

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Development Management Sub-Committee
DATE	6 December 2012
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Hopecroft Planning Brief
REPORT NUMBER	EPI/12/279

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### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report outlines the Hopecroft Planning Brief, prepared as a framework for the future development of land identified in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) as Opportunity Site OP20.
- 1.2 The Hopecroft Planning Brief is appended to this Committee Report and can also be viewed by accessing the following link:

[www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning)

### **2 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
  - (a) Approve the Hopecroft Planning Brief as interim planning advice; and
  - (b) Agree for officers to implement the process to ratify the Planning Brief as Supplementary Guidance. This will include a 4 week public consultation with results reported to Committee prior to submission to Scottish Government.

#### 2.2 Definitions

'Interim Planning Advice' – this specifies that the Development Framework is in the public domain and available for the purposes of a formal City-wide consultation. As such it becomes a material consideration in the determination of any planning application. The duration of consultation will typically be 4 weeks, given that public engagement has taken place throughout the preparation of the Framework. This allows responses to be collated and reported back in the next Committee cycle.

'Supplementary Guidance' (SG) – this is adopted and issued by a planning authority in connection with a Local Development Plan, as a result any such guidance will form part of the Development Plan. Before adoption, the SG must be publicised and a period for representations to be made specified, this includes the targeting of key consultees and stakeholders who may want the opportunity to comment. Following the specified consultation period and as a result of comments received, relevant changes will be made to the final document before reporting back to Committee and subsequent submission to Scottish Ministers. After 28 days have elapsed, the authority may then adopt the guidance unless Scottish Ministers have directed otherwise.

### **3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report out with normal officer time to evaluate the Planning Brief. The developers have met the cost of preparation of the Planning Brief, 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 Planning Brief reduces the risk of piecemeal and inappropriate development within the site, by setting out the framework and opportunities for development.
- 4.3 Approving the Planning Brief will contribute to efficiencies in determining future planning applications.
- 4.4 In accordance with the Aberdeen Local Development Plan: Action Programme and the Infrastructure and Developer Contributions Manual, the Planning Brief references how the development will seek to address requirements for cumulative and local transport infrastructure; public transport along with walking and cycling, and education.
- 4.5 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): Screening Report has been undertaken on the Hopecroft site. This report concluded that an SEA is not required because the Plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects. The SEA Screening Report and a copy of the draft Hopecroft Planning Brief is currently out for consultation with the 3 key statutory agencies, with responses to be returned by 13 December 2012.

## **5 BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES**

- 5.1 The Hopecroft Planning Brief has been produced by Optimised Environments Ltd. (OPEN) on behalf of Persimmon Homes and the Rowett Research Institute.
- 5.2 An application for Detailed Planning Permission is expected to be submitted by Persimmon Homes / Rowett Research Institute following the adoption of this Planning Brief. The principles established within the Planning Brief have informed the emerging proposals.

### **Site Description**

- 5.3 The Hopecroft site is located to the north west of Aberdeen in the residential neighbourhood of Bucksburn. The site covers approximately 3.3 hectares and is bounded by Hopetoun Grange to the south and by the A96 (T) (Inverurie Road) to the north. The back gardens of existing housing on Hopecroft Avenue are located to the east and a line of mature trees along a track called 'Lovers Lane' forms the western boundary. The site slopes gently down from south to north and is currently in agricultural use.

### **Policy Summary**

- 5.4 The Hopecroft site is identified in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2012) as Opportunity Site (OP20) for the development of housing (30 homes) near to an area where employment uses predominate. The site allocation has been brought forward from the Aberdeen Local Plan 2008. The Reporters Report on the previous plan highlighted two key site constraints which needed to be addressed, (1) existing trees and (2) the airport noise contour boundary.

### **Content of Planning Brief**

- 5.5 The Brief has been developed in order to define a framework for future development on the Hopecroft site which is appropriate and responsive. Key development and design principles are set out along with two-dimensional illustrations of the indicative layout parameters.
- 5.6 The Brief also highlights opportunities, constraints and solutions, provides a planning policy assessment and details key surveys which are required to be undertaken as part of a planning application.

### **Layout, Design and Density**

- 5.7 The Brief for Hopecroft highlights the need for a new residential development which is in keeping with the surrounding neighbourhood in terms of density and housing mix, whilst respecting existing landscape elements.

- 5.8 The Brief considers existing development surrounding the site and suggests that a range of detached family homes at a density between 20-35 units/hectare is appropriate.
- 5.9 A 15 metre “stand off” distance has been applied to the layout which is required between buildings and trees. In addition, the development principles diagram (Section 6.) maps the airport noise contour for the 57dB limit whereby no development can occur, in accordance with ALDP Policy H8. Through site masterplanning and analysis during the production of this Brief, the 2 key site constraints have been addressed. As a result the overall capacity of the Hopcroft (OP20) site is now closer to delivering 65 units.
- 5.10 Connectivity and accessibility are key parts of the Brief, with the emphasis on pedestrian and cycle movement, the use of shared surfaces and principles contained in ‘Designing Streets’ policy.

### **Public Consultation**

- 5.11 Throughout the design process for Hopcroft, public consultation on both the Planning Brief and a Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) have been run in tandem to avoid duplication and confusion.
- 5.12 The Planning Brief for Hopcroft has evolved through input from the local community. Two community consultation events took place during the design process (as detailed below) and in addition there was the ability to comment on the Hopcroft (OP20) site throughout production of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2012). In addition, the respective Community Council in the area has been given an advance copy of the draft Planning Brief prior to the Committee meeting.
- Public consultation event – the Beacon Centre, Bucksburn (17 October 2012).
  - Public consultation feedback event – the Beacon Centre, Bucksburn (20 November 2012).
- 5.13 The main issues arising from consultation so far and the design teams response are outlined below:

<b>Comment / Concern</b>	<b>Response</b>
Retention of existing trees	A Tree Survey has been commissioned and the intention is to retain trees wherever possible.
Frontage to Hopetoun Grange and potential loss of trees	As above, and this survey will inform the detailed proposals with regard to any tree works or removal.
Opposition to potential vehicular link to Hopetoun Drive	The potential for a link will be explored during the detailed planning application and a resolution reached



	with regard to feasibility and land ownership. There maintains a desire for a pedestrian/cycle connection as a minimum.
Aircraft noise	The development principles diagram shows the 57dB contour whereby no development can occur in order to create an appropriate level of residential amenity and comply with Policy H8 of the ALDP (2012).
Security issues around eastern boundary	Development along this edge is proposed to be 'back to back' gardens; therefore security should not be an issue.
Maintenance of 'Lover's Lane' pedestrian link	This link is maintained as a key pedestrian route with the Planning Brief.

5.14 Full details of the comments received and the responses can be found on Pages 24-27 of the Hopecroft Planning Brief.

5.15 Pending approval of the Hopecroft Planning Brief as 'interim planning advice' by the Council's Development Management Sub Committee, the Planning Brief will be subject to a 4 week statutory consultation. The following list highlights the key parties that will be consulted:

Bucksburn & Newhills Community Council	Scottish Natural Heritage
Aberdeen Airport	Historic Scotland
Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Authority	Scottish Enterprise Grampian
Aberdeenshire Council	Transport Scotland
Forestry Commission Scotland	NHS Grampian
Scottish Water	NESTRANS
SEPA	Planning Gain

5.16 The results of the statutory consultation will be reported back to the Development Management Sub Committee, including any recommended amendments to the Brief. Following this, the Brief will be sent to Scottish Government for ratification as Supplementary Guidance to the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2012).

5.17 It is important to note that engagement will continue throughout the planning application process.

## 6 IMPACT

6.1 The proposal contributes to the Single Outcome Priorities: 10. We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need; and, 12 – We value and enjoy our


built and natural environment and protect and enhance it for future generations.

- 6.2 The proposal contributes to the 5 Year Business Plan in terms of objective – Communication and Community Engagement; sharing our plans and aspirations for the city; and, facilitating new development projects to improve Aberdeen’s living environment.
- 6.3 The proposal contributes towards the Aberdeen City Council Administrations vision for Aberdeen: 2012 – 2017, particularly creating a City which is a great place to live and bring up a family.
- 6.4 The proposal is consistent with the Council’s Corporate Plan in particular with regard to 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 Service Plan, in particular engaging the community in the planning process, and the delivery of plans/briefs in line with Aberdeen Masterplanning Process.

## **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 The Hopcroft Planning Brief (November 2012) is appended to this Report and can be viewed by accessing the following link:  
[www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning)
- 7.2 Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2012)  
<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=42278&slID=9484>
- 7.3 Aberdeen Masterplanning Process 2008 (article 22, Planning Committee Minute, 6/11/08)  
[http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Planning/pla/pla\\_planningbriefs.asp](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Planning/pla/pla_planningbriefs.asp)
- 7.4 Aberdeen Masterplanning Process Report (Agenda item 1.1 , Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure Committee, 6/11/12)  
<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=22686>

## **8 REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

Rebecca Oakes  
Planner – Masterplanning, Design and Conservation  
 01224 (52) 2241  
 [roakes@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:roakes@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

# OP 20: Hopecroft Planning Brief

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Hopetoun Grange, Aberdeen

Client: Persimmon Homes

Document No: 120478 PlanningBrief01

Date: 26th November 2012



Project: Hopetoun Grange  
Document: Planning Brief  
Document Number: 120478-PlanningBrief 01

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Revision</b>	<b>By</b>	<b>Approved</b>	<b>Date</b>
First issue	-	CDG	PMac	26/11/12

**This Planning Brief for Hopecroft, Bucksburn has been developed in order to define a framework for future development on the site which is appropriate and responsive.**

**Key development and design principles are set out along with two-dimensional illustrations of the indicative layout parameters.**



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# 1. Introduction

This planning brief has been prepared by Optimised Environments (OPEN) for Persimmon Homes (East Scotland) to provide the context and principles for the residential development of land north of Hopetoun Grange in accordance with the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012 (ALDP). An application for Detailed Planning Permission is expected to be submitted by Persimmon Homes/ Rowett Research Institute following the adoption of this Planning Brief and the principles established within this document have informed the emerging proposals.

The 3.3 hectare site is currently in agricultural use and lies within a residential area; the ALDP identifies the site for residential development. A number of supporting studies have been carried out to inform the preparation of this Planning Brief; these include a Transport Assessment, Tree Survey, Report on Road and Air Traffic Noise, Drainage Impact Assessment and Ecology Survey. These surveys will be submitted with the Detailed Planning Permission application.

## **Public consultation**

Two public events have been organised by Persimmon Homes in order to gather public comments and reactions to initial ideas and principles of development on the site. The results of these events are summarised later in this document and relevant responses and subsequent changes to the proposals by the developer are also noted. It should be noted that these consultation events are in addition to the statutory consultation process which will be followed during the Detailed Planning Application period.

# 2. Purpose and status of Planning Brief

The purpose of this document is to define a Planning framework for future development in order to help with the delivery of proposals which are appropriate and make best use of the site and its location. The brief clearly indicates the relevant requirements and expectations as set out in ACC Policy and Supplementary Guidance which will be taken into account during determination of development proposals. This includes principles of access, connectivity, open space provision and integration of existing landscape elements for example. Additionally, the document also sets out principles for massing and layout which respond to both the context of the site and the existing sloping topography in order to ensure that the visual impact is considered from the outset in detailed proposals. The document will be progressed to form Supplementary Guidance to the ALDP (2012).



# 3. Site description

## 3.1 Site location

The proposed site is adjacent to the community of Bucksburn and is located around 7km to the north-west of Aberdeen City centre. The site covers approximately 3.3 hectares and is bounded to the south by Hopetoun Grange and to the north by the A96(T) (Inverurie Road). The back gardens of existing housing on Hopcroft Avenue are located to the east and a line of mature trees along a track known as 'Lovers Lane' forms the boundary to the west. The site slopes gently down from south to north and is currently in agricultural use. Aberdeen Airport is located to the north of the site. (See Figures 1 and 2).

### Site ownership

The land is currently owned by The Rowett Research Institute and under offer to Persimmon Homes Limited subject to various standard contractual obligations being discharged.

### Local facilities

The site is approximately around 300m from the local shops at Slattie Park and around 700m from Bucksburn Swimming Pool/ Beacon Centre sports facility.



fig. 1: Site location plan.

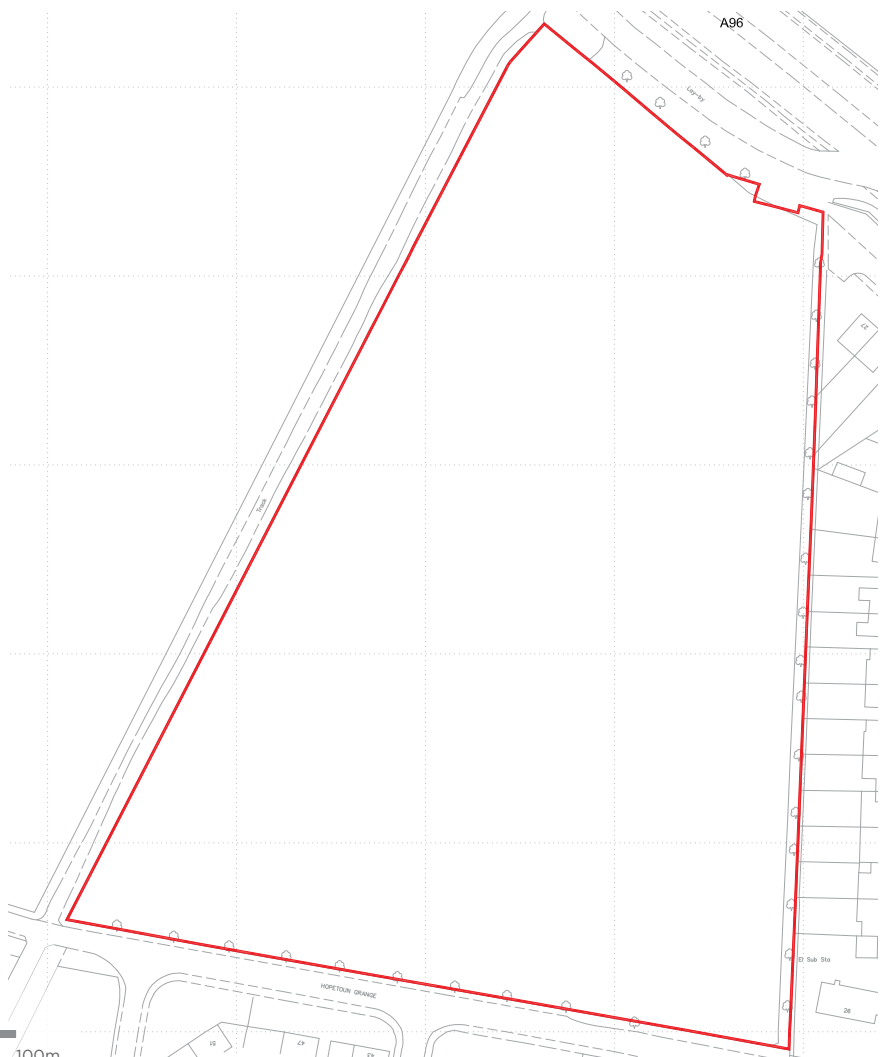


fig. 2: Site boundary on Ordnance Survey plan





fig. 3: VP. 1 Site panorama from south-west corner showing views to Grandholm and beyond



fig. 5: VP. 2 Poor condition of trees on Hopetoun Grange



fig. 4: VP. 3 View along Hopetoun Grange to east  
Hopcroft: Planning Brief



## 3.2 Site photos

The photos opposite and below illustrate the existing site character and condition.



fig. 9: Plan showing viewpoint locations



fig. 7: VP. 4 Mature tree avenue to west



fig. 8: VP. 5 Lovers Lane



fig. 6: VP. 6 View from north-west looking along mature trees at western boundary

## 3.3 Surveys

The following surveys and reports are underway or have been completed which have informed the emerging proposals and address some of the questions raised at initial public consultation, however these have not been assessed or agreed by ACC officers and will form part of the future planning application

- Report on Road and Air Traffic Noise (Charlie Fleming Associates)
- Tree report (Donald Rodger Associates)
- Ecology report (EnviroCentre Ltd)
- Transport Impact Assessment (TIA)
- Drainage Impact Assessment (DIA)
- Archaeology
- Site Investigation
- Topographic survey
- Bat Roost Potential (BRP)

# 4. Planning policy background

## 4.1 Structure plan

The relevant development plans are the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (2009) and the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP)(2012). The Structure Plan states a preference for development on brownfield sites, however recognises that the expected scale of growth will mean that a significant proportion of new development will need to take place on greenfield sites. In order to make the best and most efficient use of such sites, a target for development is set to generally have no less than 30 dwellings per hectare. An emphasis is placed on reducing travel distances and making walking, cycling and public transport more attractive to people. The requirement for new communities to have a range and mix of types, sizes and tenures of homes is noted along with the need to provide affordable housing. It is the intention of the Strategic Development Plan Authority to consult on their Proposed Strategic Development Plan early next year.

## 4.2 Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP)

The land to the north of Hopetoun Grange has been identified as an opportunity for housing since the Finalised Aberdeen Local Plan “Green Spaces – New Places” in 2004 and has since been carried forward to the current Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) which was adopted in February 2012.

The Reporters Report on the 2008 Local Plan originally set the allocation for 30 units based on constraints relating to noise and existing mature trees. The Report states that “the BAA noise contour map...shows the dB 60 contour just touching the north-east corner of the site” and combined with “the essential need to keep development well clear of existing trees and clear of the future full spread of roots and canopies of new trees that should be planted to maintain landscape continuity, mean that the capacity of the field [ie. OP20 Hopecroft] would most likely be no more than 30 dwellings”. Part of

the purpose of this Planning Brief is to address these specific concerns and give clarity to the actual extent of these two constraints which were not explicitly illustrated within the Reporters Report.

The ALDP identifies the site as “OP20 Hopecroft” and promotes it as “an opportunity to provide housing (30 homes) near to an area where employment uses predominate.” The allocation recognises the advantages of the existing residential areas surrounding the site and addresses the need for family housing in the Bucksburn area.

### 4.2.1 Constraints: Existing Trees, Noise

Initial discussions with ACC have been held to discuss the potential of increasing the allocation from 30 homes by addressing the concerns previously raised relating to existing landscape elements and noise issues. These have been addressed through a Tree Report and a Report on Road and Air Traffic Noise. The tree report along with a stand-off zone to identify areas excluded from development has helped clarify constraints relating to existing trees. Similarly, the Noise report quantifies the level of road and air traffic noise affecting the site and determines the resulting significance in order to clarify the area limited due to acoustic issues. ALDP Policy H8 “Housing and Aberdeen Airport”, states that “Applications for residential development under or in the vicinity of aircraft flight paths, where the noise levels are in excess of 57dB LAeq (using the summer 16- hour dB LAeq measurement) will be refused, due to the inability to create an appropriate level of residential amenity, and to safeguard the future operation of Aberdeen Airport”. Due to the coarse grained nature of the mapping available which identifies the Aberdeen Airport 57dB Leq Noise Contour, an approximate limit for development can be identified. These constraints of noise and existing trees are illustrated on the Development Principles diagram and together with an understanding of area requirements for SUDS and open space, a revised capacity of around 65 units has been proposed for



# The Aberdeen Local Development Plan

## City Wide Proposals Map

Scale 1:22,500

### Natural Environment

Greenbelt (NE2)  
Green Space Network (NE1)  
Urban Green Space (NE3)



### Housing

Residential Areas (H1)  
Mixed Use Areas (H2)  
Land Release Policy (LR1)



### Community Facilities

Existing Community Sites and Facilities (CF1)  
New Community Sites and Facilities (CF2)



### Economic Development

Business and Industry (BI1)  
Specialist Employment Areas (BI2)  
West End Office Area (BI3)  
Aberdeen Airport and Harbour (BI4)



### Transport

Land for Transport (T1)  
Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route  
Aberdeen Harbour Port Boundary  
Aberdeen Airport Public Safety Zone



### Retailing

Town, District and Neighbourhood Centres (RT3)  
Retail Parks (RP)



### City Centre

City Centre Business Zone (C2)



### Others

Opportunity Sites (OP number)  
City Centre Boundary  
City Boundary



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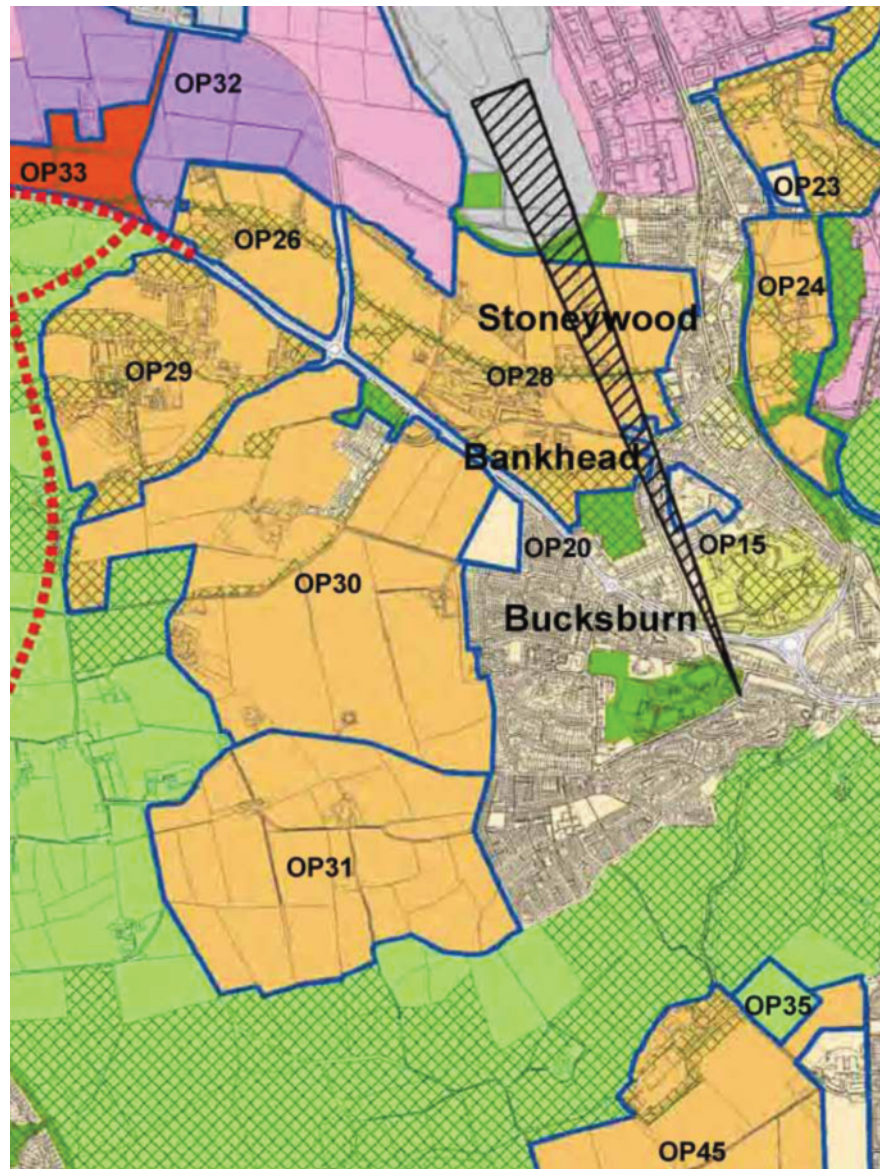


fig. 10: Extract from ALDP (2012), showing OP20 and neighbouring development sites

the net available land. This would be more in keeping with the surrounding residential areas and would be consistent with the minimum residential density set by the Structure Plan of 30 homes per hectare for all developments over one hectare. This density is proposed in order to achieve an appropriate level of population and therefore support place-making.

## 4.2.2 Neighbouring Development Sites

A number of development sites sit adjacent to OP20 and are subject to one or two overarching Development Frameworks:

- OP26 Craibstone North and Walton Farm
- OP28 Rowett North
- OP29 Craibstone South
- OP30 Rowett South
- OP31 Greenferms Landward

Described as “Newhills Expansion area”, the ALDP (2012) requires a combined Masterplan be prepared for Sites OP26 and OP28 (north of A96(T)) and a combined Masterplan for OP29, OP30 and OP31 (south of A96(T)). These Masterplans may be split into phases/land parcels as appropriate however clear linkages and a holistic approach must be demonstrated, particularly in terms of transportation and connectivity.

Whilst OP20 Hopecroft is not part of this formal process, this Planning Brief makes allowances for key principles such as connectivity and linkages between the site and the adjacent plots.

## 4.3 Relevant Supplementary Guidance

The subsequent detailed planning application must take into account relevant policy and guidance with specific emphasis on the following supplementary guidance documents:

- Delivering Identified Projects through a Strategic Transport Fund: Supplementary Planning Guidance (March 2012)
- Affordable Housing Supplementary Guidance (SG) (March 2012)
- Low and Zero Carbon Buildings SG (March 2012)
- Transport and Accessibility SG (March 2012)
- Waste Management Requirements in New Developments SG (March 2012)
- Infrastructure and Developer Contributions Manual SG (May 2012)

The specific guidance which has informed and shaped this planning brief includes The Aberdeen Masterplanning Process: A Guide for Developers, which has been followed by Persimmon and their team to respond to four key issues for ACC: Context, Identity, Connection; and Communication and Engagement. The scope and approach of this Planning Brief has been designed to address each of these issues in turn and show that there is an understanding of each which has informed the outline proposals and design principles.

The Open Space Supplementary Guidance, March 2012 which has been used to ensure the required provision of new open space is shown in the principles diagram, and the Trees and Woodland Supplementary Guidance, March 2012 which suggests that consideration be given to the retention of existing trees through the masterplanning process and how new areas of tree planting can link to existing tree cover.



# 5. Analysis

## 5.1 Surrounding density, character, use

The existing housing immediately surrounding the site comprises low rise residential development of around 1-2 storeys. Homes are generally semi-detached and terraced and are late 1960s construction. The adjacent diagrams illustrate the typical ranges of residential density in the areas surrounding the proposed Hopetoun Grange site. They demonstrate that utilising detached, semi-detached and terraced house types, existing density ranges from around 23 units/hectare up to around 36 units/hectares.

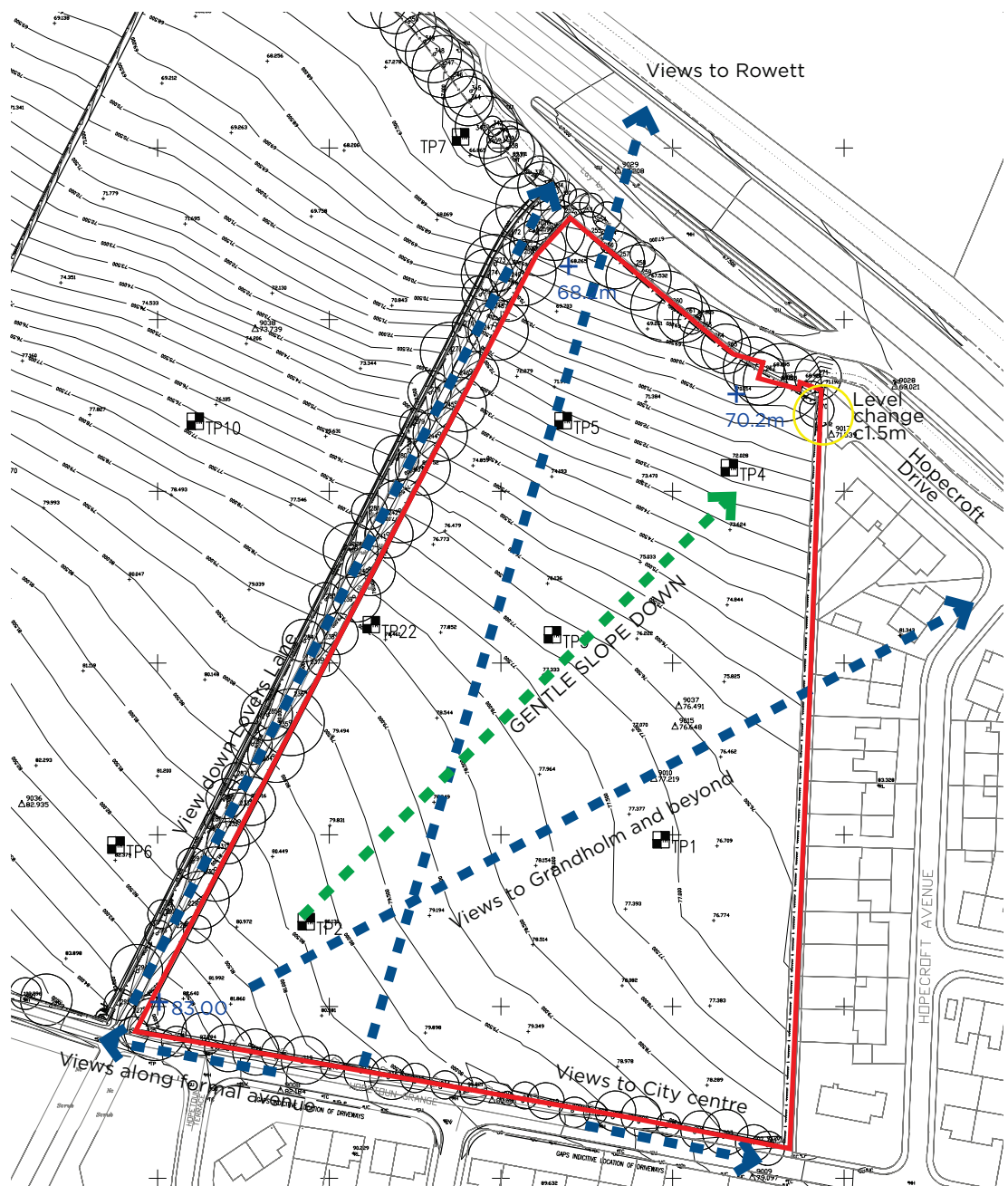


fig. 11: Density study of surrounding context

## 5.2 Topography and views

The site slopes down from a high point at the south-west to a low point at the north. The highest point is approximately 83m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum) and the lowest point is around 68m AOD. There is a significant level change at the north-east corner between the site and the existing levels of Hopcroft Drive where the site sits around 1.5m-2m below adjacent land. Less significant local changes can be observed along the southern boundary with Hopetoun Grange, although these may be simply due to the presence of collapsed dry stone dykes.

Relatively expansive views are most apparent from the upper portions of the site from Hopetoun Grange across the site to the A96(T) and Rowett land. More directed views are available in both directions along Hopetoun Grange and are quite specific to the site due to the presence of existing mature trees.



Scale 1:2000 @ A4



fig. 12: Topographic survey



## 5.3 Access/connectivity

The diagram below shows the key existing access and connectivity resources that are relevant to the site.

### 5.3.1 Pedestrian

Core Paths 38 and 9 run along the A96(T) (Inverurie Road) which is adjacent to the north of the site. Aspirational Core Path AP2 runs along Kepplehills Road around 650m to the south of the site. The track known as Lovers Lane on the western boundary is also well used for pedestrian movements and is recognised on the Scottish Paths Record. It has not been assigned a status as a public right of way, however this does not confirm that it is not one either. There are footpaths throughout the adjacent residential neighbourhood which allow routes to be followed into Bucksburn and further afield.

### 5.3.2 Cycle

The Aberdeen Cycle Map shows a recommended route to the east of the site which is easily accessed along Hopetoun Grange.

### 5.3.3 Public transport/bus

First Bus routes 17 and 18 pass through the Sclattie Park roundabout which is within 300m of the eastern

end of the site. These services are generally every 20 minutes. Several Stagecoach services also run along the A96(T) and stop at the Bankhead bus stop which is within 300m of the north-western boundary of the site. Stagecoach's 10, 10A, 10B, X10 routes stop at Bucksburn Police Station and are on an approximately hourly service. The Stagecoach 37/37A Inverurie Connect services (previously 307) also follows this route and during peak hours provides around 3 services per hour. A 20 minute Stagecoach service between the City centre and Aberdeen Airport operates every 20 minutes. The A96(T) does act as a barrier to reaching the east-bound services as safe crossing points are restricted to the pedestrian crossing point situated at Sclattie Park roundabout.

### 5.3.4 Existing street network

The surrounding street network is highly permeable and subject to a 20mph speed limit. Frontage access is consistent along the length of Hopetoun Grange and other streets immediately nearby. There are few cul-de-sacs within the area although Hopcroft Drive ends in a short section with a single point of entry and egress.



fig. 13: Access and connectivity

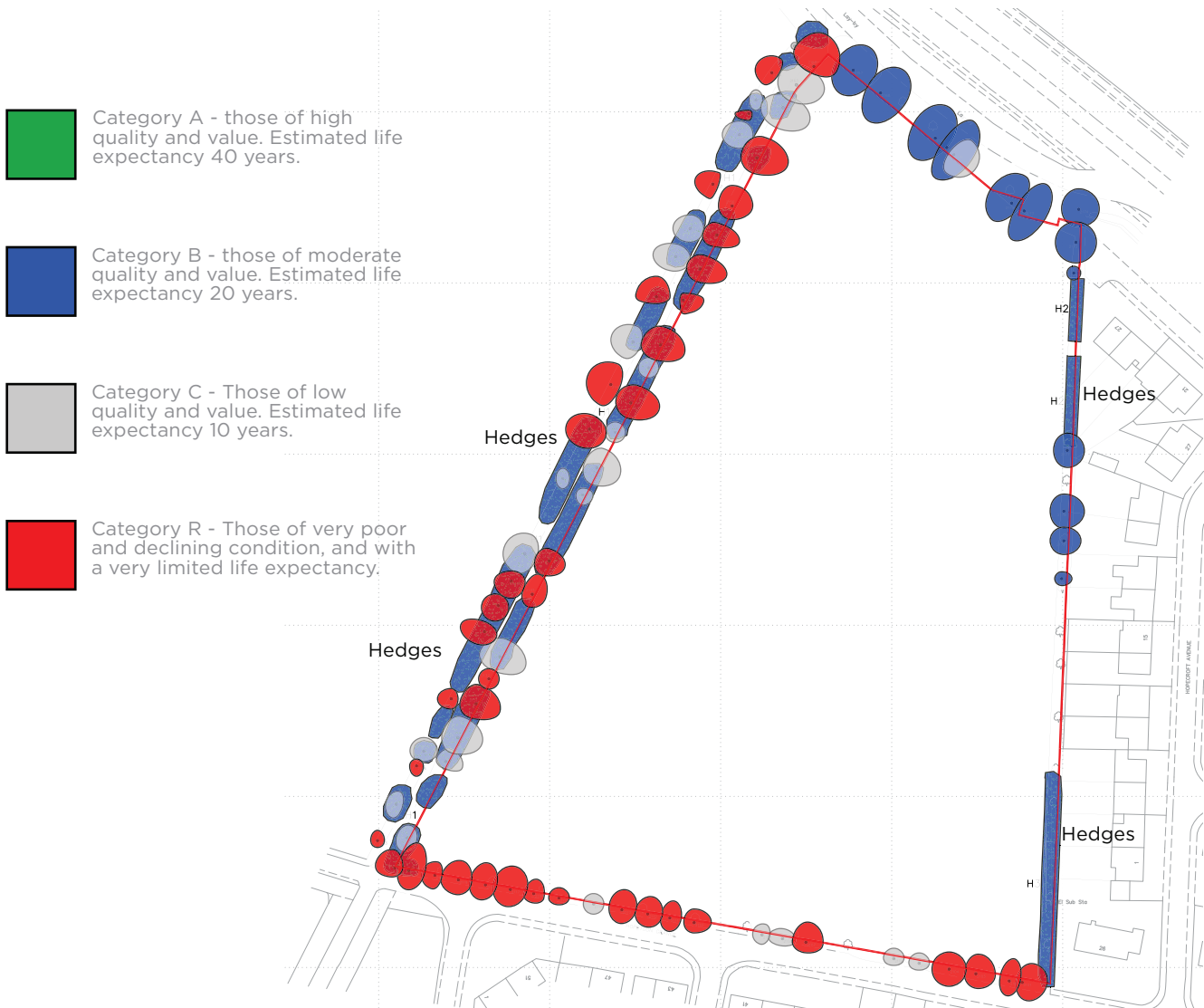
## 5.4 Existing trees/landscape elements

Tree Protection Order 19: Hopetoun Grange/Inverurie Road/Forrit Brae, Bucksburn is in place which covers many of the trees on, or immediately outwith the boundary of the site, therefore no tree work can be carried out without the express, prior permission of the planning authority on trees within this area.

A Tree Survey has been completed by Donald Rodger Associates Arboricultural Consultants to record the condition of existing trees and inform the evolving proposals. The Survey is subject to approval from ACC's Arboricultural Planner as part of the detailed planning application, including specifics of any tree works or removal. The survey records in detail the nature, extent and condition of the existing tree, hedge and woodland cover within the defined

site boundary, and on land immediately adjoining. It provides a comprehensive and detailed pre-development inventory carried out in line with British Standard 5837:2012 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations'. Initial comments and recommendations are also provided regarding tree management and trees in relation to development.

In summary, the report has found that the majority of the beech tree population along Hopetoun Grange and Lovers Lane are in "very poor and declining condition, and with a very limited life expectancy." Such trees are likely to require to be removed in the next 10 to 20 years as they decline further or have to be removed for safety reasons. The development of the site is therefore viewed as a timely opportunity to manage the ageing trees and commence a replacement planting programme.



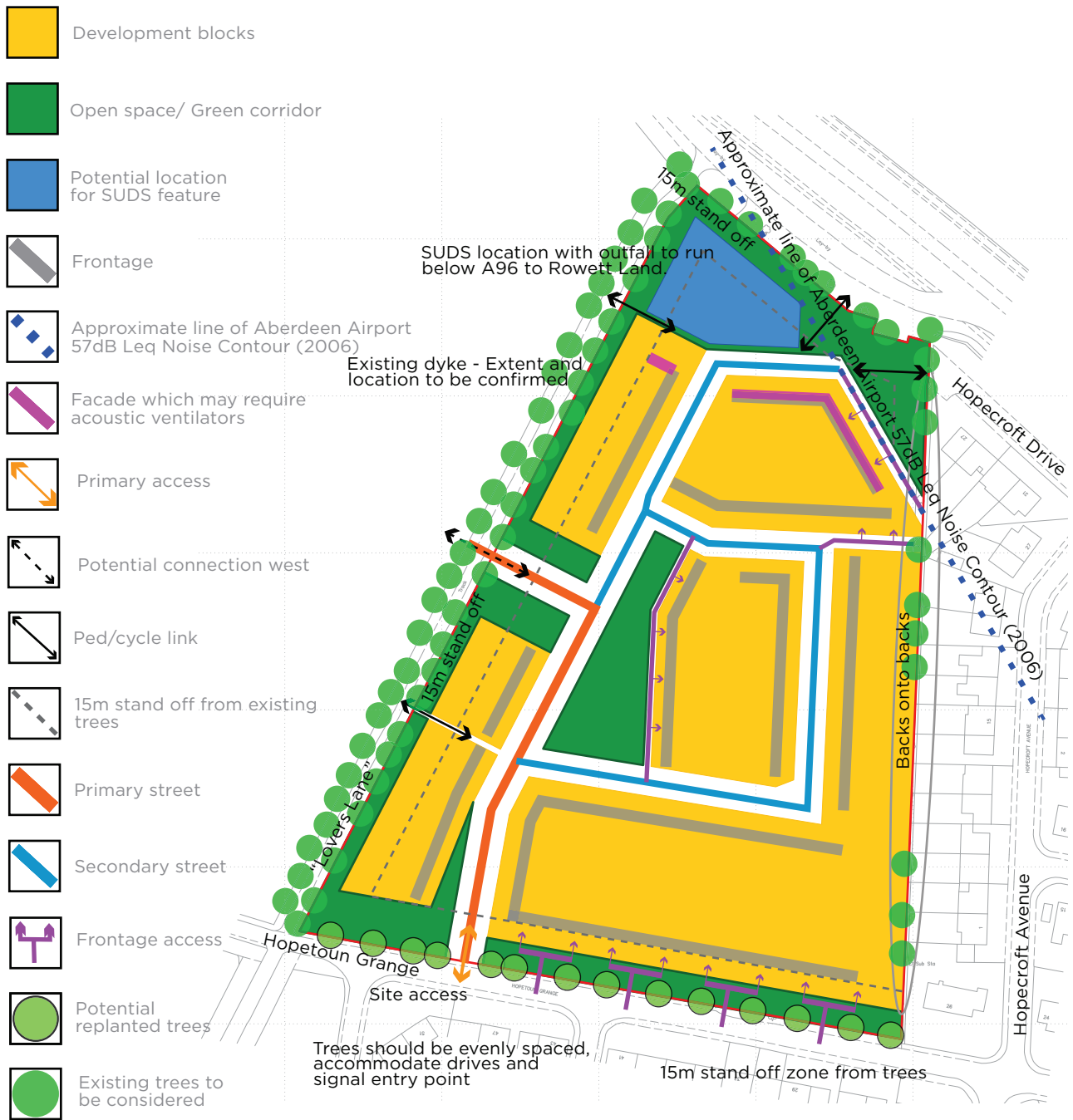
Scale 1:2000 @ A4  
 0m 20m 40m 60m 80m 100m  
 fig. 14: Tree condition survey Scale 1:2000

# 6. Development principles diagram

The diagram below illustrates the key principles for development which have been set out in the previous sections. They show:

- Key access points and connections;
- Indicative street location;
- Open space;

- Potential SUDS location;
- Boundary considerations; and
- Frontages.



Scale 1:2000 @ A4



fig. 15: Development principles diagram

# 7. Development principles

## 7.1 Vision

The Hopecroft site has a great potential for providing a new residential development which is in keeping with the surrounding neighbourhood in terms of density and housing mix whilst respecting existing landscape elements.

## 7.2 Design principles

The design principles set out here have been developed with reference to Scottish Government's Designing Places policy and ALDP Policies D1 and D2 which set out policy for high quality design and placemaking. Policy D1 - Architecture and Placemaking specifically requires new development to carefully consider its context and make a positive contribution to its setting. This has been addressed through setting design principles relating to achieving an appropriate urban response in terms of scale and massing. Policy D2 - Design and Amenity should be carefully considered during development of the Detail Planning Application process to ensure that high standards relating to privacy, security and safety are achieved.

### 7.2.1 Delivering a high quality place

The development principles diagram illustrates a number of overall design principles such as:

- Ensuring an urban layout is created with public face to the street and a private face to an enclosed garden or court;
- Setting out a framework which responds to the existing site topography and surrounding street patterns to help integrate the new development into the neighbourhood;
- Positioning of open space at the intersection of key streets and with orientation which encourages use and activity;
- Protecting existing landscape elements where possible and appropriate and the highlighting the character of existing tree avenues and specific species as an opportunity for developing a clear identity;

- Integrating SUDS from the outset in order to prevent the required spaces being 'left-over' or failing to contribute to the overall landscape setting;
- Clearly defining public and private spaces; and
- Providing clear links and routes into and through the site which allow the easy movement of pedestrians and cyclists and connects people to existing public transport services;

These principles are set out in more detail below.

### 7.2.2 Density and mix

As set out in 5.1, the surrounding area has been shown to have densities in the range of 20-35 units/hectare. Given the proximity to the local centre of Bucksburn and the need to be compatible with the surrounding character of largely semi-detached houses, an average density of around 25-30 units/hectare appears to be appropriate, taking into account constraints of the airport noise and adequate stand-off areas from existing trees. This would ensure the site adheres to Structure Plan policy and also provides an appropriate urban character which is in keeping with the surroundings. The accommodation of existing landscape elements, adequate open space provision and paths is required to be considered in the context of this density whilst delivering a coherent development. The mix of the surrounding area suggests the scope for a range of detached family homes although consideration will need to be given to the provision of affordable housing which may be in the form of terraced or semi-detached homes.

### 7.2.3 Scale/massing

Surrounding dwellings are 1 and 2 storey; the site is suitable for similar heights with potential to go up to 2 1/2 storeys or 3 storeys at the north of the site. A taller built edge to the boundary at the A96(T) would have less of a visual impact due to its lower elevation and would offer potential for some noise mitigation to houses to the south by physically blocking noise from the A96(T). The development principles diagram



indicatively shows how housing should generally be laid-out along the slope to minimise visual impact and maximise south facing elevations, subject to detailed analysis as part of a planning application.

#### **7.2.4 Carbon reduction & Sustainability**

Layout, siting and design if considered at the outset, can minimise the energy demands for the development in use. Although the Hopcroft site is a north-facing slope, the design principles demonstrate the potential for a layout which creates a significant number of south-facing elevations with the subsequent potential for passive solar gain. Further guidance can be found in the ACC Supplementary Guidance “Low and Zero Carbon Buildings”

#### **7.2.5 Trees**

Any replacement tree planting along Hopetoun Grange should reflect the existing trees in the street in terms of the shape and form at maturity. This planting should also make use of appropriate root management systems to reduce future damage to road and pavement surfaces by surface roots. Such root management systems should also be employed for any proposed new tree planting internal to site along new roads and pavements.

Careful consideration should be given to the species and location of new tree planting internal to the site in terms of the aspect and topography of the site and the affect this might have on future shading and proximity to buildings.

Any future access road off to the west of the site should be sited so as to cause minimal impact on the trees lining Lovers Lane.

The retention of the hedging along the eastern boundary of the site is important to provide screening and sensitive boundary treatments.

#### **7.2.6 Site boundary treatments**

In order to ensure appropriate maintenance for the key boundaries along Hopetoun Grange, Lovers Lane and the A96(T), it is intended that green corridors along the north, south and west boundaries are factored into the development. This will ensure that existing mature trees and any replacement planting is adequately maintained and does not sit within private householders land. The development principles diagram shows the required 15m “stand-off” distance which is required between buildings and trees.

The eastern boundary which runs along the back gardens of existing houses on Hopcroft Avenue

should be incorporated within the rear gardens of the proposed houses along that boundary in order to avoid ongoing maintenance difficulties and potential security issues. Screen planting may be considered too in this location to separate the new development from the existing homes.

#### **7.2.7 Public open space and landscape**

A sense of place which demonstrates a specific character and identity can be created partly through the careful consideration of public open space and landscape treatments. As has been identified by the tree survey, although generally the existing tree stock is in poor condition, there is an opportunity for replanting of removed trees which will contribute to the natural heritage of the site and the amenity of the housing. The existing stone dykes on the site contribute to the identity and character of the area and consideration should be given to their retention or reuse of downtakings if they are to be demolished.

The development principles diagram identifies the preferred location for public open space associated with the key primary street through the development. This is oriented south and west to provide a pleasant outdoor space for residents and should incorporate public seating and a play area. The positioning of the open space is related to the proposed link through to further development for the west, as part of the evolving Newhills Expansion Area Development Framework. The indicative development blocks shown on the development principles diagram show how houses should face onto open space to utilise passive surveillance and therefore increase safety.

#### **7.2.8 Frontage and gardens**

In order to maintain an element of consistency across the site, consideration should be given to the treatment of frontages and garden boundaries which front onto key routes and public spaces. It may be appropriate to take pointers from existing landscape elements such as the dry stone dykes or beech hedging to suggest a common palette of walls and hedges which define the edges of public realm. In general, residential development should have a public face to the street and private face to enclosed gardens.

## 7.2.9 SUDS

Surface water from the development will be dealt with through a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) and will follow best-practice principles. The development principles diagram identifies the likely best location for the main SUDS basin to the north-west of the site. The required features should be considered for their potential to contribute to the amenity of the housing area through improved open space and ecological diversity of the site, not just for functions relating to surface water.

Due to the absence of an appropriate outlet within the immediate site confines, the developer is currently progressing designs which will direct treated surface water below the A96(T) into an appropriate receiving water body within land to the north of the A96(T). Additionally, considerations relating to airport safeguarding measures which prohibit permanent open water or other features which might attract birds must be considered through the detailed design.

## 7.2.10 Noise

In accordance with ALDP Policy H8, no development will be built in areas of the site where noise levels from the airport are in excess of 57dB LAeq. Due to the coarse grained nature of the mapping available which identifies the Aberdeen Airport 57dB Leq Noise Contour, it has only been possible to plot an approximate line on the development principles diagram. Mitigation measures such as the installation of acoustically attenuated ventilators may be considered on specific facades where buildings front onto this 57 dB noise boundary.



fig. 16: Landscape and visual impact principles



# 8. Connectivity and Accessibility

## 8.1 Transport assessment

A Transport Assessment will be scoped and completed during the Detailed Planning Application process. The level of detail and scope required is yet to be determined, however the key principles appropriate to the planning brief are set out below:

## 8.2 Site access

The primary access to the site will be from Hopetoun Grange. As the tree survey has identified the majority of the mature beech trees on this boundary are recommended for removal, there is an opportunity to replant the avenue and define a distinctive entrance through formal street tree arrangements aligned with an appropriate junction. As evident along Hopetoun Grange, frontage access on this boundary is possible, subject to further discussion with ACC Transport and Roads Officers. Consideration should be given to grouping private drives to reduce number of entry/ exit points onto Hopetoun Grange.

## 8.3 Pedestrian/cycle

The movement through public open space by pedestrians must be considered from the outset to ensure a safe, secure and convenient experience. Indicative pedestrian movements and links to existing circulation routes are shown on the development principles diagram and reflect both the integration with existing routes, but also the potential for future routes which will run through the adjacent development at Rowett South. The site is well connected to the surrounding area with good pedestrian/ cycle connectivity along Hopetoun Grange.

Although outwith the site boundary, the informal use of Lovers Lane to access the footpath adjacent to the A96(T) should be recognised and new pedestrian links from the site should connect to Lovers Lane at appropriate points with reference to the tree condition survey. The informal pedestrian link to the west should be retained and the potential to formalise this should be considered now and

during the Newhills Expansion Area Development Framework.

The proposed road access across Lovers Lane should be designed to ensure that north-south pedestrian and cyclist movements along it are not severed.

ACC have indicated an aspiration to connect Hopcroft Drive to the new development with a pedestrian/cycleway, however there are considerable issues to be resolved relating to ownership and to a lesser extent, topography, for this to be delivered and the proposal has been strongly resisted in public consultation. There is also an aspiration to provide a non-vehicular link towards the A96 adjacent to the potential SUDS feature. These issues will be explored further during future detailed planning applications for the site to determine an appropriate resolution.

Signage for both pedestrian and cyclists should be considered to direct users east to a safe crossing point over the A96 which will allow for safe access onto the A96 cycleway.

## 8.4 Public transport

There is an existing and clear route to access public transport along Hopcroft Grange to Firstbus services at Sclattie roundabout - this is within 400m of the site. Stagecoach services heading out of town are easily accessed on the westbound carriageway of the A96 although pedestrians will require to be directed east to the crossing point in order to access stops on the eastbound carriageway.

## 8.5 Car movements and parking

The detailed proposals for the development must take into account Scottish Government's 'Designing Streets' policy which prioritises the movement of pedestrians and cyclists over vehicular traffic. The development principles diagram illustrates a simple hierarchy of routes within the site, and the treatment of associated footpaths and public realm should reflect that hierarchy. The primary street through the development which may link westwards should



be designed to accommodate such use; elsewhere a 'shared surface' approach which position pedestrian/cyclist on the same surface as a car may be considered.

Appropriate car parking provision should be supplied with reference to the ACC supplementary guidance "Transport & Accessibility".

## 8.6 Utilities and Servicing

Surveys are currently underway to determine requirements for utilities and other services; further information will be made available through the Detailed Planning Application process.

## 8.7 Infrastructure and Phasing

Phasing of the development is in line with ALDP housing release 2007-2016. Appropriate contributions to key pieces of infrastructure will be agreed during detailed planning application and Section 75 legal agreement processes.

ACC's Infrastructure and Developer Contributions Manual should be consulted for information on the level and type of developer contribution which may be required. The level of provision or contribution will be commensurate to scale and impact, and either relate directly to the development proposed, or to the cumulative impact of development in the area.

A contribution to the Strategic Transport Fund (STF) will also be required. Further information on the STF can be found in the Delivering Projects Through a Strategic Transport Fund which is Supplementary Planning Guidance to the adopted Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (2009). The SPG was ratified by Aberdeen City Council on 31 January 2012.

### 8.7.1 Education

Detailed discussions between the developer and the Council's Education Service will be required as part of the planning application process. However, it would be likely that the pupils generated from this development could be accommodated within existing school arrangements, depending upon when the development comes forward. Both the zoned Primary and Secondary Schools are projected to go over-capacity under existing arrangements when other developments take place.

New pupil additions will need to be carefully managed due to temporary relocation of pupils during the process of constructing the new school to replace Bucksburn and Newhills Primary Schools. This development will also be considered during the

Council's current and ongoing review of the school estate. Appropriate developer contributions towards education requirements will be provided, and agreed as part of the planning application process.

### 8.7.2 Affordable Housing

Policy H5 - Affordable Housing within the ALDP (2012) states a requirement for housing developments of five units or more to contribute no less than 25% of the total number of units as affordable housing. Further information on the provision can be found in the Supplementary Guidance on Affordable Housing. 25% will be provided unless a mutually acceptable off site alternative can be agreed between the Council and the Applicant(s) of any future planning application.

# 9. Consultation

## 9.1 Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) Consultation Events

The following list provides an overview of the consultation events which were held during production of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP). The ability to comment on the Hopcroft (OP20) site was available at these events and through formal representations to the ALDP: Proposed Plan.

- Development Options Open Evenings - Dyce/Kingswells. Dyce Academy, 4 June 2009.
- Main Issues Report Workshop - Stoneywood Primary School, 16 November 2009.
- ALDP Proposed Plan Consultation period, 24 September 2012-17 December 2010.

## 9.2 Public event

An exhibition was held on 17th October 2012 at the Beacon Centre, Kepplehills Road, Bucksburn, Aberdeen. The event was open from 3pm until 7.30pm to give flexibility for people to attend at their convenience. A total of around 30 people attended, and 11 comments were received via a feedback form. A second public consultation event was held on 20th November 2012 to address the comments received at the initial event and to relay subsequent changes to the proposals. No further comments were received at this event.

## 9.3 Comments received

Feedback on the initial proposals and principles were generally favourable, with several comments received supporting development on the site. Points of concern related largely to traffic, noise and access issues.

The key issues that were raised at the initial public exhibition are listed below:

- Retention of existing trees: There were concerns raised that existing mature trees on the boundaries would be removed and/or houses



would be positioned in close proximity and home owners would subsequently remove them for safety reasons.

- Frontage to Hopetoun Grange: Related to the issue above, concerns were expressed regarding the feasibility of frontage onto Hopetoun Grange (it is assumed in relation to the loss of the existing beech trees, but potentially also relating to road concerns).
- Link to Hopcroft Drive: A number of comments were received which were strongly against providing a link between the new development and Hopcroft Drive, due to concerns over increased traffic, the unsuitability of the road and levels as they currently exist and the creation of a 'rat run' between the new development and the road network.
- Noise/acoustics: Proximity to the airport and A96(T) and the resultant noise levels were noted, with the comment that an increase in the number of inhabitants within such an area should be restricted.
- Eastern boundary: The access arrangements to the area behind properties adjacent to the eastern boundary was questioned and a fear expressed that it might cause security issues through unwanted access and unclear maintenance responsibilities.
- Pedestrian links: The current use of 'Lover's Lane' as a convenient pedestrian route adjacent to the site was noted along with the potential to integrate it with the Core Path system.

**Land to North of Hopetoun Grange**  
Public Exhibition, October 2012

**PERSIMMON** **Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health**  
University of Aberdeen

**Introduction**  
The Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) sets out the strategic vision for the city and its surrounding areas. It identifies key areas for development and sets out the policies that will guide the city's growth. The site to the north of Hopetoun Grange is a key area for development and is identified in the ALDP as a site for residential development.

**Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP)**  
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**Site**  
The site is located to the north of Hopetoun Grange and is bounded by the Hopetoun Grange Road to the south and the Aberdeen Road to the east. The site is currently used for agricultural purposes and is surrounded by residential development.

**Land to North of Hopetoun Grange**  
Public Exhibition, October 2012


**PERSIMMON** **Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health**  
University of Aberdeen


**Site Access and Approaches**  
The site is accessed via the Hopetoun Grange Road to the south and the Aberdeen Road to the east. The site is currently used for agricultural purposes and is surrounded by residential development.

**Site Information**  
The site is located to the north of Hopetoun Grange and is bounded by the Hopetoun Grange Road to the south and the Aberdeen Road to the east. The site is currently used for agricultural purposes and is surrounded by residential development.

**Analysis and Residential Context**  
The site is located in a residential area and is surrounded by residential development. The site is currently used for agricultural purposes and is surrounded by residential development.







**Land to North of Hopetoun Grange**  
Public Exhibition, October 2012

**PERSIMMON** **Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health**  
University of Aberdeen

**Change Development and Options**  
The site is currently used for agricultural purposes and is surrounded by residential development. The site is currently used for agricultural purposes and is surrounded by residential development.

**Option A**  
Option A is a residential development option that includes a mix of housing types and a central green space. The site is currently used for agricultural purposes and is surrounded by residential development.

**Option B**  
Option B is a residential development option that includes a mix of housing types and a central green space. The site is currently used for agricultural purposes and is surrounded by residential development.

**Preferred Option**  
The preferred option is a residential development option that includes a mix of housing types and a central green space. The site is currently used for agricultural purposes and is surrounded by residential development.

**Residential and Character**  
The site is located in a residential area and is surrounded by residential development. The site is currently used for agricultural purposes and is surrounded by residential development.




















fig. 17: Consultation boards as presented on 17th October 2012

## 9.4 Developer's response

Following the receipt of comments, the following actions and responses have been formulated to address concerns:

- Retention of existing trees: A tree survey has been commissioned and the intention is to retain tree frontage where possible. It is Persimmon Homes intention to retain healthy trees and remove unhealthy ones upon Health and Safety grounds. Replacement planting to maintain the tree avenues will be implemented.
- Frontage to Hopetoun Grange: As above, a tree survey has been commissioned and will directly inform the detailed proposals in consultation with ACC Roads & Transportation regarding the frontage access from Hopetoun Grange.
- Link to Hopecroft Drive: It has been ACC's request that a link is provided from our development to Hopecroft Drive. Given land ownership and levels difference between the site and Hopecroft Drive, this link may not be possible. This will have to be investigated further during the Detailed Planning Application process after further consultation with ACC.
- Noise/acoustics: ALDP Policy H8 does not allow residential development within the 57dB noise contour of the airport. A Noise report relating to Road and Aircraft noise has been completed and the summary findings are presented within the Planning Brief. It will be utilised through the Detailed Planning Application process to determine the exact location of the relevant noise contour and therefore ensure residential development is not positioned where it would be exposed to excessive noise.

## 9.5 Further Consultation

Throughout the design process for Hopecroft, the public consultation for both the Planning Brief and a Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) have been run in tandem to avoid duplication and confusion. This included the two public consultation events as detailed above. In addition, the respective Community Council(s) in the area is given an advance copy of the draft Planning Brief prior to the relevant Committee meeting.

Pending approval of the Hopecroft Planning Brief as 'interim planning advice' by the Council's Development Management Sub Committee, the Planning Brief will be subject to a 4 week statutory consultation. The following list highlights the key parties that will be consulted:

- Bucksburn and Newhills Community Council
- Aberdeen Airport
- Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Authority
- Aberdeenshire Council
- Forestry Commission Scotland
- Scottish Water
- SEPA
- Scottish Natural Heritage
- Historic Scotland
- Scottish Enterprise Grampian
- Transport Scotland
- NHS Grampian
- NESTRANS
- Planning Gain

The results of the statutory consultation will be reported back to the Development Management Sub Committee, including any recommended amendments to the Brief. Following this, the Brief will be sent to Scottish Government for ratification as Supplementary Guidance to the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2012).

It is important to note that engagement will continue throughout the planning application process.



# Land to North of Hopetoun Grange

## Public Exhibition and Update, November 2012



### Update since previous Public event

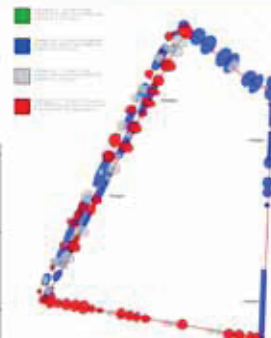
Thank you for attending the public exhibition and seeing all the planning proposals for Land of Hopetoun Grange. Since the last exhibition there has been an 18% increase in the number of people who visited the exhibition. The development and design team have been working hard to respond to your feedback. A Planning Brief will be submitted to Aberdeen City Council in the next few weeks and a Planning Brief will be submitted to Aberdeen City Council in the next few weeks and a Planning Brief will be submitted to Aberdeen City Council in the next few weeks.

### Feedback from previous public event

The previous public exhibition was the background to the development. The site context and character and proposed a number of options for the development. The site context and character and proposed a number of options for the development. The site context and character and proposed a number of options for the development.



Development Area	Comments
Retention of existing trees	A tree survey has been commissioned and the intention is to retain trees wherever possible. It is possible to retain trees wherever possible and remove any trees which are not healthy or safety issues.
Package to Hopetoun Grange	As above, a tree survey has been commissioned and will identify trees to be retained wherever possible. It is possible to retain trees wherever possible and remove any trees which are not healthy or safety issues.
Land to North of Hopetoun Grange	A tree survey has been commissioned and will identify trees to be retained wherever possible. It is possible to retain trees wherever possible and remove any trees which are not healthy or safety issues.
Retention of existing trees	A tree survey has been commissioned and the intention is to retain trees wherever possible. It is possible to retain trees wherever possible and remove any trees which are not healthy or safety issues.
Package to Hopetoun Grange	As above, a tree survey has been commissioned and will identify trees to be retained wherever possible. It is possible to retain trees wherever possible and remove any trees which are not healthy or safety issues.
Land to North of Hopetoun Grange	A tree survey has been commissioned and will identify trees to be retained wherever possible. It is possible to retain trees wherever possible and remove any trees which are not healthy or safety issues.



### Tree survey

A Tree Survey has been completed by Donald Rodger Associates (Scotland) Ltd to record the condition of existing trees and to identify trees which are likely to be removed in the next 10 to 20 years. The survey records the location, size and condition of the existing trees, large and small trees, and any trees which are likely to be removed in the next 10 to 20 years.



### Development principles

The diagram shows the development principles for the site. The development principles are as follows:

- Retain existing trees wherever possible.
- Retain existing trees wherever possible.
- Retain existing trees wherever possible.



### Landscape and visual impact principles

Any proposals relating to existing and landscape proposals are illustrated in the three-dimensional studies above.



### Next steps

ACC will be submitting the Planning Brief for the site to the Development Management Sub-Committee on the 8 December with a recommendation to approve the document as 'interim planning advice' following the above.

fig. 18: Update consultation board as presented on 20th November 2012



**PERSIMMON**  
Together we make a home



**Rowett Institute  
of Nutrition and Health**  
University of Aberdeen

optimised environments ltd.

**Edinburgh**

6th Floor | 24 Torphichen Street | Edinburgh | EH3 8JB  
t 0131 221 5920 | w [optimisedenvironments.com](http://optimisedenvironments.com)

**London**

175 - 185 Gray's Inn Road | London | WC1X 8UE  
t 020 7812 0621 | w [optimisedenvironments.com](http://optimisedenvironments.com)

Optimised Environments Ltd. Registered in Scotland SC359690.  
Registered address: 6th Floor, 24 Torphichen Street, Edinburgh, EH3 8JB.