



Fig. 20.1 Materplan



Landscape Structure Concept

A bold landscape structure is proposed utilising extensive belts of native woodland planting linking together the existing woodland belts, particularly along the slopes to the north east of the site. This planting will provide a framework which will enclose the development of the site, separating employment land from residential areas, whilst providing shelter and a backdrop to new buildings. These broad objectives were developed in accordance with North East Scotland Together, Aberdeenshire Structure Plan, National Planning Policy Guidance 11 – Sport, Physical Recreation and Open Space (imminently to be replaced by SPP11 Open Space), Planning Advice Note 44 – Fitting New Housing into the Landscape, Planning Advice Note 51 – Planning and Environmental Protection, Planning Advice Note 65 – Planning and Open Space and Planning Advice Note 72 – Housing in the Countryside. They should be developed in greater detail with reference to BRE Digest 350 Climate and Site Development, and Aberdeenshire Council’s Index 21 assessment tool.

Different woodland typologies will be developed responding to the site characteristic’s. A wet woodland mix which is able to accommodate periodic flooding will be utilised around the river and within the flood plain. This approach has been endorsed by SEPA. The shelter woodland planting on higher ground will take cues from the surrounding area and be dominated by species such as Beech and Scot’s Pine (see Figure 21.2).

One of the purposes of this structure planting is to provide a visual backdrop and to avoid the development dominating the skyline. The importance of this is highlighted in Figure’s 21.3 and 21.4 which demonstrate the softening effect and benefits for a better ‘landscape fit’ a wide belt of structure planting will have. The impact of new housing on the slopes of Hill of Selbie and Lawel Hill in views from Inverurie will be reduced with woodland planting providing a backdrop, reducing any new development seen along the horizon.

In addition the concept encompasses internal greenways, which are essentially pedestrian links across the entire development between the pockets of residential development, community green spaces and the park. These will be promoted to create a permeable overall scheme which feels like an extension to Inverurie. The greenways will link together the pockets of residential development encouraging pedestrian movement across the site and acting as wildlife corridors. They will also help to foster a feeling of community as residents from all over the site can easily mix in these public spaces.

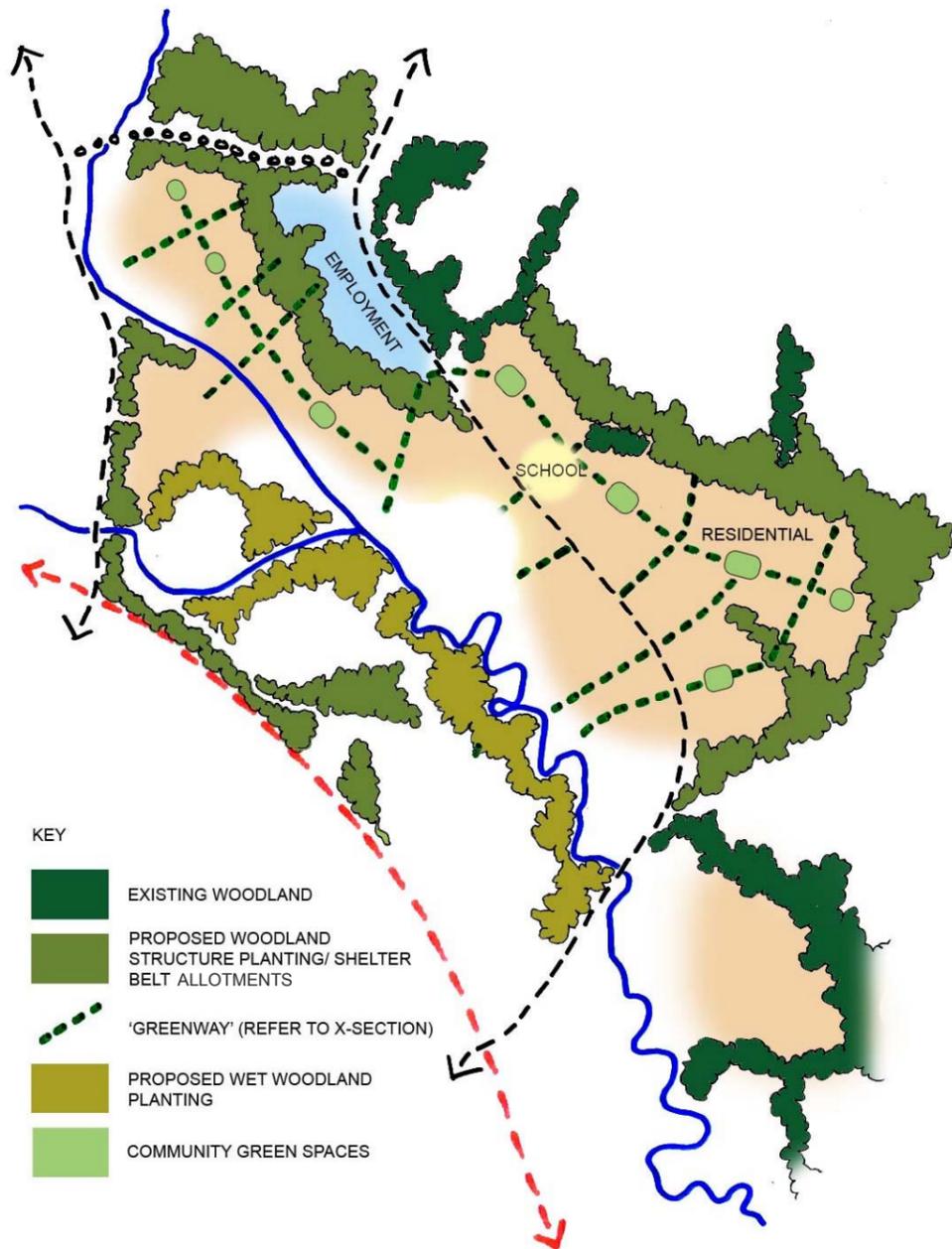


Fig. 21.1 Conceptual Landscape Structure



Fig. 21.2 Typical example of existing woodland to north of site (Ancient Semi Natural Woodland)



Fig. 21.3 Predicted view from Inverurie without structure planting



Fig. 21.4 Predicted view from Inverurie with structure planting



The Park Concept

The concept for the park is to utilise a space which can't be developed, due to the periodic flooding of the River Urie, as a means to provide active and passive recreation to the existing and new residents of Inverurie, whilst promoting the nature conservation and biodiversity of the site.

It is also anticipated that this park will become the new central focus, outwith the existing town centre, for the residents of Inverurie acting as a central hub between the existing town and the proposed extension.

The broad concept for the park is to combine nature conservation with amenity. This will be achieved through providing a manicured edge to the park with formal avenues of trees and mown lawns, with a naturalist core to the park focused around the River Urie. The naturalistic parkland will utilise marginal planting, wildflower meadows, scrub and wet woodland planting to encourage biodiversity within the site. The wider parkland path network will dissect these areas offering viewing opportunities without compromising the nature conservation value of the site.

New water bodies will be created to provide protected islands for wildlife as shown on Figure 22.4. Focusing the naturalist core around the river will also act as a first line of defence to any smaller sporadic flooding incidents, as the more naturalist parkland will be design to better accommodate these eventualities.

In addition to its nature conservation value woodland planting across the park will provide shelter in this currently open and windswept area, sub dividing this vast area into a more human scale parkland landscape. Active recreation will be accommodated in the more formal parkland through the provision of sports pitches. This will include the relocation of the local youth football teams pitches and changing facilities to within the proposed park.

Access for fishing will be encouraged along the River Urie within the parkland through the introduction of 3 river crossing points and designated areas with wider public appeal to reduce any conflict between fishing and other recreational activities.

All the uses of the park will be linked into the wider landscape through a comprehensive network of paths. These paths will celebrate the different landscape typologies as the user passes through formal parkland, native wet woodland and over aquatic habitat. The paths, as with all the other elements of the park, will be designed to cope with the occasional inundation of water associated with the flooding of the river.

Refer to Appendix A for details of RSK Ensr's Uryside Park Masterplan, which has recently been concluded in accordance with this study.

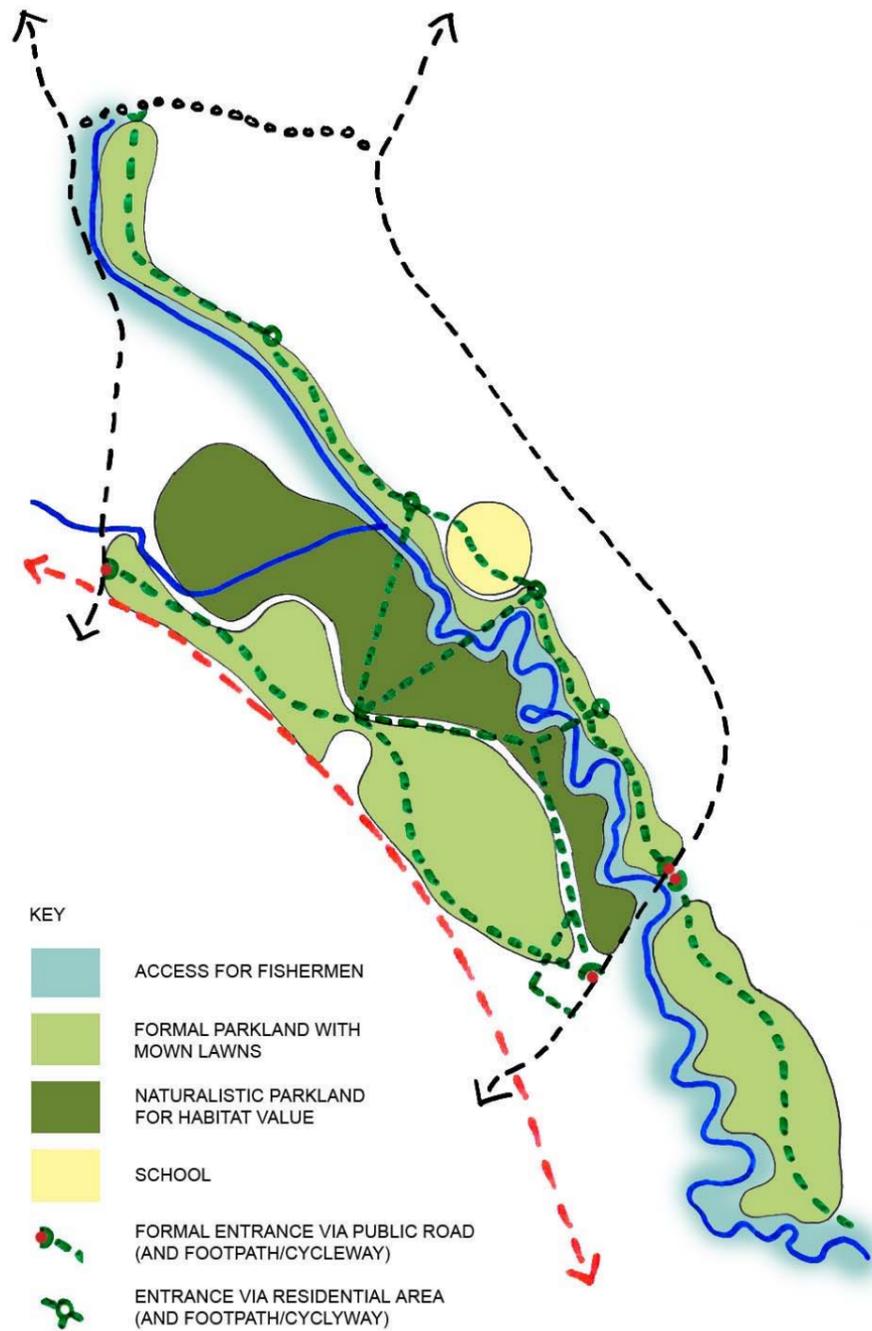


Fig. 22.1 Conceptual Landscape Park Masterplan

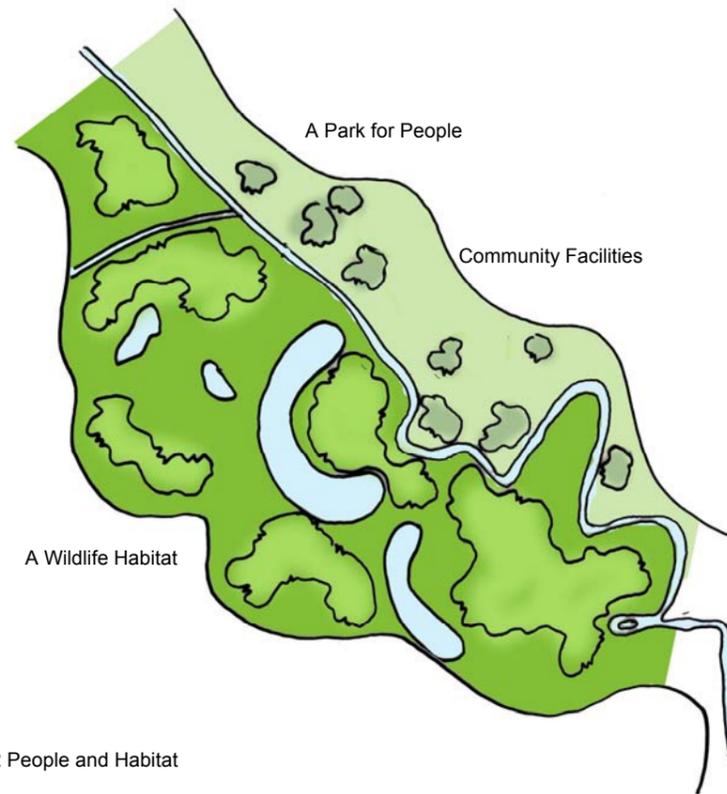


Fig 22.2 People and Habitat

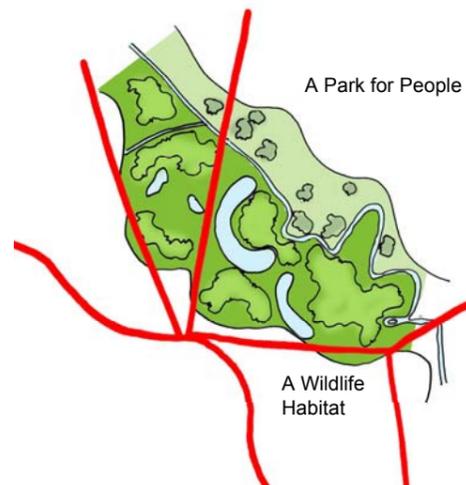


Fig 22.3 Direct Connections



Fig 22.4 Protected "Islands"



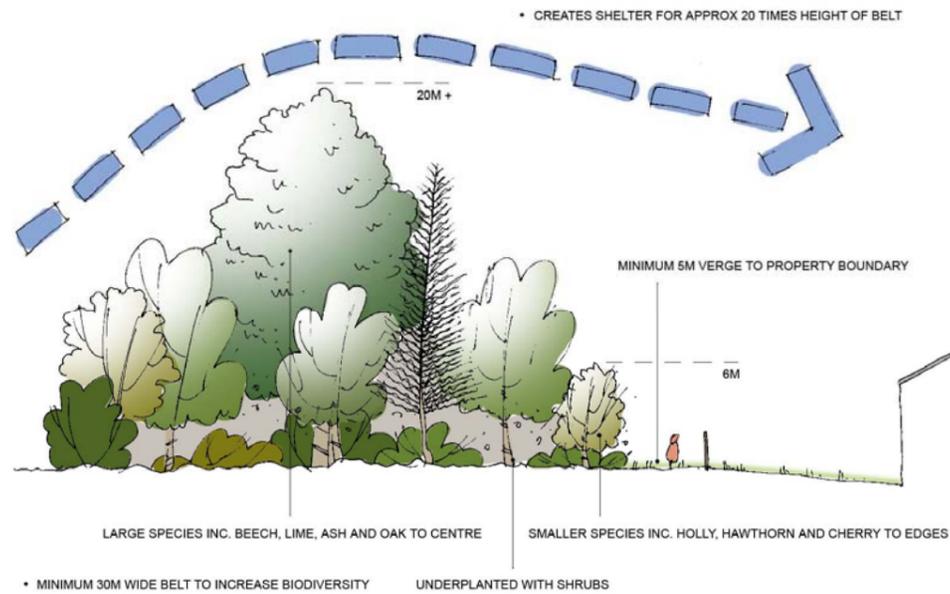


Fig 23.1 Shelter Belt Planting

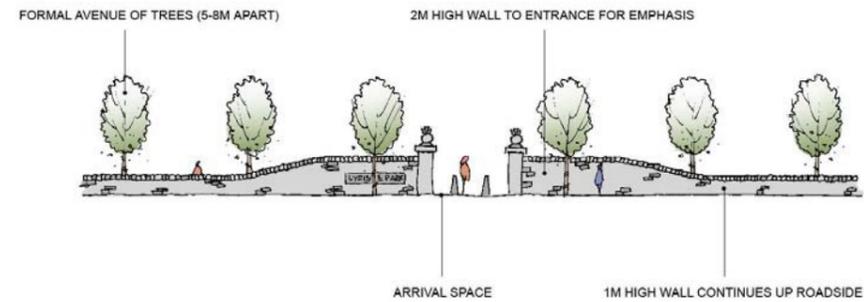


Fig 23.4 Formal park entrance

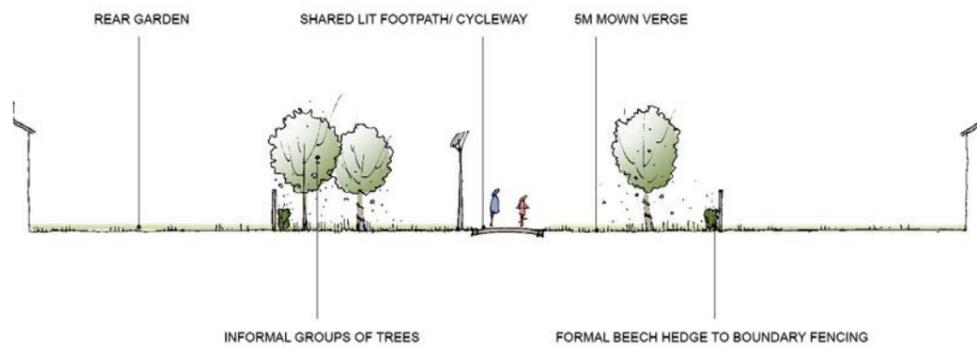


Fig 23.2 Greenways

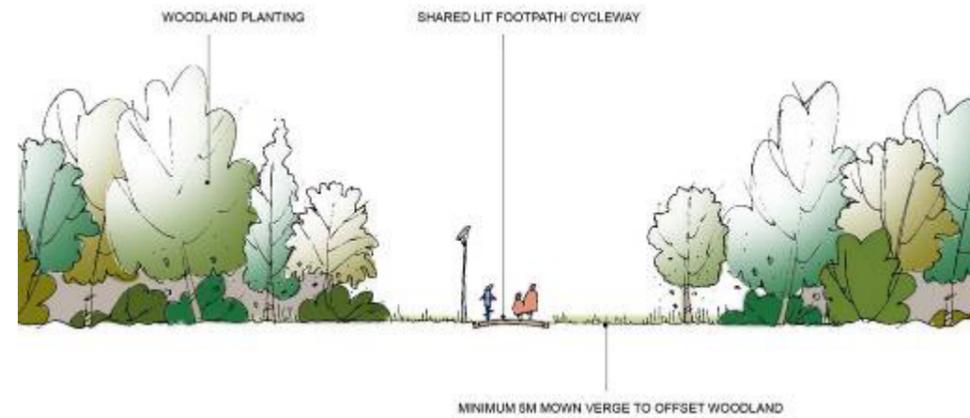


Fig 23.5 Path through woodland

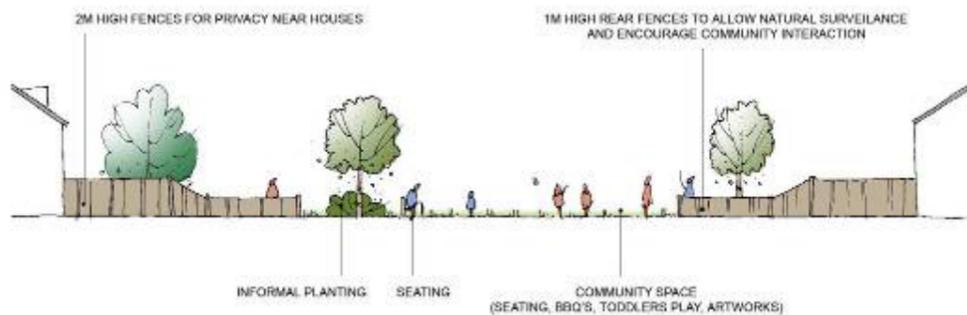


Fig 23.3 Community green spaces

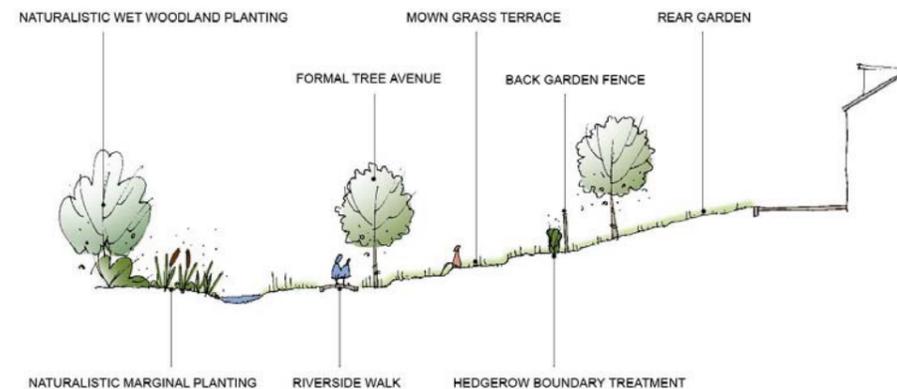


Fig 23.6 Park riverside edge

Landscape Sections

Landscape Structure Conceptual Sections

Figure 23.1 Shelter Belt – Belts to be a minimum of 30m wide (where practical) to provide a bold landscape structure and a variety of habitat to increase nature conservation value. Smaller tree and shrub species to be planted along exposed edges with larger species in the centre to encourage an ‘A’ shaped profile, designed to maximise wind shelter.

Figure 23.2 Greenways – designed to be a shared surface footpath/ cycleway which is well lit to encourage 24 hour use. Informal groups of trees within a mown grass verge either side of the footpath to be incorporated. Hedgerows along the boundary fences of houses to be incorporated to screen the fences and create wildlife corridors linking the communal village greens together with the park.

Figure 23.3 Community Green Spaces – designed to provide a safe active play space for young children as the abutting fence line has been dropped to provide natural surveillance from the surrounding houses. Surrounding the spaces with housing removes any roads and potential conflict with child’s play. The spaces will incorporate seating and informal planting for amenity.

Park Conceptual Sections

Figure 23.4 Formal Park Entrance – 2 formal entrances are proposed for pedestrian access from Oldmeldrum Road and the B9001. The traditionally built stone walls are intended to extend along the frontages of these roads to create an urban feel, visually linking the new residential development to Inverurie.

Figure 23.5 Path through Woodland – where the parkland paths dissect extensive belts of woodlands the planting will be offset by 5m either side through a mown grass verge. The paths may also be lit to help deter any anti social behaviour.

Figure 23.6 Park Riverside Edge – along the north eastern boundary of the park to accommodate the step level change a mown grass terrace will be created. The space will create a natural sun trap for local residents to enjoy. The terrace will overlook the River Urie beyond which a more naturalist parkland will be created. Nature watching opportunities will be available from the terrace.

Each landscape element should be developed in conjunction with the objectives of the Local Plan, Planning Advice Note 44 – Fitting New Housing into the Landscape and BRE Digest 350 Climate and Site Development.

Oldmeldrum Road

Oldmeldrum road is, today, simply a connecting road between 2 towns, cars moving from A to B, Oldmeldrum to Inverurie at 60 miles per hour.

When the new development has been established, the character of this road will be fundamentally different.

It will be a town road, a local distributor and should arguably be a street, an ambassador route into the town in recognition of Executive guidance in the form of Planning Advice Note 76 – New Residential Streets and A Policy Statement for Scotland – Designing Places .

In the recent past, the old A97 which left Inverurie to the north as the main road to Pitcaple and was 'de-trunked' by the bypass and by new housing developments. This section of road is now used as a local distributor but has very little life or character left. All the houses turn their back to it, hiding behind fences and garden sheds (fig. 4.1 on pg. 4).

Houses on traditional streets face the road and there are many excellent local examples to draw upon which have low garden walls and related landscaping, giving interest and activity to that street. This provides interest for the pedestrian, visitor, driver and the community in general (fig. 24.1 and 24.2).

At Uryside a certain amount of development to the south side of Oldmeldrum Road has already been planned with its back to the road in a similar fashion to that seen along the Pitcaple Road.

A small number of additional sites have been identified within these areas which could be designed to face Oldmeldrum Road (fig. 24.3). This, along with some good quality planting between the houses and the street will help to mitigate the 'back fence syndrome'.

The north side of the road can, however, still be planned with housing fronting the street (fig. 24.3). While past examples of this type of housing have allowed reversing from driveways onto a local distributor it would not be practical to introduce this today. A secondary road formed as a shared surface private driveway parallel to the main road has been proposed to resolve this issue (fig. 24.4 and 24.5).

This secondary road should be a safe and pleasant pedestrian environment encouraging interaction between neighbours.

Oldmeldrum Road will also have other changes to reflect its new role; a low speed limit; traffic calming and the introduction of cycle routes.



Fig. 24.1 Learning from the Past



Fig. 24.2 Learning from the Past

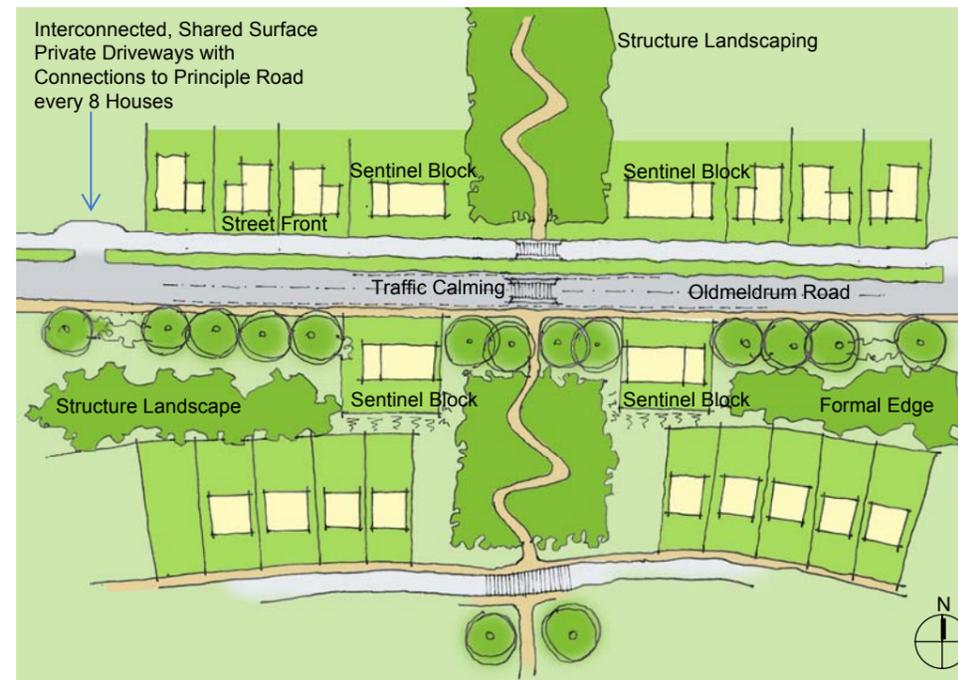


Fig. 24.3 Oldmeldrum Road

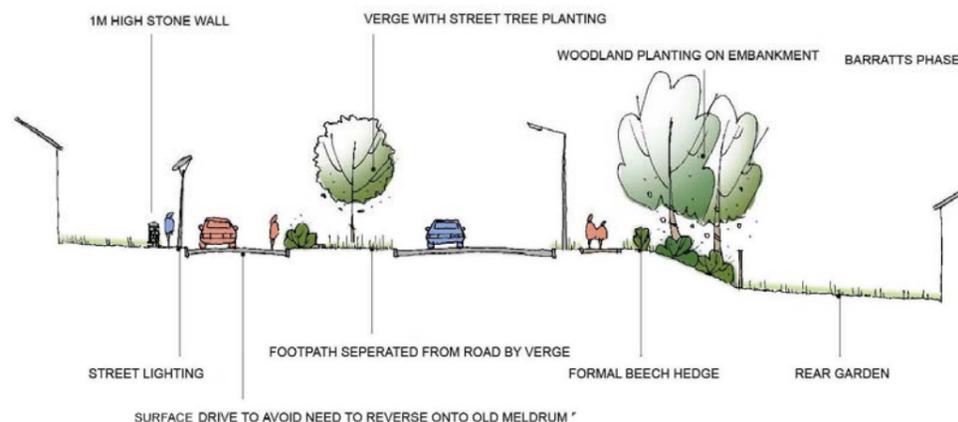


Fig. 24.4 Landscape and Built Form

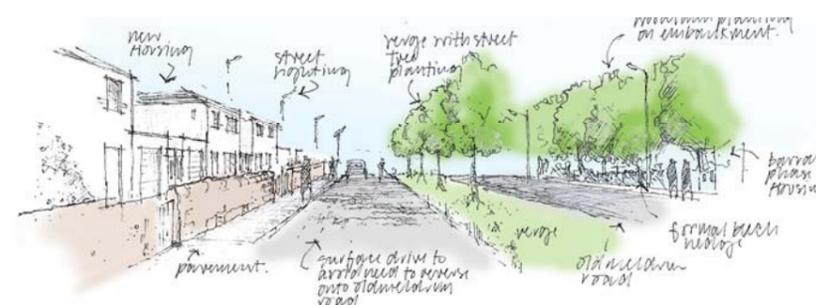


Fig. 24.5 Perspective of Oldmeldrum Road

Responding to the Topography

The relationships between houses needs to be considered in three dimensions. This is not a simple, flat abstract site, where boxes can be arranged around a road layout.

Locating lower houses to the front and allowing the others to climb naturally up the slope behind, will give more opportunity for sunshine to penetrate into the site (fig. 25.1).

Housing should be slightly staggered, like theatre seating, views and solar access therefore can be improved between the houses in front (fig. 25.2).

Generally housing layouts should follow the contours of the site to minimise tabling, large scale engineering works or the import and export of material (fig. 25.3). It is considered that these objectives can be met whilst creating attractive and functional garden space.

Clearly the topography, the availability of views and other environmental considerations will vary across the site and specific responses to these criteria are encouraged. Such a response should be designed in accordance with the Local Plan and the objectives of Planning Advice Note 67 – Housing Quality, Scottish Executive, Planning Advice Note 44 – Fitting New Housing into the Landscape, Planning Advice Note 72 – Housing in the Countryside and BRE Digest 350 – Climate and Site Development. Aberdeenshire Council's Index 21 assessment tool will in turn assist in the objective consideration of proposals as they develop.

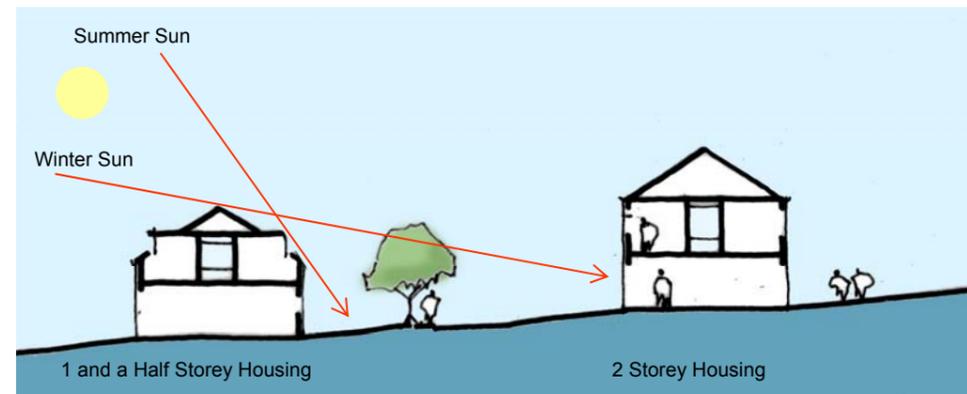


Fig. 25.1 Maximise Solar Access

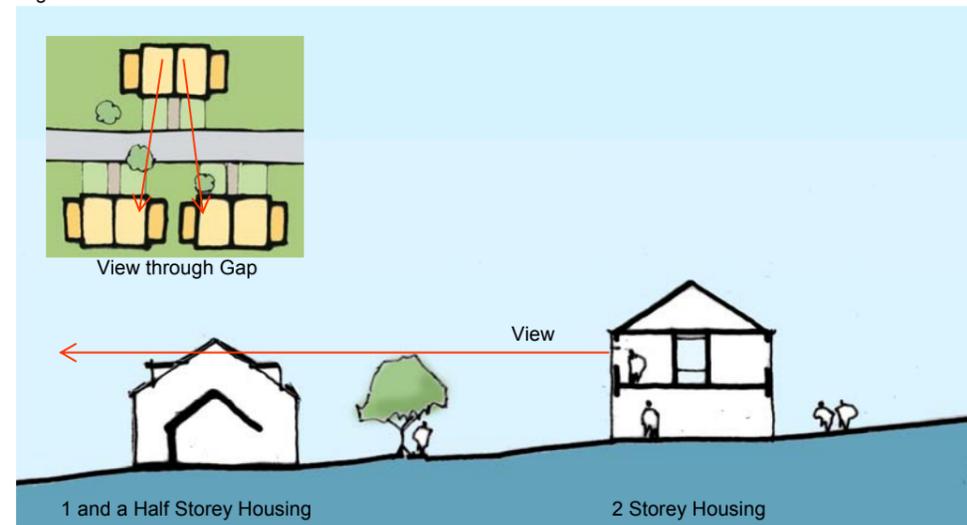


Fig 25.2 Maximise Views



Typical Tabling



Sensitive Terracing

Fig. 25.3 Follow the Contours



Fig. 26.1 Scrymegeours Corner



Fig. 26.4 The Drum, Boness



Fig. 26.5 The "Walled Garden"

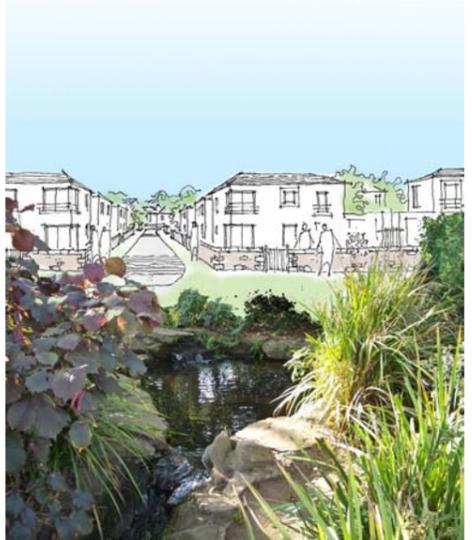


Fig. 26.2 Suds Ponds

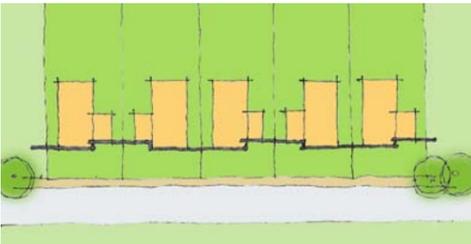


Fig. 26.6 Connected Elevations and Boundary Treatments



Fig. 26.7 The Drum, Boness



Fig. 26.3 Staiths, Newcastle



Fig. 26.8 Staiths, Newcastle

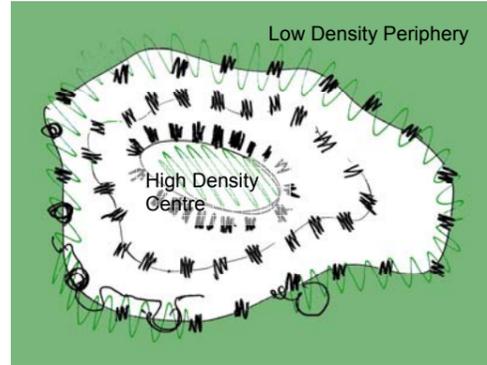


Fig. 26.9 Density Mix

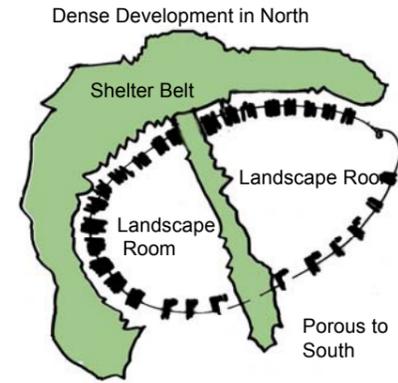


Fig. 26.10 Integration of Landscape and Built Form

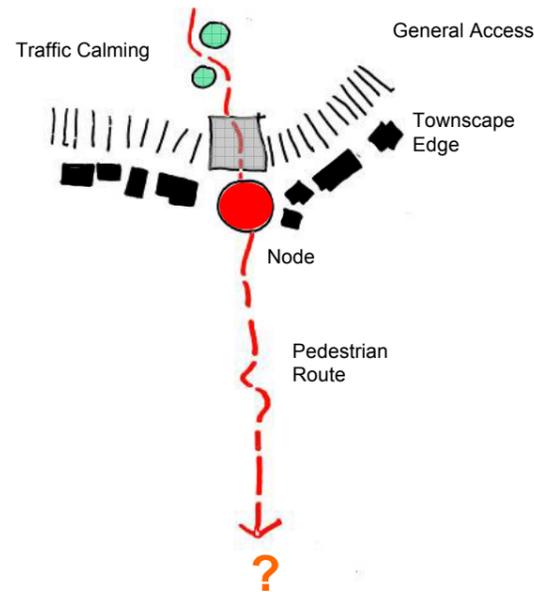


Fig. 26.11 Node and Edges

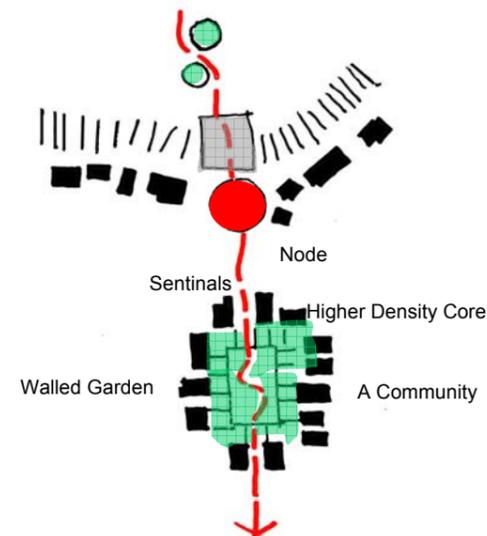


Fig. 26.12 Walled Garden

Development of a Housing Cluster

Each area of housing is formed within a recognisable landscape room in clusters of just over one hundred houses. These clusters are designed to have a high density core of buildings and a lower density periphery (fig. 26.9). The landscape and built form is arranged to protect the housing from cold northerly and north westerly winds whilst affording a more open aspect to the south and the parkland in order to enjoy solar gain and the splendid views (fig. 26.10) as per the Local Plan and BRE Digest 350 Climate and Site Development.

Each cluster is accessed from a general access road which permits access to public transport and higher numbers of vehicles as per recommendations in PAN 76 – New Residential Streets and Scottish Planning Policy 17 – Planning for Transport. Houses and other forms of building face these streets to populate them and to promote pedestrian movement along these self policed routes (fig. 26.3) in accordance with PAN 77 – Designing Safer Places. They are effectively urban in character and require the careful integration of linking components such as garages and boundary walls (fig. 26.4 and fig. 26.6) and seek to create a place following the Executive's guidance in Designing Places.

Pedestrian and vehicular access into the cluster is located at a node which will provide a focus of denser development to punctuate the overall character of the area, which may incorporate flats and shops or livework at ground floor level units (fig. 26.11). The pedestrian route at this point will join other routes running through the development and will cross the access road at a traffic calmed crossing.

That route will then run into the denser heart of the cluster formed around a green reminiscent of a walled garden developed in accordance with NPPG 11 – Sport, Physical Recreation and Open Space. These may be suitable locations for semi detached and row houses. The various access points into this area will be framed and overlooked by sentinel blocks which are intended to create a perceived threshold at these points. These shared public spaces will be interlinked to provide a series of attractive and safe pedestrian spaces but should also be designed to control their use using a variety of devices such as sprung gates, dog grids, low boundary fences separating gardens from these spaces, and well positioned windows which overlook them. They shall be well designed and equipped to create both a safe pedestrian environment and a valuable resource, around which a community is built (figs. 26.5 and 26.12). George Wimpey's Staiths development in Newcastle or Stewart Milne's development at the Drum, West Lothian are successful examples of such an approach (figs. 26.3, 26.4, 26.7 and 26.8). Please also refer to related landscape proposals elsewhere in this document.

Development of a Housing Cluster

Within each cluster the scale and character of roads are restricted to a level which promotes the greatest degree of pedestrian priority which is technically feasible. It is intended that this arrangement should create a relatively urban environment (fig. 27.6) with the "walled garden" acting as a link at the heart of the cluster.

Individual houses shall be located to create building lines reminiscent of traditional streets, with pinch points, speed tables and sentinel blocks carefully located to reduce traffic speed and to promote a self policed environment in accordance with A Policy Statement for Scotland – Designing Places, Planning Advice Note 67 – Housing Quality, Scottish Executive and Planning Advice Note 77 – Designing Safer Places.

Larger and less densely developed homes are located around the periphery of the cluster, developed against and into the shelterbelts around the area. These grander houses will be arranged either around parking courtyards reminiscent of the steading vernacular or private driveways. This approach creates a high quality environment for these higher value homes and offers greater potential for one off or more specialist housing (fig. 27.5 and 27.7). Such an arrangement provides a soft landscaped edge to the cluster as opposed to the typical almost "fortified" approach of high density housing which turns its back on adjoining land and spaces (fig. 27.8).

Within the framework housing clusters are interlinked to form an overall development within a coherent landscape, pedestrian and spatial framework as per Planning Advice Note 44 – Fitting New Housing into the Landscape. Each cluster is also linked to accommodate public transport, emergency traffic and alternative routes for car travel. Public transport will run through the clusters operated by small scale buses. Generally a selected route through a cluster is designated as a general access road with other roads within the cluster formed as minor access road or short cul de sacs (fig. 27.3). All of these roads are permitted to have frontal access and where technically possible the use of shared surfaces will be supported.

Each cluster is then interlinked via a road which is significantly traffic calmed to reduce speeds, provide a greater pedestrian priority and regulate their potential use by car traffic. It is intended that these links will be developed to a similar standard to a minor access road with carefully located and demarcated passing places where appropriate. Generally these should be attractive tree lined pedestrian environments. This network will need further detailed development by individual developers and liaison with Aberdeenshire Council's Road Department. The general approach incorporated in the framework refers to PAN76 New Residential Streets and Designing Places.



Fig. 27.1 Bellrock Square



Fig. 27.4 Poundbury



Fig. 27.2 New Milns



Fig. 27.5 An Example of a Peripheral House

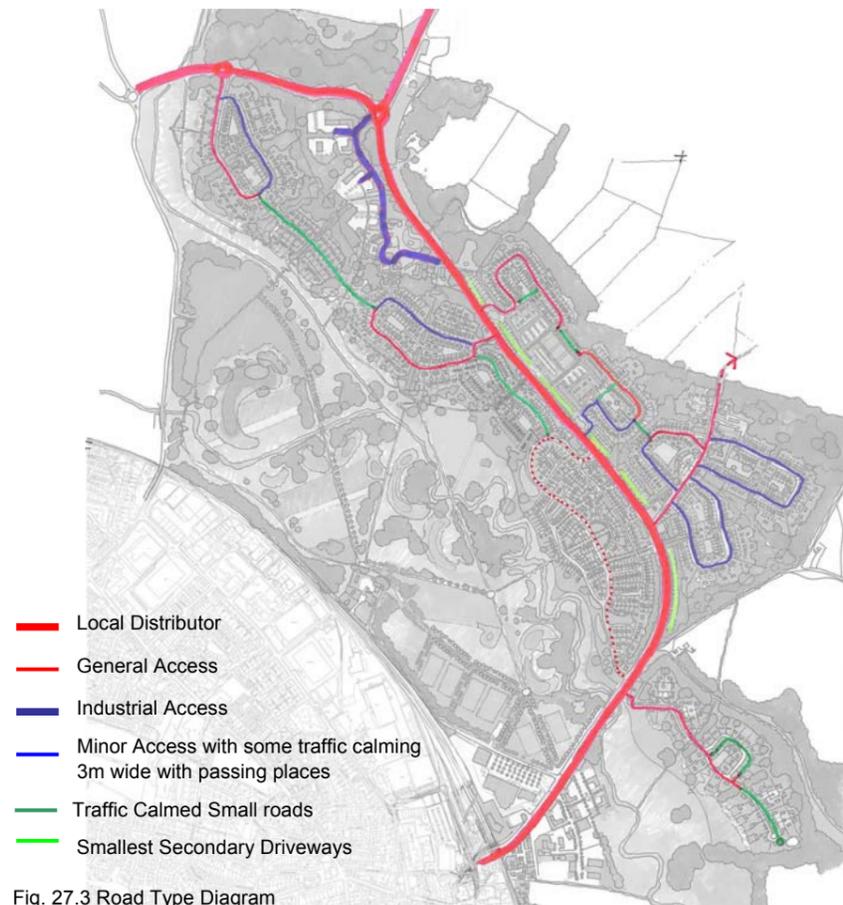


Fig. 27.3 Road Type Diagram

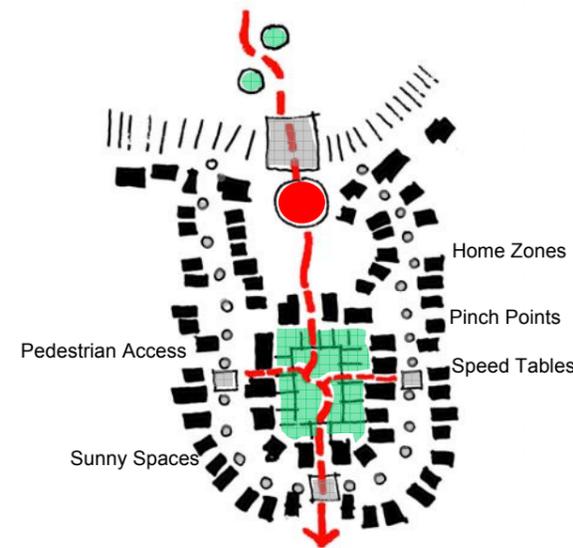


Fig. 27.6 Home Zone

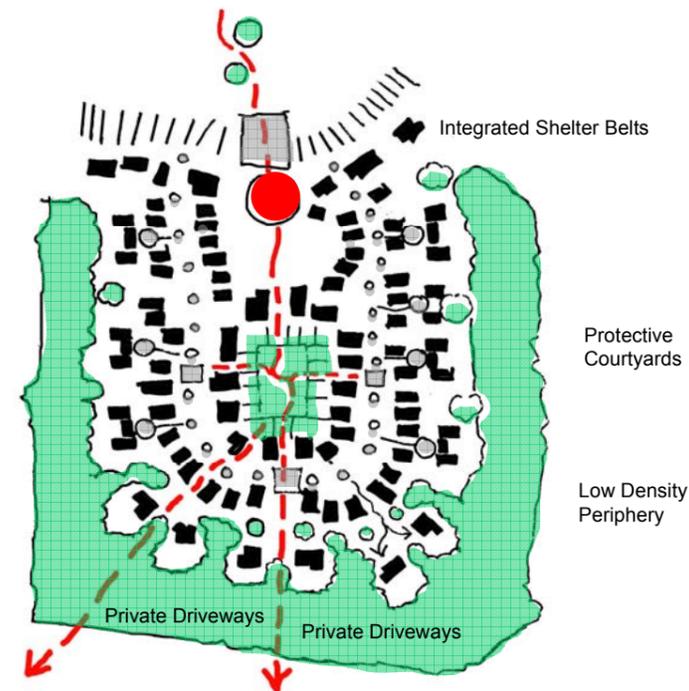


Fig. 27.7 Site Periphery

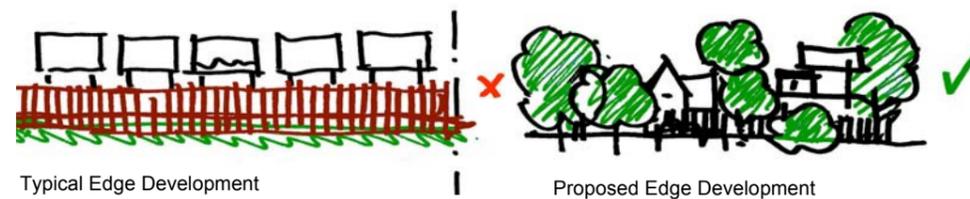


Fig. 27.8 Landscape Fit