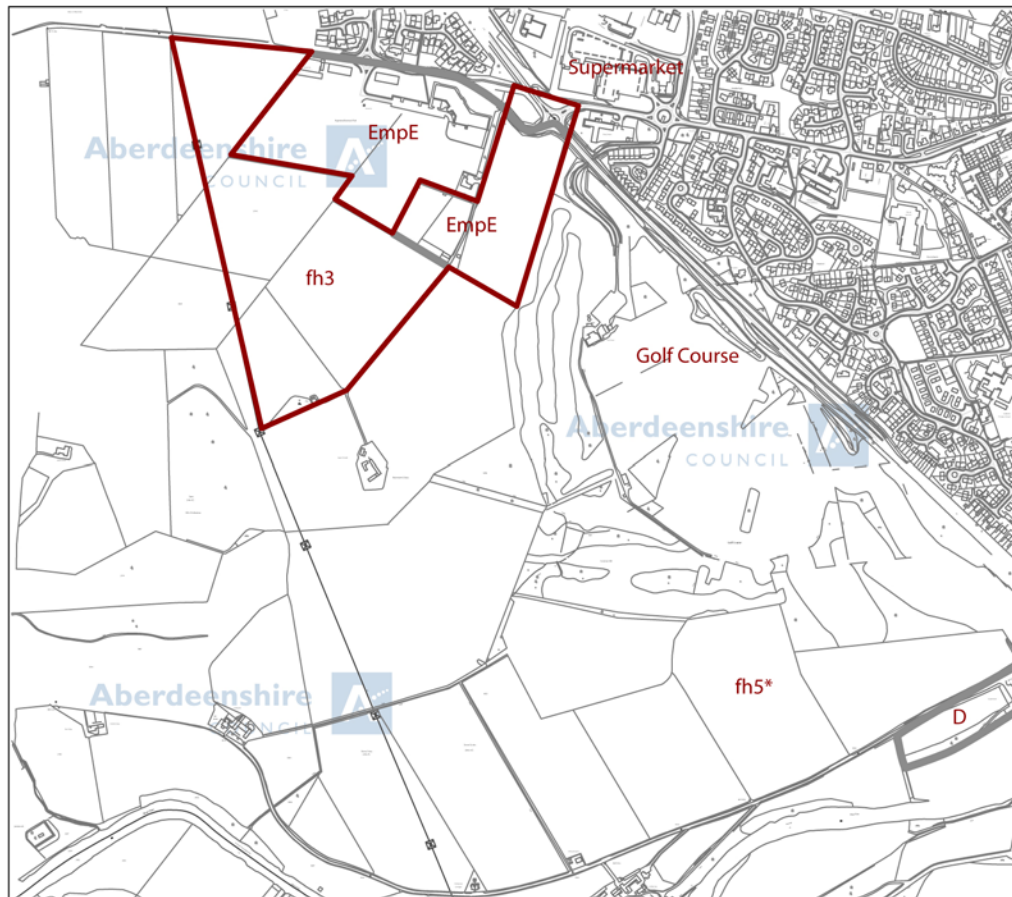


Development Brief for Housing, Employment and Associated Development Blackhall Road, Inverurie

Plan 1: Location Plan



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MARCH 2007

Developers must have regard to the contents of this Brief in preparing their scheme. Where differences do occur, justification by the developer is required

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 *Introduction*

- This Development Brief allows for a mixed use development comprising residential (including affordable housing) and employment uses, in association with public open space and strategic landscaping.
- Part of the area covered by this Brief (Site fh3 – see Plan 1) is identified in the Aberdeenshire Local Plan as suitable for around 250 dwellinghouses. The remainder of the Brief site is allocated as Site EmpE (see Plan 1), suitable for employment uses. This Development Brief aims to guide how the area should best be developed in terms of both employment and residential uses. It is proposed that the South-East part of Site EmpE be swapped with the northern most part of Site fh3, in order to achieve a more satisfactory relationship between residential and employment development and for the benefit of access and the overall layout.

1.2 *Inverurie*

- The Aberdeenshire Local Plan (ALP) describes Inverurie as the main service and employment centre for Garioch. Inverurie has a vibrant town centre with many local facilities and services. A Development Framework has been prepared for the East side of Inverurie regarding proposed development at Uryside, which takes a comprehensive approach in ensuring new development is appropriate to the attractive landscape setting of the settlement as well as ensuring delivery of the appropriate levels of design and infrastructure to integrate the development into the community of Inverurie. This Brief relates to development to the West of Inverurie, where similar to the Uryside Development, there is a barrier to overcome (A96) to ensure that the proposed development becomes an integral part of the existing settlement. Development to the West of Inverurie must address crossing the A96 and must also balance housing with employment development. This Development Brief must ensure that equal consideration is given to the development of Blackhall Road as that at Uryside, as development in both directions of Inverurie will signify real change to the development of the settlement. The supplementary guidance for all development in Inverurie will be consistent and ensure that new development protects and enhances the town as a whole and the attractive landscape setting in which Inverurie is located.

1.3 *Type of development preferred*

- This brief has been drafted to provide a framework for the detailed design process. Its aim is to ensure high quality development which integrates the housing, employment and associated infrastructure into Inverurie, ensuring new development makes a positive contribution to the area.
- ALP itself has a degree of flexibility, which allows developers to respond with their particular development proposals, however there are certain principles and aims set out by the Development Brief which applications will require to comply with. Where differences between the Brief and applications do occur, justification by the developer is required.
- This Brief seeks to ensure that the development of this site is well structured, appropriate to its surroundings and makes a positive contribution to the area.

1.4 *Constraints and limitations*

- The opportunity to develop this site has been identified through the Local Plan process. The Council wishes to encourage the sensitive development of this prominent site in a way that respects and enhances the quality of the environment.
- The site is located at the edge of the existing settlement of Inverurie, but is separated by the A96. Although new development has already occurred to the west side of the A96, careful consideration must be given to the connections through the development and into Inverurie. The new underground link provides the sole pedestrian connection to the existing development to the east of the A96.
- Located as it is, at the edge of the settlement. Public transport infrastructure to within the site is essential. A Green Travel Plan will be necessary to support any application.
- For both the residential and business development it is essential that an integrated cycle route connects throughout not only the west of the A96 but also to Inverurie as a whole.
- Although close to a supermarket and the Highcere Industrial estate the site is located a approximately 2km from the main services of Inverurie, including the railway station, swimming pool, library and town centre. This may encourage future residents to use motorised transport. Appropriate measures to offset this predicted trend will be required.

- The site is prominent (albeit from a limited number of viewpoints), located beside a main transportation corridor, and set on a slope, which currently provides an important landscape setting to Inverurie. As such, the site is important to the setting of Inverurie and also an important connection between Inverurie and the surrounding countryside and proposed Core Paths Network. Development on such a key site, will require to be of a high design quality that reflects the character and sense of place of Inverurie and does not erode the character of the area through reproducing unthoughtful “national” or “regional” designs.
- A landscape capacity study was carried out in 1997, *Urban Design and Landscape Strategy* by Gillespies LLP. The findings of this study are still relevant today and advise of the landscape capacity within Inverurie and the details contained in this report should be adhered to. A planning brief was also prepared for the new housing, which has just been completed to the West of the A96. The brief also covered the site for proposed employment development - Highclere. This Brief and planning applications made for this site, should also take account of the principles outlined within that brief e.g. in relation to the contour height limit of development.
- A public inquiry due to refusal of a planning application was held regarding development of this site. The Reporter’s Report included several key conclusions. The development must take these into consideration:
 - The pylon line forms a defensible boundary, development must therefore occur to the east of the pylons, unless the developer proposes to take this infrastructure underground. Clear structural landscaping will be required to the east of the pylon line in order to provide a landscape context to the development and to integrate the development into the rural landscape and to visually pull the development into the Inverurie settlement by separation of land uses.
 - The varied topography and tree belts that characterise the landscape in this locality provide the basis for developing a landscape structure, and would increase the ability of the site to accommodate development on the higher levels of the site.
 - The location of the open space must be very carefully designed to ensure that this provides a clear extension to the areas of woodland in the surrounding area.
 - The western boundary provides the biggest challenge in terms of integrating the development into the landscape and requires very careful design of the proposed housing and of

the landscape structure, to prevent the proposal from skylining. A cross section is necessary to show how houses and landscaping will fit into the landscape.

- The Reporter commented at that time, that there was capacity within the local schools but that it was clear that a new school would be required should 500+ houses be built within this new development area.

- Two potentially conflicting land uses are located adjacent to each other: careful design and layout will be required to guide the location of each type of development and to establish appropriate buffers and connections between the employment and residential areas.

1.5 Relevant development plan policies and Proposals

- **NEST**
 - Policy 9: Housing Allocations 2006 – 2010
 - Policy 10: Indicative Housing Allocations: 2011 – 2015
 - Policy 11: General Housing Considerations
 - Policy 12: House Building in the Countryside Beyond the Green Belt
 - Policy 13: Developer Contributions
 - Policy 14: Affordable and Special Needs Housing
 - Policy 16: Sport and Recreation Facilities
 - Policy 17: Countryside and Open Space Access
 - Policy 19: Wildlife, Landscape and Land Resources
 - Policy 21: Design
 - Policy 22: Water Management
 - Policy 31: Connecting Communities within the North East
 - Policy 33: Sharing Responsibility for Transport

- **ALP**
 - Policy Hou\2: Future Housing Land 2006 – 2015
 - Policy Hou\4: New Housing in the Countryside including the Aberdeenshire part of the Cairngorms National Park
 - Policy Hou\8: Affordable Housing
 - Policy Hou\13: Public Open Space for Housing
 - Policy Env\4: Biodiversity
 - Policy Env\16: Water Catchment Areas
 - Policy Inf\1: Roads and Accesses
 - Policy Inf\2: Parking, Servicing and Accessibility
 - Policy Inf\3: Access for the Less Mobile
 - Policy Inf\4A: Foul Drainage Standards

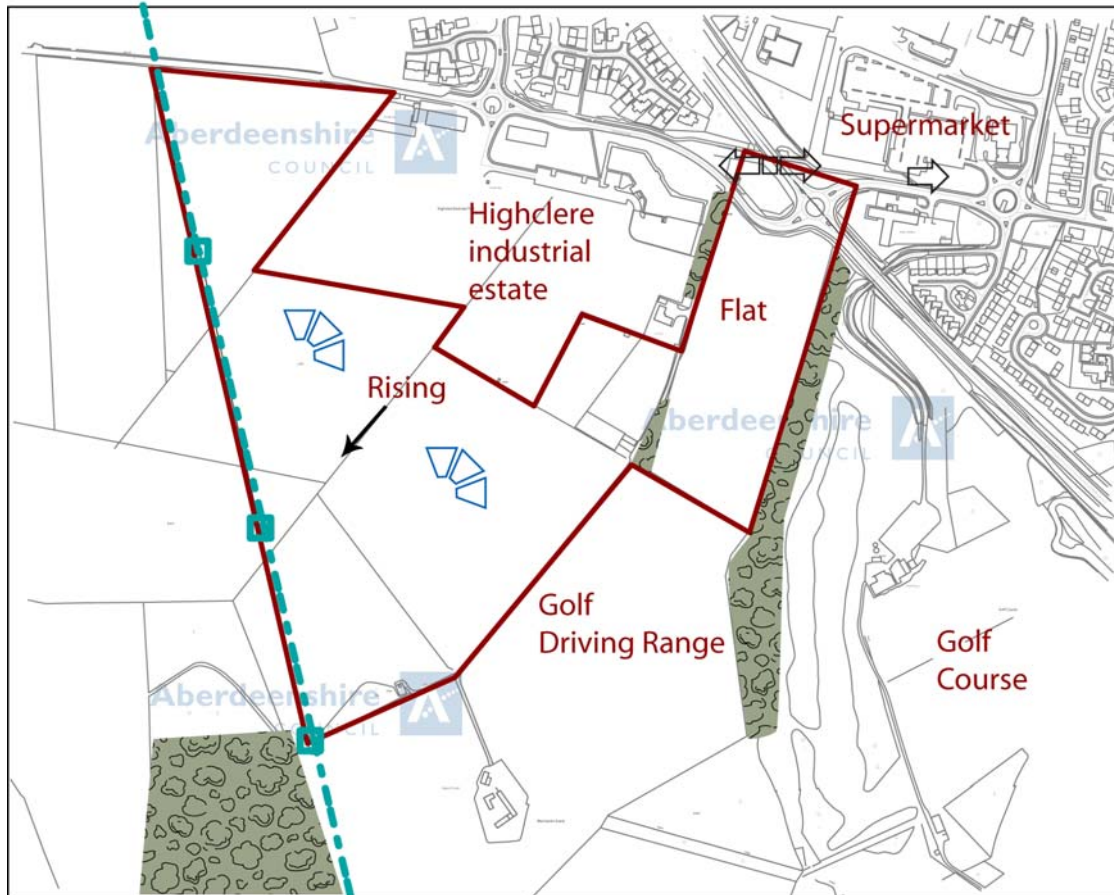
Policy Inf\4B: Surface Water Drainage Systems:
 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)
 Policy Inf\5: Water Supply
 Policy Inf\6B: Waste Management Requirements
 for New Development
 Policy Inf\8: Other Renewable Energy Sources
 Policy Gen\1: Sustainability Principles
 Policy Gen\2: The Layout, Siting and Design of
 New Development
 Policy Gen\3: Developer Contributions
 Policy Gen\5: Landscaping Standards
 Policy Gen\6: Hazardous Developments
 Policy Gen\12: Project Areas
 Appendix 1: The Design of New Development in
 Aberdeenshire
 Appendix 5: Landscape Design Guidance
 Appendix 6: Provision of Public Open Space
 Appendix 7: Affordable Housing Provision
 Appendix 8: Developer Contributions
 ALP Proposals: fh3 future housing land for 250
 dwelling houses, EmpE suitable for appropriate
 employment use(s), fh5* future area of search for
 housing, p11 for strategic landscaping

- **National Planning Guidance**
 - A Policy Statement for Scotland – Designing Places
 - Scottish Planning Policy 1: The Planning System
 - Scottish Planning Policy 3: Housing
 - Scottish Planning Policy 7: Planning and Flooding
 - Scottish Planning Policy 17: Planning for Transport
 - NPPG11 Sport, Recreation and Open Space
 - PAN 44 Fitting New Housing into the Landscape
 - PAN 51 Planning and Environmental Protection
 - PAN 52 Planning for Small Towns
 - PAN 61: Sustainable Urban Drainage
 - PAN 65 Planning and Open Space
 - PAN 67: Housing Quality
 - PAN 72 Housing in the Countryside
 - PAN 75 Planning for Transport
 - PAN 76 New Residential Streets
 - PAN 77 Designing Safer Places
- Aberdeenshire Council Housing Land Release 2006 –2010
 Aberdeenshire Council Micro-renewable Energy Developments







- **Circulars** 12/1996: Planning Agreements

2.0 Site Analysis

Plan 2: Analysis of Site



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	Site boundary		Pedestrian underpass
	Pylon line		Town centre direction
	Existing trees		Views

- 2.1 The following is not an exhaustive site description, but a list of the key issues that lead to the site requirements in the next section.

Location

- The site is located on the western outskirts of Inverurie on existing agricultural land. It is approximately 800 metres to the west of the town centre. Adjoining land uses include retail and residential to the north, with agriculture being predominant to the south and west. Inverurie Golf Course is found to the south east of the site.
- The development area enjoys fine views to the north east across Inverurie and the floodplain of the River Ury. Views are more

limited to the west, due to the nature of the topography, however, Bennachie can be seen in this direction.

- The site is formed on the lower slopes of the Hill of Ardtannes, which rises to the south of the allocated land. The highest point, on the southern boundary of the site, is 130 M AOD, and the lowest point, on the north east corner is at a height of 90 M AOD.

Climatic considerations

- The north east sections of the site are relatively flat in character, with the land rising more steeply to the south western corner.
- The main direction of wind-chill will be from the west, due to the prevailing wind direction and the lack of natural shelter across the site. The mature tree planting on the eastern boundary of the site, adjoining the golf course will provide a degree of shelter.

Flooding/Potential for Flooding

- There is no known history of flooding on the site. There is an open watercourse on site, and this takes the form of a ditch, containing a slow flowing burn. A covered field drain runs along the northern boundary of the site, to the west of the electricity sub-station.

Ecological/ Bio-diversity

- There are belts of mature trees, one which runs along the eastern boundary of the site, adjacent to the Golf Course and another along the boundary with existing employment development.
- This site is located adjacent to a natural gateway from Inverurie to the west Garioch countryside. There are footpath networks existing in the area. Paths through the site are proposed to fit into the proposed Core Paths Network.
- Badgers are known to be present to the north of the development site. They may be resident or foraging in this area. A badger survey will be necessary to identify required mitigation measures.
- Bats may use any large, mature trees as roost sites. If any large trees are to be felled on site a bat survey will be required to identify if any roosts are present.

Urban Context

- Development in Inverurie has taken place mainly to the east of the A96. New development has more recently occurred to the west of the A96 in a suburban style. Adjacent development

comprises primarily of detached houses, although there are some semi-detached dwellinghouses in the area. The existing houses are mainly single or two storey dwellinghouses. Although there are no Listed Buildings in the nearby area, there are several more traditional dwellinghouses and vernacular buildings. The vernacular buildings are typically 1 storey or 1 ½ storey buildings, granite and slate materials are observed, with traditional style windows having a vertical emphasis and roof pitches of approx 42°.

- On the east side of the A96 is a more modern and innovative development, located beside a modern police station building. These developments have looked at incorporating innovative design with traditional building materials such as timber.
- Like many other developments on the fringes of our Aberdeenshire towns and villages, suburban developments have taken place in Inverurie with little appreciation both of their landscape setting and the character of the existing settlement.
- The employment site is partially developed. A furniture store has been built and is operating, an industrial bakery with ancillary bakery and grocery outlet has been approved and permission has been given for a vehicle sales outlet. There is a variation in the size of the proposed developments and the majority are of a greater size than the nearby residential properties.
- Strategic planting is proposed around the perimeter of the existing employment site.

Access

- The site is served by local and regional bus services. The Aberdeen to Inverness Express 10 service travels along the A96 Trunk Road, which is adjacent to the site. This provides an hourly bus service throughout the week.
- The local town service is available from Burghmuir Circle, which is 200m to the north east of the site. This provides an hourly service connecting the site with other parts of the Town.
- No official rights of way or wayleaves are present on the site, however pedestrian access on existing paths across the site to the west Garioch countryside may be exercised by some who wish to access the surrounding countryside and connect into more formal walks. These paths are proposed to be included in the proposed Core Paths Network
- The site is close to the Morrisons supermarket, which is located directly opposite the site on the east side of the A96. However,

the majority of the local facilities such as the schools, the railway station, town hall, medical centre and shopping are located within or adjacent to Inverurie Town Centre. These are assessed as being within 1.5km and 2.5 km from the access to the site, which is equivalent to 15-30 minutes in walking time. Housing would be within the walking distance prescribed in the Education Acts, so school transport would not be provided by the Council.

- Pedestrian access across the A96 currently occurs through a lit underpass.
- The potential future development to the south requires that the design will need to allow for connections accordingly.
- There are no adopted roads within the site.
- The Scottish Executive, in conjunction with the Council's Transport and Infrastructure Service, are currently considering the use of a five-arm roundabout as a solution to vehicular access into this area. The Scottish Executive will have to consent to the access arrangement prior to any planning permission being granted.

Utilities

- Scottish Water (SW) advises that there are a number of major infrastructure issues within Inverurie, one which relates to the capacity/property flooding problems with the High Street sewer. Due to the level of proposed development in Inverurie there are also water supply issues. SW are presently seeking to identify a strategic resolution to the supply problem. An appropriate solution requires to be resolved with SW prior to the development of the site.
- Broadband is available in the area, therefore properties will be able to benefit from connection to broadband.
- A Drainage Impact Assessment will be required to support the drainage proposals for the site and Aberdeenshire Council's Flood Prevention and Coastal Protection Service and Scottish Natural Heritage will be consulted on the proposal.
- Surface water should be dealt with by means of a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS), in accordance with good practice. Any SUDS system for residential development will be designed in accordance with "Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems – Design Manual for Scotland and Northern Ireland" published by CIRIA, 2000 and PAN61. These require a single level of treatment prior to discharge to a receiving watercourse or existing network. This will require to be designed to the satisfaction of SEPA and SW and will minimise the impact on

the water quality and quantity of the receiving watercourse. Adoption of the SUDS measures will be required by SW or by Aberdeenshire Council, in which case a capitalised maintenance charge will be required.

Hazards

- A major pylon line runs along the western boundary of the site. This is a 275kV transmission circuit, which connects Peterhead with Kintore.
- A full site investigation has been carried out and this has confirmed that no contamination exists.
- The presence of the golf course poses a potential hazard that needs to be taken into account in the distribution of land uses and the detailed design at the north west of the site.

Archaeology

- Crop marks representing features of prehistoric date have been recorded to the north and to the southeast of the proposed development area, while a number of prehistoric features have been recorded during development around Highfield, again to the north.

Other Considerations

- The site is presently under the ownership of two owners and has been used for agricultural purposes for many years.
- A planning application has been submitted by Cala Homes for residential and employment development on the site.

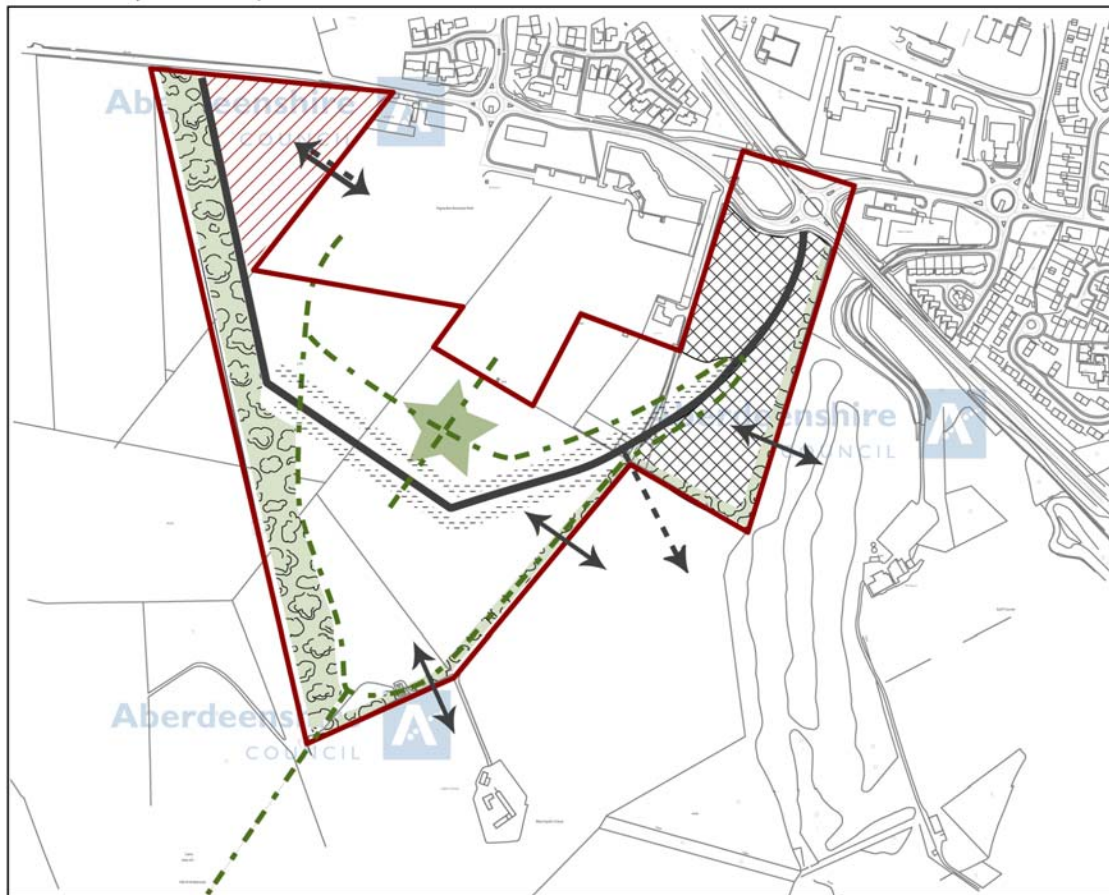
2.2 Conclusions

- Development of this site of importance to the setting of Inverurie provides an opportunity to enhance the approach into the settlement. A high standard of design is expected. Care should be taken to ensure that development fits within the landscape structure.
- The existing pylons should provide a clear and defensible boundary to the settlement in this westerly direction.
- A careful approach will have to be taken in the design of development to prevent skylining.
- Due to the sensitive location of the site an extensive level of strategic landscaping within as well as on the perimeter of the site, will be required to ensure that the proposed development is properly integrated into Inverurie.













- Appropriate connections will be required both to provide access to services and facilities in Inverurie, but also to ensure that development on the site provides access for the residents to the surrounding area including to possible future development and into the west Garioch countryside.
- Careful design will also be required to successfully integrate the two land uses to prevent noise or nuisance to residents of the proposed residential area and to prevent limitations to businesses within the employment site as well as to the adjoining golf club.

3.0 Site Requirements

Plan 3: Key Site Requirements



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	Site boundary		Residential use
	Pedestrian & possible vehicular access		Employment use
	Distributor road		Gateway development
	Possible future distribution road		Central area of open space
	Footpath network		Public frontage
	Possible future pedestrian access		Strategic landscaping

3.1 **General Approach**

- Development of the site's layout should reflect the approach set by the 5 indicators listed in "Index 21". Index 21 is a method of assessment that essentially does two things: it identifies a set of key issues that affect the "environment-friendliness" of housing layouts; and integrates them in a framework that gives each element its proper status. It is based on the assessment of five indicators: climate, energy, resources, biodiversity and social aspects. Crucially, it has developed as a process by which the quality of layouts can be assessed rather than as a prescriptive

guide to good and bad ones. However, this development brief also identifies some aspects from Index 21 that will be important for this particular site. Further information can be obtained from Lynne Reid, the Index 21 Project Manager at the Scott Sutherland School, Garthdee Road, Aberdeen, or by visiting www.index21.org.uk

3.2 *Layout*

- Solar considerations. The majority of the site is north-east facing, therefore the potential of maximising on solar radiation is limited. Throughout the development, the design must carefully reflect this solar restricted site. Design of all buildings should maximise on solar gain and prevent any overshadowing of adjacent housing through careful consideration of the overall layout.
- Wind considerations. The presence or absence of wind may have a greater impact than solar gain in the heating of buildings, particularly during colder months. The use of strategic planting, embankments and lowering buildings into the site is an effective method of reducing the impact of wind blowing across the site, therefore reducing the amount of heat loss. The developer will be required to demonstrate how this has been taken into account in the design statement which must accompany any planning application for the site.
- Energy: Houses should meet a high energy efficiency standard and a substantial amount of everyday energy use should be derived from microrenewables. The Scottish Ministers have set a target of generating 40% of Scotland's electricity from renewable sources by 2020 (SPP6: Consultation Draft) and those reductions in energy use are not unrealistic. A statement on renewable energy technologies considered must be submitted with the proposals and justifiable reasons given for any rejected. More than one technology should be considered. It may be that a particular technology is suitable for part only of the site. A series of flow-charts is attached to aid this consideration (Annexe 1). The advice of 'SCARF' may also be useful in this respect and any available grants can be discussed with them. However, the methods proposed will be expected to include insulation appropriate to a zero energy house and some form of district heating. The investigation must take account of the fact that suitability of different renewable energy technologies may vary across the site, and more than one form of renewable energy provision may be appropriate. It is essential that a particular technology should not be rejected because some of the dwellings may not be suitable for its adoption. On the contrary, any part of the site, which is suitable for a particular technology, should be entered into the scheme in question.

- Resource efficiency. Scottish Planning Policy 3: Housing highlights that the efficient use of land is an important planning aim. High density development can be achieved through good design without overcrowding, congestion or loss of residential amenity. This is supported through NEST Policy 11: General Housing Considerations which outlines that the Local Plans must ensure that housing developments make a positive contribution to sustaining the community in which they are located through the use of appropriate densities. Due to the topography of the area the higher parts of the site will not be able to contain as high densities as the lower parts of the site. It is clear that a lower density of housing, built partially into the landscaping structure on the higher parts of the site, will reduce the prominence of the development in the areas which will be viewed from the A96 and Inverurie. On the lower parts of the site, higher densities will be expected in order to achieve the overall 250 house indicative allocation for the housing development area.
- Existing drystone dykes are located on the site, which will provide an attractive boundary and feature within the site and should largely be retained. The character of the area should therefore build upon the existing drystone dykes and should provide additional stone dykes on the main routes through the development.
- The use of energy efficient, low maintenance and sustainable materials (e.g. wood) will be encouraged whenever practicable. The developer will be required to demonstrate the energy efficiency that will be incorporated into the proposed development.
- As part of the development, properly and sympathetically designed open space and strategic landscaping will be required. This will provide further opportunities for an increased variety of flora and fauna, which will enhance the site once developed. The planting of species in scale with the development is an important consideration and generally plant species should be native. A protected area of strategic landscaping shall be established as a buffer between the western boundary of the proposed development site and the pylon line corridor. The buffer should vary in width and feature woodland planting not less than 15 metres wide and fully take into account the line operator's guidance for establishing woodland adjacent or close to pylon line corridors. Proposals should provide a continuous and unbroken buffer of strategic planting between the pylon line and built development. The strategic landscaping should widen out towards the top of Hill of Ardtannes with no built development located at higher than the 125m contour. Buffer planting should also widen out towards Blackhall Road and should tie in with the open space allocation at the north side of Blackhall Road. Avenues should be created along the main distributor roads, which should become

green corridors, which tie in positively to the green space network. Further advice for landscape design guidance is provided in Appendix 5 of ALP.

- The planting of tall fast growing trees such as Birch must be kept 20 metres from the pylons. However smaller slower growing trees such as Rowan and Holly can be strategically located nearer the pylons to soften the edges of the strategic planting next to the pylon.
- Regrading will be required across the site. Good earthworks design will be required to help create an attractive environment at Blackhall Road and form the basis of landscape design. Where required, the more industrial buildings may be lowered in the landscape and bunds/mounds used for screening purposes, or to create added interest for the setting of on-site features. In order to support any future application on the site, the developer will be required to submit details regarding the existing levels, design levels and cut and fill proposals primarily in plan format with contours. Developers will be required to use the opportunity of earthworks to create bunding and mounding to assist the screening effect of structure planting located around the development. All mounding in landscaped areas should be designed to appear as natural as possible and not have a uniform engineered appearance.
- Open space should be developed in relation to Policy Hou\13 and Appendix 6 of ALP. The open space network should also be formulated in relation to the Scottish Executive document “Minimum Standards for Open Space” and principles outlined in draft SPP11, which includes guidance on open space allocations for commercial development and a number of other land use classes. Generally a strong open space network needs to be created from the outset of the development, and should positively tie into related structures such as SUDS schemes.
- A ‘sense of place’, could be produced, by utilising the current position of the site within Inverurie. As an important gateway site, the area of Blackhall Road adjacent to the western boundary of the site, is a location for a gateway feature to Inverurie. This feature should take the form of landscape design, public art and bespoke signage, which should reflect the settlement of Inverurie. Such features should also tie in positively with the overall development of the site, through a percentage for art requirements.
- The layout of the development could also create a sense of place by reflecting the best of vernacular layout patterns in the Garioch Area of Aberdeenshire and should refrain from a continuation of standard housing developments, which, in the past have resulted

in the erosion of many of the Aberdeenshire towns. All new developments are expected to comply with Gen\2 The Layout, Siting and Design of New Development and Appendix 1 The Design of New Development in Aberdeenshire, as contained in the Aberdeenshire Local Plan. Additionally new developments should also take into account all new guidance published by the Scottish Executive, which relates to residential streets, housing, design, as well as designing for security and safer more inclusive environments.

- A design statement will be required to accompany the development which should clearly demonstrate how the development has taken account of the approved development brief and should explain how the specific design has been created for this development. The statements should demonstrate how the overall design reflects the best of the nearby traditional and innovative designs in the Garioch Area. Details regarding the proposals relating to the % for art should be discussed in the submitted statement.
- The layout will have considered the requirements for recycling, through provision of adequate bin storage facilities both for everyday storage but also for collection. Appropriate recycling facilities should be provided in an easily accessible and central location to allow both employees of the employment developments and residents to use the facilities. This lends itself to the southernmost area of the employment site.

3.4 *Distribution of Land Uses*

- Part of the area covered by this Brief (Site fh3) is identified in the Aberdeenshire Local Plan as suitable for around 250 dwellinghouses. The remainder of the Brief site is allocated as Site EmpE-, suitable for employment uses. This Development Brief aims to guide how the area should best be developed in terms of both employment and residential uses. It is proposed that the South-East part of Site EmpE be swapped with the northern most part of Site fh3, in order to achieve a more satisfactory relationship between residential and employment development and for the benefit of access and the overall layout.
- The site, at the part nearest to the A96 entrance, should be well-landscaped and high-quality in order to ensure this gateway is maximised in terms of layout and design. The ultimate form of development of this area will be dependant upon the outcome of the access requirements from a re-designed roundabout at the A96 as well as the need to provide for connection to a possible, future mixed-use development to the south. In addition to access roads, the gateway development could include residential, business/commercial, open space and SUDS. This gateway boundary in the brief is made on a precautionary principle basis,

protecting the above interests, and to ensure high quality development at this main entrance to the site. The lower parts of the site are more capable of achieving a higher density of development and due to their flatter nature lending themselves to residential development. In contrast, the north-west corner is higher and steeper and larger employment buildings could be cut into the site more effectively than numerous dwellings which would be required within the same footprint.

- Housing: There should be a clear public frontage overlooking the main distributor roads and public space. This does not have to be a solid frontage, but indicates a requirement that the orientation of the buildings should be in the direction of the public area. Houses may be accessed through a secondary road, or may be accessed from the rear or development may take the form of courtyard developments, with collective parking areas. This will ensure that a sense of security and self-policing will be integrated through the design and will also ensure that there is a real sense of identity, rather than a view of rear fences, which is commonplace in modern developments.
- The exact capacity of the site can only be established through detailed design having regard to plot sizes and open space standards required in the Local Plan and the required housing mix. Housing sites should be developed in a way that maximises their potential and at a density that is appropriate to individual locations and sites. The higher density areas will be located on the flatter parts of the site, with development on the higher parts of the site at a lower density and well integrated into the strategic landscaping in order to provide an appropriate landscape context for the development.
- The 250 dwelling capacity stated in the Local Plan should be considered indicative rather than prescriptive. This is supported by SPP3 and NEST, which encourages sustainable development through maximising the use of land. NEST Policy 11: General Housing Considerations also outlines that new housing developments should offer a choice of residential environments and house types. It further states that every effort must be made to ensure that a wide range of market sectors is catered for in all locations.
- At the higher levels across the site, the heights of properties may require to be limited to single storey or 1 ½ storey, except where the developer is capable of demonstrating through the production of cross sections that other heights may be accommodated in these areas, due to the strategic landscaping. No buildings will be permitted beyond the 125m contour line.

- Views into and out of the site must be carefully considered. The design statement, which must accompany any future planning application, must ensure that the proposed design and setting takes into account the importance of views both into and from the site. Appropriate landscaping must be incorporated to enhance or to protect views.
- The employment site should provide a frontage on to Blackhall Road. The design of the buildings will be addressed in the design section of this report. Car parking should carefully be located to the side or rear of the buildings and appropriate landscaping, to ensure that these less attractive land uses are kept well screened. A minimum 12 m landscape buffer will be required between the employment and residential site. Along Blackhall Road appropriate landscaping will also be required. Class 5 uses should be resisted except where the developer can clearly demonstrate that the proposed development will not have a negative impact in terms of residential amenity.
- Open Space. The provision of open space is key to the generation of a sense of place in this location. It is also vital that proposed open space has a clear purpose and function and is not simply an area left over or inconvenient for any other use. A central area of open space should be incorporated which appropriately links between the residential and employment sites as well as allowing linkage to possible future development, offering a useful area of open space that can be used by residents and workers alike. The open space should be self-supervised through the orientation of adjacent housing, which should front on to the open space. Also, it provides an opportunity to create a real sense of place, with surrounding houses addressing the public space. A focal building should be located adjoining the area of open space to landmark this area, this should be an individually designed building. The proposed open space should integrate with the required paths network through the site, to provide green fingers through the development. Boulevard planting should be proposed along the main walking/cycling routes, which should be fully incorporated throughout the development.
- Other smaller areas of open space and, where appropriate, play facilities, shall be provided in accordance with Appendix 6. Play area(s) should be overlooked and located within areas that are well lit and set back from any hazards such as busy roads. Play area(s) should be easily accessible to all residential properties in the proposed development.
- The key land uses expected as part of this development are housing, employment, open space and strategic landscaping. The correct mix and layout of these uses will significantly determine the success or otherwise of this development. There may be an

opportunity to provide a central local node, which may provide a small local convenience shop, where it is clearly demonstrated that the size of facility will not be detrimental to existing shopping facilities in Inverurie and where the shop is required to service the mixed-use development of the area.

- Private Garden Space. Garden dimensions will be determined by considerations, including the density of development, design objectives and the need to provide a complementary range of house types. Flexibility in the design of dwellinghouse types, such as terraced, semi-detached, mixed storey heights and flatted developments, as well as a good mixture of floor areas, will ensure that a sustainable density of dwellings per hectare is achieved. Development standards are set out within Appendix 1 of ALP and also indicate privacy distances and plot ratios which must be adhered to.
- Appropriate Housing Mix. The residential development must provide for every market sector. Within Inverurie there is a clear demand for a wide range of housing types, the following mix is therefore seen to provide a guide to an appropriate range for housing development on the site, although this may vary in the context of changing market circumstances:

- 2 to 3 Apartment Homes	15%
- 4 Apartment Homes	10%
- 5 Apartment Homes	16%
- 6 Apartment Homes	40%
- 7 Apartment Homes	13%
- 8 Apartment Homes	6%

This mixture should be achieved through a clear mix in house types and properties available, which should range from detached, semi-detached, terraced and flatted; bungalows (including suitability for the aged), 1, 1½ or 2 storey properties (or higher, if it can be demonstrated as acceptable within proposed landscaping).

- Affordable housing is required and the details of the provision should be agreed with the Council's Planning Gain Co-ordinator at an early stage. Affordable housing is in high demand within the Inverurie area and a large contribution is expected from this site. As a minimum the Council would expect a 25% level and a higher level, up to the 35% stated in ALP, could be justified. The affordable housing will be required on site and should not be developed as separate large pockets within the development, but rather should be integrated throughout the development. Locations of the proposed affordable housing should be indicated within the planning applications for the development of this site.

3.5 Access

- **Transport Assessment.** A full Transport Assessment will be required for the development. The Transportation and Infrastructure Service have advised that a new five arm roundabout is likely to be the preferred solution for the junction of Blackhall Road with the A96. The infrastructure proposed must clearly meet the requirements of Aberdeenshire Council and the Scottish Executive before determination of any application will occur.
- A distributor road with the potential for longer term extension to the south-east (Site fh5* and the golf course – see Plan 1) will be required through the development as indicated on the proposals map. From this separate accesses will be required to service each residential and employment area. Two points of access will be required off Blackhall Road.
- Nether Blackhall will require widening to 7.30 metres along the frontage of the site.
- Within the site there should be an incorporation of a ‘home zone’ style approach.
- All roads must be designed to the specification contained in the current version of “Standards for Road Construction and Adoption”. A road bond will be required to allow Aberdeenshire Council to adopt the roads.
- It is important that any development on this site creates a safe addition to the town, while being accessible by all forms of transport, in particular pedestrians and cyclists. The existing cycle/footpath network must therefore be extended into the development area.
- Footpath creation into and through the site is a key requirement to make the site as accessible as possible and to encourage the use of modes of transport other than the private car. The landscape structure of the site creates an opportunity for footpaths and cycle ways to be developed in the area.
- Footpath links should be provided to create permeability through the site and with the wider area including the community woodland. Access links for pedestrians should link the network of public spaces and play areas created throughout the scheme. These should include both formally adopted routes and informal walks through the site. Additionally, careful consideration should be given to how the links through the site will connect into existing routes from existing developments adjacent to the site. Access into the countryside through the proposed Core Paths initiative should be integrated into the design of the infrastructure.

- All footpaths and cycle ways should be designed to have a predominantly open character for security reasons and shrubs, other than ground cover should not be planted immediately adjacent to footpaths and cycle ways. Paths should be well lit at night, especially those routes which link the housing areas with the settlement centre. Key routes should be suitably landscaped to provide attractive routes, which will encourage walking and cycling. Cycling facilities should be clearly separate from the proposed road networks and should ensure connection throughout the development and along the proposed distributor road and Blackhall Road.
- All emergency and service accesses will be accommodated by the internal access roads to be constructed in accordance with the requirements of the Fire Officer and the Roads Authority.
- Every effort should be made to make the site as accessible as possible to a wide range of potential users, including those with sensory or physical disabilities.
- The developer will be required to enter into discussion with the public transport operators to ensure the extension of services into the development. Bus halts serving the employment and residential areas should be conveniently located, and must be approved by Aberdeenshire Council Transportation and Infrastructure Service.
- Car parking must accord with the Council's adopted 'Car Parking Standards for Development Control'.

3.6 Services and Utilities

- Education facilities. There are currently issues regarding primary school capacity within Inverurie. It is clear that the development of a further 250 houses will impact on the current provision of primary education facilities. Although the development in itself may not generate the requirement for a new school, combined with other housebuilding in the Inverurie school catchment areas and possible future development to the south it is clear that a new school will be required in the near future and must be addressed in any new local plan. Developer contributions will be required in order to provide a future primary school. Due to the size of the proposed development at Uryside, developers are being required to provide land and fully fund a new primary school generated by the Uryside development. Developers of the Blackhall Road residential development may be required to provide either a new school within the proposed residential area, or alternatively contribute commensurate to the requirements generated by this development. Additionally, as approximately 50 secondary places will also be generated by this development, appropriate contributions towards the provision of secondary places are also required.

- **Medical Facilities.** NHS Grampian have advised that the Inverurie Medical Group and primary care services are currently located on a land locked site within Inverurie. There is an acknowledged need for a new site due to overcrowding. New premises are proposed for 2009. Due to patterns of growth in Inverurie NHS Grampian advise that any additional development will add further pressure to already stretched services for the area and would therefore look for a planning gain contribution towards future provision of health care for residents of this proposed development.
- **Other Facilities.** There has been a clear lack of appropriate playing pitches within the Inverurie area. There are new proposals to provide new facilities within the Inverurie Riverside Park. Additionally, community facilities are becoming stretched in Inverurie and each development is putting further pressure on the ability of services to accommodate growth. Planning gain contributions will be sought towards the provision of additional community facilities, commensurate with the proposed development. A new facility is not envisaged on the Brief Site at the time of writing. Should a future local plan allocate residential development in this area it is likely that new community facilities will be required in the area of Blackhall Road, whether freestanding or in association with a new school.
- **Drainage and Water Supply.** There are currently issues with both water supply and foul drainage capacity. These matters must be addressed with Scottish Water, prior to the determination of any planning application. All surface water will be disposed of using SUDS. The use of greywater systems for non human consumption are encouraged in this development.
- **Maintenance.** The creation of public open space within the development may result in those areas requiring adoption by the Landscape Services section of Aberdeenshire Council, and subject to a S75 agreement. Evidence as to the arrangements made for the long term maintenance of any paths, landscaped areas and open space will be required.

3.7 Design

- Every care must be taken to ensure that both the layout and design of the development are of the highest standards and quality materials are to be used throughout. Finishing materials should be in grey and off-whites, ensuring that the proposed designs reflect the character of Inverurie and are not a pastiche of other new housing developments in the area, which do not reflect the locality and erode the character of the area, rather than create or confirm a sense of place

- A detailed Design Statement explaining the design principles of the development and how these have emerged in relation to the site and its wider context will be required. Detailed statements must be included to support any planning application and should incorporate examples of design used to influence the development proposal. It is important that change is planned and managed so that positive aspects are encouraged and good qualities are retained and enhanced. The development of this site should consider high standards of siting and architectural design to reflect the character of layout, built form and materials, which is typical to the vernacular of the Garioch Area. Alternatively, truly innovative design will also be considered. This is crucial to help minimise landscape conflict and allow the development to ‘fit’ with the landscape. The design will ‘fit’ further into the landscape through the provision of appropriate strategic landscaping and boundary treatments, which should be given individual consideration. To prevent views of rear fences the following principle should be adopted – “public facades face public areas, private facades face private areas, this way private gardens will not back on to public spaces, paths or roads, but rather the front of the property (or public face) will face on to the public area. This is an established requirement throughout new development in Aberdeenshire and can be observed in the most recent housing developments. This also relates to the employment development, storage or delivery yards should be carefully located behind the building.
- Building heights. Housing should be designed to and located to fit well within the site, respect the character of the surrounding area and minimise intrusion on neighbouring properties to the east. Up to 2 ½ storeys may be acceptable, where the design statement can demonstrate that such heights can be accommodated without detriment to the outlook and overall appearance of the development. Such development, such as townhouse or flatted development is best located within the lower parts of the site. Towards the higher levels of the site, developers should limit the height of housing to single storey, unless the developer is capable of demonstrating through appropriate cross sections that housing will be appropriately contained within the landscape setting. The height of buildings, within the employment site will have to pay special regard to the location of the building, earth works required and how the building will site in the landscape structure. No building must create skylining.
- Housing and space standards. Housing on the site must meet the current requirements, such as plot ratio, private usable garden space and privacy distances as well as preventing overshadowing to adjoining areas, as set out in ALP, specifically Appendix 1 (The Design of New Development in Aberdeenshire) and Appendix 6 (Provision of Public Open Space).

- Other design details. The design statement will be required to demonstrate how the proposed layout relates to creating an attractive environment, which creates a sense of place and relates to its setting in Aberdeenshire. Details of how the development will fit into the proposed landscape structure will also be required. Clear cross sections of the site will be required to demonstrate the landscape fit.
- Guidance on the design of new developments can be found in ALP, under Policy Gen\2: The Layout, Siting and Design of New Development, and Appendix 1: The Design of New Development in Aberdeenshire. Further guidance on this can be found in PAN 67: Housing Quality and A Planning Policy Statement for Scotland: Designing Places. Of critical importance to this type of development is PAN 76: New Residential Streets, which should be observed in the formation of an appropriate design solution. Consultation with the Council's Development Control service is recommended on this matter, in accordance with up- to-date guidance.

3.8 Other Considerations

- Archaeology. An archaeological evaluation will be required as a condition of any planning permission.
- Circular 12/1996: Planning Agreements states that planning agreements should be related in scale and kind to the proposed development. Developers may, for example, reasonably be expected to pay for or contribute to the cost of infrastructure, which would not have been necessary, but for the development. The effect of such infrastructure investment may be to confer some wider benefit but payments should be consistent with the scale of the proposed development.
- The subject of developer contributions should be discussed with the Council's Planning Gain Co-ordinator at the earliest opportunity. The agreement may contain contributions in cash or kind in line with Policy requirements.

4.0 Further Information

- Developers are encouraged to contact the Planning Service of Aberdeenshire Council at the earliest opportunity to discuss details of any application. Any application will be dealt with primarily by the Garioch Area Development Management Team, based at the following address:

Development Control and Building Standards
Gordon House
Blackhall Road
Inverurie
Aberdeenshire
AB51 3WA

Tel: 01467 620981
Fax: 01467 628469

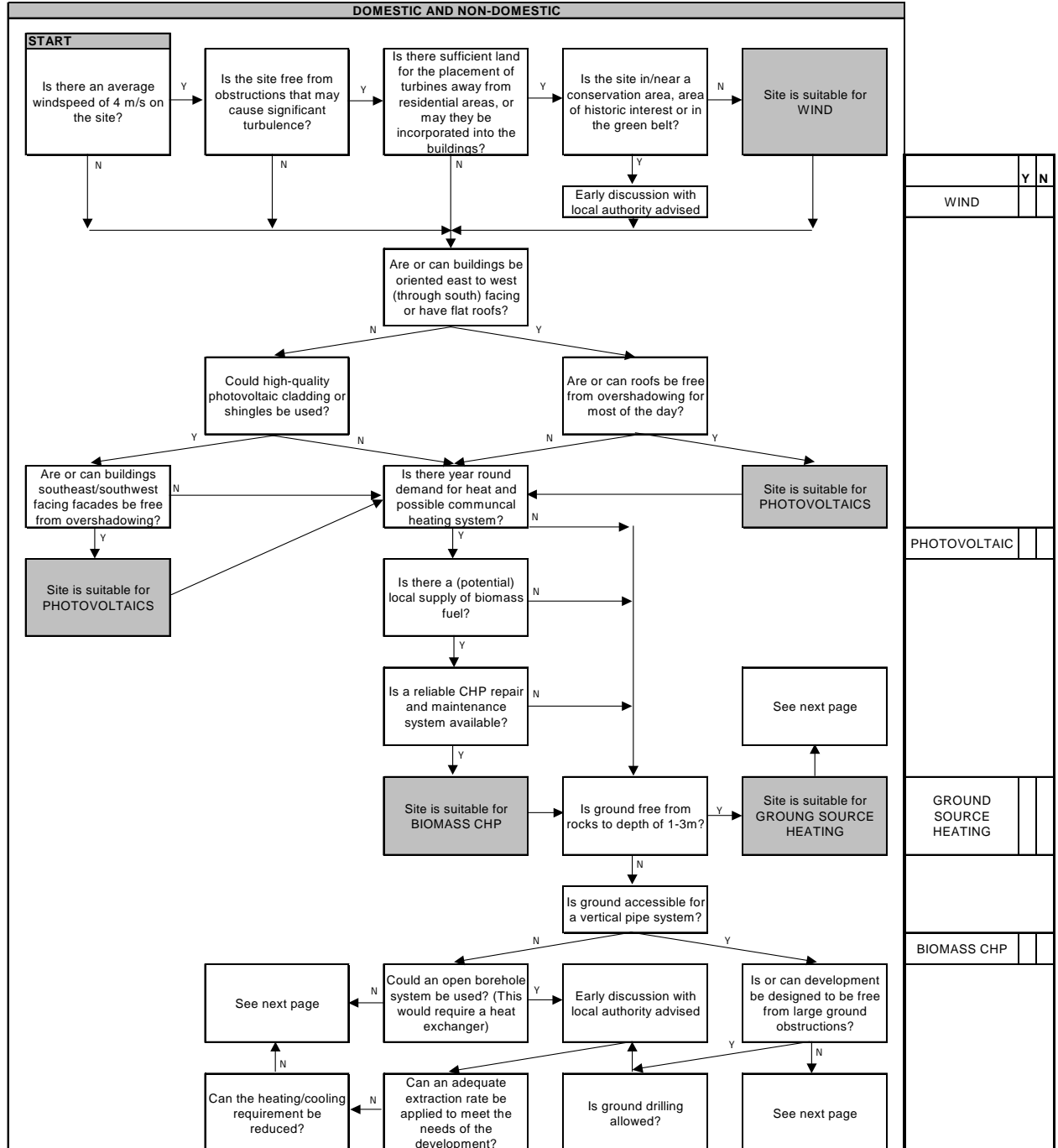
Other useful numbers:

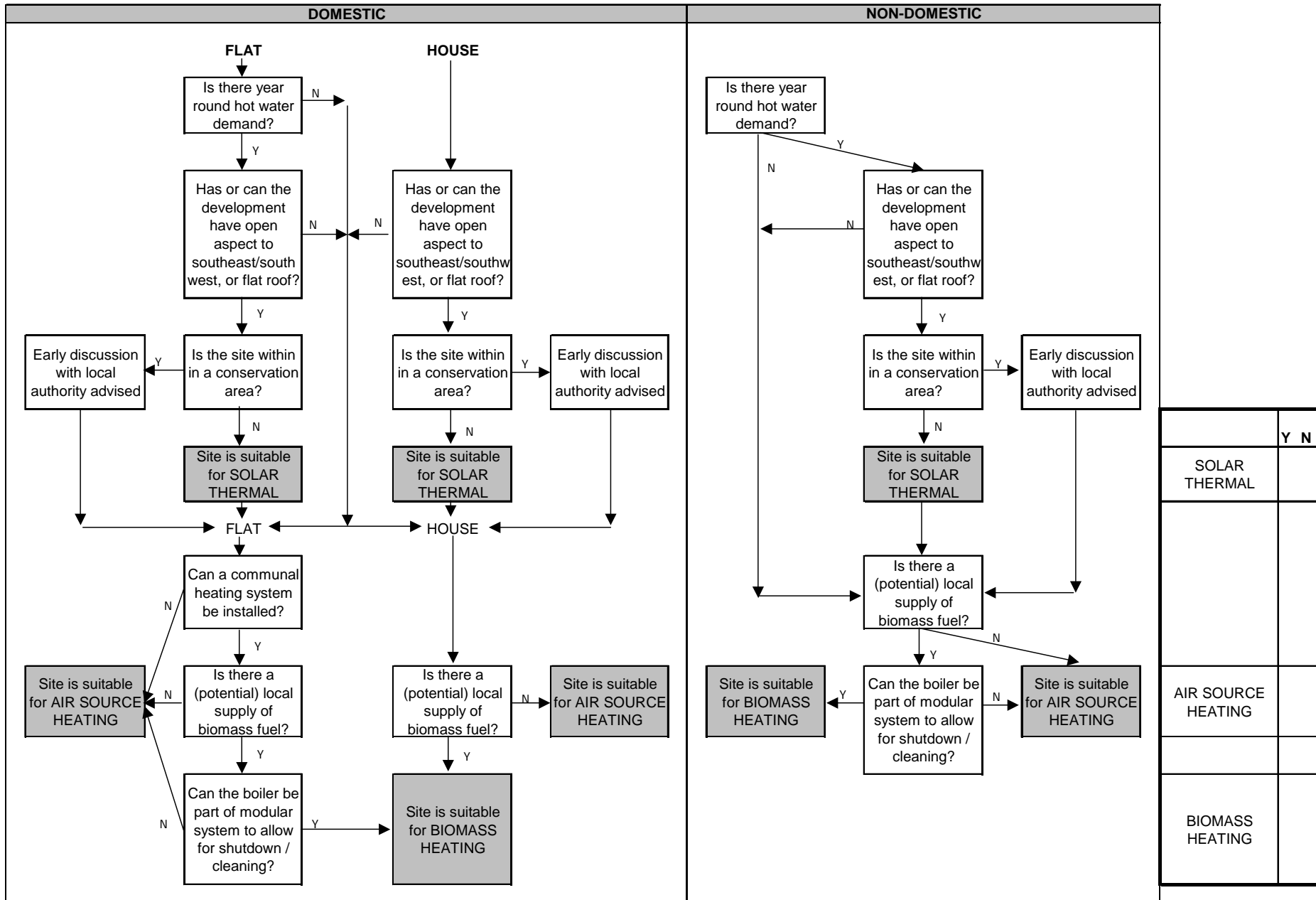
Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Gain Co-ordinator	01330 825518
Transportation and Infrastructure	01467 620981
Scottish Water	0141 355 5574
SEPA	01224 248338

Annexe 1

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The flowchart below has been designed to lead you through various types of renewable energy technologies. By answering these questions, potentially suitable sources of renewable energy will be identified.
2. Start at the top left corner ('START') and answer the questions as 'yes' or 'no' and follow the appropriate arrow.
3. The columns on the right should be used for your reference to highlight technologies that should be examined further.
4. The first page highlights energy sources that are relevant to houses, flats and other developments, such as retail or industrial and should always be completed.
5. The second page is split between domestic and non-domestic i.e. houses/flats and other developments. You may need to consider the charts more than once depending on your proposal (e.g. a mixed-use development of houses, flats and retail will need to consider the charts for each use
6. These energy sources should then be discussed in a statement submitted as part of the proposal outlining which sources are to be incorporated in a development, or why they have been rejected.





COMMITTEE RESPONSE – MARCH 2007

6. DEVELOPMENT BRIEF FOR HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT AT BLACKHALL ROAD, INVERURIE

As previously indicated, Provost Bisset declared an interest, but continued to take a full part in the consideration of this item.

A report by Head of Planning, Policy and Environment was circulated presenting a finalised Development Brief for housing, including affordable housing, employment and associated development at Blackhall Road, Inverurie.

The Committee heard of the amendments to the Brief that had been made as a result of the public consultation. Concerns were raised about having landscaping so close to the pylon line. The Officer indicated that the maps could be altered to allow adequate distance between the landscaping and the pylons. Members indicated their wish to have stronger wording regarding energy use and to see homezones incorporated within the scheme. The Roads Officer indicated that homezones could be incorporated but that roads would also be required on the site to access further development sites. Concerns were raised about the fact that no site had been identified for a school within the area of the development brief, and the need to look at Inverurie as a whole was highlighted.

The Committee **agreed** to the Finalised Development Brief for housing, employment and associated development at Blackhall Road, Inverurie subject to:-

1. The wording of the energy section of the Brief (page 15) being amended to read “A substantial amount of everyday energy use should be derived from microrenewables and houses should meet a high energy efficiency standard. The Scottish Ministers have set a target of generating 40% of Scotland’s electricity from renewable sources by 2020 and these reductions in energy use are not unrealistic. A statement”;
2. The inclusion of the use of greywater systems for non human consumption as part of the SUDS proposals; and
3. the landscaping belt beside the pylon line being amended to allow for the appropriate clearance distance to the pylons.