

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there are green fields and a road. In the middle ground, there is a large industrial or commercial area with several large buildings and parking lots. In the background, there is a large lake and more fields. The sky is clear and blue.

LOIRSTON

Development Framework
November 2012

SUMMARY

Loirston Development Framework: Summary

Introduction

The Loirston site occupies an important strategic position within the context of Aberdeen City both as a gateway site and as a resource for open spaces such as Loirston Loch and Kincorth Hill. The site offers an excellent location for development, with the potential to connect to and support existing surrounding communities whilst integrating with the distinctive landscape setting.

The Loirston masterplan area is located to the south of Aberdeen and is adjacent to the residential areas of Nigg, Cove and Charleston and in close proximity to the employment uses of Altens industrial estate. The relevant “Opportunity Site” boundaries cover a total area of c177 hectares.

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

Section 1: The Masterplan Process

Sets out the process which has been followed during the evolution of the Development Framework, the planning context, existing consents within the DF which are considered as “fixes” and details the consultation and engagement process which has been undertaken along with recorded responses to comments.

Section 2: The Site

Describes the site, historic development and site analysis. A brief outline of the EIA and TA scoping process is presented.

Section 3: Opportunity and Vision

Details the potential of the site as a major gateway to the City and outlines the key principles which have been adopted for the DF.

Section 4: Design Development

Illustrates the design progression from early sketches and options to material included in the public exhibition and more detailed testing of urban grain and character.

Section 5: The Development Framework

Defines the various components of the DF and demonstrates how they address points of policy, landuse, movement, open space, urban design, character and design. Three-dimensional material sets out the aspirations for various character areas.

Section 6: Phasing and Delivery

Key principles of phasing and delivery are set out through indicative phasing diagrams and a matrix of infrastructure requirements.

Section 7: Appendices

Additionally, the following supporting information has been submitted in support of the Development Framework and should be read in tandem with this document:

- Drainage Statement
- Geo-environmental Desk Study
- Traffic Assessment Scoping
- EIA Scoping

Development Framework Area



Legend

-  Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) Opportunity Site

Section 1: Masterplan process

This section sets out the purpose of the Development Framework and sets out the planning context in terms of development plans, policy and other relevant guidance documents. The technical workshops with ACC stakeholders is described and the process of consultation with the Community is set out. A public exhibition was held in June 2012 and the relevant material and collated comments is recorded. The design team response to those comments is set out along with identification of how the proposals have changed to reflect the aspiration or specific requests made by the community. Several meetings have been held with the three involved Community Councils and the outcome of those meetings is noted.



Public exhibition, June 2012

Section 2: The site

Section 2 describes the site in detail and sets out the existing consents and relevant planning applications which fall within the Framework area. A number of these, including the proposals for Aberdeen Football Club and Cove Rangers Football Club, are considered as 'fixes' for the purpose of the Development Framework, and their current planning status and layout is recorded.

The Loirston site is located to the west of Cove Bay on the southern outskirts of Aberdeen City. It is bordered on the west side by the A90 and on the south-east by the A956 (Wellington Road). To the west and south lies agricultural land. Immediately north of the site is Kincorth Hill, an area of scrub and a nature reserve, and beyond that the residential area of Kincorth. Bordering the site to the north-east is a small area of agricultural and recreational ground, and further to the north and north-east are the large Tullos, Nigg and Altens industrial estates.

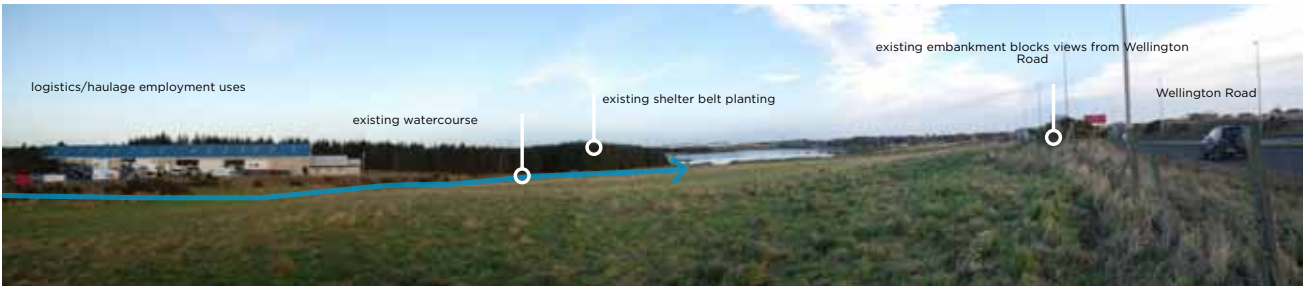
Most of the site lies between 80 and 90 metres above ordnance datum (m aod). The ground is generally fairly flat, sloping gently down towards Loirston Loch, but steepens upwards towards Kincorth Hill at the north end and Blue Hill to the south-west (outwith the site). There is an area of low-lying, marshy ground immediately to the west of the loch. Areas of boggy ground exist, particularly near to the loch. The main use of the site is as grazing land for cattle and sheep with some recreational uses.

The historic development of the site is set out through text narrative associated with historic maps; key landscape elements such as Loirston Loch and Kincorth Hill are described and their key sensitivities noted along with the environmental principles to be adopted as the framework is developed in more detail. Other environmental considerations are summarised along with an overview of the Environmental Impact Assessment scoping process. This includes an outline of the approach to assessing impact on amongst other topics: land use; hydrology, drainage, flood risk and water quality; ecology, nature conservation and biodiversity;

cultural heritage; noise and vibration; and traffic and transport. Initial studies suggest that potential environmental impacts can be avoided or minimised to an acceptable level through sensitive design.

Reference is made to the Transport Assessment scoping report which accompanies the DF and sets out the proposed approach to assessing impact on connectivity issues.

Finally, selected site panoramas are set out with key landscape elements identified along with relevant features in the immediate context.



View A: View from within embankment and site to loch from south-west extent of site



View B: To loch from Wellington Road



View C: To Blue Hill from location of proposed AFC junction at Wellington Road

Section 3: Opportunity and Vision

The Loirston site sits in a key strategic location which has the potential to be a significant gateway to Aberdeen City making the Loirston site a highly visible edge of city location, integrated positively with important landscape resources such as Loirston Loch and Kincorth Hill. With future changes planned to the transport network around the site the area covered by the Framework will be bounded by two key routes into the city; these key arteries, coupled with the potential for a public transport route through the new development and the open aspect of the site due to the existing topography, make the Loirston site a highly visible edge of city location.

The existing landscape resources of Loirston Loch and Kincorth Hill offer a fantastic opportunity for a new neighbourhood that is fully integrated with its landscape setting and that is distinctive and appropriate to the surrounding context. The proximity to the city centre and key employment areas creates the potential for a unique and attractive waterside mixed-use development. By sensitively establishing a landscape framework from the outset around the existing resources, a strong green space network can be created, into which sustainable development neatly fits, offering easy access to the surrounding open spaces and existing communities.



Indicative Framework block model

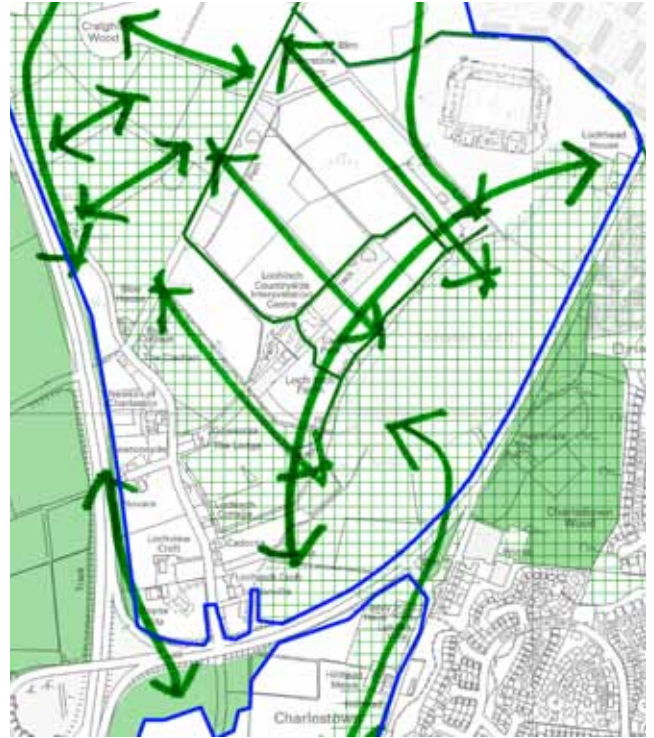


Illustrating key development principles

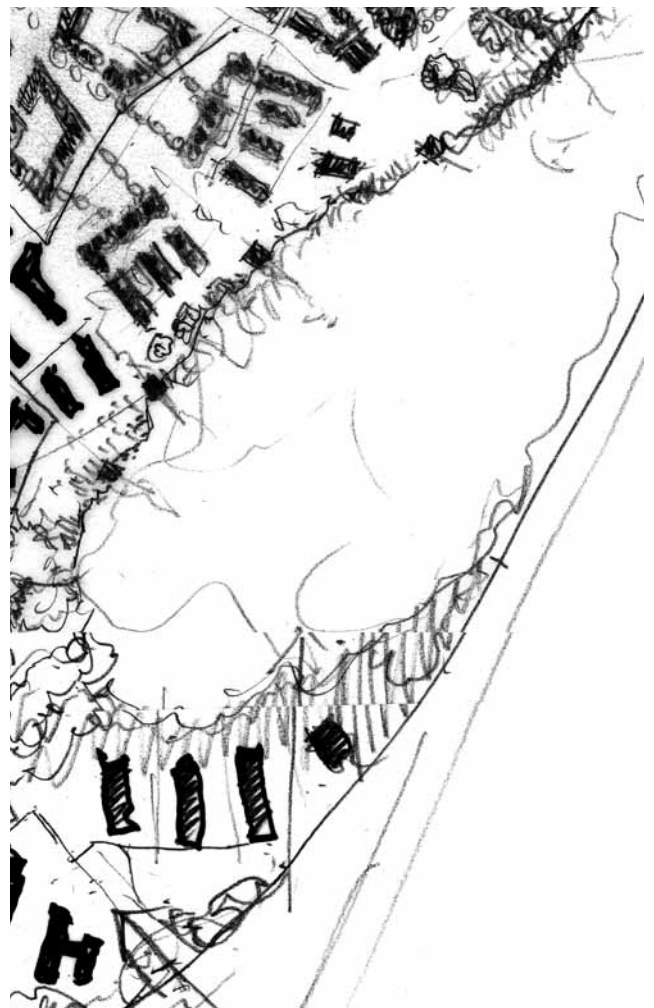
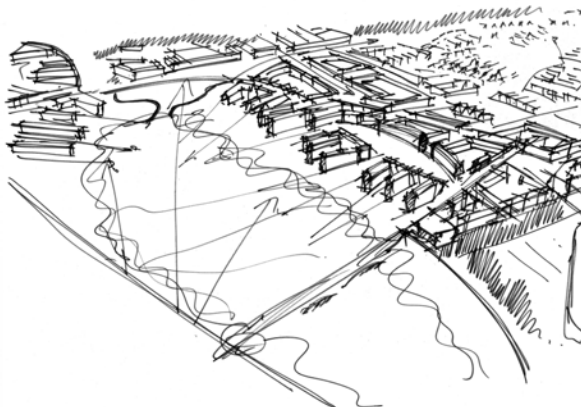
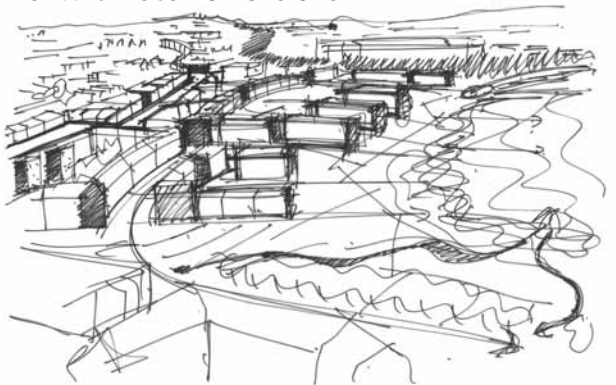
Section 4: Design development

The design team has used an iterative process to develop the Loirston Framework, based on an evolving understanding of the site and its technical parameters, the surrounding context and the aspirations of the key stakeholders. Consultation has been key, taking into account the views and expertise of the community, statutory consultees and ACC. Feedback received from these interactions has been assessed and integrated where appropriate in order to ensure the best outcome for the site and a Framework which can flexibly adapt and accommodate change in the future.

This section illustrates and records some of the outputs of this process, exploring through diagrams, plans and sketches the various paths that were followed on the way to establishing a concept and baseline that could be tested technically and with stakeholders.



Testing the open space network connections



Sketches in support of early visualisations for the loch.

Section 5: The Development Framework

The Framework has evolved from a careful study and analysis of the Loirston site and its context within Nigg, Cove and Charleston. It has taken into account the prime strategic nature of the site and the potential for it to develop as a gateway to the City over time, as well as being a place in its own right. The Framework establishes a flexible structure which is in line with the timing and allocations set out within the ALDP and allows for future detailed proposals to come forward in due course.

In line with the Aberdeen City Council 'Masterplanning Process' the Development Framework sets out a vision and a spatial Framework for the way in which the Loirston area will be developed. This section illustrates through concept diagrams how the framework has been structured in relation to existing landscape features, landform and orientation, views, spatial experience and connections.

Detailed diagrams set out the proposals for access and connectivity relating to existing and proposed core paths and cycle networks along with vehicular movements which follow the principles of 'Designing Streets' Policy Statement for Scotland. Two main junctions are proposed for access from Wellington Road supported by two other connections at Redmoss Road and Wellington Circle.

The requirements for usable, well-designed open space as set out in ACC's

Open Space Supplementary Guidance is clearly illustrated through a series of diagrams which identify relevant types and categories by use and area.

Landuse and density principles illustrate how and where 1500 residential units and 11 hectares of Employment land would be accommodated on the site and ranges of applicable storey heights are indicated. A strategy of taller buildings around the Loch has been identified to maximise the opportunity to create a gateway development which is visible across the water on approach to the city.

An initial assessment of the required surface water strategy is described along with a description of current topography and landform. Indicative character areas have been identified across the framework and two- and three-dimensional material has been developed to illustrate the proposed approaches and relevant urban design principles. A section relating to the specific sensitivities of the lochside area shows how the next steps in detail design should consider building heights, setbacks, environmental improvements and access arrangements.

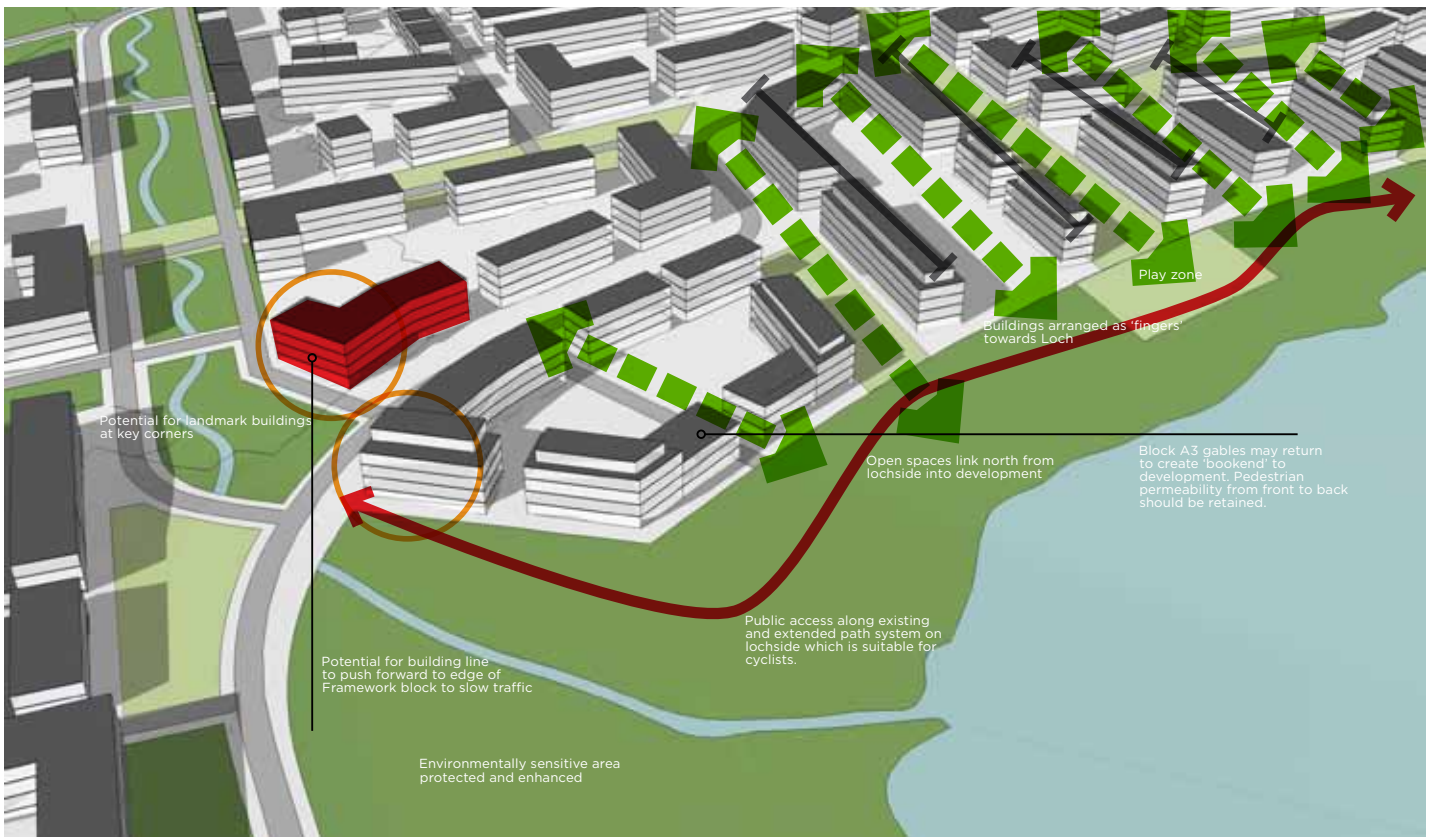
Finally, due to the current uncertainty regarding both the final location for a new Secondary School and the delivery of the various football club's proposals, a number of options to the 'Baseline' Framework have been developed which allow the Framework to accommodate various scenarios.

Loirston Development Framework



Legend

- Development blocks
- Existing development
- Streets
- Indicative location for new junction
- Major connection to surrounding road network
- ↘ Other connection to surrounding road network
- Core path (existing and improved)
- Core path AP3
- General path network
- Major Open Space
- Neighbourhood Open Space
- Local Open Space
- Indicative SUDS location
- Primarily continuous frontage
- Mixed frontage
- Key buildings/corners for orientation, landmarks and urban character.
- Suggested development block internal access.



Urban design principles of lochside area

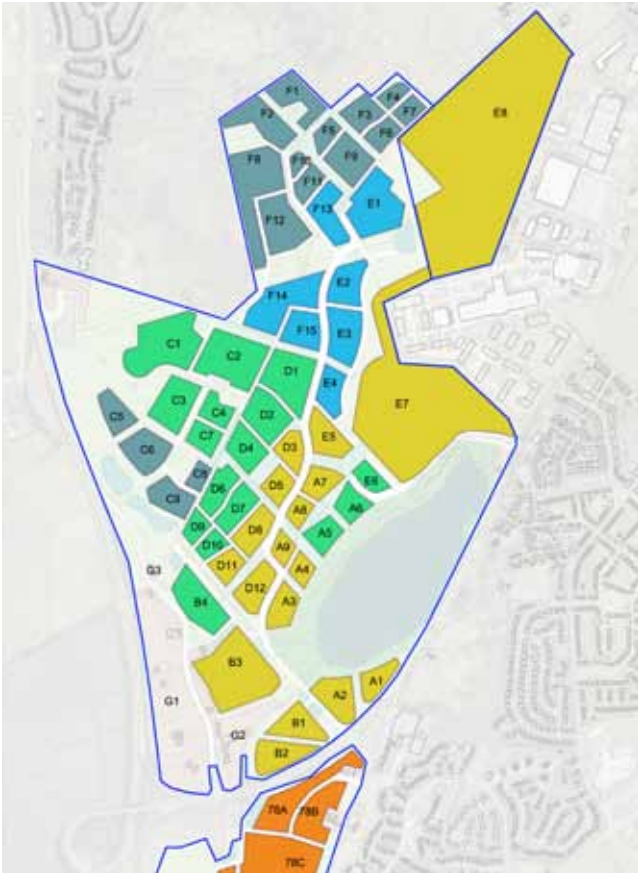


Concept plan for lochside area illustrating key principles



Section 6: Phasing and Delivery

The last section of the Framework presents indicative phasing diagrams and associated principles which are devised to create a logical sequence of development and an appropriate build-up of the place. A matrix describing an outline delivery strategy identifies the key infrastructure requirements and the parties to be involved in their delivery at later stages.



Indicative phasing



Illustration of opportunity and potential for lochside area

