

Application for Planning Permission in Principle
October 2013



Planning and Design Statement

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning and Design Statement has been prepared on behalf of the Grandhome Trust in support of the planning application for Planning Permission in Principle for a mixed-use urban extension comprising up to 4,700 dwellings together with associated retail and commercial development, community facilities, amenities and infrastructure.
- 1.2 The aim of this Statement is to set out the key features of the application proposals and demonstrate that these are compliant with both national and local planning policies. The Planning and Design Statement should not be read in isolation, but as part of a suite of documentation prepared in support of the application which includes:
- Application drawings
 - Environmental Statement and Non-Technical Summary
 - Landscape Statement
 - Pre-Application Consultation Report
 - Infrastructure Statement

Vision

- 1.3 The vision for Grandhome is the creation of a new mixed-use urban extension of Aberdeen, catering for the city's anticipated growth over the next 10-20 years whilst adhering to the principles of place-making and responding to the traditional vernacular.
- 1.4 The vision is underpinned by six core principles:

1. Strong Sense of Place

Grandhome will have a strong Donside identity and character, rooted within the vernacular of northeast Scotland. Architecture will respond to the context and traditions of the area to remain compatible with the surrounding communities of the Bridge of Don.

2. Sustainable and Walkable Neighbourhoods

Grandhome's masterplan is made up of a series of neighbourhoods, each of which is designed so that residents can access schools, shops, employment opportunities and community facilities within walking distance of their homes. By optimising the range of local facilities over time, residents will be less car dependent than other communities, promoting a sustainable lifestyle.

3. A Well-balanced Mixed Community

Grandhome will aim to become a self-sustaining development, with housing, employment and community facilities integrated within each neighbourhood. Each neighbourhood will comprise a mix of different sizes and designs of homes at different price levels, including 25% affordable housing.

4. Green Spaces to Breathe

Grandhome will include an extensive green network, crossing the site from both north to south and east to west. Different green spaces will combine to provide a mix of formal recreation, walking areas and informal relaxation. The landscape plan also preserves key elements of the site in naturalistic, untamed areas, and creates safe corridors for local wildlife.

5. Well-Connected Streets

Grandhome is designed to follow the progressive principles of the Scottish Government's 'Designing Streets' policy. The various neighbourhood phases are designed to maximise connections using streets, promote walking and cycling, combining together to make an attractive and traditional place.

6. A New Centre for the Bridge of Don

Grandhome will be sympathetically integrated into the surrounding community and over time will provide a range of employment, retail and other local services including opportunities for new businesses of different sizes, strengthening the lifestyle and choices for local people.



Fig 1: Indicative Masterplan

- | | |
|---|--|
| ■ Mixed-Use Buildings | ■ Schools |
| ■ Office Buildings | ■ Civic Buildings |
| ■ Single-Use Commercial Bldgs. | ■ Existing Buildings |
| ■ Indicative Footprints | ■ Open Space |
| ■ Plots | ■ SUDS |
| | - - - - Site Boundary |

Key Parameters

- 1.5 The masterplan for the entire Grandhome site will eventually extend to over 7,000 dwellings and include 7 neighbourhoods. In line with the housing land requirements of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (LDP) this figure of 7,000 units has been separated into pre and post 2023 stages.
- 1.6 This application for planning permission in principle purely relates to the pre 2023 housing stage. The key parameters of the development in relation to this application are as follows:

- Development of up to 4,700 dwellings, of which, up to 25% will be affordable;
- 5 hectares of employment land, including a technology park;
- 5 neighbourhoods, each supported by shops and services;
- 2 primary schools incorporating sports pitches and community uses;
- A community campus, including an academy, library and sports centre;
- A health centre;
- A network of open spaces, connected to the wider area including sports pitches, neighbourhood parks and habitat creation; and
- A vibrant high street to support the wider Bridge of Don area.

Public Consultation

- 1.7 Public consultation has featured heavily throughout the design process playing an important role in influencing and shaping the development of the masterplan.
- 1.8 Initial consultation took the form of local events aimed to gauge opinion regarding the development of the site. This then led to the inclusion of the site within the Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative (SSCI). Grandhome was then subsequently confirmed as one of three sites to be taken forward as part of the SSCI Charrette Series; a national community engagement exercise comprising intensive, interactive sessions involving local people and organisations in the early planning and design of their communities.
- 1.9 The Grandhome charrette was held in March 2010 attracting more than 300 people and led by renowned masterplanners Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ). The event comprised an eight day participative design exercise, which created a forum for the exchange of ideas enabling community members and stakeholders the opportunity to work directly with architects, urban planners and engineers designing the new community. The process featured ‘feedback loops’ during which professionals and members of the public had the opportunity to discuss and review the proposals alongside a series of specialist meetings designed to address specific topics relevant to the development of the masterplan.
- 1.10 By the end of the Grandhome charrette, the design team had developed a site masterplan, accompanied by diagrams and illustrations all of which were influenced by the presence of the public.
- 1.11 Subsequent to this extensive early public engagement exercise a follow up public exhibition was held to present the evolution of the masterplan based on comments from statutory consultees and findings from technical site analysis. The objective of this continued consultation was to provide an update on the evolution of the masterplan and a summary of findings from the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) technical studies. The exhibition also provided an opportunity to introduce the Grandhome Development Framework, setting out the draft content of the document.
- 1.12 A full review of the consultation activity in support of the development of the Grandhome masterplan is contained within the Pre-Application Consultation Report.

Fig 2: Grandhome consultation



2. Planning Context

- 2.1 Promoting sustainable economic growth whilst protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment is fundamental to the Scottish Government's aspirations for the country and inherent in both national and local planning policy.

National Planning Framework 2

- 2.2 The second National Planning Framework for Scotland (NPF2) was published in 2009. This overarching policy document sets out the spatial strategy for Scotland until 2030, identifying strategic development priorities to support the Scottish Government's central purpose – sustainable economic development. NPF2 plays a key role in co-ordinating spatial policies and planning authorities are required to take the Framework into account when preparing development plans.
- 2.3 The Scottish Government are currently in the process of reviewing NPF2 with the third edition expected to be published in June 2014.

Scottish Planning Policy

- 2.4 In response to the NPF2, Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), in its vision regarding the purpose of planning (paragraph 3) identifies its 'central purpose' as delivering sustainable growth. To succeed in this task:

"...(the) Government believes strongly in the value of forward-looking, visionary and ambitious plans that will guide development" (SPP, paragraph 5).

- 2.5 SPP promotes the use of the planning system to 'proactively support development that will contribute to sustainable economic growth and to high quality sustainable places' (SPP, paragraph 33). Again, the Scottish Government are currently reviewing this policy document with the second edition expected in June 2014.

Designing Places and Designing Streets

- 2.6 Designing Places and Designing Streets sit alongside one another and form the Scottish Government's two key policy statements on design and place making.
- 2.7 Designing Places sets out the national policy context for design aspirations and the role of the planning system in delivering these. This policy document emphasises the importance of sustainability in design, particularly in terms of its impact on future communities' social, economic and environmental wellbeing.
- 2.8 Designing Streets supports the principle of Designing Places and is the first policy statement in Scotland for street design emphasising the importance of street design towards place-making. The principle of this policy statement is based on the recognition that good design should derive from an intelligent response to location rather than the rigid application of standards.
- 2.9 Both of these policy statements aim to raise the standards of design setting the basis for local planning policy and guidance.

Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (2009)

- 2.10 The spatial strategy set out in the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009 designates Aberdeen City as one of three "strategic growth areas" in the north east, together with the Huntly to Laurencekirk corridor and the Aberdeen to Peterhead corridor. As such, the city is expected to accommodate at least half of the new housing and employment land likely to be required up to 2030, equating to 21,000 homes and 175ha of employment land within the plan period.

2.11 The Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan Authority have submitted the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (SDP) to Scottish Ministers. Once adopted this will replace the existing Structure Plan. The SDP will set the housing targets for the period up to 2035, thereby setting the long term framework for growth and development in the region. The proposed SDP places the same importance on Aberdeen City in delivering housing and identifies Grandhome as a proposed new community.

Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2012)

2.12 Aberdeen City Council adopted its Local Development Plan (LDP) in 2012 which identifies proposals for the development and use of land until 2023 and contains the policies against which planning applications will be assessed.

2.13 This LDP echoes the vision of the Structure Plan and recognises the important role Aberdeen has to play in the contributing to the growth of the Scottish economy noting that the ‘expansion

around existing suburban communities is, therefore, essential and provides opportunities for exciting new ways of delivering development guided by detailed masterplans prepared in consultation with local communities’ (LDP, paragraph 2.4).

2.14 To meet the predicted growth as set out in the Structure Plan, the LDP allocates land for development within a number of greenfield sites.

2.15 The LDP contains two land release policies which require the development of greenfield allocations to be assessed against – LR1: Land Release Policy and LR2: Delivery of Mixed Use Communities. As a greenfield allocation, Grandhome will be assessed against both of these policies.

2.16 Grandhome is allocated as Opportunity Site (OP12) within the LDP capable of accommodating 2,600 homes up to 2016, a further 2,100 homes up to 2023, 5 hectares of employment land up to 2023, and a further 2,300 homes up to 2030 (see Table 1).

Site: OP12 Grandhome	Local Development Plan Period		Future Growth
	2007-2016	2017-2023	2024-2030
Housing	2,600 homes	2,100 homes	2,300 homes
Affordable Housing	650 homes	525 homes	575 homes
Employment	5 hectares		

Table 1: Development at the Bridge of Don and Grandhome, Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012.

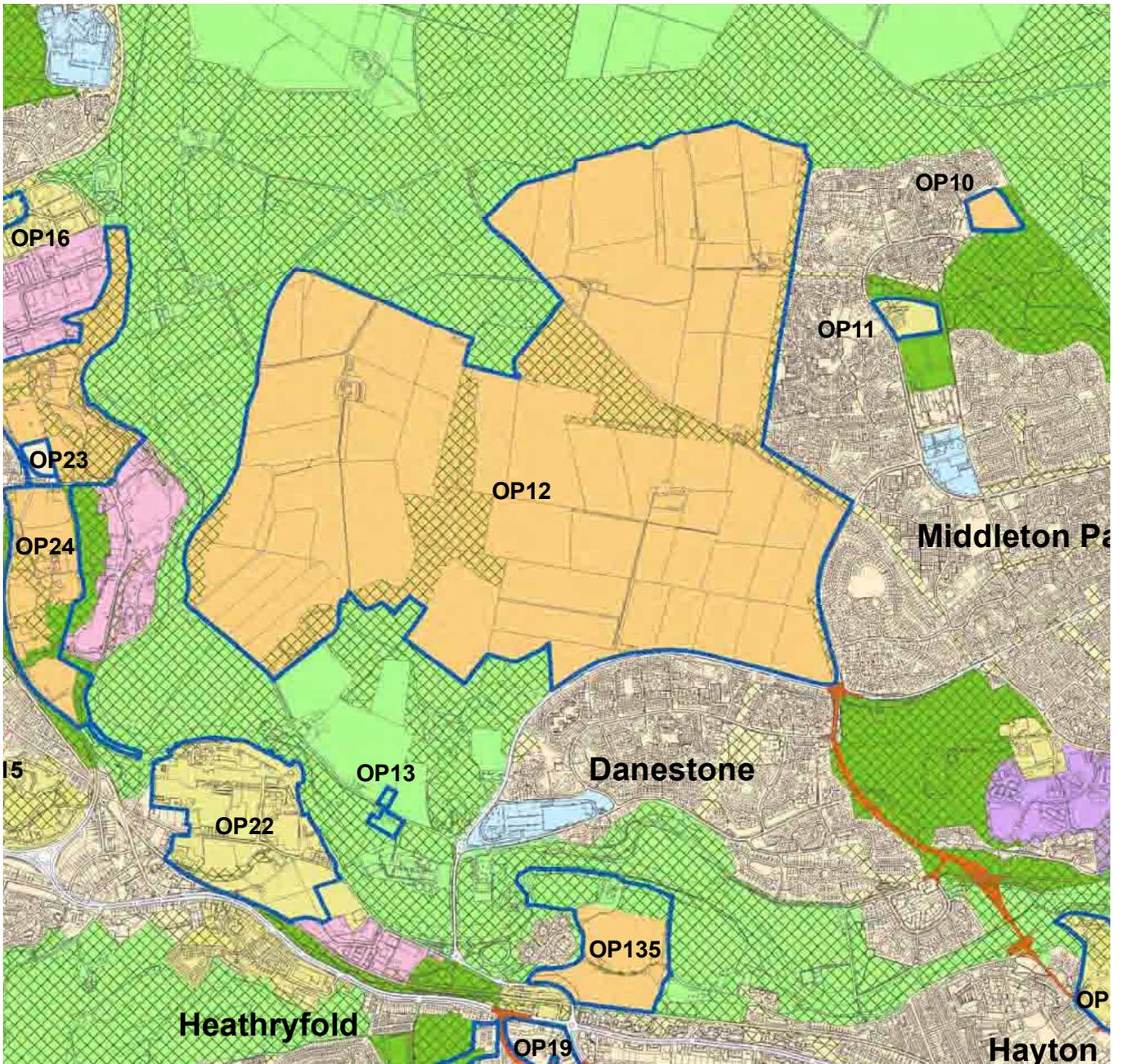


Fig 3: LDP Policies Map

Natural Environment

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



Housing

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



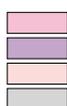
Community Facilities

- 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



2.17 The following local planning policies and supplementary guidance have also been considered and addressed in the development of the Grandhome masterplan:

LDP policy

- Policy I1 – Infrastructure Delivery and Developer Contributions
- Policy T2 – Managing the Transport Impact of Development
- Policy D1 – Architecture and Placemaking
- Policy D2 – Design and Amenity
- Policy D3 – Sustainable and Active Travel
- Policy D4 – Aberdeen’s Granite Heritage
- Policy D5 – Built Heritage
- Policy D6 – Landscape
- Policy H1 – Residential Areas
- Policy H2 – Mixed Use Areas
- Policy H3 – Density
- Policy H4 – Housing Mix
- Policy H5 – Affordable Housing
- Policy H7 – Gypsy and Traveller Requirements for New Residential Developments
- Policy CF2 – New Community Facilities
- Policy RT1 – Sequential Approach and Retail Impact
- Policy RT5 – Retail Development Serving New Development Areas
- Policy NE1 – Green Space Network
- Policy NE4 – Open Space Provision in New Development
- Policy NE5 – Trees and Woodlands
- Policy NE6 – Flooding and Drainage
- Policy NE8 – Natural Heritage
- Policy NE9 – Access and Informal Recreation
- Policy NE10 – Air Quality

- Policy R2 – Degraded and Contaminated Land
- Policy R3 – New Waste Management Facilities
- Policy R6 – Waste Management Requirements for New Development
- Policy R7 – Low and Zero Carbon Buildings
- Policy R8 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments

Supplementary Guidance

- Grandhome Development Framework
- Energetica (2012)
- Gypsy and Traveller Sites (2013)
- Hierarchy of Centres (2012)
- Low and Zero Carbon Buildings (2012)
- Open Space (2012)
- River Don Corridor Framework (2012)

Grandhome Development Framework

2.18 Aberdeen City Council requires owners of large sites to bring forward an overarching plan for the site called a Development Framework. In accordance with the relevant LDP policies and Supplementary Guidance a Development Framework has been prepared for Grandhome. This document was approved by the Council’s Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee as Interim Planning Advice in March 2013 and the process to ratify the Framework as Supplementary Guidance by the Scottish Government has commenced.

2.19 The Development Framework sets out the key components of the new mixed use community and will guide future development, setting the quality, style and design which the forthcoming detailed planning applications will adhere to.

2.20 The proposals put forward by this application for planning permission in principle are fully in accordance with the Grandhome Development Framework.

3. Site Analysis

Description

3.1 The Grandhome site is located 6km northwest of Aberdeen city. The parcel of land to which this planning application relates totals 226.73ha and occupies a wedge of farmland lying between the built up areas of Bucksburn to the west and the Bridge of Don to the east and south. To the north, the site links to open, undeveloped farmland extending out over the Buchan Plateau.

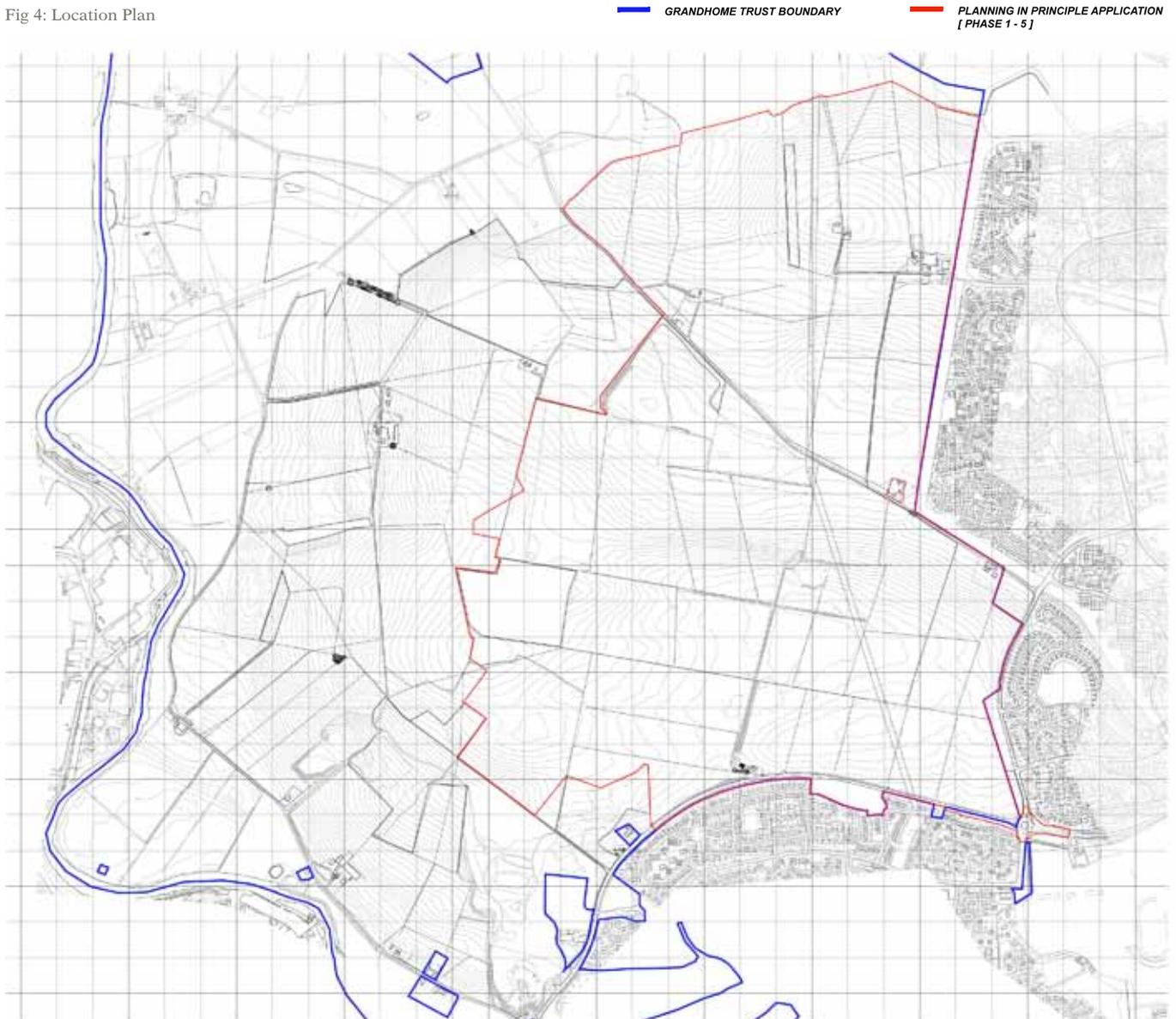
3.2 To the east and south, the site is bound by Danestone and Middleton Park. Pedestrian connections between these areas and the

proposed site are poor, primarily because the busy commuter routes of Whitestripes Avenue and the Parkway (A90) act as significant barriers along the site boundary.

3.3 There are older, traditional residential communities with their own range of facilities to the west of Grandhome, but these are largely inaccessible from the site at present because of the lack of bridging points over the River Don.

3.4 The site itself is greenfield land, predominantly under agricultural use with occasional woodland blocks, tree belts, and a number of farmsteads and

Fig 4: Location Plan



dwellings. The site straddles Whitestripes Road, a secondary road that connects the Bridge of Don area to the B997 Scotstown Road, and is traversed by a high voltage power line running broadly north-south across the eastern part of the site.

Site Assessment

Regional and Local Amenities

- 3.5 The site is well situated in terms of existing facilities, amenities and employment locations, all of which have been taken into consideration when developing the proposed layout and phasing of the Grandhome masterplan.
- 3.6 The Aberdeen Science and Technology Park and the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre are facilities of regional significance that lie approximately 2km and 3km east respectively of the site. Other amenities closer to the site include shops, supermarkets, schools, sports centres, community buildings, pubs and restaurants, post office, libraries and police station.

Paths and Cycleways

- 3.7 Although located on the periphery of Aberdeen, there are many opportunities to connect Grandhome to the existing network of paths in the area. The existing Core Paths network (as identified in the LDP) comes close to the site in three locations; Whitestripes Farm, the corner of Whitestripes Road and Whitestripes Avenue and near the Parkway/Whitestripes Avenue roundabout.
- 3.8 An existing path link runs through the site from the end of the Core Path at Whitestripes Farm westwards to Clerkhill Wood, then circles south via Cothill to Persley Quarry woods. This path continues beyond the site to connect to other established paths running east and west along the Don which the Council has identified as potential future Core Paths and part of the National Cycle Route.

Transport Network

- 3.9 The site is situated adjacent to two major roads: the Parkway (A90) which runs along the southern boundary and Whitestripes Avenue which runs north along the eastern boundary. Whitestripes Road runs north west from the Whitestripes Avenue, dissecting the site. The Parkway and Whitestripes Avenue intersect at the Buckie Farm roundabout which is situated at the south eastern corner of the site.
- 3.10 Several strategic improvements to the transport network are planned. These include the AWPR, the Third Don Crossing, and the upgrade of key junctions including the Haudagain roundabout. Together these projects will alleviate current pressures on the city's transport network including localised pinch points such as Parkway and Persley Bridge. It is expected that once the AWPR is in place this will alleviate traffic pressures along Parkway while opening links north of the site to the strategic road network via Whitestripes Road.

Topography

- 3.11 The levels on the site range from approximately 30m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum) close to the River Don to approximately 90m AOD at the highest point of the site, on Whitestripes Road. In broad terms, the land slopes west, south and north from that high point.
- 3.12 The site slopes most steeply in the western parts of the site, where it incorporates part of the east bank of the Don Valley. To the east, the land forms a tilted bowl shape, with steep northern slopes but, opening out to the east and south.
- 3.13 North of Whitestripes Road the land falls away becoming steeper towards the site boundary. A small valley cuts into this slope running west from Whitestripes Farm, with a noticeable small ridge feature forming its northern slopes.

Hydrology

- 3.14 Whilst the River Don is prone to flooding, the entire Grandhome site falls outwith the SEPA Indicative River and Coastal Flood Risk zone which is focused immediately south of the site along the River Don.
- 3.15 Within the site boundary, the highest land on Whitestripes Road forms a watershed from which water drains to the north, south and west. Specifically, the site drains towards four low lying areas: towards the River Don to the west of the site, to an area of low lying ground in the bottom of the bowl shaped landform north of the Parkway, to the small valley running west from Whitestripes Farm and to Grandhome Moss beyond the north boundary of the site.
- 3.16 The site is generally well drained, especially where there is sufficient gradient. There are however some small wet patches where agricultural drainage has failed, most notably in the low lying area south of the manganese quarry.
- 3.17 There are only a few permanent water bodies on site, principally the flooded manganese quarry in the eastern part of the site and various other drains and ditches.

Landscape & Views

- 3.18 Taken as a whole, the nature of the site is distinctly rural and agricultural. The land is subdivided into an orthogonal pattern of fields enclosed by drystone dykes and fences with lines of shelterbelt planting along main roads or field boundaries, and occasional, irregularly shaped blocks of mixed woodland. Trees on ridgelines are often seen against the sky and form attractive, feathered silhouettes. Robust granite houses and clusters of farm buildings are scattered in the landscape, usually accompanied by a group of trees planted to provide shelter.
- 3.19 The site is not homogeneous in terms of character with several distinct zones, each with a different landscape quality and scale. At the most general level, the site divides into two main character zones; to the west of Monument Wood on the slopes leading down to the River Don the landscape is more wooded than elsewhere on the site, with smaller, enclosed spaces and a more intimate scale. To the east the land is more open, spaces are larger, views broader, and the outlook generally much more urban in character.
- 3.20 The eastern half of the site further subdivides into two secondary character areas either side of the tree lined Whitestripes Road. North of this, the character is heavily influenced by long views north over a rolling mosaic of fields.
- 3.21 Much of the site is visually discreet but the highest parts of the site can be glimpsed from various points around the city, especially from other high points above the Dee and Don Valleys. Specifically, trees lining Whitestripes Road form a noticeable silhouette on the skyline in views to the site from areas of high ground on the south and west margins of the city. This includes, for example, brief glimpses of the site in the distance in views from the A96/Inverurie approach at Tyrebagger, and from the A90 at Kincorth.
- 3.22 More locally, topography, low planting and trees screen many views into the site, thus views into the northern and western parts of the site especially are partial and sporadic. The most open, and consequently, most visible part of the site, is the farmland immediately north of the Parkway, where it is widely overlooked from roads on three sides: the A90, Whitestripes Avenue, and Whitestripes Road. For many of the houses in the neighbourhoods adjacent to the site, intervening topography, planting or development obscures views to the proposed new development.

3.23 South of Whitestripes Road but east of Monument Wood the site is even more affected by the surrounding urban context, with its character being influenced by the city and suburbs that dominate views to the west, south and east. The power line cutting across the site here adds further to the 'urban fringe' character.

Tree Quality

3.24 A full tree survey was carried out by a qualified arboriculturist in January 2012 and the findings can be summarised as follows:

3.25 There are three areas within the site boundary that are protected by policy and designated 'Ancient Woodland Inventory – Long Established Woodland (of plantation origin)':

- part of Monument Wood, located in the centre of the southern part of the site
- a strip of land south of the Whitestripes Road
- the Carrot Belt and adjoining shelterbelt planting along Whitestripes Road

3.26 There are two other areas designated as 'Ancient Woodland' outside of, but near, the site boundary:

- Clerkhill Wood on the north boundary
- Persley Quarry woods to the immediate south of the site

3.27 An area protected by a Tree Preservation Order also lies near the site, just north of, and contiguous with, Persley Quarry wood. The trees within the site are of variable condition but all contribute usefully to some degree to both biodiversity and visual amenity.

3.28 Most of the trees on the site, regardless of their condition, are seen as 'valuable' and worth retaining in current form, for visual reasons, because they frame dwellings, form attractive silhouettes on skylines/ridges, line key routes or otherwise usefully subdivide the landscape. The presumption will be to retain and enhance current areas of tree planting.

3.29 A few specimens and areas are of a poorer quality and may benefit from being replaced or having enhanced woodland management practices carried out.

Ecology and Green Space Network

3.30 An ecological appraisal for the site has been undertaken in support of the development and identified that the closest areas of interest to the site are Corby, Lily and Bishop's Lochs Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which are 1.9km to the north. Three Local Nature Conservation Sites are also adjacent to the site; Stoneyhill Wood, Grandhome Moss and the River Don Corridor. While the site itself does not include any statutory wildlife sites it does adjoin or contain three former District Wildlife Sites, namely Persley Quarry, Clerkhill Wood and Monument Wood. Although these sites are no longer designated, they are still offered a level of protection through the Council's Green Space Network (GSN) policy.

3.31 Ecological surveys undertaken have included:

- Phase 1 habitat survey
- Badger sett and territory mapping
- Otter and water vole survey
- Great crested newt survey
- Breeding and wintering bird survey
- Bat activity (whole site) and emergence surveys of buildings in Phase 1 area
- Red squirrel survey

3.32 No ecological constraints or significant features were identified. Full details of these surveys are available within the Environmental Impact Assessment.

3.33 Outside of the wooded areas, most of the site is intensively farmed land and generally of no more than local habitat value with low biodiversity interest.

Archaeology

- 3.34 Two features within the site are considered to be of medium sensitivity - Whitestripes Burial Ground and the crop mark of a possible henge, both of which are located in the vicinity of Whitestripes Farm. Two further features, both possible enclosures, are of unknown sensitivity, whilst all other features are considered to be of no more than local sensitivity.
- 3.35 The only feature nearby of high sensitivity in terms of national and international importance is Foucausie stone circle, a scheduled ancient monument, located outside the development boundary in Clerkhill Wood.
- 3.36 The potential impact of the Grandhome development on all of the monuments and sites identified has been considered during the evolution of the masterplan.

Ground Conditions and Land Contamination

- 3.37 Two areas of ground disturbance and potential contamination risk have been identified adjacent to the site including a landfill occupying a former quarry (known as Hall's quarry) near Persley, and an area of made ground close to Whitestripes Road. Initial investigations have found that there is no significant contamination or grassing identified at Hall's quarry.

Agricultural Land

- 3.38 The site has been classed by the Soil Survey of Scotland Land Capability for Agriculture (LCA) map as predominantly Class 3.2, i.e. land capable of supporting mixed agriculture, with soil and wetness limitations. In addition, the most steeply sloping parts of the site are defined as Class 4.2, i.e. land capable of producing a narrow range of crops. While it is possible that some better quality land

may be included within the site, these areas may be too isolated for practical farming to a consistently high standard. It is considered very unlikely that land of prime quality is present on the site.

Overall Environmental Constraints Summary

- 3.39 A summary of key environmental constraints is outlined below.
- 3.40 **Natural topography and drainage:** taking a light-handed approach to grading on the site will reduce the impact of development on the natural landscape and help promote workable sustainable urban drainage systems.
- 3.41 **Existing trees and woodland areas:** where possible trees will be retained whilst new trees will be planted to increase the quality and variety of planting across the site.
- 3.42 **Landscape character:** the distinctive character of the area will be interpreted and used to influence the design of the development to help develop a clear, unique and locally appropriate sense of place.
- 3.43 **Ecology and green space:** the planned green space network will link the site to surrounding countryside and Core Paths as well as aiding biodiversity across the site.
- 3.44 **Archaeology:** the location of all monuments and sites have been considered in the development of the masterplan.
- 3.45 **Ground conditions and land contamination:** further investigative works will be carried out to determine the potential for land contamination and any constraints will be addressed within the masterplan.

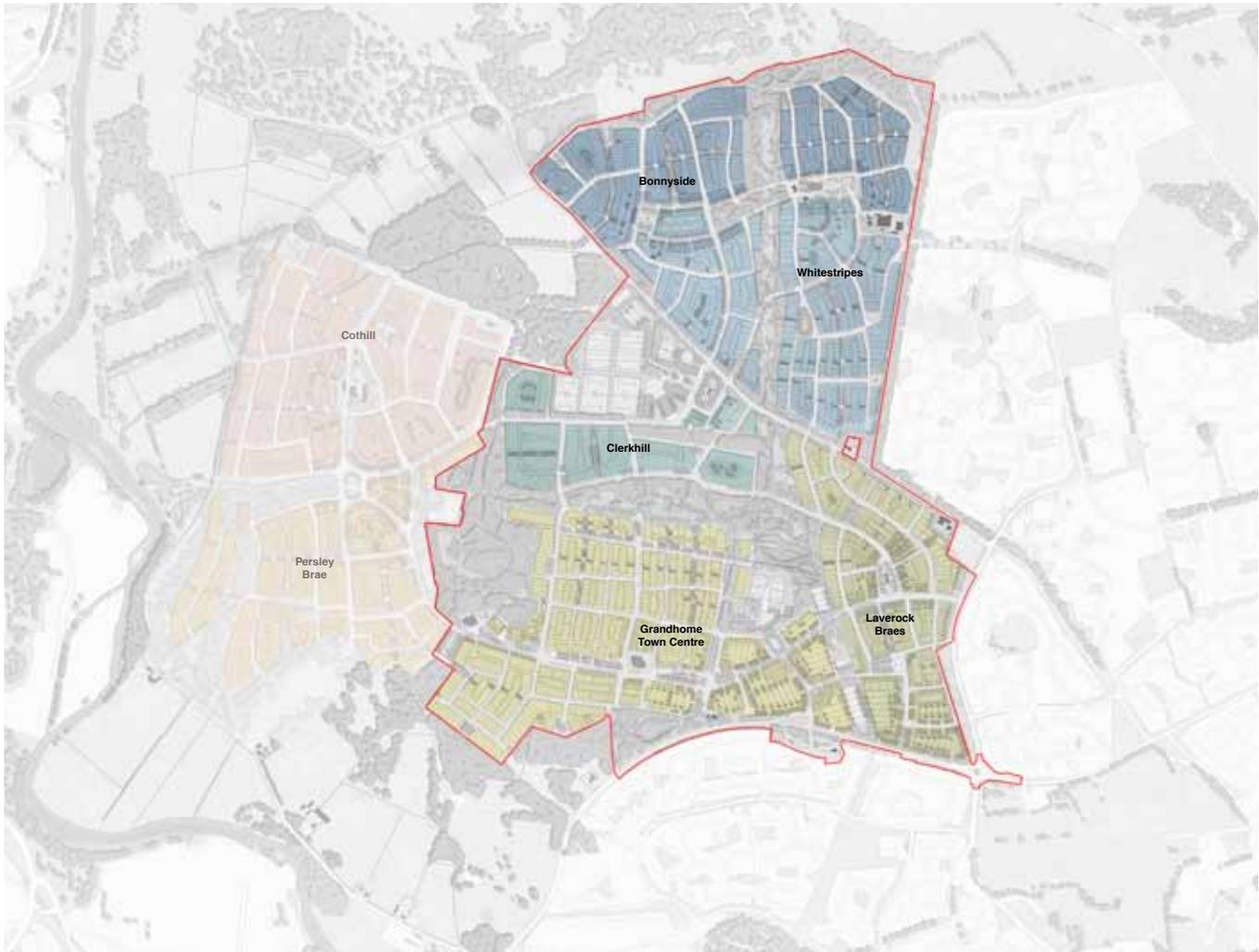
4. Proposals

Description of Development

- 4.1 Planning permission in principle is sought for the following development: “a mixed-use community comprising up to 4,700 homes, town centre (including commercial, retail and leisure uses and hotel), 5 ha of employment land, neighbourhood centres (including commercial, retail and leisure uses), community facilities, energy centre, open space, landscaping, and supporting infrastructure including mean of access at Grandhome Estate, Danestone, Aberdeen”.
- 4.2 The Grandhome masterplan proposes the phased development of five neighbourhoods, including a vibrant town centre and business park. As set

out in the Grandhome Development Framework, the vision for the development stems from the principles of place-making, which promotes the design of walkable neighbourhoods offering a range of house types, as well as community facilities, shops and jobs. Each of the five neighbourhoods has thus been designed to be traversed in 5-minutes by foot, from centre to edge, with the town centre itself spanning a 10-minute walk. Shops, offices and bus stops are then located within each neighbourhood centre, providing residents with ample facilities in walking distance of their homes. Aside from the Grandhome town centre, these neighbourhoods are to be known as Laverock Braes, Clerkhill, Whitestripes and Bonnyside.

Fig 5: Neighbourhoods and Block Structure

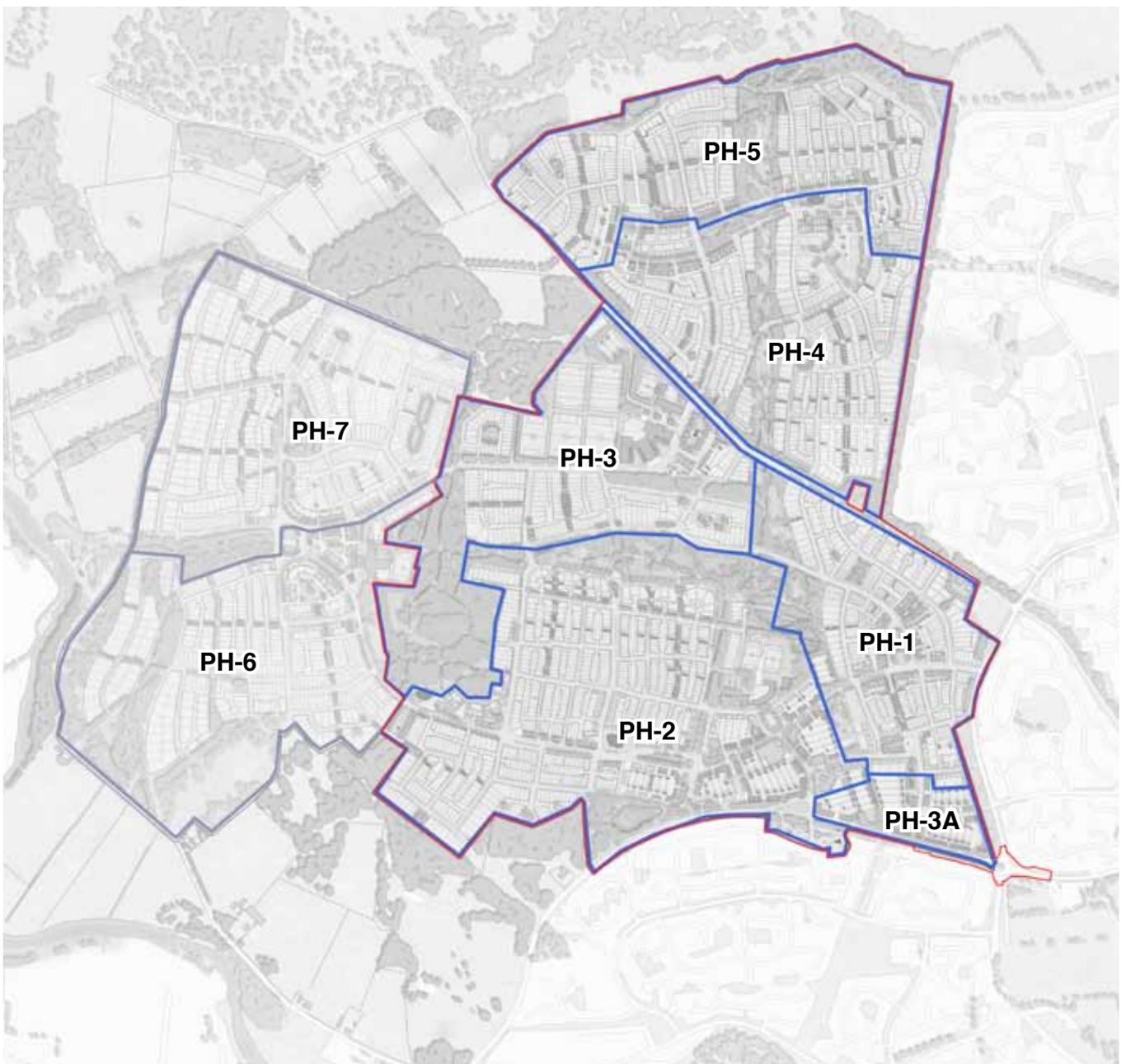


4.3 It is envisioned that each neighbourhood will develop its own character over time, given that each will be built at a different time with a different composition of architects and builders. However all aspects of Grandhome will follow the aspirations set out in the Development Framework as well as the transect-based design regulations, meaning that their street frontages, heights and massing will be visually compatible and appropriate to the region.

Phasing

- 4.4 Grandhome's phasing strategy reflects the housing allocation release set out in the LDP. The first phase of development will comprise Grandhome's first neighbourhood, Laverock Braes.
- 4.5 The second phase will see the formation of Grandhome Town Centre. As the population of

Fig 6: Phasing Plan



Grandhome grows through subsequent phases, additional demand will act as a catalyst for the development of further retail and commercial uses that will ultimately complete the full complement of town centre uses.

4.6 Table 2 below sets out the indicative development schedule (gross external floor areas) by phase and by use class.

4.7 Further detail concerning the phasing of services and facilities is set out in the Infrastructure Statement.

Table 2: Indicative Development Schedule

Class	Use	Type	Laverock Braes		Town Centre		Clerkhill		Whitestripes/ Bonnyside		Whitestripes/ Bonnyside		TOTAL
			Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3		Phase 4		Phase 5		
			Site (ha)	GFA (sqm)	Site (ha)	GFA (sqm)	Site (ha)	GFA (sqm)	Site (ha)	GFA (sqm)	Site (ha)	GFA (sqm)	
1	Retail	Convenience		729		7380		577		360		840	
		Comparison				5000							
		Bulky				5000							
		Supermarket			0.73	2700							
		Total		729		20080		577		360		840	22,586
2	Financial & Professional		122		1230		96		60		140	1,648	
3	Food & Drink		365		3690		289		180		420	4,944	
4	Business (Office)			0.52	3218		14938					18,156	
5	Industrial												
6	Distribution												
7	Hotels			0.57	4,500 (75 rooms)							4,500 (75 rooms)	
8	Residential Institution												
9	Residential		500 units		1,800 units		500 units		1,100 units		800 units	4,700 (units)	
10	Non-Residential Institution	Civic/Community	0.08	240	0.63	3760	0.11	210	0.26	720			
		School			3.67	3375	11	18375					
		Total		240	4.3	7135	11.11	18585		720	0	0	26,680
11	Assembly & Leisure			0.42	2200							2,200	
		Sui Gen											
SUB TOTAL				1455		42053		34485		1320		1400	80,713



Fig 7: Regulating Plan



Housing

4.8 Grandhome will deliver up to 4,700 residential units which it is anticipated will be home to a population of approximately 11,600. Out of the 4,700 residential units up to 25% will be affordable, equating to 3,525 private units and 1,175 affordable units.

4.9 The entire Grandhome site will be developed at approximately 30 units/ha with the town

centre featuring a higher density than the neighbourhood edges. The precise breakdown of property size and type will be determined on a phase by phase basis, however the majority of the scheme will be scaled at 2-3 storeys with some four storey accent buildings. There may also be scope for occasional single storey buildings in certain limited locations. This range of height and densities will add to the character of the development and is appropriate based on the regional context.

Employment and Retail

4.10 The Grandhome masterplan features shops and community facilities within a town centre intended to cater for the Bridge of Don community at large. The area will therefore provide a range of jobs thereby minimising out-commuting. This will be further enforced by the provision of live/work units alongside a range of business/retail opportunities, varying in size and cost. Similar scale facilities will also be provided in the individual neighbourhood centres.

4.11 The character of the town centre embodies a traditional high street with a mix of commercial uses mainly through mixed-use buildings with smaller retail shops on the ground floor and residential units above. A number of buildings have been identified within the town centre for specific commercial, retail and leisure uses. These include, but are not limited to, 25,000m² of mixed use retail potentially including convenience shopping, local supermarket, gym, cinema and hotel.

4.12 In accordance with the LDP allocation, the masterplan also features a 5ha Business Park located on the south-eastern boundary of the site. This space is intended to facilitate integration with the proposed Energetica corridor. The provision of high-quality retail space, within close proximity of potential employee housing and amenity facilities, as well as the substantial existing transportation network makes the site ideal for businesses.

4.13 Crucially, the close physical relationship between the Business Park and the town centre means the former will help drive the latter.

Landscape & Openspace

4.14 The vision for Grandhome is to create a settlement with a high proportion of open space accommodating a full range of uses such as formal recreational facilities and informal places to rest and relax, as well as natural, untamed areas that support biodiversity.

4.15 The Green Space Network (GSN) principles illustrated in the LDP have been used to configure an extensive network of greenspace within the Grandhome masterplan connecting the new development to adjacent land beyond the boundary. Within this network there will be a full complement of open spaces in accordance with Aberdeen City Council's Open Space Supplementary Guidance.

4.16 The landscape framework below sets out the open space strategy for the development.

4.17 Approximately 62 hectares of public open space will be provided, which is above the provision required by the Council's Supplementary Guidance. The open space provision is set out below.

Open Space		
Formal Open Space	Number	Total Area
Play Zone/Other Play Area	9	4.8 ha
Large Scale Play Zone	1	0.25 ha
Outdoor Sports Areas	2 (5 inc. existing**)	7.53 (42.1 ha inc existing**)
Allotments or Community Gardens	2	0.65 ha
Town Park	1	7.5 ha
Neighbourhood Parks North and West	1	1.5 ha
Village Greens	5	3.5 ha
Civic Square	3	1.5 ha
Informal Open Space		
Natural Greenspace and Green Corridors	-	23ha
Other Landscaped Areas	-	12 ha
TOTAL OPEN SPACE		62.2****

Table 3: Open Space Provision

Table Notes:

All areas approximate

- Not specified/not applicable

** 3 no. existing sports facilities within walking distance + 2 no. proposed = 5 no. total

Existing sports facilities include: Middleton Park - 3 ha, Bannatyne's Health Club - 0.6ha, Woodside Sports Complex - 17 ha, Barracuda's/ One Sport - 14ha

Total existing = 34.6ha, total proposed in addition: 7.53 ha

**** Excluding existing sports provision outside the site boundary

4.18 A separate Landscape Statement had been submitted in support of this application and should be reviewed in reference to the above.

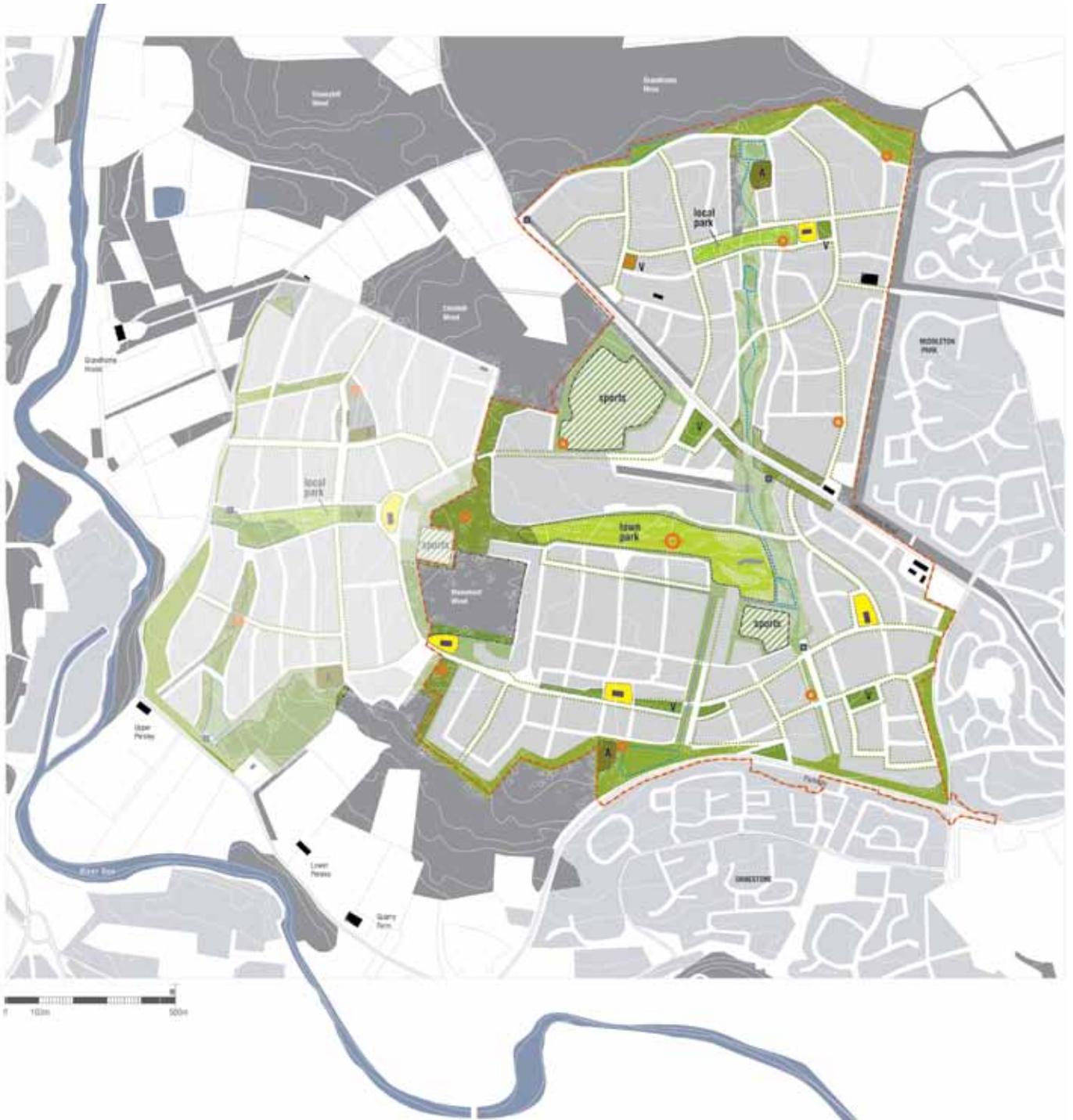
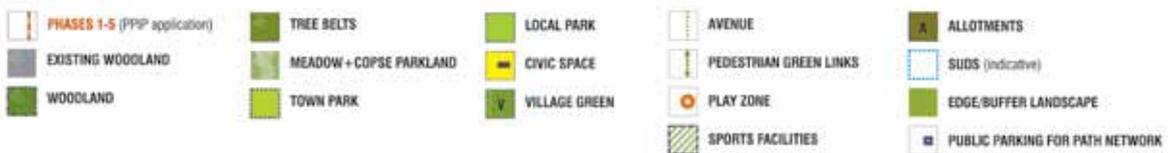


Fig 8: Landscape Framework



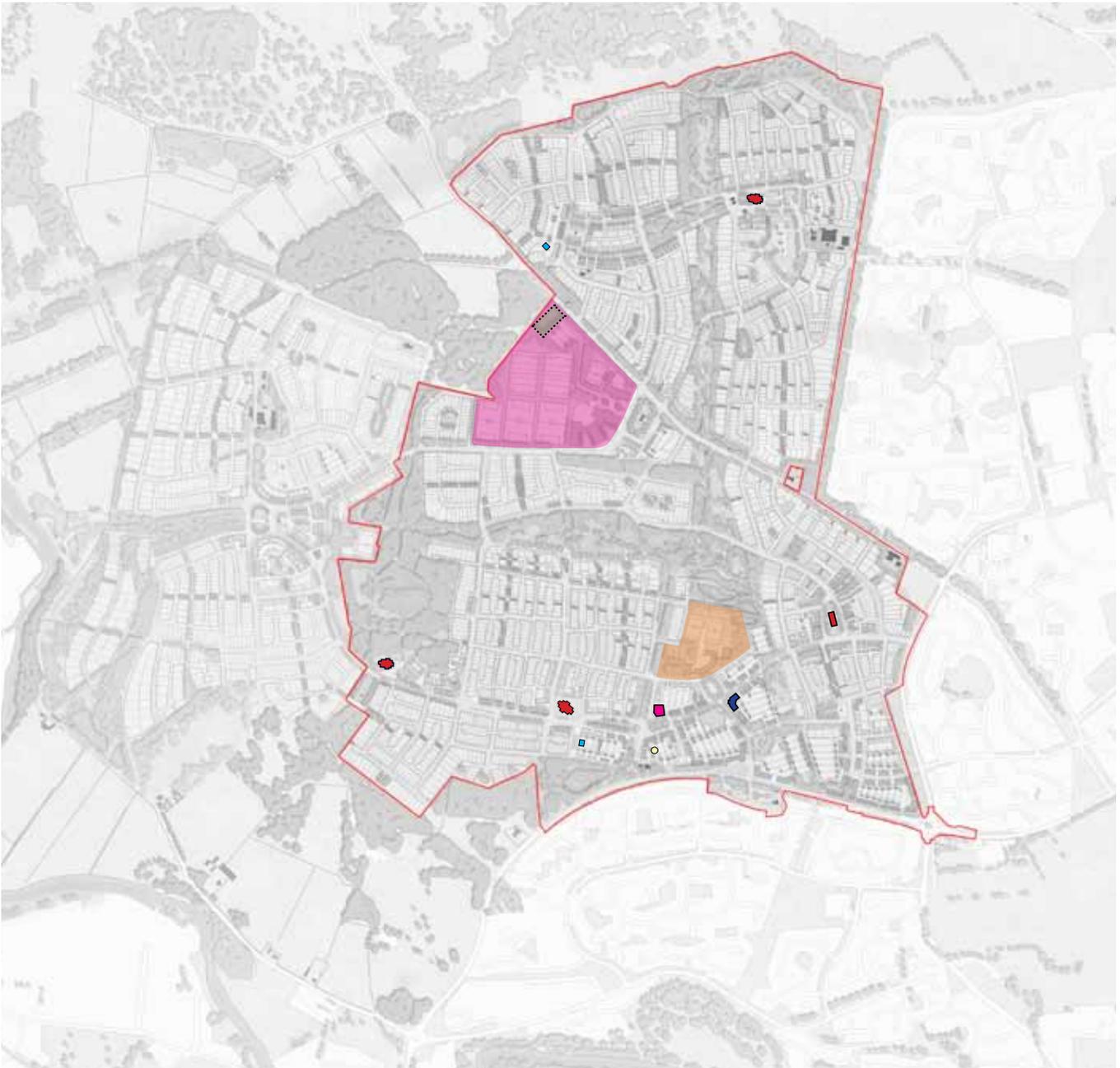


Fig 9: Proposed Indicative Locations of Community Facilities

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| Existing Buildings | Civic Building:
1. Religious Building
2. Cover Market
3. Sites for Community Use
4. Civic Structure / Monument | Small Cinema/ Theatre |
| Community Primary School & Sports | | LDP required Gypsy and Traveller site |
| Academy, Library, Community Campus, & Sports | | Health Centre |
| | | Neighbourhood Recycling |
| | | CHP Facility |

Community Facilities & Education

4.19 Central to the design of Grandhome is that all facilities and services necessary for residents' daily needs are easily accessible. This not only relates to shops and restaurants, but also to

social and community facilities including schools, community centres and health provisions. The focus of community activity within Grandhome will be the community-use school network although other community sites have also been identified throughout the Grandhome masterplan.

4.20 Grandhome will accommodate two primary schools and one secondary school all built to Scottish Futures Trust standards. The masterplan places these educational buildings across the site embedded into different neighbourhoods:

- Grandhome Primary School
- Clerkhill Primary School and Academy (Community Campus)

4.21 It is envisaged that the Community Campus will accommodate a range of community services which could include early years/ day care public facility, a public library, leisure centre with numerous sports pitches, youth provision and family centre. These services will draw the buildings into community life and ensure that school buildings are used efficiently both during the school week and at evenings and weekends.

Health

4.22 Health facilities will include suitable NHS provision along with pharmacies and dentists within selected neighbourhoods. It is proposed that the majority of health provisions will be delivered at the neighbourhood scale to accommodate the initial demand from the new development. Once a sufficient critical mass has been established the population will be able to support a purpose built health centre proposed to be located to the eastern edge of the town centre. This location can support early delivery if necessary.

Sustainability and Recycling

4.23 The requirements to move towards a low carbon economy have been fully incorporated in the Grandhome masterplan. Development of the site will incorporate sustainable energy practices such as promoting energy efficiency through building orientation design and materials.

4.24 Recycling facilities and recycling stations will also be situated throughout the masterplan to support the residents of Grandhome. The sustainable energy hierarchy will be followed, reducing the demand for energy, using energy more efficiently and finally providing low and zero carbon (LZC) energy through onsite generation.

Transport & Movement

Pedestrians & Cyclists

4.25 The modular pattern of the masterplan is designed to ensure a high degree of pedestrian access within each neighbourhood and beyond. This is reinforced by a network of streets intended to optimise connections between the neighbourhoods, the town centre and the surrounding area. It is anticipated that residents will live within 5-minute walking distance of neighbourhood centres, ensuring ease of access to all essential amenities, as well as public transportation nodes.

Pedestrian and cycle links will ensure a high degree of permeability within the development, providing connections to the existing and aspirational core path network in the surrounding area. Essentially, all streets will be designed to accommodate pedestrians as the prime user, ensuring the optimal pedestrian experience. This will involve providing a range of street typologies to enhance legibility and curtail visual monotony, whilst also ensuring street design that calms traffic speeds and increases pedestrian safety.

Public Transportation

4.26 The area surrounding the site is already relatively well served by public transport. The A90, A96 and A947 corridors all support frequent bus services, with First Aberdeen services in the vicinity of Grandhome terminating in the established residential areas of Danestone (service 1), Ashwood (service 2) and Dubford (service 4).



Fig 10: Cycling and Footpath Network

- ■ ■ Cycling and Footpath Routes
- ● ● NCN 1
- ■ ■ Site Boundary
- — — Other Pedestrian Connections

4.27 It is envisaged that new or extended bus routes will be delivered in support of the development providing connectivity from the site to principal employment centres, transport nodes and other attractions in the City Centre and at other locations such as Dyce and Aberdeen Airport.

4.28 Bus routes have been identified for phased implementation with the initial phases of development served by a variant of

First service 1 which will operate via Whitestripes Avenue to the development. An initial loop service will then be provided serving Phases 1 to 3 which links the town centre to the western neighbourhood centre and community campus. This loop is expanded to serve Bonny-side and Whitestripes, north of Whitestripes Avenue at Phases 4 and 5. A further route is anticipated to be required to serve Phases 6 and 7.

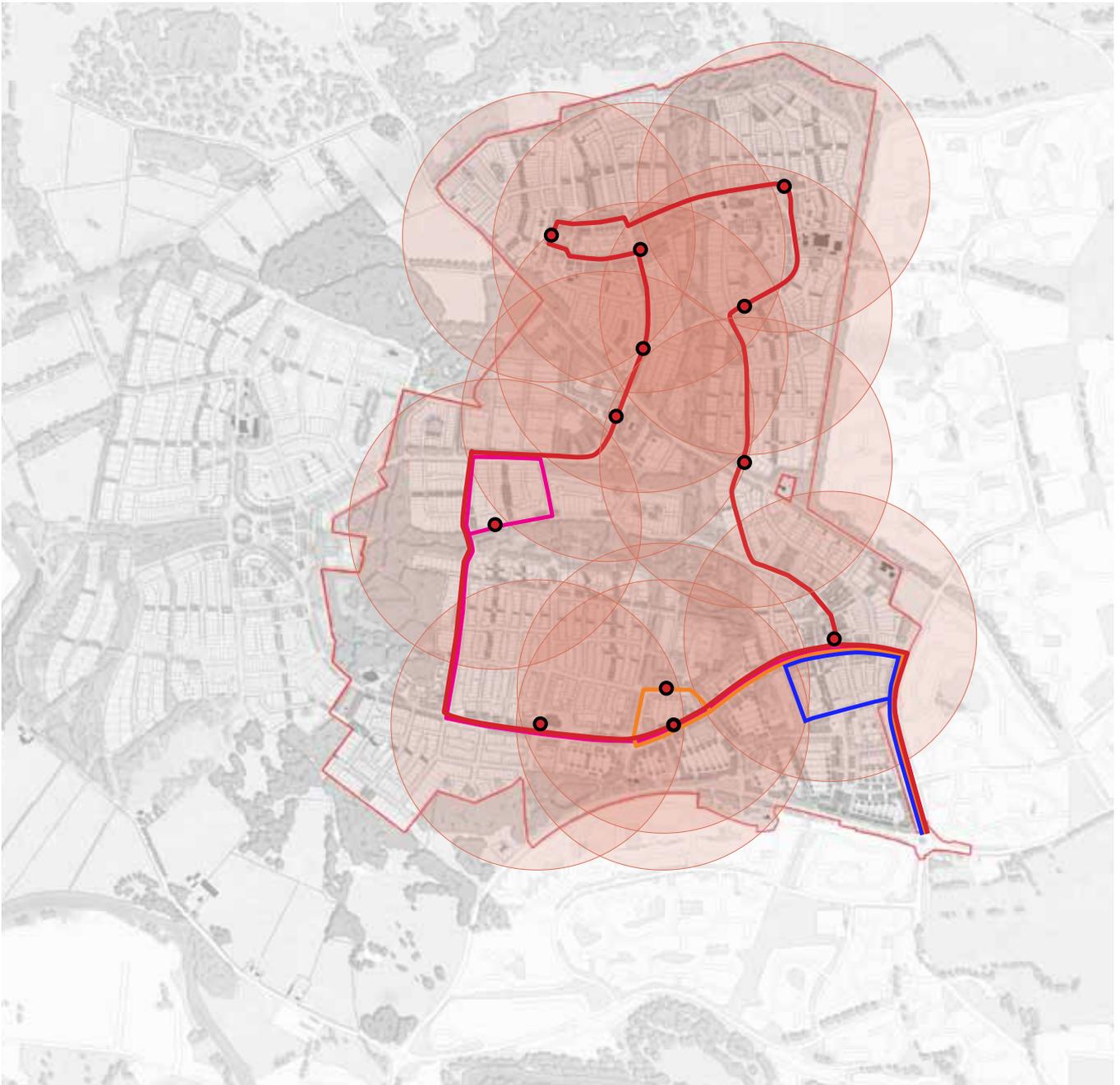
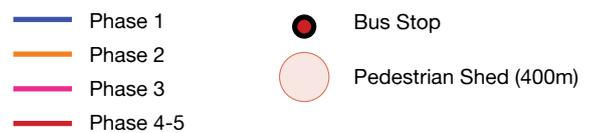


Fig 11: Potential Public Transport Bus Route



4.29 Bus stops are located within a short walk of all homes in line with policy which requires access to bus services within a 400m walking distance. The location of stops within neighbourhood centres will allow passengers access to shops and other facilities as an integral part of their journey.

Vehicular Access

4.30 Following comprehensive development of the settlement the main vehicular access will be

provided from the A90 / Parkway with secondary accesses on to Whitestripes Avenue to the east and Whitestripes Road to the north.

4.31 The Access Strategy for the site proposes that initial access will be taken from Whitestripes Avenue to serve the first phase of development with a potential access from Whitestripes Road as Phase 1 develops. As the settlement continues to expand northwards further accesses will be provided on to Whitestripes Road.

4.32 Future phasing after the implementation of the AWPR anticipates access taken from the Parkway which will then form the main access point to the development and provide a more direct access to the town centre. The Parkway access will be designed to create a distinctive gateway into the community, routing visitors directly into the town centre, where commercial plots feature high-density retail and offices, with car parking shielded within the blocks. This busy commercial centre will be designed to serve both Grandhome and the wider Bridge of Don area.

Grandhome Parking Strategy

4.33 The Development Framework includes a mixed neighbourhood parking strategy within residential areas, allowing for on-street, on-site (side/rear garage), courtyard, and mews parking arrangements. The following principles will underpin the parking strategy for Grandhome:

- Minimising the impact of car parking on public realm, for instance locating car parks behind high-density mixed-use blocks to create more attractive streetscapes.
- In mixed-use areas, ensure car parking provision is shared when the demand for different uses varies over different times and days.
- Garages shall be counted towards the overall parking provision for residential units.

4.34 This approach will act to calm traffic, add character and variety to the streetscape, and provide active frontages to the residential areas.

Infrastructure

4.35 An Energy Strategy has been prepared which explains how power will be not only provided through upgrades to the existing gas and electricity networks and the installation of a local Primary Substation but also sustainably generated through LZC technologies as discussed above.

4.36 The infrastructure upgrades to provide water and to dispose of waste water have also been investigated. The development is expected to be served from Fernhill Reservoir which will require the delivery of a dedicated water main.

4.37 It has been agreed in principle with Scottish Water that the development will connect directly to Persley Waste Water Treatment Works. Scottish Water is expecting to increase the capacity of Persley Waste Water Treatment Works to accommodate later phases of Grandhome and other developments in the area.

4.38 A modern telecommunications network will be provided as part of the development, ensuring Grandhome is fully enabled to take advantage of the next generation of digital telecommunication technologies.

4.39 Full details of all infrastructure proposals are contained within the Infrastructure Statement submitted in support of this application.

5. Design

- 5.1 The design for Grandhome has been developed on the principles of good urbanism, with the masterplan seeking to deliver a successful mix of uses and house types to create a well-balanced street scape and sustainable mixed-use community.
- 5.2 The preceding section details the proposals to be delivered within Grandhome. This section now seeks to highlight the design principles which have shaped the masterplan.

Transect-Based Design

- 5.3 The Grandhome masterplan is transect-based, meaning that the plan's structure is generated by a tool called the transect. The transect measures the character of an environment from rural to urban. Grandhome has been designed to include many types of environments along the transect, ranging from its urban high street hub through to lower density residential neighbourhoods on the settlement edge.
- 5.4 The transect can be measured in six zones, which are distributed across a masterplan. These zones include T1 (Natural Zone), T2 (Rural Zone), T3 (Sub-Urban Zone), T4 (General Urban Zone), T5 (Urban Centre) and T6 (Urban Core). Densities, building heights, building setbacks and other issues then correlate with each zone.

- 5.5 Grandhome includes three of the six transect zones: T3, T4 and T5. Each neighbourhood features a range of zones, to reflect the variety of urban environments and housing types within the settlement. T5, however, features more prominently in the higher-density town centre and the neighbourhood centres. Grandhome also includes a zone called 'Special District' – a specialised area that does not comply with the typical rules of the urban-rural transect. In Grandhome, the business park is a Special District.

The Grandhome Transect

- 5.6 The design team sought to calibrate the transect system to a scale and character appropriate for the Grandhome site. An analysis of local urban environments within Old Aberdeen and other northern Aberdeen neighbourhoods was therefore undertaken to inform the masterplan. Throughout the development of the proposed masterplan, the design team has continually returned to these historic precedents, studying not only the architecture, but also the setbacks, densities and other components of urbanism. Full details of this contextual analysis are contained within the Development Framework.

Fig 12: An introduction to the transect zones, with those in Grandhome highlighted (T3, T4, T5 and SD)





Masterplan Development

5.7 The Grandhome masterplan has been in development since 2008, when the Grandhome Trust first submitted the site for consideration for the Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative. Over the past five years, the masterplan has developed through a public charrette, community consultation and feedback as well as technical and environmental studies.

5.8 There have been four main iterations of the masterplan:

Masterplan from the end of the SSCI Charrette in 2010 (top left). By the end of the eight day event the masterplan had been developed to include the town centre and six other neighbourhoods, a substantial green network, well connected thoroughfare network and a diverse range of densities.

Masterplan produced during design development in March 2012 (top right). This responded particularly to

further infrastructural and technical studies. The key changes at this stage included a revision to the site boundary so that it adheres to that shown in the LDP. The Green Space Network also evolved and became far more permeable.

Masterplan produced during design development in September – December 2012 (bottom left). As the plans again further developed refinement took place in light of the Quality Audit process guiding Grandhome's street network. Other key changes included amendments to the Parkway access strategy, revision of school building numbers and introduction of a community campus, specific commercial uses incorporated into the town centre and modifications to the Business District design to ensure good visibility from the Parkway as well as linkages to the High Street.

Current Masterplan 2013 (bottom right). The masterplan being submitted as part of this planning application is the culmination of all the previous iterations which have led to its final form.



Fig 13: Grandhome Character Areas

1. High Street and Town Centre
2. Business Park
3. Whitestripes and Bonnyside neighbourhood centres
4. Community Campus
5. Hilltop Park and Monument Wood

Character Areas

5.9 Drawing on the design principles of Grandhome, five key character area's are discussed below, with commentary on each areas likely design approach and development patterns.



Fig 14: Indicative view of Grandhome's High Street

Character Area 1: High Street and Town Centre

5.10 Located on the southernmost portion of the site, Grandhome's town centre will be a vibrant destination for both Grandhome residents and the wider Bridge of Don community. The high street is situated in this area due to its close proximity to the A90 and the residential communities to the south. The town centre's shops, restaurants, offices and community buildings will thus be accessible to a wide variety of people, ensuring that the nearby residential community no longer needs to commute into the centre of Aberdeen for such amenities.

5.11 Designed around a traditional high street, retail activity is concentrated on the eastern edge of the street while a more residential frontage anchors its western end towards Monument Wood. Landscape features have been included to soften the street as well as connect a series of public spaces and squares.

5.12 Throughout the town centre, car parking is strategically shielded within the blocks, to ensure that vehicles do not visually dominate the streetscape.

5.13 The condition of the High Street will change according to its location within Grandhome. As the High Street is traversed and connects to other areas, the street design will change in response to the different character areas. This will be determined through the detailed masterplanning process on a phase by phase basis.

Character Area 2: Business Park

5.14 Alongside substantial mixed-use development, Grandhome will be home to some business development, in line with the principles of Energetica and other initiatives in Aberdeen. Locating business development alongside a traditional high-street will ensure that workers leave their offices and use the shops and services on offer.

5.15 Large companies seeking a new or improved base in Aberdeen are likely to find Grandhome attractive due to its high-visibility location on the A90, design and housing availability. Locating within Grandhome ensures that employees can live in close proximity to their place of work, and access other amenities close to the office, such as schools, day care, shops and health facilities.



Fig 15: An indicative view of Grandhome's Business Park

5.16 Should a company be interested in locating in this area, their detailed design requirements will be processed by the design team to ensure an optimal solution is achieved in line with overall aspirations for Grandhome.

5.17 The basic principles of the Business Park include the following:

- Flexible Class 4 buildings suitable for a variety of tenants;
- Car parking will be shielded from clear views, behind buildings and landscaping;
- Integration with the Town Centre will be key as well as connectivity with the settlement as a whole;
- Views of this area from Whitestripes Avenue and the Parkway will be carefully considered; and
- Storey heights will be up to 3 storeys unless an urban design case for four storeys in selected locations can be made.

Character Area 3: Whitestripes and Bonnyside Neighbourhood Centres

5.18 Beyond the High Street, Grandhome is home to a number of small neighbourhood centres designed primarily for residents. These centres are designed to be attractive and convenient to those living within walking distance, providing amenities such as shops, offices and community buildings.

5.19 One such neighbourhood centre is located in the northeast portion of the Grandhome site: the Whitestripes neighbourhood centre.

5.20 The centre is currently designed around a key community building, which faces the park and a public green. The green is aligned with small-scale live/work buildings, home to shops or offices. The green also opens directly onto a road which connects to the north/south green corridor, providing long views.

5.21 Residential streets surround the square, featuring a variety of homes, from terraces to semi-detached and detached houses.

5.22 To the west of Whitestripes neighbourhood centre is Bonnyside, another small neighbourhood retail pocket.

Fig 16: Whitestripes Neighbourhood Centre





Fig 17: Bonnyside Neighbourhood Centre

This area again features a square, bordered by mixed-use buildings, featuring offices or retail on the ground floor and flats above.

5.23 The main road running east from this square connects to a green space, running into the north/south green corridor, and eventually the Whitestripes neighbourhood centre. The square is also in close proximity to the Green Belt (Policy NE2) to the north, including the community campus' sports pitches.

Character Area 4: Community Campus

5.24 Grandhome's Community Campus is located in the centre of the site, and will be a hub of activity for the settlement as a whole. The campus is home to both a primary school and Grandhome's only secondary school, alongside recreational facilities, sports pitches and a connected green network. The aim is to create a welcoming and inclusive

Fig 18: A view of the Community Campus and central square



campus, which will be attractive to both students and community members who may use the facilities outside of school hours.

5.25 The secondary school is situated in this part of Grandhome in order to be conveniently located for all students, including those living in neighbourhoods to the north and west. A primary school was then added in order to create a campus environment, in which students of different ages could benefit from proximity and some shared facilities. The site's proximity to the surrounding Green Belt also makes this a convenient place for both schools, given the ample space for sports pitches.

5.26 Both the primary school and the secondary school face onto the neighbourhood centre square. To the east of the schools is a large square, which also overlooks the Green Belt. This square is lined on two sides with small-scale office buildings and shops. The square is also intended to be the central gathering area for the surrounding neighbourhood, and is scaled to accommodate community events.

5.27 Whitestripes Road acts as the square's northern boundary; accordingly, the public space will be noticed by many travelling through Grandhome on this high-volume road. North of the square, Whitestripes Road will overlook the Green Belt and the school sports pitches. These facilities may also be shared by the community.

5.28 A small green link south of the secondary school also connects the sports pitches and the Green Belt to the north/south green corridor, which itself connects to the Hilltop Park and subsequently to Monument Wood and the green space along the River Don.

Fig 19: An indicative view of the Community Campus





Fig 20: Hilltop Park

Character Area 5: Hilltop Park and Monument Wood

5.29 The Grandhome masterplan is designed to follow the site's natural topography, avoiding cut and fill and adhering to the site's natural contours. Accordingly, the hillcrest that runs from east to west, in the centre of the site, was preserved for a Hilltop Park. The park will not only offer views, but also ensure that steeper portions of the site are not used for roads or residential plots.

5.30 The Hilltop Park starts at the eastern edge of the site, and widens as it reaches the site's centre. The central portion includes a water feature, which will be incorporated into the settlement's Sustainable Urban Drainage System. Paths and lines of trees crisscross the park, following the historic traces on the land. The park eventually links to Monument Wood, Grandhome's largest naturalistic park, which is adjacent to the western neighbourhood centre.

5.31 Rows of houses face onto the Hilltop Park, and the blocks behind them are largely residential. Although in the centre of Grandhome, the area will have a lower density and a quieter feel, particularly in comparison to the town centre to the south.

5.32 Monument Wood is Grandhome's most naturalistic park, and will retain its original woodland character. The park is located west of the Hilltop Park, and south of a green wedge connecting to the Green Belt. The park is also adjacent to the western neighbourhood centre, bordering the primary school. The school's sports pitches then face onto Monument Wood, offering views into the green space, with Hilltop Park in the distance.

5.33 In contrast to the more formal and picturesque spaces in Hilltop Park, Monument Wood is designed as a space for wildlife. New plantings will follow the site's historic character, and contribute



Fig 21: Monument Wood Park

to the existing woodlands landscape. The park is also designed to connect the green space south of Grandhome to the Green Belt to the north, to allow for wildlife habitats and migrations.

5.34 The park is likely to become a popular space for recreation, particularly for residents living in the adjacent neighbourhoods. The park is also likely to be used by local wildlife.

North/South Green Corridor

5.35 The north/south green corridor is one of Grandhome's largest continuous open spaces, running from the town centre's primary school to the very north of the site. The corridor is designed to accommodate the existing pylons, and to link with other prominent green spaces, such as the Hilltop Park. The park's size follows the setback requirements for pylons, and curves slightly to follow the natural contours of the land.

5.36 The north/south green corridor will be a series of continuous green spaces designed for different uses. Uses are likely to include play parks, allotments and sports pitches, along with traditional green spaces for gathering and relaxation. Water features, which will be incorporated into the SUDs network, will also be prominent. These many uses are intended to activate the space and provide a range of activities, drawing residents from across the settlement. More information on the specific uses proposed is provided within the Landscape Statement.

6. Planning and Design Analysis

6.1 The planning policy framework has already been outlined in Section 2. This section now focuses on the proposed development in light of the planning policy context demonstrating that Grandhome is an appropriate strategy to deliver sustainable growth for the City.

Principle of Development

6.2 The LDP allocates a significant level of housing and employment in the Bridge of Don area, with Grandhome representing a substantial contributor. The masterplan for Grandhome has been prepared in accordance with Aberdeen City Council's LDP and the Grandhome Development Framework.

6.3 As outlined in section 2 of this Statement, Grandhome has a long term allocation of 7,000 residential units and 5 hectares of employment land. Policy LR1 states that this should be delivered in three phases: the first phase of 2600 units is allocated for the period 2007 to 2016, the second phase for a further 2,100 units is safeguarded for the period 2017 to 2023, and the final third phase for the remaining 2,300 units is also safeguarded for the period 2024-2030. The 5 hectares of employment can come forwards at any stage in the period 2007 to 2023.

Site: OP12 Grandhome	Local Development Plan Period		Future Growth
	2007-2016	2017-2023	2024-2030
Housing	2,600 homes	2,100 homes	2,300 homes
Affordable Housing	650 homes	525 homes	575 homes
Employment	5 hectares		

Table 4: Development at the Bridge of Don and Grandhome, Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012.

6.4 LDP Policy LR2 states that, provided there is 5 years effective housing land supply, the Phase 2 housing land should be released through a review of the

Local Development Plan. However paragraph 5.5 of the Structure Plan qualifies this stating:

“In truly exceptional circumstances, for example if it is essential to put the plan’s strategy into practice, planning permission may need to be granted on sites identified in local development plans for the period 2017-2023 (shown in schedule 1). Any permission may have conditions which control the rate of development. We would need to highlight the need for this action through the Action Programme and both the strategic development planning authority and the relevant council would have to agree to it.”

6.5 As this statement has explained, the vision for Grandhome is to create a sustainable new mixed use community, which meets the daily needs of residents through the provision of shops, employment and community facilities, structured around a new town centre and a series of walkable neighbourhoods. To deliver this vision it is essential that there is certainty that sufficient critical mass will be achieved to make the delivery of infrastructure viable, and the commercial and retail opportunities attractive to occupiers, make the development vital.

6.6 The Infrastructure Statement submitted in support of the planning application sets out the infrastructure which will be delivered in support of the 4,700 units. This illustrates that a number of key pieces of infrastructure, such as water mains, sewers, roads and schools, must not only be installed early in the development, but must also be designed to serve the overall development to ensure that this infrastructure does not need to be unnecessarily replaced or upgrade infrastructure within relatively short timescales. This introduces significant costs at an early stage which must be offset against the certainty of future development having achieved planning permission in principle.

6.7 To this end permission is required for the first and second LDP phases of 4,700 units as this provides the critical mass necessary to support the viable and managed delivery of the new community’s services and infrastructure. These factors clearly represent the

exceptional circumstances required by paragraph 5.5 of the Structure Plan, thereby demonstrating that the application proposals are entirely in accordance with the development plan.

- 6.8 In order to help deliver mixed use communities, Policy LR2 requires large sites to 'service employment land along with the associated phases of the housing development...road, water, gas and electricity infrastructure will need to be considered for the whole site'. The proposed development has been prepared to fully accord with this policy, with the masterplan delivering a sustainable mixed use new community.

Infrastructure & Delivery

- 6.9 A broad range of new and enhanced infrastructure will be delivered in support of the development ensuring that residents needs can be met from the occupation of the first house which is expected in 2015. Full details of the infrastructure to be delivered in support of the development are set out in the Infrastructure Statement which has been submitted in support of the application. The Statement robustly demonstrates that the first phase of the development will be effective in 2015, with further infrastructure being brought forward to support the phased development of the site. At this stage a build out rate of 200 units per annum has been assumed based upon our understanding of likely demand for new housing. However the development, including the supporting infrastructure, could be brought forward at a faster rate if there was sufficient demand.

Retail

- 6.10 LDP Policy RT1, supported by the City Centre and Retailing - Hierarchy of Centres Supplementary Guidance, seeks to ensure that a sequential approach is taken to locating new retail floorspace. Accordingly Retail Impact Assessments are required in support of retail developments of over 2500 square metres which are located outside of regional or town centres and which are not in accordance with the

development plan. Alongside this, Policy RT1 explicitly recognises that large scale developments can result in the creation of new centres, stating that:

"in significant new development areas that are more than 800m walking distance from shopping facilities, permission may be granted for the establishment of a new neighbourhood centre".

- 6.11 Policy RT5 takes this principle further stating that: *"masterplans for sites allocated for major greenfield residential development should allocate land for retail and related uses at an appropriate scale to serve the convenience shopping needs of the expanded local community."*
- 6.12 As a large scale mixed-use community, Grandhome is seeking to create a new accessible town centre, offering retail and commercial facilities not only for the residents of Grandhome but also for surrounding community of the Bridge of Don which have an identified deficiency in retail opportunities.
- 6.13 In accordance with the sequential approach the Supplementary Guidance sets out the scale of new retail developments that are appropriate in different types of centres.
- 6.14 Within town and district centres, new developments of the following scale will be permitted:
- Convenience – up to 15,000 sqm
 - General Comparison – up to 5,000 sqm
 - Bulky Goods – up to 5,000 sqm
- 6.15 The proposed scale of retail floorspace within Grandhome town centre is wholly in compliance with these thresholds.
- 6.16 The retail and leisure proposals for Grandhome are thereby entirely in accordance with the requirements of Policy RT1 and RT5 and the supporting Supplementary Guidance.
- 6.17 Notwithstanding the above a Retail Impact Assessment will be prepared in support of the Town Centre Masterplan in compliance with requirements of the Development Framework.

Environment

- 6.18 Whilst the site is relatively free of environmental constraints, the environmental characteristics which feature across the site have been instrumental throughout the design process, informing the charrette process and the evolution of the masterplan.
- 6.19 Alongside the refinement of the masterplan and preparation of the application for planning permission in principle technical assessments have been undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to identify the effects of the development and the requirements for mitigation.
- 6.20 Assessments have been undertaken in respect of:
- Air Quality
 - Climate Change
 - Cultural Heritage
 - Ecology
 - Flood Risk & Drainage
 - Geo-environmental
 - Landscape and Visual
 - Noise
 - Socio-economic
 - Transport
 - Waste
- 6.21 The assessments demonstrate that, taking the proposed mitigation measures into account the residual impacts of the development will be negligible and as such the development will not have a significant effect.

Transport

- 6.22 The development of Grandhome is being brought forward alongside a package of strategic enhancements to the wider transport network including the Third Don Crossing, the Aberdeen Western Periphery Road (AWPR) and improvements to the Haudagain roundabout as well as a number of associated strategic improvements which are still to be identified. Together these improvements will significantly increase the capacity presently available

on the network to enable it to accommodate the developments allocated in the Local Development Plan, including Grandhome.

- 6.23 A Transport Assessment has been carried out which assesses the potential traffic impact of the development. This illustrates that the development can be accommodated on the network subject to the delivery of the following mitigation measures which will be delivered by the Grandhome Trust alongside the wider strategic network improvements which are expected to be delivered:

2018 - 500 homes:

- New junction improvements in support of the development on Whitestripes Road and Whitestripes Avenue.

2023 - 1500 homes:

- The northern element of the Parkway junction;
- Minor Lane alterations at Buckie Farm roundabout.

2032 - 2000 homes:

- First phase signalisation of Buckie farm roundabout (using no third-party land);
- The southern element of the Parkway junction and dualling to Buckie Farm Roundabout.

2038 – By 4,700 homes:

- Junction at Whitestripes Avenue and Whitestripes Road upgraded.

- 6.24 Across all of these phases will be the gradual improvement of Whitestripes Road which will keep pace with the development of frontage along that corridor.

Street Types & Design

- 6.25 Grandhome is designed following the policies contained within 'Designing Streets'. These principles have been incorporated into the Grandhome masterplanning process, with the design team working alongside stakeholders to explore the policy document and the opportunities presented by it.

6.26 The design team has continued to prioritise the policies contained within 'Designing Streets', consulting with the Scottish Government as well as the local Roads Authority whenever possible, to ensure a design solution aligned to the policy's aims and aspirations. The design team is committed to implementing 'Designing Streets', in order to create a vibrant, walkable community which can become a model for Scotland.

6.27 'Designing Streets' proposes that new communities should adhere to a series of qualities. All of these have been considered by the Grandhome design team and addressed within the masterplan as explained in the following text:

Distinctive:

6.28 Street design is an important element of each neighbourhood's distinctive identity, given the differing combinations of streets, mews, alleyways and thoroughfares of other sizes and characters. The use of block layout and character areas will allow greater orientation and navigation within the settlement.

Easy to move around:

6.29 Grandhome is designed to have a well-connected street network, in which it is very easy to move from one destination to another, whether by foot, cycle or public transport. The masterplan ensures this by proposing a legible network of thoroughfares including gridded blocks, and by avoiding cul-de-sacs and separated uses. The central road around Grandhome, connecting the principal neighbourhood centres and all primary schools, will also provide a clear and logical path for a local bus route.

Safe + pleasant:

6.30 With most streets designed to 20mph, Grandhome will be pleasant, safe and conducive to pedestrian and cycle activity. Landscaping will also be used to facilitate traffic calming while long straight streets will be avoided to discourage speeding.

6.31 The site is characterised by variant gradients which bring challenges to connectivity and development. Several areas on the site with more substantial gradients, such as the ridge in the centre of the site, have been identified as steep and thus incorporated into the masterplan as parks rather than parts of the street network. This approach ensures that cut and fill is kept to a minimum and the site's natural contours are preserved.

6.32 Well designed and positioned signage, street furniture and street lighting will be applied to ensure safety and functionality.

Resource efficient:

6.33 By including substantial employment land, retail, schools and community uses alongside shops, Grandhome offers residents a chance to access more of their daily needs by foot and thus lessen their petrol consumption. The aspiration is to provide for residents' daily needs within a five minute walking distance of all homes. The masterplan is also designed to accommodate cycle paths and efficient local and regional bus routes, which will again ensure that residents only use their cars when absolutely necessary.

6.34 Existing natural features will be incorporated into the design of streets to create natural and distinctive areas. This includes incorporating existing trees, wooded areas and stone dykes where possible to create attractive streetscapes.

6.35 Where possible building materials will be sourced locally, and selected and detailed to minimise long term maintenance obligations.

Adaptable:

6.36 The Grandhome masterplan is designed to be implemented in phases which can be built in line with the demands of the housing market. These phases are designed as self-sufficient neighbourhoods which can flourish regardless of the status of the settlement as a whole. Street design is a key element of the composition of each neighbourhood and streets are designed to be adaptable by allowing, where appropriate, a variety of vehicle movement and car

parking opportunities which do not compromise pedestrian/ cyclist accessibility and do not detract from the sense of place.

- 6.37 Connections to the existing roads network respond to the current junction arrangement where appropriate. The proposed street layout allows for potential future junctions onto Whitestripes Avenue but is not reliant on these connections. Allowance has been made in the layout for the potential future widening of parts of the Parkway and Whitestripes Road.

Welcoming:

- 6.38 Grandhome is designed to be a unique community, comprised of homes responding to the best of contemporary and vernacular architectural traditions. The community will be fundamentally welcoming due to its high-quality design and the provision of neighbourhood and town centres uses within walkable distances. In short, the community will be home to residents of many ages, family sizes and aesthetic preferences. The settlement's memorable public spaces and safe streets will also encourage residents to spend time outdoors in their neighbourhoods and thus foster a welcoming community spirit.
- 6.39 By focusing on these place-based objectives, the Grandhome design team has proposed a masterplan which is sensitive to the site and its context and which achieves Designing Streets' objectives in terms of street network design.
- 6.40 To develop these principles further several 'Quality Audit Workshops' have already taken place to develop the street engineering for Phase 1 to ensure that the principles of Designing Streets will be delivered on the ground. The Workshops, which have involved both the local Road Authority and the Design Team, have considered how best to respond to the characteristic of the site, in particular gradients, to deliver the place making aspirations of the masterplan. This has resulted in agreements to slightly relax gradient standards on a main street through Phase 1 and parking space standards on minor streets.

Future Growth

- 6.41 SPP requires the Structure Plan to look beyond the 12 year housing land supply required and provide an indication of scale and location of housing growth for up to 20 years. Land is safeguarded at Grandhome for the period post 2023 to look beyond the 12 year land supply.
- 6.42 Grandhome is different in that it has been planned comprehensively across the entire land holding of the Grandhome Trust, using the neighbourhood as its basic building block. This has resulted in a masterplan for the whole site offering a compact, walkable and sustainable community for 4,700 homes with supporting employment and services, and also offers a route map to providing a further 2,300 homes in two neighbourhoods post 2023, offering certainty and stability for the long term plans of Aberdeen. Infrastructure planning across all seven phases has also been considered.

7. Summary & Conclusion

- 7.1 The potential for Grandhome to meet both national and local development aspirations has long been recognised and was reinforced by the site's inclusion in the Scottish Sustainable Charrette Initiative and the site's formal allocation within the LDP.
- 7.2 The application proposal presents a robust strategy in order to contribute to the housing and employment requirements of Aberdeen. The proposal for Grandhome will deliver a mixed-use community founded on the principles of sustainable urbanism, fully in accordance with both national and local planning policy.
- 7.3 The large scale mixed-use allocation, combined with the high accessibility and unconstrained nature of the site, also offers the opportunity to achieve the full range of sustainable development objectives, namely:
- Creation of a self-sustaining community with housing, employment and community facilities within each neighbourhood
 - Providing opportunities for sustainable movement patterns through a series of well-connected streets and walkable neighbourhoods all served by public transport
 - Provision of up to 4,700 homes of differing house types including up to 25% affordable units
 - Provision of high quality employment opportunities including a 5 hectare business park
 - Development of a new town centre catering for the new residents of Grandhome as well as the wider Bridge of Don community
 - Creation of a strong sense of place and community through delivering community facilities to foster social interaction
 - Greater efficiencies in the delivery and use of infrastructure
- 7.4 As is evident, the application proposals for Grandhome meet the Scottish Government's primary objective of sustainable economic growth. The development of a new mixed-use settlement will allow Aberdeen to continue to develop in a sustainable manner meeting the significant housing and employment challenges facing the City whilst contributing to the growth of the Scottish economy.

