

PROPOSED ABERDEENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020 RESPONSE FORM

As part of the production of the Local Development Plan, a 'Main Issues Report' was published in January 2019. The responses from these consultations have helped to inform the content of the Proposed Local Development Plan ("the Proposed Plan").

The Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan will direct decision-making on land-use planning issues and planning applications in Aberdeenshire for the 10-year period from 2021 to 2031. The Proposed Plan was agreed by Aberdeenshire Council in March 2020 as the settled view of the Council. However, the Proposed Plan will be subjected to an independent examination and is now open for public comment.

This is your opportunity to tell us if anything should be changed in the Proposed Plan, and why.

When writing a response to the Proposed Plan it is important to specifically state the modification(s) that you would wish to see to the Plan.

This is the only remaining opportunity to comment on the Proposed Plan. The reasons for any requested changes will be analysed and reported to Scottish Ministers. They will then appoint a person known as a Reporter to conduct a public examination of the Proposed Plan, focusing particularly on any unresolved issues and the changes sought.

Ministers expect representations (or responses) to be concise (no more than 2000 words) and accompanied by limited supporting documents. It is important to ensure that all of the information that you wish to be considered is submitted during this consultation period as there is no further opportunity to provide information, unless specifically asked.

Please email comments to ldp@aberdeenshire.gov.uk or send this form to reach us by 31 July 2020*.

We recommend that you keep a copy of your representation for your own records.

**UPDATE 16 June 2020: Consultation period was extended from 17 July 2020 for a further two-week period.*



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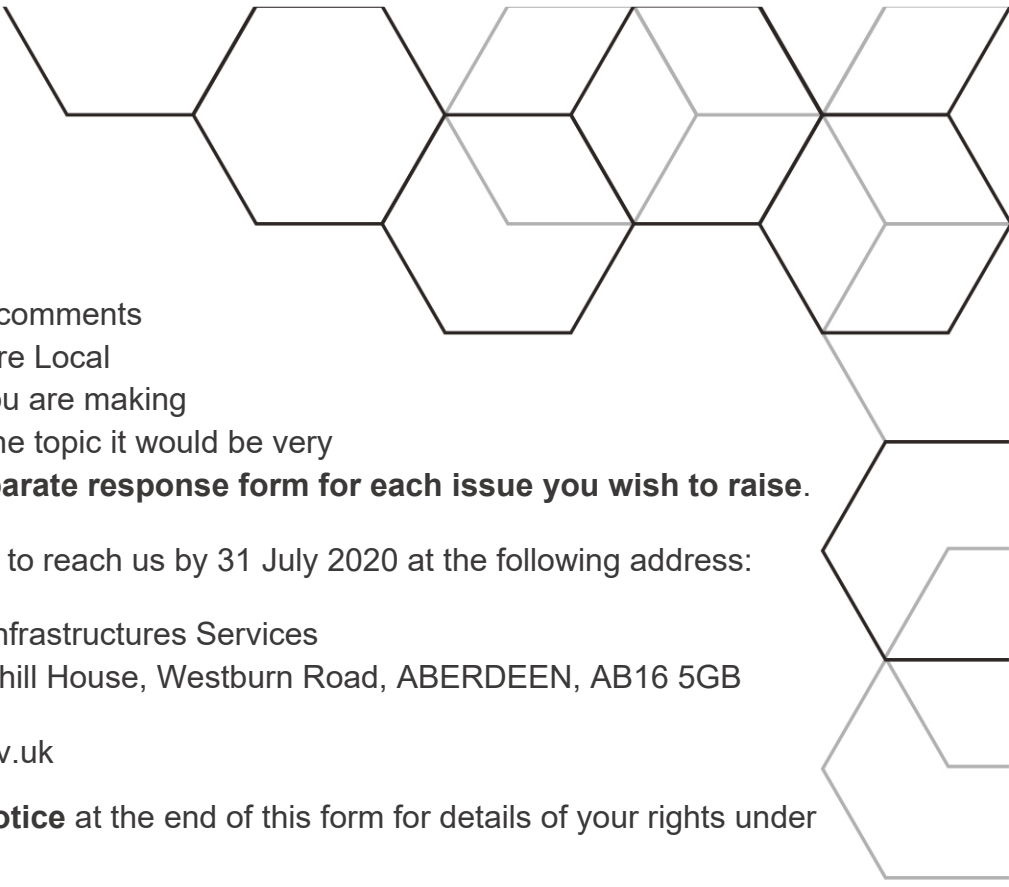
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Please use this form to make comments on the Proposed Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2020. If you are making comments about more than one topic it would be very helpful if you could fill in a **separate response form for each issue you wish to raise**.

Please email or send the form to reach us by 31 July 2020 at the following address:

Post: Planning Policy Team, Infrastructures Services
Aberdeenshire Council, Woodhill House, Westburn Road, ABERDEEN, AB16 5GB

Email: ldp@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Please refer to our **Privacy Notice** at the end of this form for details of your rights under the Data Protection Act.

YOUR DETAILS

Title:	.
First Name:	Gladman
Surname:	Developments Ltd
Date:	30 th July 2020
Postal Address:	██
Postcode:	████████
Telephone Number:	████████████████
Email:	██

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If yes who are you representing?

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Please provide us with your comments below. We will summarise comments and in our analysis will consider every point that is made. Once we have done this we will write back to you with Aberdeenshire Council's views on the submissions made. We will publish your name as the author of the comment, but will not make your address public.

Modification that you wish to see (please make specific reference to the section of the Proposed Plan you wish to see modified if possible, for example Section 9, paragraph E1.1):

Kincardine & Mearns Settlements – Muchalls - The site at Dunnyfell Road, Muchalls (Ref: KN059) should be added to Appendix 6: Housing Land Allocations and relevant table as a housing allocation for 50 units in the Proposed Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan.

Reason for change:

As set out in the response to the Proposed Aberdeenshire Proposed Local Development Plan (PLDP) housing section, the Council has failed to allocate sufficient housing land to meet its housing land requirement (HLR). The PLDP relies on historic housing sites that were considered constrained in the 2019 Housing Land Audit (HLA) moreover, many of the sites in the existing land supply are sites that have been continually delayed in development while still contributing to the effective housing land supply. As a result, there is an overarching need to allocate a range of new sites that can assist with meeting the HLR in the plan period. This will ensure maintenance of a 5-year supply of effective housing land and, in line with Paragraph 119 of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), by allocating a range of housing sites that will come forward within the plan period.

Land at Dunnyfell Road, Muchalls (Site Ref: KN059) is respectfully suggested to be allocated for 50 homes (including 25% affordable) in the emerging Local Development Plan.

The proposed development has been designed to introduce a balanced and appropriate development that will rationalise and consolidate the existing settlement form and respect both the conservation area and special landscape setting. The development is set within an proposed extended landscape structure of open spaces, trees and tree groups whilst ensuring the coastal setting of the village is retained. The proposal has a clear relationship with the existing residential area and is of a scale that is compatible with the settlement. The site can be positively integrated with the settlement pattern and surrounding area.

The Council provided an overview of the site within the Main Issues Report (MIR) Kincardine and Mearns Settlements document, and more recently published the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) which scores the site. As submitted at the MIR stage, the following documents provide detailed analysis on the issues raised by the Council and demonstrate how the site is suitable and effective as a housing allocation:

- Vision Document prepared by WYG
- Initial Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Appraisal by Indev Consult Ltd (additional Flood Risk Work has been undertaken and can be provided if required)
- Access Appraisal prepared by Modus Transport Solutions

The Muchalls settlement statement, included within the Kincardine and Mearns Settlement document, states there *“has been more modern development within the village adding a range of house types”* (page 715 – Proposed Plan - Kincardine and Mearns Settlement Statement). There has been no housing land allocated in Muchalls in at least the last two adopted Local Development Plans and as it stands, no new development is proposed to be allocated within the emerging plan. In order to increase the range and housing stock and sustain the services in the settlement, the site should be allocated within the emerging plan.

Whilst Muchalls is covered by a Conservation Area, more recent development has been well integrated into the existing village. It is considered that this site can also be delivered in a manner that is compatible and in-keeping with the character and setting of the village.

The Council’s MIR assessment, acknowledges that site *“is well located in relation to the settlement.”* This position was also supported by the Reporter during the previous LDP Examination, stating that *“in landscape terms I consider this site to have some merit and it would relate well to the existing settlement. I see no reason why an appropriately designed development would be detrimental to the overall character of the settlement.”*

The Vision Document also supports these conclusions and demonstrates how the site could be developed in a manner that is appropriate to the settlement.

Development of the proposed site will not only provide the benefit of new local housing but can also offer wider contributions to the settlement. Muchalls falls within the Coastal Special Landscape area which is part of a key attraction in this part of Aberdeenshire. Currently, the core path network runs through the settlement, which then leads to coastal paths, providing access to the coastline. There are, however, some sections of the existing coastal path network that are in poor condition. Much of the path network is under the same landowner control as the Dunnyfell Road site. Essential maintenance and improvements to the coastal path routes could be enabled by and directly linked to the allocation and development of the proposed development site at Dunnyfell Road. Improvements of this manner would be of significant benefit to both existing residents and potential new residents through the improvement of the accessibility to the special landscape area. This benefit will also extend to visitors to the area. As shown in the Vision Document, further pedestrian linkages can be created throughout the settlement, improving the pedestrian network around the conservation village.

Previously, the Council identified potential flood risk and access constraints that would restrict development, however this has been directly addressed in the accompanying Access Appraisal and Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Appraisal documents.

Finally, with regards to delivery, using the effectiveness criteria set out in PAN 2/2010: Affordable Housing and Housing Land Audits, the site meets all requirements and can be delivered in the short-term. The site is free from any ownership and physical constraints, and contamination that would preclude development commencing immediately. In addition, there will be no deficit or public funding required to deliver new homes. The site is within a strong market area and there are no infrastructure constraints that would prevent the site from being developed.

In conclusion, this representation sets out why the site at Dunnyfell Road, Muchalls should be allocated for housing within the Proposed Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. The site has been consulted on comprehensively and represents a clear opportunity to contribute to the housing land requirement in the Aberdeenshire area and housing need within Muchalls. The proposal can bring clear benefits to Muchalls and the surrounding area through careful design. We trust that the above and enclosed is sufficient, however should the Council and/or Reporter have any queries regarding the site, we can provide the relevant information upon request.

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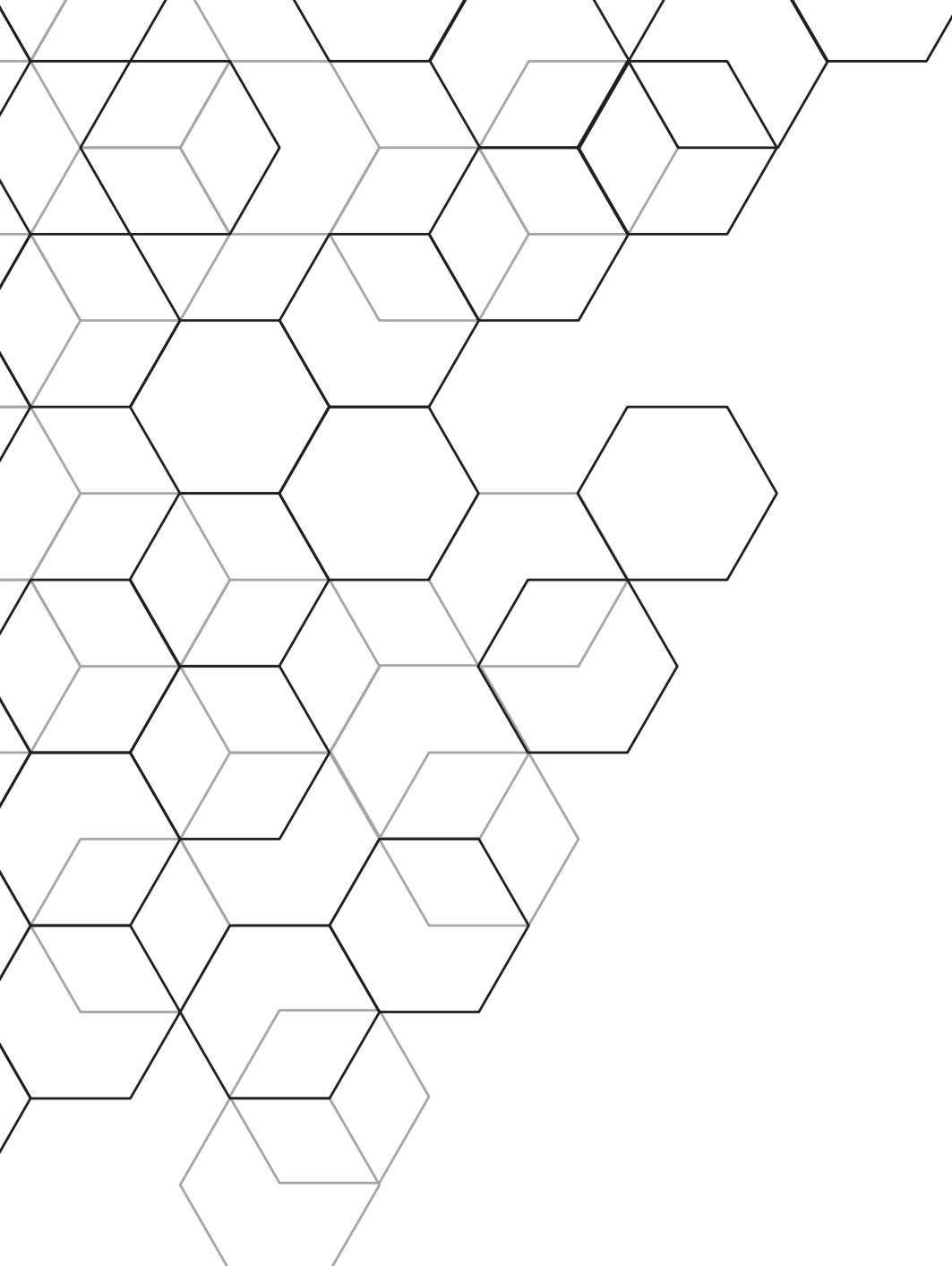
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Muchalls, Aberdeenshire

Drainage Strategy Statement

April 2019



Client:

Gladman Scotland



Report Reference:			
	Name	Signature	Date
Originator:	██████████		04/04/2019
Checked By:	██████████		04/04/2019

Revision Record:			
Issue	Date	Status	By

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1. INTRODUCTION

Appointment

Indev Consult Ltd have been appointed as civil engineering consultants to assess the engineering master planning at a proposed development site at Dunnyfell Road, Muchalls, Aberdeenshire. The report will investigate desktop ground conditions, topography, earthworks, drainage strategy and utilities, to support a representation to the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan – Main Issues Report by Gladman Developments Ltd.

Site Description

The site is located to the west of Muchalls and covers an area of approximately 4 hectares and currently comprises agricultural fields.

The site is bounded by the Dunnyfell Road to the north, residential development to the east, Walker Drive to the south and further agricultural fields to the west as shown in figure 1. An unnamed watercourse enters the site on the western boundary and flows south to a culvert at Walker Drive.



Figure 1 - Location Plan

The topography falls from north to east from a level of 66.5m to 54m AOD with gradients varying from approximately 1:60 to 1:8 across the site. Refer to drawing 19-003-Sk30, in appendix 1, for closer examination of the site topography.

Site Layout

No development layout is available at this time however the design will comprise 2 storey housing with associated roads and open space. The site will provide development roads working to the principles of 'designing streets' guidance along with amenity open space and SUDS areas. Access only being taken from Dunnyfell Road.



Figure 2 – Proposed masterplan

A linear landscape feature will be incorporated along the small watercourse.

2. DRAINAGE

Existing surface water drainage review

Review of current and historical drainage for the site a small unnamed watercourse traversing through the site from north to south. This watercourse is culverted below the A92 to the north and Walker Drive to the south. The largest watercourse in the vicinity of the site is the Pheppie Burn which lies approximately 350m to the north.

Assessment of Scottish Water record plans indicate no adopted surface water sewers within the site. The nearest drainage shown is a surface water network to the south serving a small residential development. Scottish Water record plan extracts are shown in figure 3 and the full extents can be examined in appendix 2.

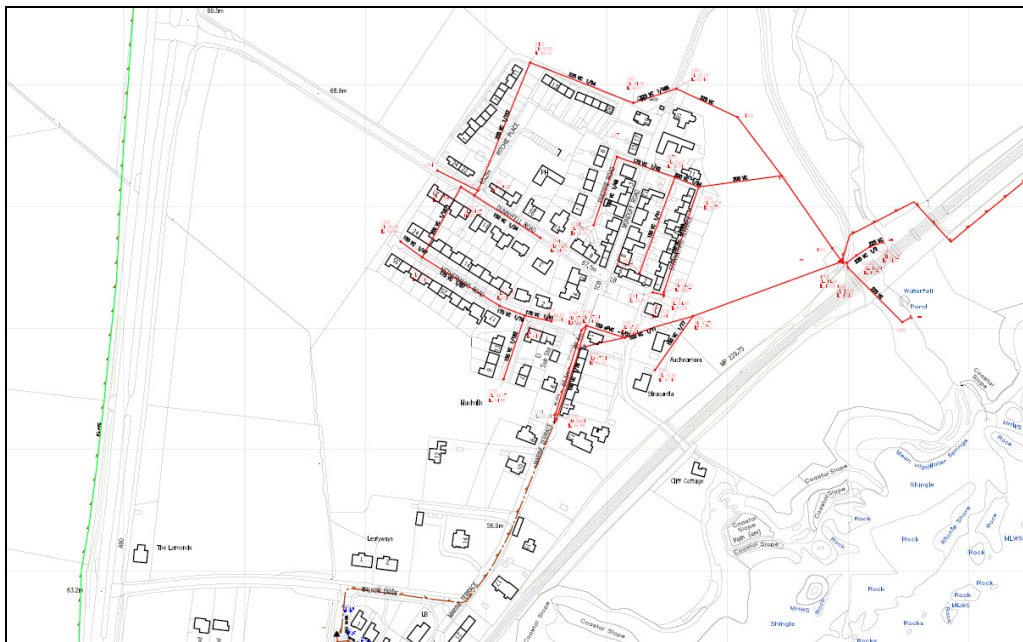


Figure 3 – Existing adoptable drainage south

As the development progresses, formal land drainage designs and details will be incorporated into the proposed drainage scheme to intercept any encountered unrecorded pipework or overland flows.

Flooding

The SEPA Flood Map shows the site to have a relatively low risk of surface water flooding, however, does indicate a small area of flooding associated with the small watercourse within the site and also just north of the A90.

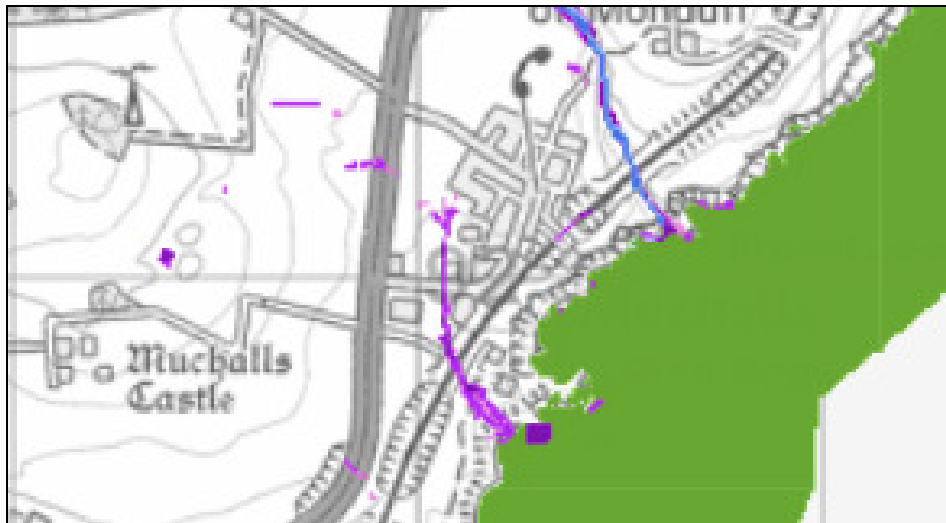


Figure 4 – SEPA flood map extract

This map is for guidance purposes only and a Flood Risk Assessment will be undertaken to assess the upstream culvert and watercourse.

Existing foul drainage

Existing Scottish Water record plans indicate apparatus outwith the site boundary within the residential developments to the south and east of the site. The southern site also indicates a pump station and rising main which traverses along Marine Terrace to the east. Pipe diameters are generally indicated to be 150-175mm.

Proposed surface water drainage

For development of the site it is necessary to consider the requirements of Aberdeenshire Council, Scottish Water and SEPA with respect to quantity and quality of the resultant flows. As required by the Statutory Bodies the following considerations will require to be undertaken within the final engineering designs.

1. The 1 in 30 post year development critical storm for the application site shall be attenuated to a 1 in 2 -year green-field release.
2. The difference between the 1 in 30 year and 1 in 200 year (plus 30% uplift for climate change) is to be accommodated within the application site with no detriment to properties within or out with the application site.
3. Where flooding is indicated to occur under critical storm events, the finished floor levels of dwellings adjacent must be a minimum of 600mm above predicted levels.
4. The site should ensure the development can be accessed and egressed by emergency vehicles during flood events in accordance with Scottish Planning Policy.

As noted earlier existing and proposed site topography has been assessed, along with the site catchment areas and from this it has been determined that the site will drain via an

attenuation basin located at the south east corner of the site as shown on drawing 19-003-Sk20 in appendix 2. Attenuated discharge from the basin will be discharged, at greenfield release rate, to the small watercourse at the south corner.

Calculations have been undertaken utilizing FEH rainfall data, and Windes, and the resultant discharge rate and 1:200-year attenuation volumes are noted in the table below.

Table 1 – Basin Attenuation Volumes

Catchment (m ²)	Release (l/s)	Preliminary Attenuation Volume (m ³)
27,000	9.1	805

With regard to water quality the effect of a development discharge on the watercourses must be considered and any detrimental effects mitigated against. A primary consideration is pollution for road, footpaths and car parking areas (e.g. suspended solids and silt, oil, etc.), and in accordance with Aberdeenshire Council, Scottish Water and SEPA requirements, such areas will require two levels of surface water treatment.

The first element of the treatment will be within the detention basin which will be designed in accordance with current Scottish Water Sewers for Scotland requirements. The second level will be within an end of line swale immediately downstream of the basin. This proposal is not prescriptive and secondary treatment will be required to meet the current CIRIA Simple Index Approach guidance. Further discussion with Scottish Water/SEPA and East Dunbartonshire Council is required subject to detailed design, these can be in the form of but not limited to, swales, porous paving, filter trenches, and bioretention facilities. This element will be subject to detailed layouts and design.

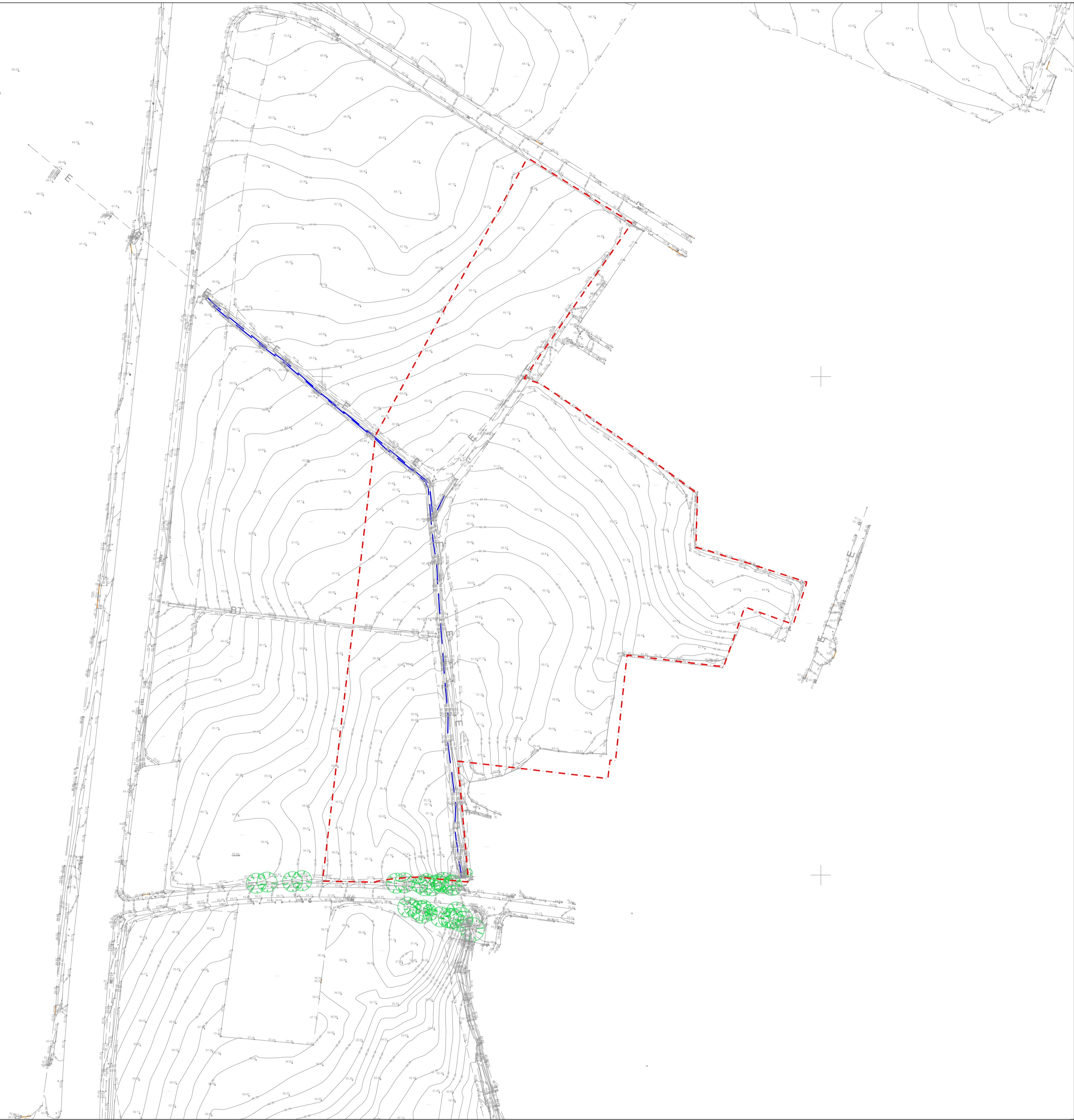
Refer to drawing 19-003-Sk20 indicating the proposed site drainage strategy in appendix 1.

Proposed foul drainage

Foul catchment for the site has been assessed with a view to providing a gravity connection where possible. The preferred option for foul connection would be to the existing sewer with Marine View to the south. This connection point subsequently discharges to a foul pumping station which would most likely require to be upgraded to accommodate the additional flows and to current Sewers for Scotland Standards.

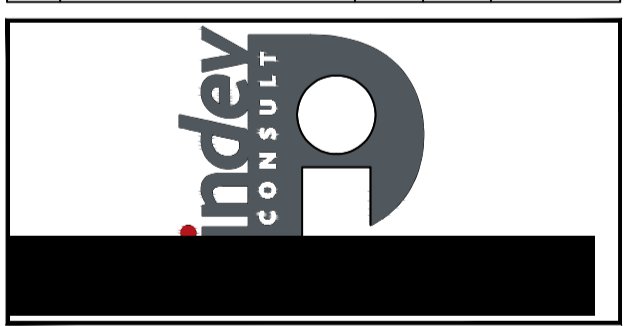
Confirmation with respect to the existing network capacity has been requested from Scottish Water and a response is anticipated shortly. Should a Drainage Impact Assessment be required the development shall adhere to any identified mitigation resultant from the report/study.

Appendix 1



- NOTES:
- DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING
 - THE CONTRACTOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR CHECKING AND VERIFICATION OF ALL DIMENSIONS ON SITE PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT
 - THE CONTRACTOR SHALL CONFIRM AND BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF THE ENGINEER ANY DISCREPANCIES CONTAINED IN THIS DRAWING PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT.

Rev	Description	Drwn	Chkd	Date



Project Title: Muchalls

Drawing Title: Topo Survey

Drawn By: [Redacted] Checked By: [Redacted]

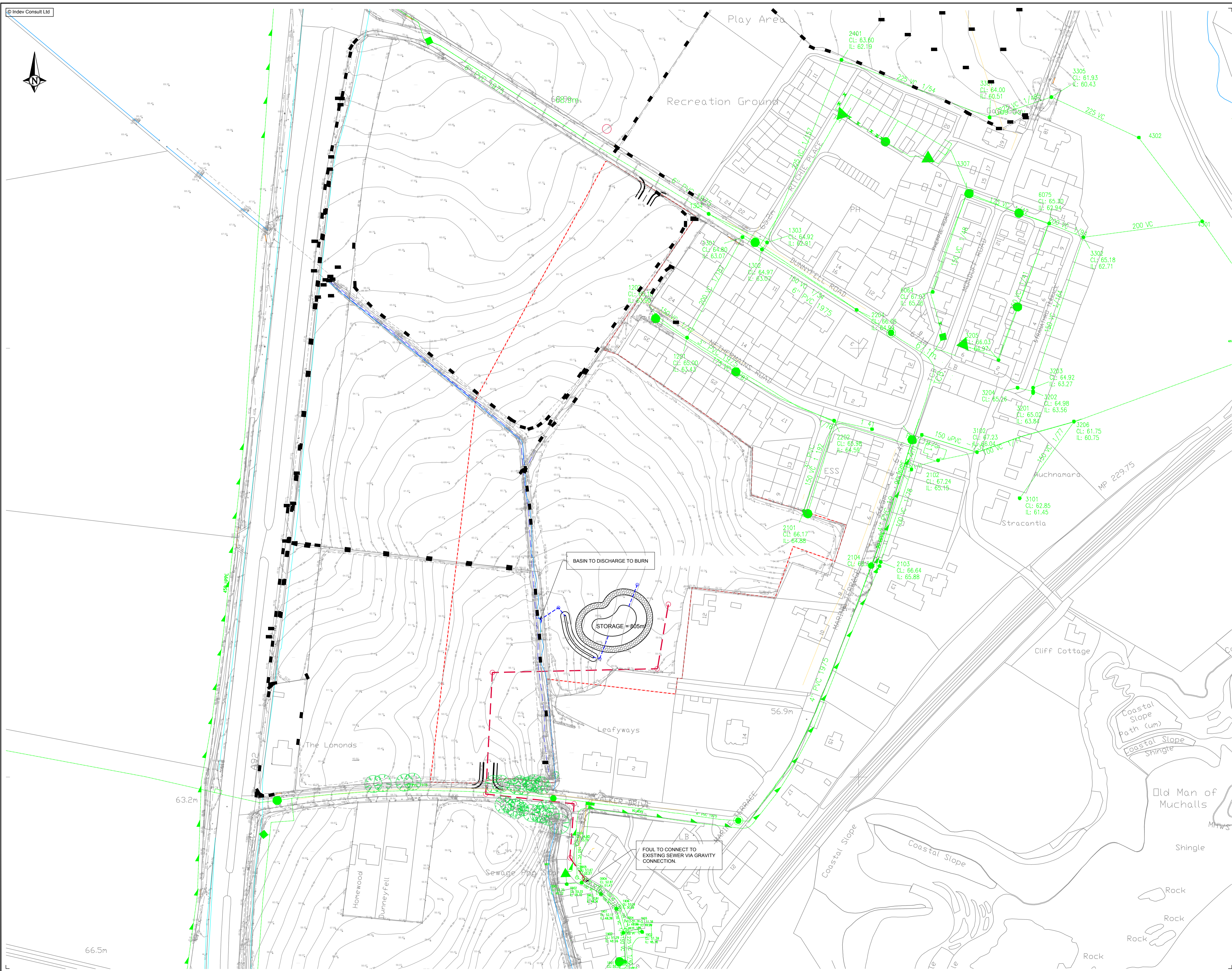
Date Drawn: 03/04/2019 Scales: 1:1000

Drawing Number: 19-003-SK10



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- LEGEND
- EXISTING COMBINED SEWER
 - PROPOSED SURFACE WATER SEWER
 - PROPOSED FOUL SEWER



Rev	Description	Drwn	Chkd	Date



Project Title: Muchalls

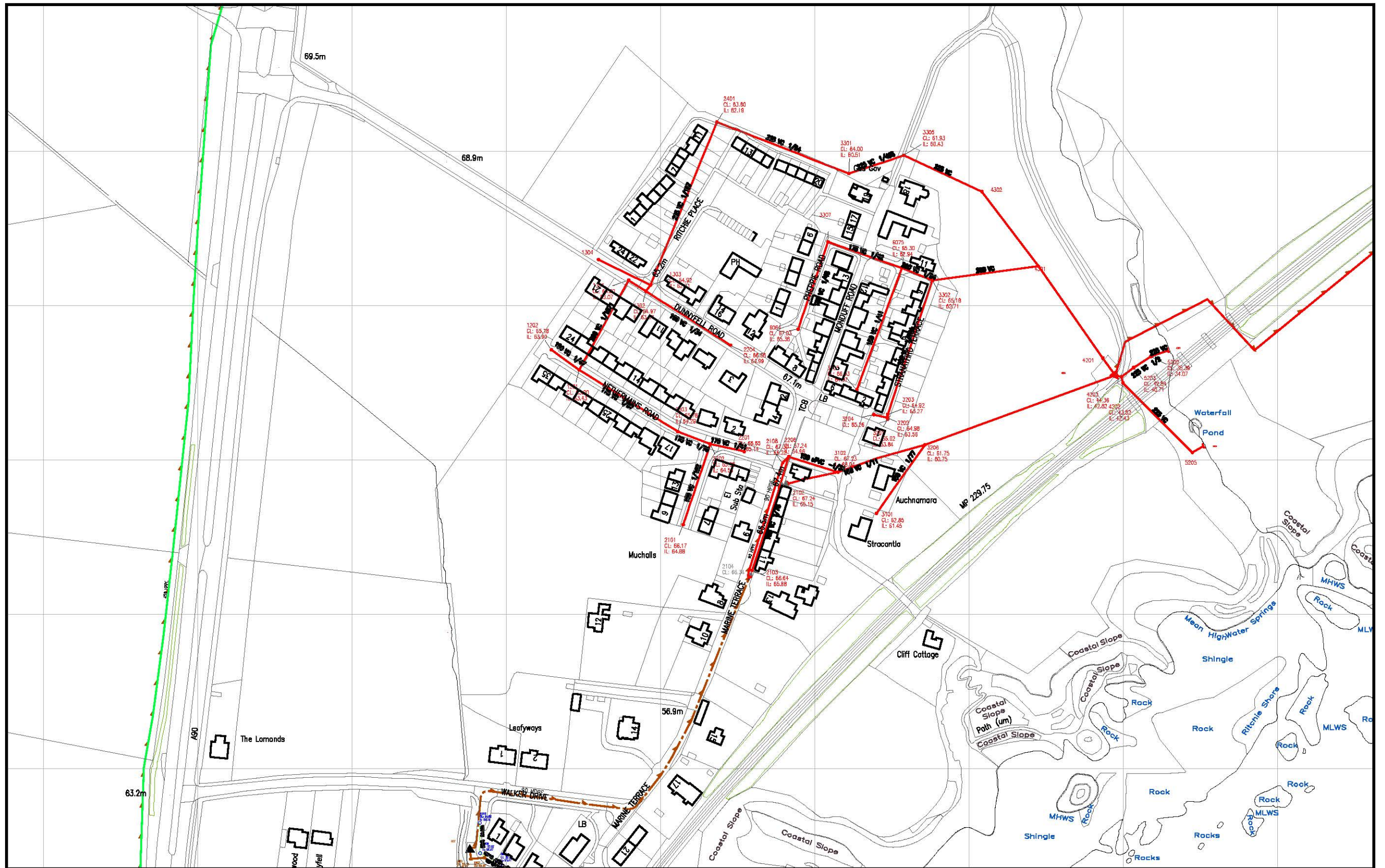
Drawing Title: Drainage Strategy Plan

Drawn By: Checked By: Issue Status:

Date Drawn: 02/04/2019 Scales: 1:1000

Drawing Number: 19-003-SK20 Revision:

Appendix 2



The representation of physical assets and the boundaries of areas in which Scottish Water and others have an interest does not necessarily imply their true positions. For further details contact the appropriate District Office.

Date Plotted: 04/04/2019



Scale: 1:2500

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Vision Document

Land at Muchalls, Aberdeenshire

April 2019





Document Control

Document: A107832 - Vision Document

Project: Muchalls, Aberdeenshire

Client: Gladman Developments Limited

Job Number: A107832

Revision: Final

Date: 08/04/2019

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1. Introduction



This section will set out the key drivers behind the development strategy and outline the purpose of this Vision Document.



1.1 Introduction

This Vision Document has been prepared on behalf of Gladman Developments Ltd. to promote the proposed development site located at the western edge of Muchalls through the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan process.

The site is located in between the A92 to the west and the coastal settlement of Muchalls to the east. The site extends between Dunnyfell Road and Walker Drive and abuts the existing settlement edge. It is located within the Muchalls Conservation Area and within the South East Aberdeenshire Coast Special Landscape Area.

1.2 Key Drivers & Opportunities

The development strategy set out in this Vision Document offers a high quality housing scheme of up to approximately 50 no. new homes of mixed type and tenure.

The development strategy has been designed to respond to the existing landscape context whilst also responding to the edge of settlement location. Development at this location offers an opportunity to introduce a balanced and proportionate settlement expansion which respects the characteristics of the Conservation Area and the Special Landscape Area setting.

Green infrastructure and open space provision is key to creating a sense of place, and the development strategy has been designed to incorporate an extended landscape framework of varying habitats including public open spaces, tree belts, SUDS facilities, and a wetland corridor.

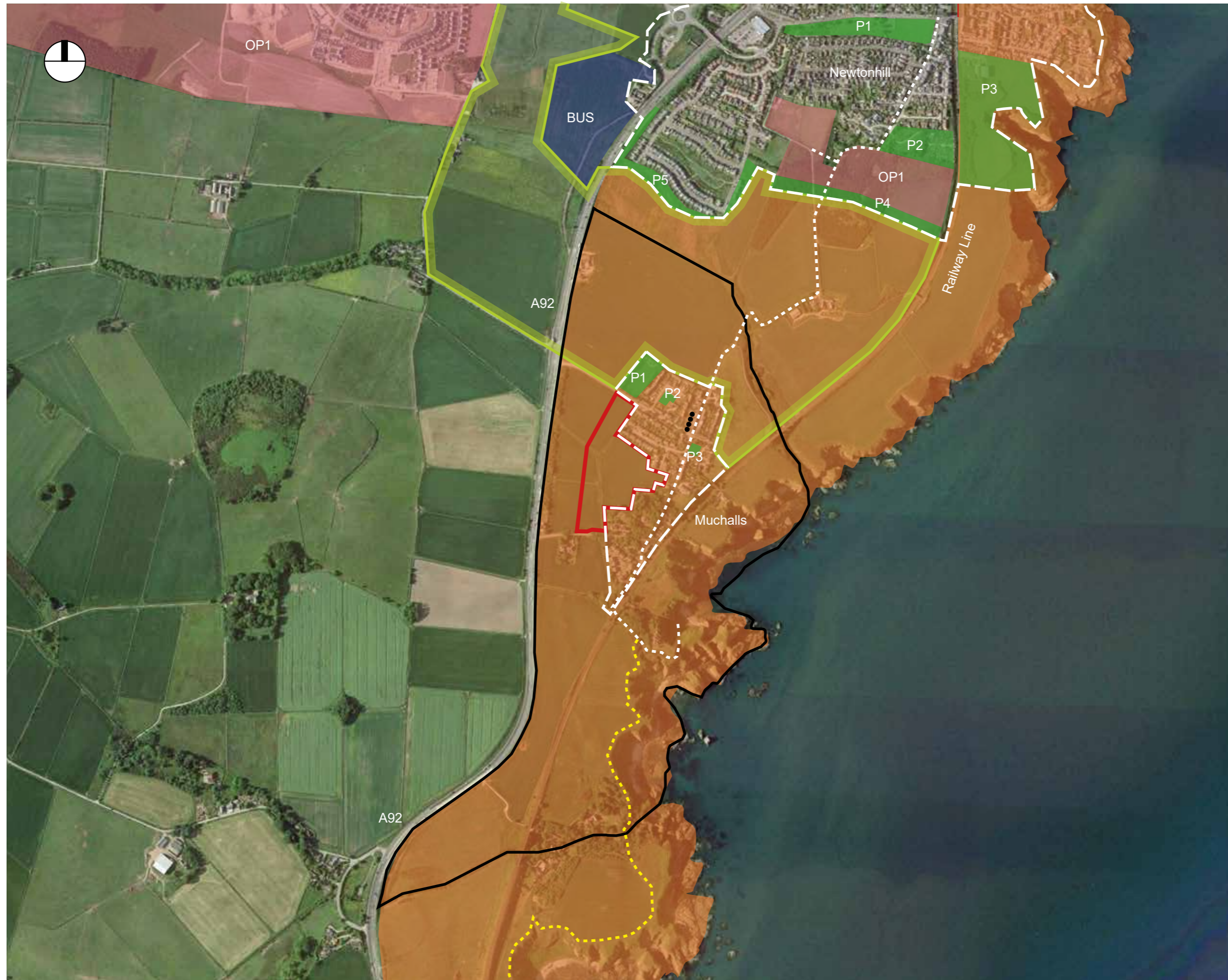
It is also recognised that connectivity is key to creating successful places and new path links have been proposed to offer recreational opportunities and connect the new development to the existing settlement and the wider countryside.



2. The Site & its Context



This section provides an appraisal of the site and its immediate context, focusing on planning context, land use, landscape character, landform, access, and settlement form.



Legend

- Site location
- Settlement Boundary
- OP1 Opportunity Sites
- BUS Existing Employment Land
- P1 Protected Areas and Reserved Land
- South Aberdeenshire Coast Special Landscape Area
- Green Belt
- Muchalls Conservation Area
- Core Paths (Existing)
- Core Paths (Proposed)
- Listed Buildings

Information taken from Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan, Core Paths Plan, and interactive map

Figure 1
Planning Context

Scale: 1:10,000

2.1 Planning Context

The site is located within the Aberdeenshire local authority area. The development plan for Aberdeenshire is the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (2014) and the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (LDP) (2017). The site at Dunnyfell Road lies adjacent to the west of the Muchalls settlement boundary. The site is situated within the Muchalls Conservation Area and the South East Aberdeenshire Coast Special Landscape Area in the adopted LDP.

Muchalls is situated within the Aberdeenshire-part of the Aberdeen Housing Market Area (HMA) within a 20-minute drive to Aberdeen City Centre. Under the existing Development Plan, and Main Issues Report (MIR) for the emerging LDP, a range of sites have been allocated to meet the housing land requirement for both the Aberdeenshire Local Authority area, and the Aberdeenshire-part of the Aberdeen HMA (this also comprises Aberdeen Local Authority area in its entirety).

However, as detailed within the representations that this document is submitted in support of, a significant part of the housing land supply is contained within only a small number of large-scale sites and/or Strategic Growth Areas. While these sites will undoubtedly have to make a valuable contribution to meeting the housing land requirement, any delays or under-delivery at these sites will have a major impact on the Council meeting the housing targets.

Paragraph 119 of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) emphasises the need for local planning authorities to allocate a range of sites that they are confident can be brought forward for development within the plan period and that will enable the housing supply target to be met. The focus on range highlights that the housing land supply should not only be plentiful and considered effective but also diverse and across the whole local authority area, particularly in areas within an accessible distance to Aberdeen City, such as Muchalls.

To avoid such an over-reliance on the programmed delivery of a small number of sites in the emerging LDP, there is a pressing need to further sites that are proven to be effective and deliverable in the short term in order to augment the housing land supply throughout Aberdeenshire, and the Aberdeenshire-part of the Aberdeen HMA.

The site at Dunnyfell Road was submitted to the Council for consideration during the Call for Sites stage of LDP2. However, the site has not been identified as a preferred option for housing within the MIR. The representations being made, along with the supporting documents, demonstrates that the land at Dunnyfell Road is an appropriate and suitable site which can deliver effective and sustainable development in the short-term.



Muchalls Conservation Area



Legend

 Site location

Figure 2
Site Location

Scale: 1:50,000



Figure 3
Site Context
Scale: 1:10,000



Legend

- Site boundary
- 6 Photographic Viewpoints (refer to Figure 5, 6 & 7)

Figure 4

The Site

Scale: 1:2,500

2.2 Site Location & Context

The proposed development site (illustrated on Figures 2 to 4) is located at the western edge of Muchalls, immediately abutting the settlement boundary. Muchalls is located to the east of the A92 and approximately 0.5km to the south west of Newtonhill. The emerging new settlement at Chapleton of Elsieck is located approximately 1km to the north west, whilst the larger settlement of Stonehaven is located approximately 7km to the south west. The east coast mainline railway extends along the eastern edge of the settlement.

Muchalls is located within a predominantly rural setting near to the coast and is set back from the A92 corridor beyond four irregular fields (which comprise the site). The settlement extends generally along Marine Terrace and Dunnyfell Road, which loop back to the A92, with access achieved via Dunnyfell Road (to the north) and Walker Drive (to the south).

The proposed development site extends to the south of Dunnyfell Road, encompassing the part of the northernmost and all of the easternmost field, which is framed by the housing at Marine Terrace and Nethermains Road. The site extents are illustrated on Figure 4.

2.3 Landscape of the Site

The site extends across the eastern part of the three westernmost fields, and all of the easternmost field which abuts the existing settlement edge. It extends to a total area of approximately 4.15 ha. Its northern edge extends to the stone wall which frames the southern edge of Dunnyfell Road, where the primary point of access into the site will be taken. The western edge of the site is undefined as it extends across the existing fields, whilst the eastern edge of the site is framed by the housing and rear plot boundaries at Marine Terrace, Walker Drive and Nethermains Road. The southern edge of the site extends down to Walker Drive. At the time of survey, the fields which comprise the site area were used for arable farming.

A narrow watercourse / field drainage channel extends into the western part of the site, before returning southwards where it is culverted below Walker Drive. This watercourse forms the low point of the site, with the land to the west rising gently to the existing tree belt (located along the eastern edge of the A92 corridor). To the east, the land rises gently towards the more elevated settlement edge.

Whilst the proposed development site boundaries are described above, it is noted that development will be contained within the northern and eastern parts of the site (to the east of the central watercourse / drainage channel).



1 View looking south-east from Dunnyfell Road towards the Muchalls settlement edge.



2 View looking north-east from the A92 through a gap in the roadside tree belt towards the settlement edge.

Figure 5

Site Photos

Refer to Figure 4 for photo locations



3 View looking north east from the junction of Walker Drive and the A92.



4 View looking north east from Walker Drive towards the western edge of the settlement.

Figure 6

Site Photos

Refer to Figure 4 for photo locations



5 View looking south-west across the site and towards residential properties situated on Marine Terrace.



6 View looking south-west across the site from Dunnyfell Road.

Figure 7

Site Photos

Refer to Figure 4 for photo locations

3. Site Analysis



This section will analyse each of the site's characteristics and will set out any identified constraints and opportunities for development.



Legend

- Site location
- Gradient
- Tree belts / vegetation which obscure or filter views
- Exposed settlement edge / visible development
- Views across site from nearby roads
- Watercourse / drainage ditch
- Existing paths / tracks
- Exposed settlement edge / prominently visible development

Figure 8
Site Analysis

Scale: 1:2,500

3.1 Landscape Character

South and Central Aberdeenshire Landscape Assessment

The South and Central Aberdeenshire Landscape Assessment (No 102, published by SNH in 1998) identifies Muchalls as being located within the Kincardine Cliffs Landscape Character Type. The landscape type is characterised by a “steep, weathered coastal cliffs with stacks and arches especially between Stonehaven and Aberdeen” (paragraph 4.3.2, page 58).

It goes on to note that there is a “major communications corridor behind the cliffs, notably the A90 [now A92] and east coast railway” and “settlements cluster on cliff tops; older villages and harbours nestle at cliff base accessed by steep roads down to the sea” and “extensive new development at edge of coastal towns” (paragraph 4.32, page 58).

The assessment also sets out the following ‘Management and Planning Guidelines’, which are relevant to the proposed development:

- “New development on the coast which is clustered in form and limited in extent will reflect traditional patterns and will be acceptable in principle; linear development along communication routes may lead to amorphous strip development, lacking sense of identity.
- Isolated houses and small developments which reflect traditional architectural styles and finishes, such as whitewashed walls, will be more appropriate within the cliffline landscape.

- Historical features, such as clifftop castles, churches and archaeological remains, benefit from an open setting that emphasises their exposure and enhances views; development near to such features will detract from this outside the main settlements.
- The maintenance of drystone dyke field boundaries will enhance landscape structure.
- The rural character of the clifftops may be conserved by restricting the use of urbanising elements such as street lighting and signage outside the main settlements.
- In this exposed landscape, extensive use of shelterbelts around development will appear out of place and may emphasise built development; clumped groups of native species will be more appropriate” (paragraph 4.4.4, page 59).



Muchalls coastal settlement

Aberdeenshire Special Landscape Areas

In addition, the site falls within the South East Aberdeenshire Coast Special Landscape Area, identified in Appendix 9: Aberdeenshire Special Landscape Areas (April 2017).

The following relevant aspects and features of this landscape are considered worthy of recognition through SLA designation:

- *“Rugged and intricate scenery of weathered coastal cliffs and raised beach landforms, including sites of geological interest.*
- *Coastal routes include the A92, A90, east coast railway, footpaths and National Cycle Network (Route 1), all offering expansive views out to sea.*
- *Panoramic views out to sea from headlands and beaches and important views along the coast” (page 26).*

The document also sets out the following management recommendations, which are relevant to the proposed development:

- *“The South East Aberdeenshire Coast SLA is classed as a coastal landscape type. As such emphasis should be to maintain the focus of development within existing coastal settlements in order to retain the character of the coastal area. Development within settlements should be of scale and style that respects and complements their coastal character. The effects of development along the coastal edge and within the hinterland adjacent to the SLA should be carefully considered through a coastal character assessment.*

- *Development should only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the sense of place associated with the cliffs in this area will be unaffected.*
- *Development should conserve the coastal characteristics associated with towns in this area.*
- *In smaller coastal villages design of development proposals should respect the vernacular heritage and sense of place that they provide” (page 27).*



Rugged coastal cliffs



Public access to the cliff tops and bays



Rugged coastal cliffs

3.2 Visibility

The proposed development site is located immediately abutting the western edge of Muchalls and extends across a slightly lower elevation than much of the adjacent settlement form.

From the west, views are generally restricted to glimpse, transitory views from the A92 and from the minor road which extends towards Home farm Cottage from the A92. Views from the A92 are filtered by the existing tree belt which extends along the eastern side of the road corridor, however oblique views are available across the site from the north west and south west of this feature (on the northern and southern approaches towards Muchalls). From the south, views are generally filtered by intervening features including existing building forms (The Lomonds, Homewood and Dunnyfell), and the tree cover evident within garden grounds and along Walker Drive. From the north, views are predominantly obscured by the coniferous tree line which borders the playing fields to the north of Dunnyfell Road. From the east, filtered views from the existing settlement are available between building forms, structures and vegetation.

As noted previously, the settlement lies within the South Aberdeenshire Coast SLA, so the 'gaps' between settlements are important in offering views towards the sea from the A92 corridor. As such, development within these areas would contract or narrow the available views, so any proposed development should be retained to the landward (western) side of the existing settlement and not to the north or south. The following photographic views and Visibility Analysis (Figure 9) illustrate the importance of coastal views from the west and the A92 corridor.



1 View from Home Farm Cottage showing the visual 'gap' between settlements (Newtonhill and Muchalls). Refer to Figure 9.



2 View from the southern edge of Newtonhill showing the coastal view available between settlements. Refer to Figure 9.



Legend







-  Site location
-  Coastal views available from the A92
-  Built form / tree cover which filters or obscures coastal views
-  Local high point (Whinward Plantation)
-  Approximate line of visual containment provided by local high point (Whinward Plantation)
-  Photographic view locations

Figure 9
 Visibility Analysis

Scale: 1:10,000

3.3 Muchalls Conservation Area

The conservation area designated at Muchalls stretches well beyond the settlement edge, relating to some of the key aspects of the coastal setting and Special Landscape Area. The extent of the Conservation Area is shown on Figure 1.

Within the settlement itself the historic development of the village is still evident. The settlement form from the late 19th century is still legible with a clear distinction between these areas and post 1960s development to the west at Dunnyfell Road, Nethermains Road and Ritchie Place, and the recent development at Marine View.

Figure 10
Conservation Area
Character Areas

Scale: 1:2,500



1 Historic Core (refer to Figure 10)

The historic core of the village is formed to the north of the settlement with two streets of single storey terrace houses. Monduff Street is narrow with the houses hard up to the rear of the narrow footways. Four of the properties on the west side of the street are category 'C' listed. Stranathro Terrace has single storey properties to the west with open views to the North Sea over their private garden ground located on the opposite side of the road to the east. The two streets are joined at the south by Dunnyfell Road with further single storey cottages with detached private garden ground on the opposite side of the road.

The original proportions of many of the properties has been significantly altered by large box dormers, in many instances the full width of the properties. Such dormers to the rear of the properties are often higher than the original ridge line leading to an unattractive upstand where the original ridge line would have been. Where these dormers occur to the front they give the appearance of two storey flat roofed properties which are out of proportion with adjacent original roof lines. In addition, there are frequent vestibule additions at the entrance to properties creating an ad-hoc appearance along the streetscape which is out of character with the original properties.

The listed properties have not escaped this fate.

The historic core is therefore a mix of interesting and characterful features with gables, chimney breast and original building proportions juxtaposed with unfortunate interventions such as the large box dormers and vestibules.



White rendered terraced cottages along Monduff Road



Terraced cottages with sea views along Stranathro Terrace



1.5 storey terraced cottages with box dormer windows along Dunnyfell Road



1.5 storey terraced cottage with exposed stone facade

2 Marine Terrace (refer to Figure 10)

The second key element of the original settlement is Marine Terrace running on a north south axis. Again, much of the late 19th century settlement is legible. At the junction with Dunnyfell Road a small 'Village Green' still exists with the road edge then initially defined by a terrace of two storey original properties along its east side. To the south of this the road is narrow in character with boundary walls to both sides along its length. Behind these walls, larger single properties at low densities are located.

The boundary walls give a distinct character, providing a sense of enclosure and with a largely consistent triangular coping and many feature gateways to the properties behind creating interest along the route. Properties to the east are more evident from the road with glimpsed views beyond to the North Sea whilst those to the west of the road are set within woodland. Some properties run parallel to the street presenting gable ends with a variety of window sizes and openings.

At the southern end of Marine Terrace there were once a cluster of amenities with the Village Hall, Train Station and Marine Hotel. Of these only the Village Hall remains.

Beyond this the road continues under the railway line, providing access to two further large dispersed houses and the network of coastal paths.



Marine Terrace



Large villa (Greenacres) located at the south western end of Marine Terrace



Large villas located along Marine Terrace



The Village Hall

3 Pheppie Road & Ritchie Place (refer to Figure 10)

The remainder of the settlement is made up of more modern housing, predominantly of the 1960s and 70s.

The housing on Pheppie Road and at Ritchie Place is outward facing presenting positive frontage with a large courtyard and green space to the rear providing vehicular access. This provides a positive connection on all sides with frontage to the historic village core, park to the west and settlement edge to the north. The properties on Pheppie Road are storey and half (room in the roof) whilst those within Ritchie place are predominantly two storey. Both are formed as terraces.



4 Nethermains Road & Dunnyfell Road (refer to Figure 10)

On the southern side of Dunnyfell Road and on Nethermains Road many of the properties provide low walls to the street, defining its edge and delineating defensible space. The predominant house type is larger storey and a half (room in the roof) semi-detached housing. These houses are deeper in plan than the historic part of the village leading to large roofscapes also featuring large box dormers which creates the overriding character and dominates many of the views of the settlement from the A92 to the west and is incongruous with the original settlement.



5 Marine View (refer to Figure 10)

To the southernmost extent of the village, a 21st century development of larger houses is located on the site of the former Marine Hotel. These are large two storey houses, with street layout and building detailing typical to the modern-day volume house builder. This development reflects little of the original character of the settlement or the wider conservation area.



Landscape Setting & Characteristics

As shown on Figure 1, the Conservation Area boundary extends outwards to cover a significant amount of the surrounding landscape context. Whilst there is no Conservation Area Appraisal available for Muchalls, it is recognised that this extended coverage has been designed to respond to the key elements of the Special Landscape Area setting and to protect the setting to the settlement and the key views towards the coast which are available from the A92 corridor and interior landscape.

The landscape setting to Muchalls predominantly comprises open agricultural fields with occasional tree belts and vegetation. This open landscape facilitates views between settlements and towards the rugged coastline whilst also creating a sense of separation between settlements and the A92 road corridor. In this regard, the fields located between the A92 and the western edge of Muchalls combine to reinforce the coastal character of the settlement and limit the potential for development to encroach towards the road to the west. It is however considered that limited development could be introduced within this area that could rationalise the settlement form whilst still retaining this offset from the A92.

Boundary features evident around the fringes of the village are extended into the settlement, creating a consistency in character through the historic parts of Muchalls. For example, stone walls with a distinct pointed coping are found along the southern edge of the settlement, along the track which connects between Muchalls Castle and the Core Path and railway underpass, and along parts of Marine Terrace and the small village green.



Post-war housing at Dunnyfell Road



Stone walls with distinct pointed coping extending into the village



Stone walls with distinct pointed coping at the edge of the village



Gated entrances with ornate gate piers along Marine Terrace

3.4 Recent Development

A new residential development (currently under construction) is located to the west of Chapelton of Elsick, which is approximately 1.5 km to the north west of Muchalls. The initial phase of the development will comprise 4,045 new houses, located in four neighbourhoods, with community facilities such as shops, offices, parks and schools.

In addition, recent housing development has emerged along the southern edge of Newtonhill, and the housing at Michael Tunstall Place is prominently visible in views from the Core Path and A92 when approaching the southern edge of the settlement.

Within Muchalls, recent development has been restricted to the housing development at Marine View. Again, when viewed from the A92, this development appears prominently visible in views.



Recent development at Chapelton of Elsick



Recent development at Marine View, Muchalls



Recent development at Chapelton of Elsick



Recent development along the southern edge of Newtonhill

3.5 Access and Transportation

Walking

Pedestrian access will be provided at multiple points from the site directly onto Dunnyfell Road to the north and possibly Walker Drive to the south. The pedestrian facilities within the site will connect to existing pedestrian facilities in the village allowing for onward journeys to bus stops and local amenities within the adjacent village of Newtonhill, accessed either from the A92 or via the core path which runs from the north eastern side of the village.

Both National and Local Transport Planning Policy seeks to ensure that new developments are accessible by a range of sustainable transport modes. National Transport Policy PAN 75 sets out recommended criteria for walking distances to local bus stops and public transport facilities. This is typically 400 metres to local bus stops. The development site benefits from access to local bus stops on the A92 which lie within the recommended 400m of the development site.

The local residential roads surrounding the site are provided with good quality footways with street lighting. All the footways in the local residential area are in good condition and well maintained and are of an appropriate width and standard to support increased pedestrian activity as a result of the development proposals. The development will connect directly into the pedestrian facilities on Dunnyfell Road.

The development site is well placed for pedestrian access to the local area including bus stops on the A92, the whole of the village of Muchalls and the village of Newtonhill and the amenities within the village. The walking distances to the facilities within Newtonhill are in line with Scottish Government policy and these can all be reached within 1,600m.

Public Transport

The nearest bus stop to the development site are on the A92 at the western end of Dunnyfell Road and are approximately 400m from the centre of the development site. The bus stops on the A92 are provided with bus flags, bus shelters and timetable information. There are 6 services operating from the bus stops on the A92 which provide regular bus services to the main centres of employment both to the north and south of Muchalls. Typically, a journey to work by public transport of between 30 – 40 minutes would be in line with Scottish Government policy. A typical journey from Muchalls to Aberdeen City Centre by bus would take approximately 28 – 38 minutes using service X6 or X7. A journey to Stonehaven would typically take 10 minutes.

Site Access

The development site has the potential to take direct access from Dunnyfell Road in the form of a standard priority junction. The priority junction(s) would have standard 6m corner radii and the access road into the development would be 6m in width, a standard residential access road. New footways within the development would connect directly onto the existing footways on Dunnyfell Road provided for good pedestrian connectivity to the rest of the village and the local bus stops.

3.6 Drainage & Flood Risk

Review of current and historical drainage for the site shows a small unnamed watercourse traversing through the site from north to south. This watercourse is culverted below the A92 to the north and Walker Drive to the south. Assessment of Scottish Water record plans indicate no adopted surface water sewers within the site. The nearest adopted drainage shown is a surface water network to the south serving a small residential development. Existing Scottish Water record plans indicate foul apparatus outwith the site boundary within the residential developments to the south and east of the site. The southern site also indicates a pump station and rising main which traverses along Marine Terrace to the east.

The site topography has been assessed, along with the site catchment areas and from this it has been determined that the site will drain via an attenuation basin located at the south east corner of the site. Attenuated discharge from the basin will be discharged, at greenfield release rate, to the small watercourse at the south corner. With regard to foul drainage the catchment for the site has been assessed with a view to providing a gravity connection where possible. The preferred option for foul connection would be to the existing sewer with Marine View to the south. This connection point subsequently discharges to a foul pumping station which would most likely require to be upgraded to accommodate the additional flows and to current Sewers for Scotland Standards.

4. The Vision



This section will set out the design concept and preliminary development framework proposals for the site.

4.1 Concept

The development strategy has been designed to introduce a balanced and proportionate development that will rationalise and consolidate the existing settlement form and respect both the Conservation Area and Special Landscape Area setting.

The main principles of the concept are illustrated on the following diagrams:



1 - New development abutting existing settlement edge



3 - Create positive 'gateway' to settlement with new 'gate lodge'



2 - Development set back from the A92 to retain the villages coastal character



4 - Create an extended landscape structure



New path network offering connectivity across site.

Existing wall / field boundary alignment extended to enhance and restore landscape structure

New tree planting / vegetation introduced along watercourse

'Gate Lodge' fronting onto Dunnyfell Road
- Formalised entrance
- Sense of arrival / place

Legend










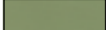
-  Site boundary
-  Proposed vehicular entrance off Dunnyfell Road
-  Proposed road network
-  Proposed paths
-  Proposed development areas
-  Positive frontage
-  Proposed SUDS basin
-  Proposed trees
-  Public open space / parkland / 'paddocks'
-  Stone walls

Figure 11

Preliminary Development Framework Plan

Scale: 1:2,500

4.2 Housing Mix

The Preliminary Development Framework Plan (Figure 11) has been designed to promote up to approximately 50 no. new homes of mixed type and tenure, and it is envisaged that the development mix will accommodate a range of detached and semi-detached houses including 25% affordable homes.

4.3 Development Density

The proposed developable area extends to 2.36 ha (5.68 acres) so the proposed development of up to approximately 50 no. new homes equates to an average development density of approximately 21 dwellings per hectare. This relatively low development density is appropriate to the edge of settlement location, but it is noted that the proposals have also been designed to respond to the range of development densities evident across the existing settlement.

4.4 Placemaking

As noted above, the development proposals have been designed to respond to the existing landscape and settlement character, and the Conservation Area and Special Landscape Area context. Setting development back away from the A92 corridor also aims to respect the coastal setting of the village and retain the landscape buffer between the settlement edge and the strategic road corridor.

The proposals have therefore been designed to set the housing development within an extended landscape structure of walled paddocks / public open spaces; trees and tree groups; and, interconnecting pathways. Within the northern sector of the site, the proposed development would include positive frontage to the north west and a 'gate lodge' building adjacent to Dunnyfell Road which would form a gateway to both the new development and the wider settlement. This would replace the existing negative frontage formed by the prominent gable ends of housing at Nethermains Road and Dunnyfell Road. In front of this, a walled 'paddock' / public open space will be introduced. This will reflect the prevalence of walled boundaries to the south of Muchalls and create a formalised entrance space when entering the village.

This theme is continued into the site, with a series of extended stone walls and tree lines introduced to frame the development and link into the existing landscape structure.



A new 'gateway' to the village



Respecting existing landscape features

4.5 Access & Connectivity

Access into the site will be via a new vehicular junction onto Dunnyfell Road. A new road will then continue into the site before returning to the south east, eventually connecting back onto Nethermain Road. In addition, a series of new path links will be introduced across the southern and western sectors of the site. These will provide recreational access to the countryside and direct links southwards onto Walker Drive.



A network of new interconnected pathways



4.6 Green Infrastructure

As noted previously, the proposed development will be set within an extended landscape structure of walled public open spaces; trees and tree groups; and, interconnecting pathways, which have been designed to respond to the historic characteristics of the village.

The existing watercourse / drainage channel will be enhanced through the introduction of new tree planting. This will create a more interesting and ecologically diverse blue / green corridor which will also help to filter and soften views towards the existing and proposed settlement edge.

The existing tree belt located along the eastern side of the A92 corridor will be widened to create a more robust landscape buffer, and new formal / avenue tree planting will be introduced along Dunnyfell Road and along the new public open spaces.

A SUDS basin will be also located within the south eastern part of the site, where it will help to set development back from the large villas located off Marine Terrace and Walker Drive. This will be complemented by mixed native species based planting.



A range of habitats



SUDS features incorporated into the wider green infrastructure

