buildings - Social Centre and Ellonbank House - Block O.
- Provision of a mix of low and medium density housing - around 261 units.
- Business starter units provided within Block K.
- Environmental improvements to Bucks Burn to south of Mugiemoss Road, including provision of open space and ground for allotments.
- Provision of pedestrian/cycle bridges over Bucks Burn
- Path links within Phase 1 and connecting to context including existing Bus Stops on Auchmill Road and Oldmeldum Road from which this entire Phase is within a 400m radius. Pedestrian connectivity to these stops has been considered as a priority.

Section 4: Character areas

Three broad character areas have been identified which set the atmosphere and visual attributes expected of the development. These are: Mugiemooss, Core and Riverside.

Phase 1 falls under the Mugiemooss character area and is described below. Descriptions of the other character areas can be found in the main Phase 1 Masterplan Document.

Mugiemooss

Reflecting primarily the first phase of development and hence the first opportunity to create a new and positive identity for this site, this area must set an overall tone for Davidson's Mill recognising that it also sits alongside a diverse range of existing and more recent buildings. Although not directly adjacent to the River Don it has an important connection to the Bucks Burn, and Phase 1 will include works to improve this important ecological corridor and facilitate connections across it.



Reference imagery of modern well proportioned housing, using render, slate, and larger format windows.

Outlined below is some of the descriptive text from the Phase 1 Masterplan.

Adjectives

Responsive, informal, soft.

Typical street conditions

Curvilinear street with distorted grid which responds to slopes and gradients. Sympathetic layout which follows contours and prevents excessive cut and fill.

Materials

Predominantly render. Brick for larger blocks as inspired by the history of larger 'industrial' buildings in Aberdeen.

- In order to accommodate the transition from existing and recent development which establishing an overall identity for Davidson's Mill, render should be considered in the first instance for the majority of houses and semi-detached typologies.
- Larger typologies, from terraced units up to flatted accommodation should utilise brick on primary frontages and as appropriate to the scale and massing of individual blocks.



Section 5: Material Palette and Details

The development at Former Davidson's Mill will be a very particular and high quality response to both the unique site and the surrounding urban context. In order to ensure an appropriate sense of place is inherent in architectural designs, the definition of appropriate building materials and details is important. This section aims to provide a commentary on a specific architectural appearance as guidance, rather than as strict design code.

Because the development contains a number of discrete areas, the public realm elements defined within the Detailed Strategic Landscape Plan are also critical in bringing the development to life and will bring a level of sophistication and attention to detail which should also be consistent across the development.

The Former Davidson's Mill development is not envisioned as a typical suburban development and the Framework clearly establishes a vision for an urban area which will have urban forms and house types. Elsewhere in the Phase 1 document, block structure and street layout principles are clearly set out, ensuring the development form and layout lend themselves to a well connected urban place and sense of community.

A standard house product response is unlikely to be appropriate throughout the site and this section sets out considerations which guide how standard products might be adapted, or bespoke responses might emerge. The developers and their design teams are required to produce architectural designs which are inspired and responsive to identified qualities of

Aberdeen urban vernacular as well as key features of the site. Such examples (although not exhaustive) of appropriate local reference include such detail as windows on gables, and elevated corner building arrangements which are all common in Aberdeen townscape. In conjunction with this, and perhaps most importantly the development should reflect a modern response to setting of the River Don, Bucks Burn and the industrial nature of the previous land use.

Guidance is set out relating to:

- Street elevation
- Building Proportions
- Elevation elements
- Roofs
- Walls

A limited palette of materials which is linked to the character areas is set out, primarily based around brick, render and timber.

The following pages illustrate some of the material guidance, but is not exhaustive of everything included in the Phase 1 Masterplan.



Reference imagery of windows in gables



Accordia: street elevations carefully considered to provide vertical articulation.



The Drum: Rhythm of pitched roofs onto secondary streets.



Fore Street: Flat roofs carefully considered alongside massing and proportions of buildings.



Upton: Opportunities for arrangement of pitched roofs on street elevations to be used in dramatic ways.





Caer Amon: Crisp white render with plinth.



The Drum: A simple palette of white render and engineering brick unifies the development. Canopies, eaves and other projections are minimal and present relatively 'flat' modelling of elevations.



The Botany: Characterful, but simple brick use for flatted accommodation and terraced housing. Sensitive use of flat and pitched roofs. Coherent streetscape and clean street elevation.



Eyre Place: Eternit cladding panels at ground floor, top floor and accent areas.



Section 6: Block Structure

Specific rationale is set out relating to the masterplan response to landscape features, landform, orientation, connections and integrations, views and spatial experience. These principles have been adopted in producing the detail masterplan and act as a gauge against which any future changes or amendment to the masterplan may be assessed.

Section 7: Access and Connectivity

Illustrated below are the key connections and routes for Phase 1. Many other connections are shown on the underlying base and these will be required as part of detailed design, however those highlighted are key

Access and Connectivity

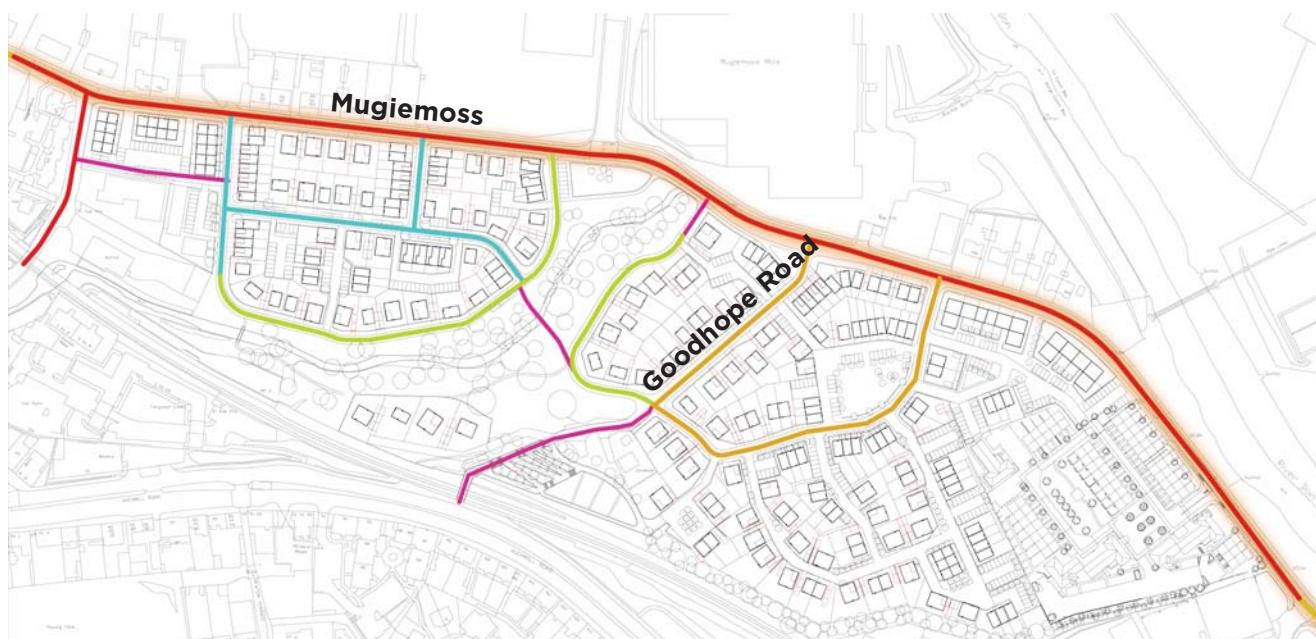
- Existing street
- Secondary street
- Minor street (within block)
- Minor street (block edge)
- NCR 1
- Other connections

in establishing a well connected and permeable environment.

Existing pedestrian networks will be supported and strengthened, particularly those along Mugiemoos Road and Auchmill Road linking in the communities that already exist. Pedestrian movement through Phase 1 will also include crossing of the Bucks Burn. Generally cyclists will be accommodated on street and on shared pedestrian routes. An improved accessible route will be provided up to Auchmill Road via Goodhope Road.

The hierarchy of streets illustrated below will be designed to dictate the movement habits of vehicles while providing streets safe for all to use, following the principles of current national policy.

There will be no public transport provision within Phase 1, but new and improved connections both north and south will facilitate connections to existing public transport routes and those that are proposed as part of the whole development.

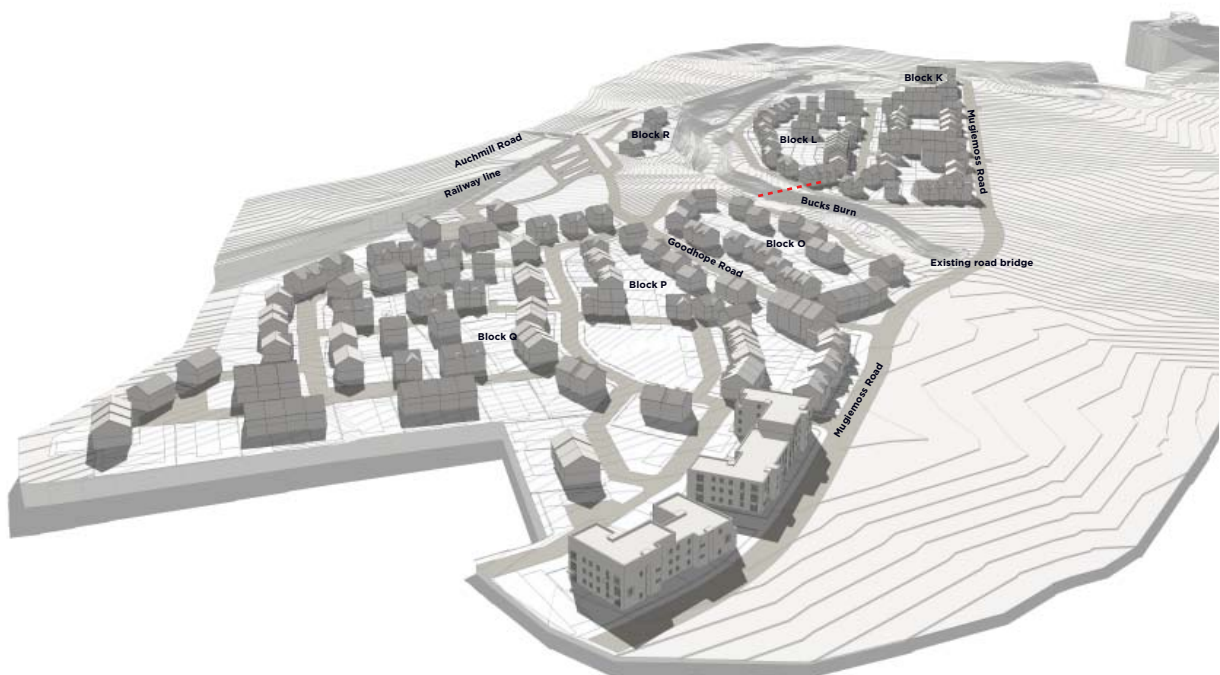
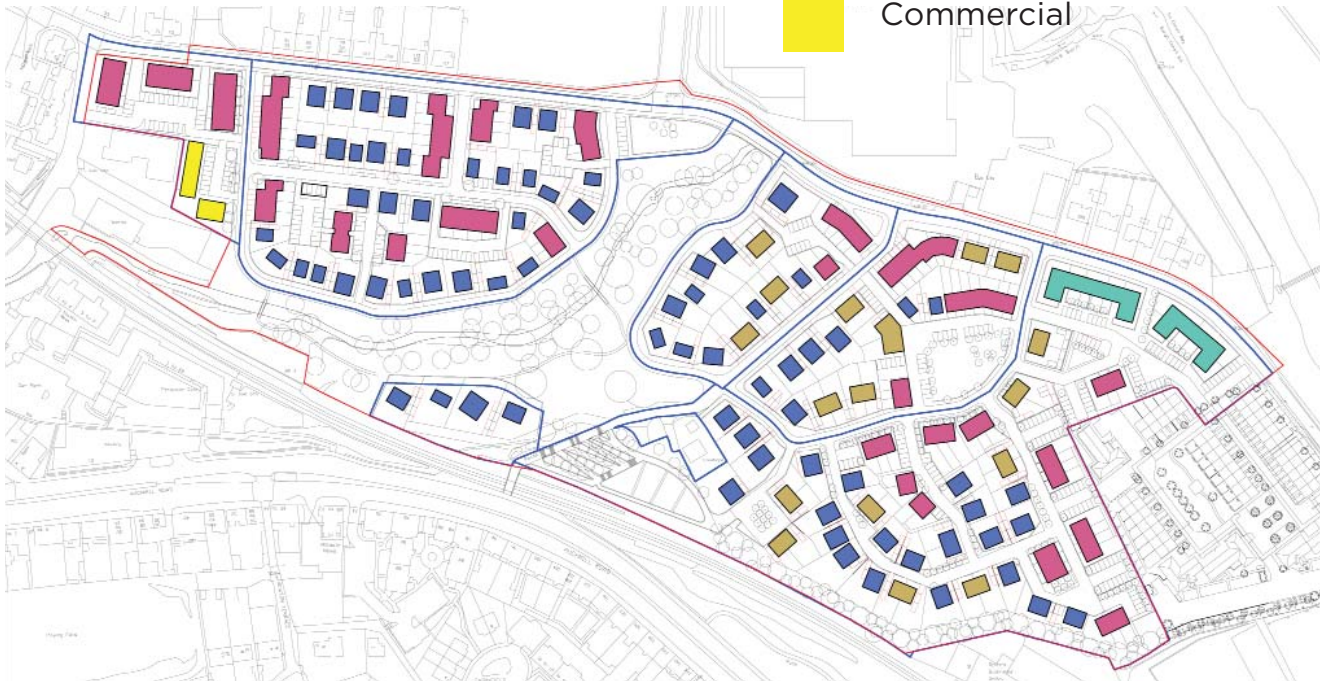


Section 8: Landuse and Density

These sections set out general principles for access, land use and density alongside a rationale for each sub-block. Principles of building typologies, heights and spatial definition are demonstrated through an indicative masterplan layout and diagrams. Opportunities for commercial space are highlighted.

Buildings

-  Detached units
-  Semi-detached
-  Terrace/townhouse
-  Flatted units
-  Commercial



Phase 1 Masterplan area showing indicative layout and residential mix

Section 9: Design Principles

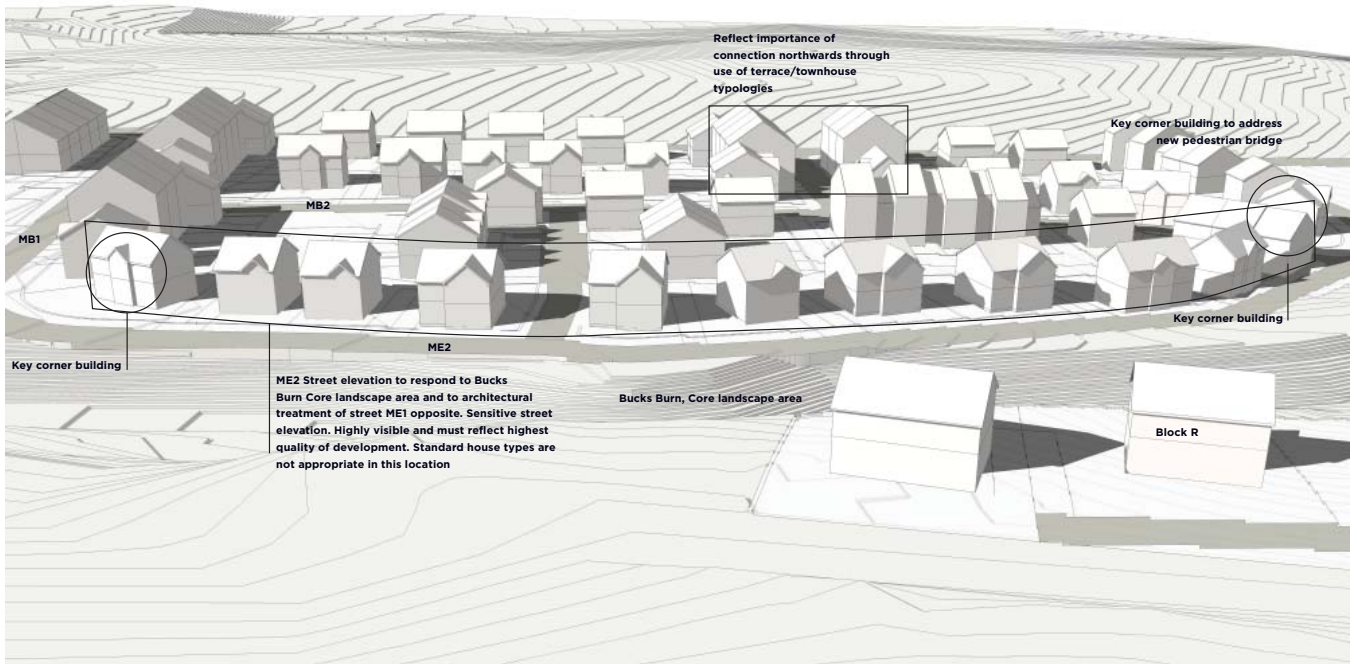
The Phase 1 Masterplan is made up of a series of sub-blocks which respond to additional site specific issues. In the spirit of making developments fit and respond to sites the identification of particular issues that relate to localised parts of sites or phases of development are key to success.

Therefore this key section explains the general and specific design principles for each sub-block in architectural and place-making terms.

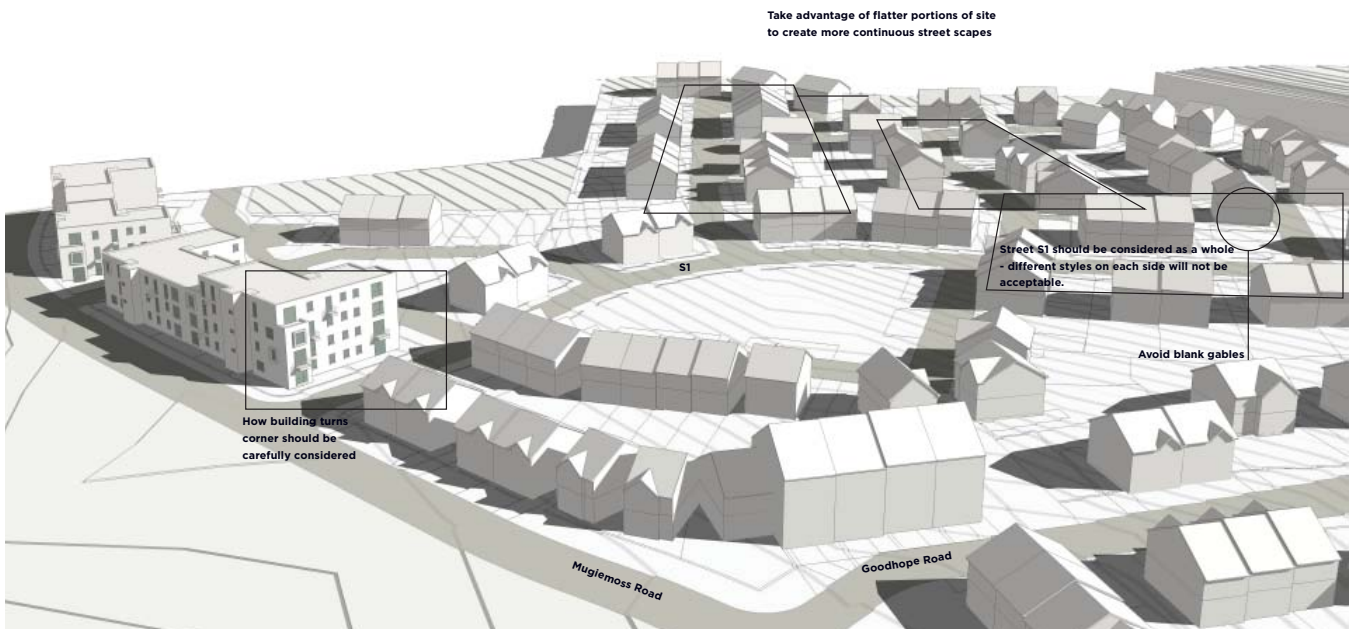
An initial overview of approach to street-scape and urban design which has driven the indicative masterplan is followed by further detail at a sub-block level.

The specific principles and desired architectural quality is described on a sub-block basis through a common language and three-dimensional modelling (example set out on opposite page), which demonstrate the required architectural and urban response.

Parameters are set by sub-block relating to density, maximum storey height, parking approach and indicative residential mix. Reference is made back to the overall Detailed Strategic Landscape Plan for common guidance on streets and materials.



Example of 3d sub-block modelling - Block L



Example of 3d sub-block modelling - Block Q

