

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.*



ACCESSIBILITY

If you need information from this document in an alternative language or in a Large Print, Easy Read, Braille or BSL, please telephone 01467 536230.

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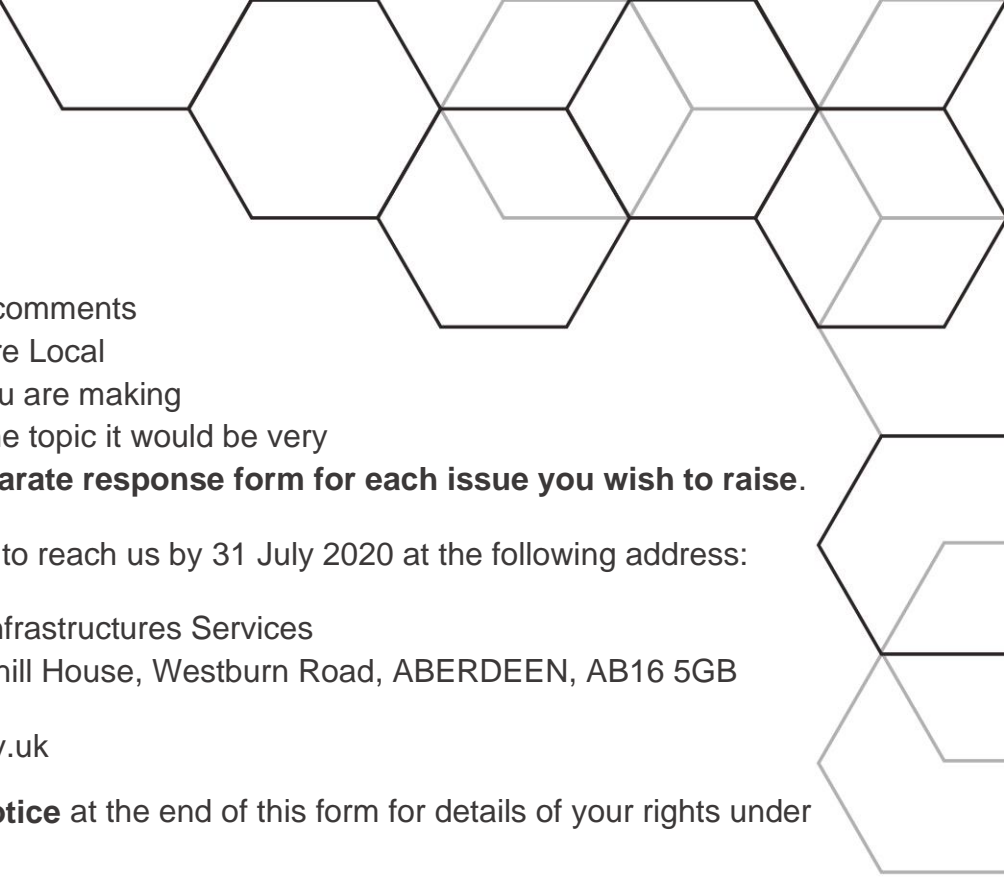
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Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan
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If you wish to contact one of the area planning offices, please call 01467 534333 and ask for the relevant planning office or email planning@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.



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:	Mr
First Name:	Craig
Surname:	Fotheringham
Date:	July 2020
Postal Address:	Bancon Homes, [REDACTED]
Postcode:	[REDACTED]
Telephone Number:	[REDACTED]
Email:	[REDACTED]

Are you happy to receive future correspondence only by email? Yes ☒ No ☐

Are you responding on behalf of another person? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes who are you representing?

☒ Tick the box if you would like to subscribe to the Aberdeenshire LDP eNewsletter:

An acknowledgement will be sent to this address soon after the close of consultation.

YOUR COMMENTS

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):

Representation against non-allocation of Site GR060. Site should be allocated for housing as submitted.

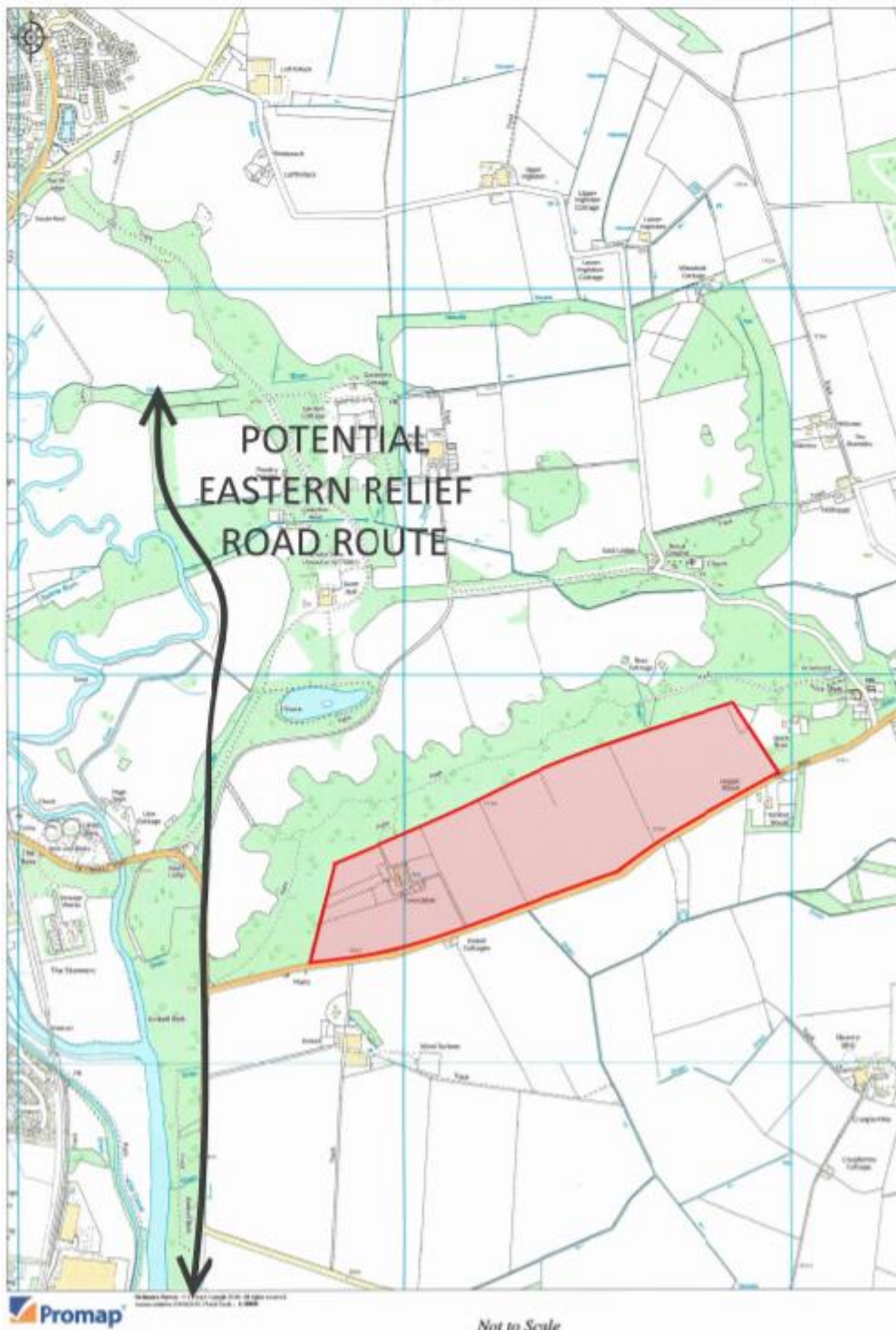
Reason for change:

The site at GR060, Keithhall, was promoted for allocation as housing at the MIR stage of this Local Development Plan (LDP) process (see site plan overleaf). Bancon Homes continue to object to the effective embargo on greenfield housing allocations in the Blackburn to Inverurie Strategic Growth Area, based primarily on the unknown future of a proposed A96 dualling project.

The Structure Plans in 2009 and 2014 identified the strategy for delivering housing across the City & Shire and as part of that identified the requirement for housing in this Strategic Growth Area. Until this Proposed Plan, the 2012 and 2017 LDP's instead avoided making any strategic allocations. The key local exception to this is the proposed expansion of an allocation within Inverurie from 58 units to 180 units. This and other prospective sites in the area were previously identified in the MIR as part of the Council's embargo that "further allocations were not to be made until the preferred route of the A96 dualling was confirmed." Is it the case that new strategic allocations, or selective expansions are now permitted in this corridor?

A site has also been expanded in its allocation at Keithhall from 15 units to 36 units. Again, this represents a significant relative expansion within an area which previously identified a restriction on any further allocations.

Through the examination of the above plans, Transport Scotland has been clear that the dualling project is a strategic project, and in no way designed to provide capacity for housing in particular areas. It is the role of LDP's to ensure that housing can be delivered, along with the necessary infrastructure. As in our response to the MIR, Bancon Homes submit that this has not been achieved and that the delivery of the housing land requirement has been frustrated by the approach taken. Land to the west of Inverurie was earmarked as the preferred area for long term development back in the 1998 Consolidated Aberdeenshire Local Plans, but frustratingly has been omitted from subsequent plans.



This bid for GR060 at Keithhall can offer a solution to traffic congestion, by delivering the majority of a link road from the east of Inverurie to the north, allowing traffic to bypass the town centre.

None of the routes being considered by Transport Scotland (finalised route options were expected to be published during 2019, but this is now expected later in 2020) impact on GR060 directly and therefore cannot be considered a constraint to the delivery of housing. The MIR stated that it is premature to consider the benefits of such a development / new road until a preferred route for dualling the A96 has been selected and the timescale for delivery is known.

This is an unreasonable position to take, given the purpose of the A96 dualling is not to facilitate the release of development land – that is the role and function of the LDP.

There is also the possibility that when a route is selected (albeit this has been delayed) and that this Inverurie section is delivered prior to 2030, it would be delivered within the currency of this next LDP. As such the LDP should provide for development options in the same LDP.

In terms of housing land allocations, despite the position taken in the Proposed Plan (Appendix 6 Housing Land Allocations) we contend that there remains a housing land shortfall within the Aberdeen Housing Market Area (HMA). A surplus of 80 units is identified in the LDP in response to the SDP Housing Supply Allowance.

However, Homes for Scotland, analyse the housing land supply within the Aberdeen HMA as being short by c.483 units (a difference of 563 units where sites are considered to be constrained or non-effective). Worryingly, there are a number of sites where the bid or previous allocation has been increased by Aberdeenshire Council (in total 287 units) including some sites where this is seemingly without request, where there is no evidence of housebuilder involvement or the site is not evidently in effective ownership.

802 units within Aberdeenshire Council's analysis of housing land supply are from sites of 50 units or below. It is contended therefore that there is significant risk of a housing land shortfall as measured against the SDP Allowance, and this site would be effective in meeting that shortfall.

In addition, whilst not lying within the same area of Aberdeenshire but nonetheless in the Aberdeen Housing Market Area (AHMA), representations have been made previously by Bancon Homes regarding the continued under-delivery of housing at Chapeltown of Elswick. We do not object to the principle of this allocation, but continue to request that Aberdeenshire Council recognise (1) the significant proportion of the effective land supply within the AHMA that Chapeltown constitutes and (2) the number of completions arising from Chapeltown continues to be well below those envisaged in either the 2012 or 2017 LDP's.

In terms of the first point above, Appendix 6 of the Proposed Plan identifies a total housing land supply for the Aberdeen to Laurencekirk SGA of 6,030 homes. Chapeltown is allocated for a total of 4,045 homes, with only 164 delivered as of Jan 2019 (Housing Land Audit 2019). This leaves 3,881 homes remaining, constituting 64% of the total effective housing land supply for this SGA.

In relation to the second point, the delivery of 164 units since commencement in 2015 equates to a build rate of approx. 40 units per annum. Extrapolating this out, even at a more generous 60-80 units per annum, would leave a completion total of only 1,184 units by 2031. This would leave 2,697 units undelivered during the plan period.

This further throws into focus the risks associated with Aberdeenshire Council's assessment of effective land supply, and that without further allocations, the delivery of homes across the AHMA will be well below that required by current and prospective residents.

It is contended therefore that there is significant risk of a housing land shortfall as measured against the SDP Allowance, and this site would be effective in meeting that shortfall.

Inverurie is a key settlement in Aberdeenshire, and continued development will support the provision of key infrastructure such as the delivery of a new secondary school and necessary improvements to the local road network.

The Main Issues Report and the Proposed Plan highlight the importance of the historic garden and designed landscape. This bid, and that submitted in response to the MIR both submit an assessment of the designation, and the landscape and visual impact assessment.

Accordingly, we submit that the development of housing at Keithhall is an appropriate option for delivering the housing requirement for Inverurie to Blackdog Strategic Growth Area as a whole

The site is in single ownership & control and is deliverable, meeting the effectiveness tests within the Circular.

PRIVACY NOTICE



LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN PUBLIC COMMENT

The Data Controller of the information being collected is Aberdeenshire Council.

The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at Town House, 34 Low Street, Banff, AB45 1AY.

Email: dataprotection@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Your information is being collected to use for the following purposes:

- To provide public comment on the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. The data on the form will be used to inform Scottish Ministers and individual(s) appointed to examine the Proposed Local Development Plan 2020. It will inform the content of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2021.

Your information is:

Being collected by Aberdeenshire Council	X
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The Legal Basis for collecting the information is:

Personal Data	
Legal Obligations	X

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It is a Statutory Obligation under Section 18 of the Town and Country (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended, for Aberdeenshire Council to prepare and publish a Proposed Local Development plan on which representations must be made to the planning authority within a prescribed period of time. Failure to provide details requested in the 'Your Details' section of this form will result in Aberdeenshire Council being unable to accept your representation.

Your information will be shared with the following recipients or categories of recipient:

Members of the public are being given this final opportunity to comment on the Proposed Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. The reasons for any changes that the Council receives will be analysed and reported to Scottish Ministers. They will then appoint a person to conduct a public examination of the Proposed Plan, focusing particularly on the unresolved issues raised and the changes sought.

Your name and respondent identification number (provided to you by Aberdeenshire Council on receipt of your

submission) will be published alongside a copy of your completed response on the Proposed Local Development Plan website (contact details and information that is deemed commercially sensitive will not be made available to the public).

In accordance with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2008 where the appointed person determines that further representations should be made or further information should be provided by any person in connection with the examination of the Proposed Plan the appointed person may by notice request that person to make such further representations or to provide such further information.

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Not applicable.

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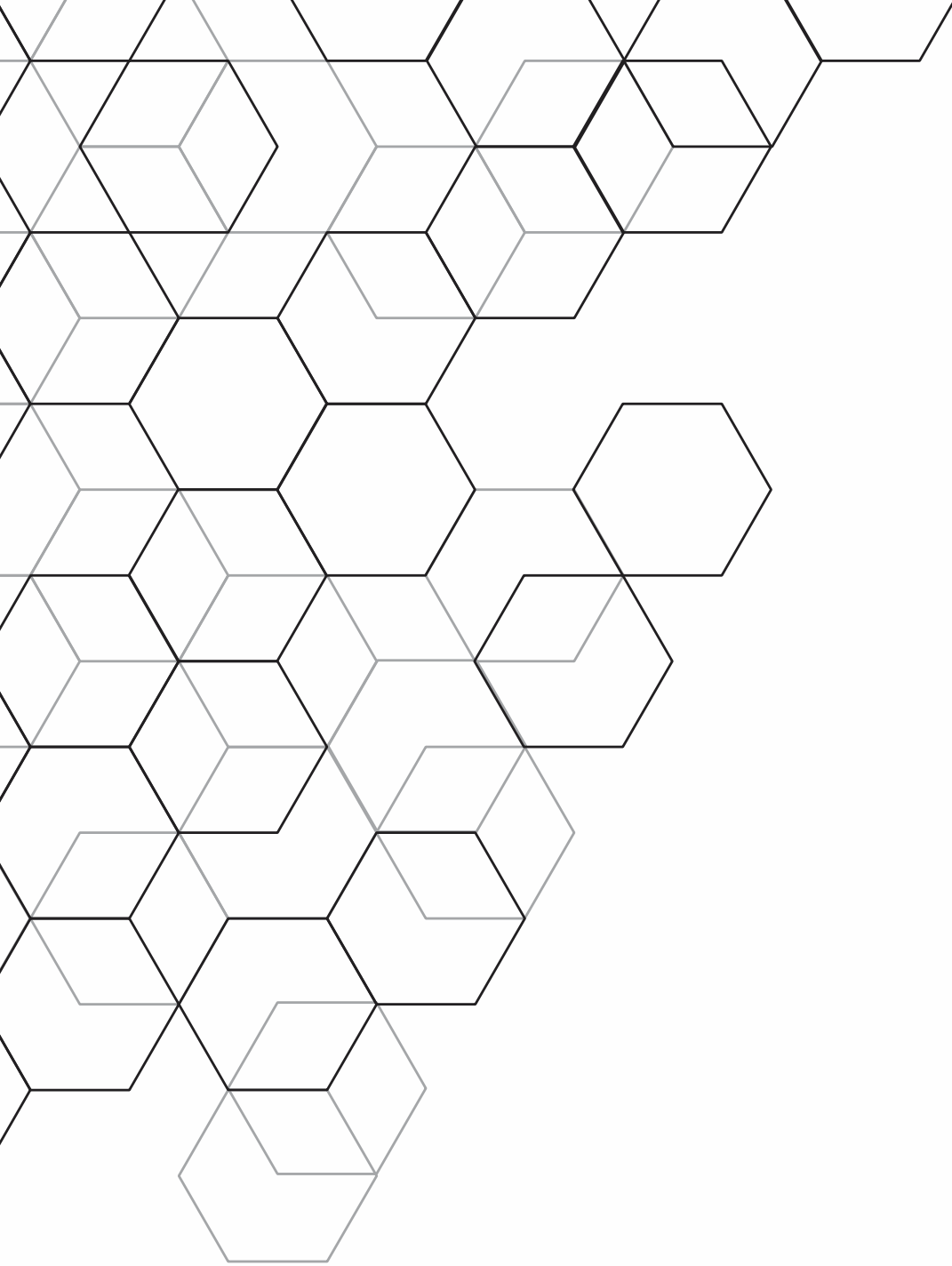
Aberdeenshire Council will only keep your personal data for as long as is needed. Aberdeenshire Council will retain your response and personal data for a retention period of 5 years from the date upon which it was collected. After 5 years Aberdeenshire Council will review whether it is necessary to continue to retain your information for a longer period. A redacted copy of your submission will be retained for 5 years beyond the life of the Local Development Plan 2021, possibly until 2037.

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Not applicable.

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- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (after raising the issue with the Data Protection Officer first);
- to request access to your personal data;
- to data portability, where the legal basis specified above is:
 - (i) Consent; or
 - (ii) Performance of a Contract;
- to request rectification or erasure of your personal data, as so far as the legislation permits.



Appendix 3: Keith Hall Designed Landscape Appraisal

BANCON DEVELOPMENTS LTD

KEITH HALL

DESIGNED LANDSCAPE APPRAISAL

NOVEMBER 2008

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LPA Ref: Aberdeenshire

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Date of Issue:

November 2008

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of Bancon Developments Ltd to appraise the Keith Hall Designed Landscape, located to the east of Inverurie (see Figure 1: Site Location). This appraisal will inform future development proposals for the estate and provide a clear understanding of its key physical and historical components.
- 1.2 A site visit has supported a desktop review of available historical maps and literature.
- 1.3 The importance of the Designed Landscape at Keith Hall is defined by Historic Scotland against a number of values in the Inventory of Designed Landscapes. Keith Hall was scored as follows;
 - High Significance for **Work of Art**: the design by Thomas White is a significant example of his work and in its present condition is of high value as a Work of Art.
 - High significance for **historical** value; the distinct periods of development of Keith Hall and its estate give Keith Hall high historical value.
 - Outstanding **architectural** value: The designed landscape provides a setting for Keith Hall, which is a Category A listed building.
 - Outstanding **scenic** value: The canopy of the woodland around the park contributes to the surrounding scenery and gives Keith Hall outstanding scenic value.
- 1.4 The appraisal will focus on the key built and natural elements that comprise the Designed Landscape as identified by Historic Scotland. An understanding of the merits of individual elements will allow a fuller understanding of the reasons for the Designed Landscape's scoring.

2. Appraisal

- 2.1 The Designed Landscape extends to an area of around 411ha with a focus on Keith Hall. The extent of the Designed Landscape Boundary is indicated on Figure 2. The designation covers all of Bancon Developments Ltd land interest.
- 2.2 The aim of this appraisal is to identify the existing condition and legibility of the various parts of the estate and the validity of its designation as a Designed Landscape. This will be achieved by appraising the features that currently contribute to its designation.
- 2.3 Historic Scotland's identifies the key components of the Designed Landscape as follows;
- Plantation woodland which borders the park, particularly along the south edge and the north drive.
 - Parkland extending to the south and east of Keith Hall.
 - Ornamental gardens, to the south of Keith Hall.
 - A walled garden located to the north east of Keith Hall.
 - Architectural features, including Keith Hall, a new bridge, Stables, Kennels, Home Farm and North and South Lodges.
- 2.4 Each key component will be considered to inform an analysis of Historic Scotland's scoring of the Designed Landscape.

Surrounding Plantation Woodland

- 2.5 Historic Scotland note the earliest designs for the Keith Hall estate were laid out in the 17th and early 18th century and focussed the woodland along two formal avenues to the south and east of the hall.
- 2.6 Figure 3 provides an analysis of the phases of planned growth of woodland that has taken place within the Keith Hall estate. The woodland planting that surrounds the estate was understood to be implemented as part of Thomas White's informal designs for the Keith Hall landscape in the late 18th Century. Historic map analysis reveals the southern and eastern plantations were indeed planted but the northern section did not fully enclose the estate as seen today.

- 2.7 During the mid and late 19th century, ornamental woodlands were added along a new North Drive to Keith Hall. By the end of the 19th century a remaining pocket of land at the east of the North Drive was filled in with woodland, enclosing the estate on the north, east and west edges.
- 2.8 By the late 20th/ early 21st century much of the ornamental wood along the North Drive had been replanted. Part of the southern woodland was replanted following a fire in the 1980s. A large area of woodland planted in the late 20th century occupying agricultural land in the north of the site has been recently removed.
- 2.9 The distribution of woodland within the estate today partly reflects the original design intentions of the plans laid out by Thomas White but later alterations and additions reduce the legibility of the 18th century plan. The majority of woodland to the north of Keith Hall was added in the 19th century and the shape of woodland within the tree belts continues to change to this day. The woodland in close proximity to Keith Hall represents the intentions of the original 17th and 18th century designs and subsequently Thomas White's plan.

Parkland

- 2.10 The parkland features of the estate were originally designed in late 18th Century by Thomas White and extended to the east and south of Keith Hall. The parkland area within the estate are now largely in agricultural use, with around 75% of the parkland originally set out in White's landscape plan now in use for agriculture. This is based on the assumption that the majority of land within the tree plantations was designed for recreation rather than agriculture. No plan showing the extent of the parkland was available.
- 2.11 This change in use represents a departure from the original intentions of the informal designed landscape set out by Thomas White. The area of former parkland to the north of the East Drive is in agricultural use. The former parkland area to the south of the East Drive still maintains some of the original characteristics but is now in agricultural use.
- 2.12 Within the parkland area it is noted that there has been some changes to the landscape form. Clumps of woodland within the former parkland setting have been removed as the land is now in agricultural use, and some clumps of woodland have been replanted during recent years.

- 2.13 The parkland areas within the estate are largely situated outwith the view of Keith Hall itself, and therefore have little direct influence on the architectural setting of the house. The change of use from parkland to agricultural land has maintained the sense of open space that wraps around the more enclosed central area of the estate around Keith Hall.
- 2.14 The former parkland areas of Keith Hall are considered to be low significance in terms of their relationship to original design intentions, as the majority of land no longer fulfils a role of parkland within the estate.
- 2.15 Areas of intact parkland that reflect their planned characteristics, such as the land to the west of the Southwest Drive, are situated in close proximity to Keith Hall.
- 2.16 The landscape character of the former parkland areas of the estate, east of Keith Hall, are broadly similar to the wider landscape as it comprises a mix of agricultural fields broken by boundaries of low stone walls and post and wire fences. The landscape is enclosed by a woodland edge of structure planting, which encloses it from the wider area, but beyond this characteristic, the value of the former parkland area is not considered to be any more significant than the surrounding countryside.

Ornamental and walled gardens

- 2.17 The formal landscape garden features within the Keith Hall estate were first established in the late 17th century when a simple formal garden was planted around Keith Hall, with two formal avenues running east and south from the hall. No evidence was found to suggest Thomas White's improvement plan in the 18th century altered this garden.
- 2.18 During the mid to late 19th century William Ramage of Aberdeen redesigned parts of the estate grounds, adding a series of formal gardens to the west of the hall including flowerbeds, bowling green, tennis courts and croquet lawn. During the early 20th century a lake was created to the south of Keith Hall, which blocked off the original south drive.
- 2.19 At the present time, 10 ha of ornamental gardens south of the hall are being restored and maintained by Keith Hall Gardens Ltd for the benefit of the Hall's residents. There is no remaining evidence of the Ramage's 19th century amendments to the formal landscape to the west of Keith Hall. The extent of the woodland and mix of ornamental tree species has changed.

- 2.20 A walled garden was introduced in the mid 19th century and lies to the north east of Keith Hall. This comprises a series of terraces enclosed by a brick wall. The walled garden is currently operating as a commercial nursery.
- 2.21 The formal gardens also play an important role in providing a setting for the house, and in turn adding to the scenic value of the estate by creating variety within the landscape. The formal nature of the gardens reflects the architectural and historical grandeur of the Category A listed Keith Hall.
- 2.22 This area of formal landscape around Keith Hall is therefore considered to be of high significance in underpinning the landscape values attributed to the estate by Historic Scotland. The formal landscape is situated outwith the boundaries of the study area. The impact of development in adjacent areas must be considered to ensure that the value of the formal landscapes is upheld.

Architectural features

- 2.23 Keith Hall is a Category A listed building, which incorporates the former Caskieben Castle. The original Z-plan tower of the castle built in the 16th century was extended in the 17th century by the 1st Earl of Kintore, to include the wings and towers. Further alterations were made to the structure by John Paterson (1788), John Smith (1806 – 1812) and William Ramage of Aberdeen (1854). Many other alterations and additions were commissioned between 1895 and 1914. Since then, a complete renovation of the internal building has taken place in the 1980s, which separated the building into smaller apartments.
- 2.24 In addition to Keith Hall itself, there are a number of other listed buildings and structures located in and around the estate. The location of listed buildings within the estate is indicated on Figure 4: Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments. These are noted as follows;
- Keith Hall North Lodge – Single storey, L-plan lodge (built 1854) with small modern flat roof addition (Category B Listed);
 - Keith Hall South Lodge – Central octagon (2 storeys with higher circular turret) with 1 storey projections. Built around 1810. (Category C Listed);
 - Keith Hall East Lodge – Single storey rectangular-plan lodge with two small additions to the rear. Built 1806 – 1812. (Category C Listed);

- Keith Hall Stables – 2-storey, shallow U-plan, classically-detailed former stables and coach house, converted to house. Built 1806. (Category B Listed);
- Keith Hall Home Farm - Large quadrangular plan, single storey and attic and 2-storey steading with later additions. Built 1806-12. (Category B Listed);
- Keith Hall Home Farm Cottages - Single storey, 8-bay, rectangular-plan row of 2 cottages. Built mid 19th century. (Category C Listed);
- Keith Hall Ice House - 18th century. Simple egg shape ice house with squared granite block entrance, brick ceiling with round granite aperture at apex (Category C Listed);
- Keith Hall Road Bridge at North Drive - Single span round-arch road bridge over field track. Built 1806-12. (Category C Listed);
- Keith Hall Walled Garden and Garden Cottage - Large rectangular plan walled garden, terraced on three levels with cottage attached at north west corner. Built 1854. (Category B listed);
- Keithhall and Kinkell Parish Church (Category B listed) – Rectangular building with belfry at the west end built from granite with a slated roof. Dated 1772.
- Keith Hall Gardener's Cottage – single storey, 3-bay Picturesque cottage with modern addition to rear. Single storey bothy/ shed also included in listing. Built mid 19th century. (Category C listed).
- Bridge over River Urie near the Bass (Keith Hall Road) – Large single segmental arch, fine ashlar granite voussoirs with simple hood moulding. Dated 1809. (Category B Listed).

2.25 In addition, there is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) located within the Estate at the former site of Caskieben Castle, moat and standing stone. The SAM is located around 200m to the north of Keith Hall and the setting of the castle is enclosed by woodland. These features are also identified on Figure 4.

2.26 The presence of numerous listed buildings within the estate represents the accumulative historical significance of Keith Hall. The majority of the listed structures are located outwith the study area.

2.27 Development proposals for areas of the site within the visual envelope of these buildings must ensure that the architectural setting of the listed buildings is not compromised. Due care should also be taken to ensure that new development does not detract from the wider setting of the listed buildings.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 The appraisal of the key components of the Keith Hall Designed Landscape as defined by Historic Scotland has enabled this report to consider the robustness of the values attributed to the landscape. The categories by which the Design Landscape was assessed and the values given will now be discussed.

Values

High Significance for Work of Art:

- 3.2 The design of Thomas White was largely an improvement plan that introduced woodland plantations, extensive parkland and replaced the original southern drive with a new southwestern drive. A desktop review of Thomas White has not revealed a significant body of work.
- 3.3 The outlying parkland and woodland has been significantly altered over the years. The ornamental gardens close to Keith Hall pre-date White and the walled garden post-date White. The eastern drive was improved but did exist prior to the improvement plan. The scoring of high significance is not understood given the majority of the features introduced by White have been removed, replanted or altered.

High Significance for Historical Value;

- 3.4 The landscape has evolved over the centuries rather than changed in particularly distinct or wholesale phases. Keith Hall and its surrounding gardens haven been continually altered so to make judgements on distinctive phases based upon visible evidence difficult. There is no question that over time the collection of listed buildings and structures has contributed to an overall historic value but a high score for distinctive periods is not understood.

Outstanding architectural value:

- 3.5 Keith Hall is an A listed building with other buildings and structures within the Design Landscape policy area listed as B or C. Historic Scotland considers the designed landscape to provide a setting for Keith Hall but this is limited to the fields surrounding the building. Given the scale of the policy area and the large number of non-A listed buildings or structures an outstanding value is perhaps too high.

Outstanding scenic value:

- 3.6 The woodland around Keith Hall is one of numerous planned areas around Inverurie that contribute to the character of the wider area. The scenic value of woodland should be judged within the context of its uniqueness and design qualities. The appraisal has established the woodland cover evolved over a number of centuries to reach the form it has today. Due to the site's location and relationship with topography, the landscape cannot be viewed as one entity. Views of the estate from the wider area are generally of one of the woodland edges and it is not possible to gain glimpses of the open space beyond.
- 3.7 The woodland does contribute to the variety and scenic qualities around Inverurie but outstanding is perhaps too high a value considering the diminishing association with historically planned landscapes.

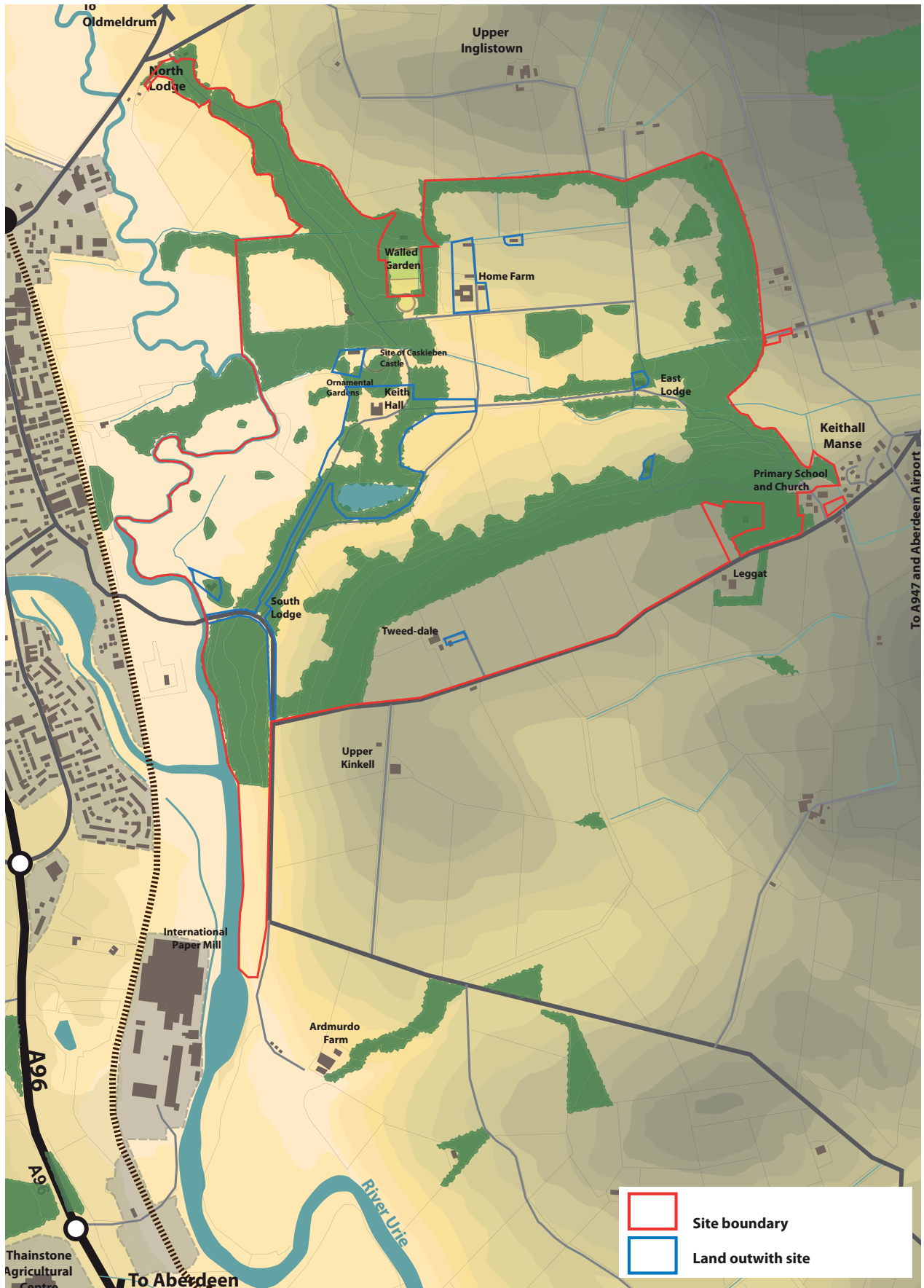
Site potential

- 3.8 Many of the original intentions of the designed landscape have been eroded by changes over time to the landscape character and use of areas of the Keith Hall estate. This has particularly affected the significance of the former parkland, some areas of woodland and the majority of land to the north of East Drive.
- 3.9 The majority of architectural features are situated outwith the site area itself, and are largely well contained by the landscape structure. Due care should be taken to ensure that development proposals for land within the visual envelope of listed buildings does not detract from the core cultural values.
- 3.10 Figure 5 provides an analysis of the sensitivity of the Designed Landscape within the Estate. The most sensitive areas of the Designed Landscape are situated around the setting for Keith Hall itself (highlighted as Area 1 on Figure 5: Designed Landscape Sensitivity). This area is considered to be the core of the Designed Landscape and owes its appearance to the work of a number of people, rather than any particular person.
- 3.11 The area directly east and south of the core area forms part of the core area's setting (Area 2). The East Drive forms a spine to this area and the landscape broadly resembles the White improvement plan although land uses have changed.
- 3.12 The area around Home Farm has seen the proportion of open space and woodland change over time (Area 3). The later introduction of the walled garden and the introduction of woodland planting contribute to the landscape character but are unrelated to Thomas White. The open spaces within this area are considered the

least relevant to the Designed Landscape within the plantation woodland boundaries.

- 3.13 The reasons for the policy areas extending beyond the plantation woodland are not clear and not supported by this report (Area 4). However, the setting of the woodland would need to be considered should future changes in land use occur.
- 3.14 Within the boundary of the plantation woodland, appropriate uses should be explored that can retain the structure of open space without detracting from historic structures.
- 3.15 The northern open spaces within the woodland are the least sensitive and should be subject to further study to determine potential future uses.
- 3.16 Agricultural areas outwith the plantation woodland are not considered significant to the Designed Landscape.

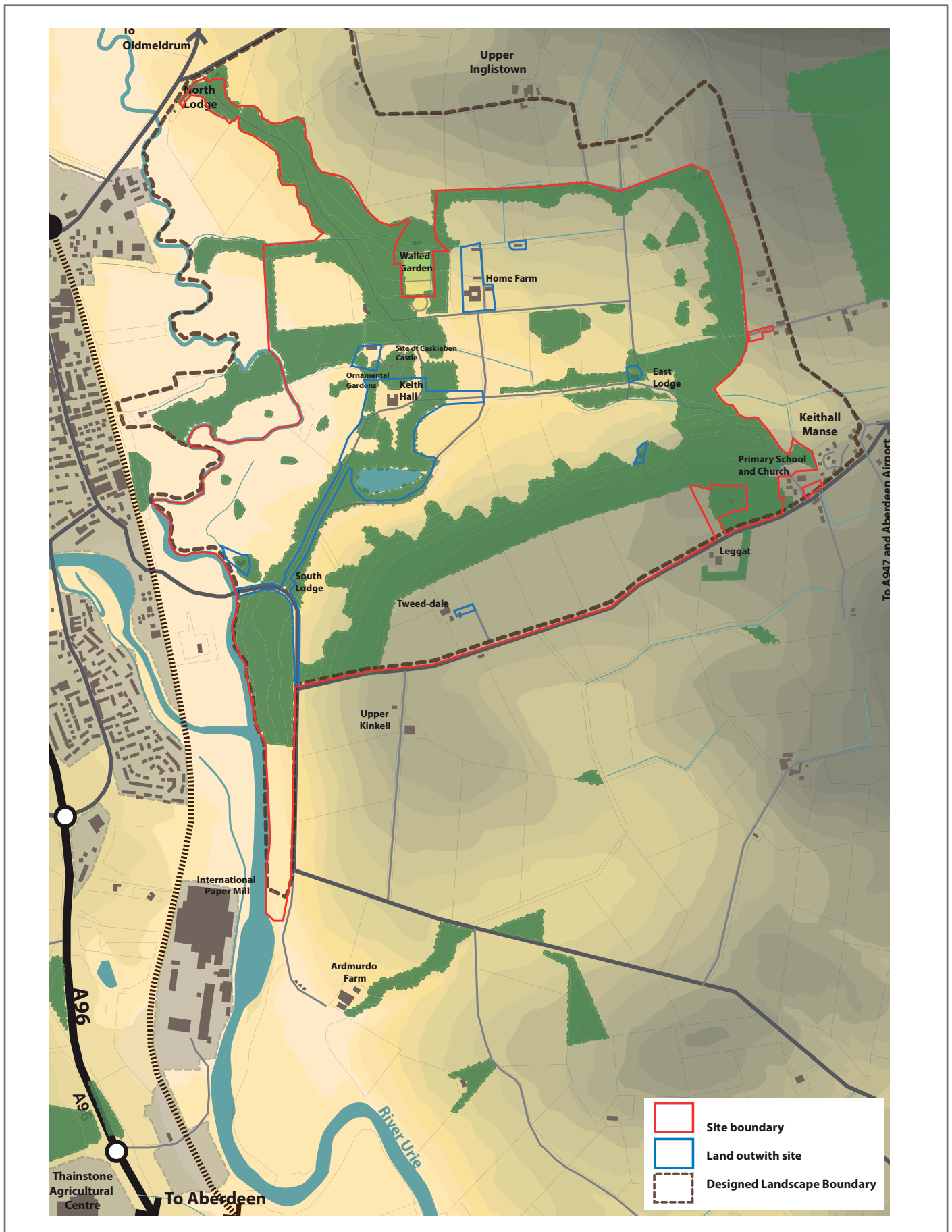
Appendix 1: Figures 1 - 5



Client: Bancon Developments Ltd
Project: Keith Hall, Inverurie
Title: Figure 1 - Location Plan
Reference: BDEE1005
Date: November 2008
Scale: NTS

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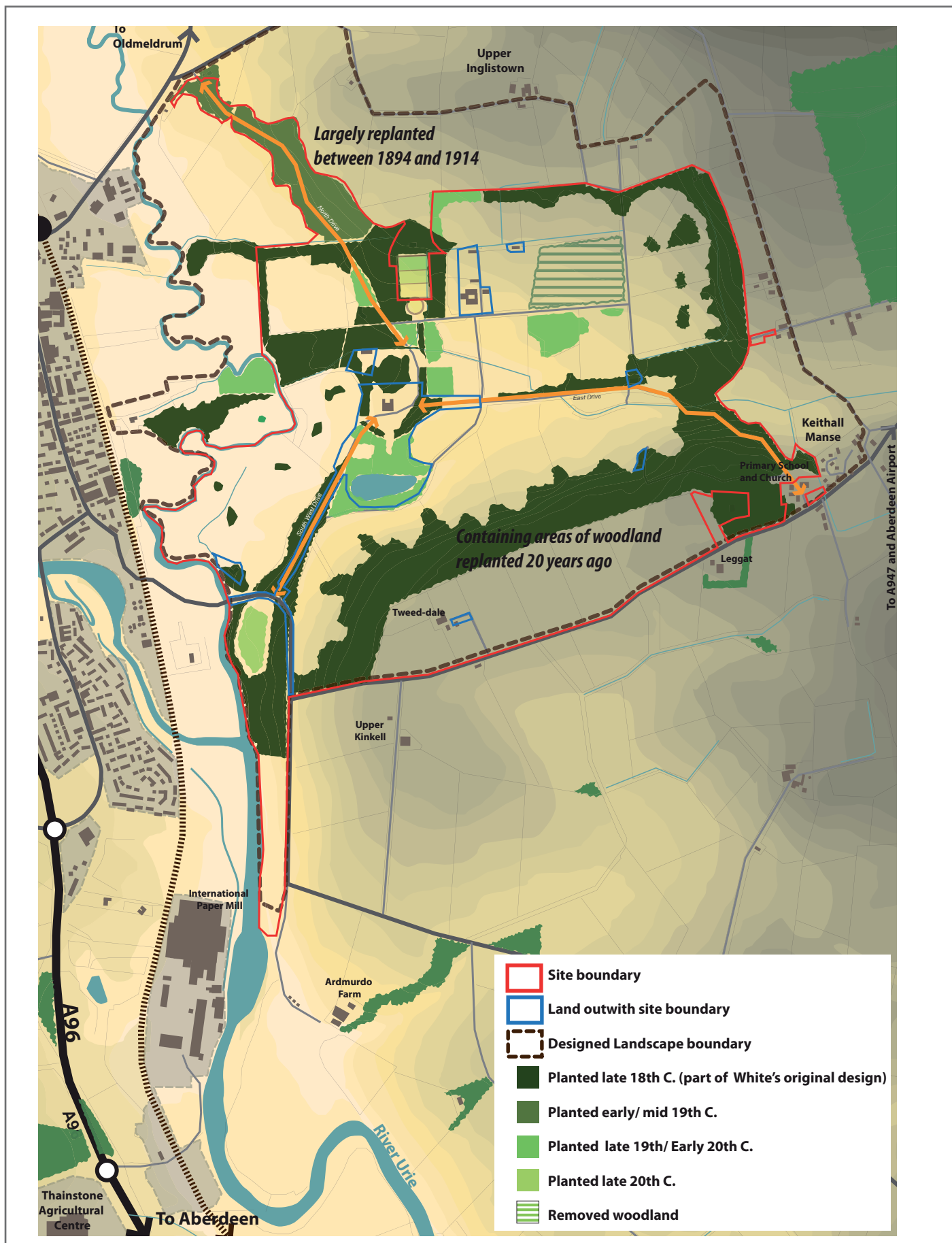




Client: Bancon Developments Ltd
Project: Keith Hall, Inverurie
Title: Figure 2 - Designed Landscape boundary
Reference: BDEE1005
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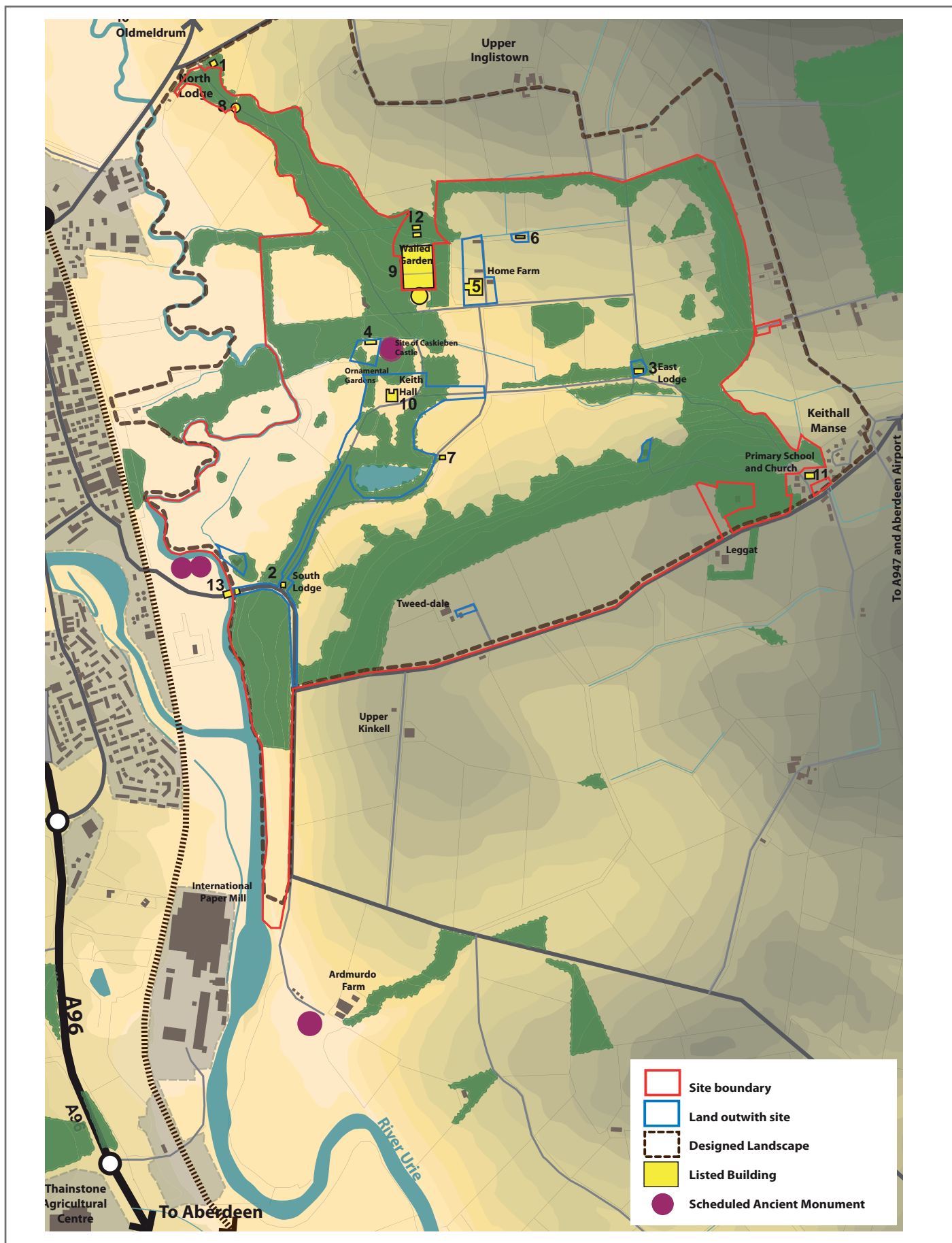




Client: Bancon Developments Ltd
 Project: Keith Hall, Inverurie
 Title: Figure 3 - Significance of Woodland
 Reference: BDEE1005
 Date: November 2008
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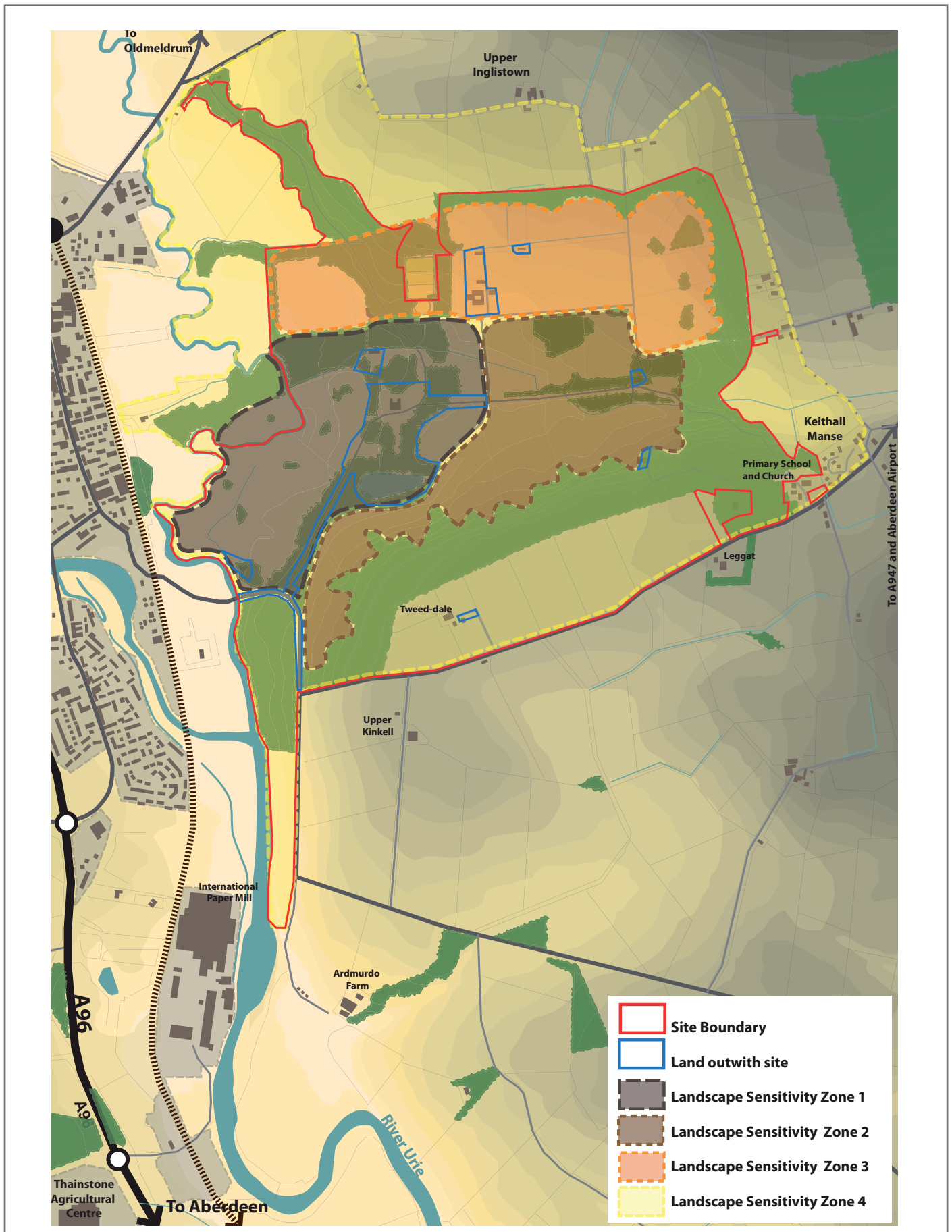




Client: Bancon Developments Ltd
 Project: Keith Hall, Inverurie
 Title: Figure 4 - Location of Listed Buildings & SAMs
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Client: Bancon Developments Ltd
Project: Keith Hall, Inverurie
Title: Figure 5 - Designed Landscape Sensitivity
Reference: BDEE1005
Date: November 2008
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BANCON DEVELOPMENTS LTD

KEITH HALL, INVERURIE

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

NOVEMBER 2008

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Date of Issue: November 2008

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of Bancon Development Ltd to inform a development strategy for land at Keith Hall, Inverurie.
- 1.2 The purpose of the report is to;
 - Assess the landscape character
 - Assess the visibility of the site
- 1.3 The outcome will be an understanding of the sensitivity of the site in terms of character and views

Site Description

- 1.4 The site is located within Keith Hall Estate, to the east of the urban area of Inverurie. The site is identified on Figure 1: Site Location.
- 1.5 The southern site boundary is the B993 that leads to Whiterashes on the A947 in the east and Inverurie town centre in the west. An area of linear woodland known as the Kinkell Belt extends south west between the River Urie and an unnamed road.
- 1.6 The majority of the western boundary runs along the eastern bank of the River Urie. The northern section of the western boundary lies along the west side of the woodland that is set back from the river.
- 1.7 The southern and eastern boundaries run along the plantation woodland that encloses the open spaces within the Designed Landscape.
- 1.8 Land within the site is predominantly agricultural in use with formal gardens and landscape situated close to Keith Hall.

2. Landscape Character Appraisal

2.1 In order to address the differing aspects of scale, the appraisal will be split into two sections addressing:

- The site's relationship with the wider area; and
- The site's relationship with the local area

Topography

2.2 The topography of the site plays an important role in establishing the relationship of the site within the wider area. The Keith Hall estate sits to the east of the River Urie, which lies at a height of around 50m AOD. The estate sits in a shallow valley, with land rising gradually to the south, east and north (see Figure 2: Topography).

2.3 The north drive is located at approximately 65m AOD. Within the site boundary, the land slopes upwards to approximately 110m AOD in the northeastern corner. The landform dips along the eastern boundary to 80 m AOD to accommodate a burn and rises back to 110m AOD as it meets the southern boundary (B993).

2.4 From this point, the land gently slopes down to the west until nearing the River Urie when it descends more steeply, meeting the southern boundary of the site.

2.5 The topography of the area results in the site being relatively well contained within the wider landscape.

Wider Landscape Character

2.6 Inverurie is located within the Agricultural Heartlands landscape character type, as defined by the South and Central Aberdeenshire Landscape Character Assessment (SNH, 1998). The predominant landscape characteristics of this area are summarised as agricultural, comprising a mix of generally intensive mixed farming, on large fields. Inverurie sits on the edge of an area of generally flat lowland, which curves between Huntly to the northwest and Oldmeldrum to the northeast.

2.7 Within the Agricultural Heartland landscape character type, Inverurie and its hinterland sit in the Central Wooded Estates landscape character area (Area 12). The Keith Hall Estate falls within this character area. The landscape character changes and east of the site, and is categorised within the Formantine Lowlands landscape character area (Area 11).

- 2.8 Inverurie is typical of most towns in the area in that it is fringed by modern housing development. Whilst the woods and estates dictate the local landscape pattern, network of roads are routed fairly randomly across the landscape, which influence the character.
- 2.9 Key characteristics of the landscape which are of relevance to the site and surrounding land are as follows;
- Rolling landscape of low hills and wide valleys.
 - Strong woodland structure associated with numerous estate policies, adding rich and diverse texture to the landscape.
 - Mixed farmland with varying size and pattern of fields.
- 2.10 The landscape character of the Keith Hall estate fits specifically into the policy woodlands landscape type identified as being prevalent in this area.
- 2.11 The Uryside Development Framework (Adopted 2006) is changing the character of the landscape to the north of the site. This new community also extends to the south of the B9170 (Oldmeldrum Road) and into the policy area of the Designed Landscape.
- 2.12 The Keith Hall Designed Landscape extends to an area of around 411ha. The significance of the Designed Landscape at Keith Hall has been considered in a separate report entitled Keith Hall Designed Landscape Appraisal.
- 2.13 Due to a combination of the topography and plantation woodlands the impact of development on the wider character is unlikely to be significant. Potential development around the periphery of the estate will need to consider its influence on local visual receptors.

Existing Local Character

- 2.14 For the purposes of assessment, the site has been split into four areas. These are indicated on Figure 3: Landscape Character Appraisal.
- 2.15 The first area is located to the northwest of the estate, and comprises the north drive and an area of open space to the west of the walled garden.
- 2.16 The second area encompasses the majority of the open space within the plantation woodland. Home Farm is situated to the west of the area with the lower third separated by the East Drive from Keith Hall. This area is currently used for agricultural land, punctuated by clumps of woodland.

- 2.17 The third area covers land on either side of the Southwest Drive located at the south of Keith Hall. The area is bordered by the River Urie in the west and the southern plantation in the east.
- 2.18 The fourth area is located to the south of the southern plantation. This plantation forms the northern boundary and the B993 forms the southern boundary. Keithall Manse is located a short distance to the east.
- 2.19 The landscape characteristics of the designed landscape and policy woodlands dominate the local character of the site. Within the estate itself, the character of the landscape differs between the four areas outlined above.

Area 1

- 2.20 The area of site to the west of the walled garden and the north drive is fully enclosed by the surrounding woodland structure. The landscape is therefore characterised by the enclosed woodland setting and isolated from open spaces and buildings within the designed landscape.
- 2.21 Woodland on the eastern edge of this area of the site is more broken, providing a visual connection between the site and the north drive. The drive heads south through a sinew of woodland which eventually opens up into the central parkland area. The north drive also leads to the B9170 and is enclosed by woodland on both sides along the entire length.

Area 2

- 2.22 The central parkland area of the estate is distinguished from the wider landscape character by the enclosure created by the plantation woodland. The landform within the central parkland area undulates slightly, but allows for views to the surrounding woodland. Field boundaries are demarcated by a mixture of post and wire fences. There are also a number of stone walls that are particularly associated with the roads through the estate and Home Farm.
- 2.23 Tree groupings are scattered throughout the area with linear belts located along the east drive. Home Farm is clearly visible and combines with the agricultural fields to create a farmland character. Views outwith the estate grounds from this area are completely blocked by the woodland edges.

Area 3

- 2.24 The fields to the east of the southwest drive are enclosed to the north, west and south by woodland. These fields appear overgrown and not used for any specific purpose. Views into the site are possible from the adjacent B993 road; however the fields are sheltered from views from further afield by the woodland belt which runs to the west of the B993. This area of the site is therefore relatively self contained, and has little impact on the surrounding land within the estate.
- 2.25 The area to the west of the southwest drive slopes down to the River Urie's east bank. The northern, eastern and southern boundaries are enclosed by woodland creating an attractive and sheltered setting. The eastern edge of Inverurie is evident beyond the embankment carrying the rail line.

Area 4

- 2.26 The land to the south of the site has a different landscape character to the rest of the site. This area sits outwith the southern woodlands, and therefore has an association with the surrounding countryside than the enclosed areas within the plantation woodland. In this respect, the southern fields match the landscape characteristic of rolling hills and valleys that typifies much of the landscape around Inverurie, as set out in South and Central Aberdeenshire Landscape Character Assessment (SNH, 1998). These fields feel detached from the land within the woodland boundary, as there is no visual relationship with the land within the estate.

Summary

- 2.27 The purpose of the previous section was to appraise the wider and local landscape to understand the sensitivity of the landscape within the site. Key observations / principles are considered to be:
- Woodlands surround the estate, with the exception of some land to the south and west. This creates an enclosed landscape for much of the site, which separates it from the wider landscape character area;
 - The majority of the open space within the plantation woodland shares the farmland characteristics of the wider landscape;
 - Isolated and enclosed areas exist within the site that have little relation or connection with the character of the designed landscape of the wider countryside; and
 - Land along the southern boundary shares the landscape characteristics of the wider landscape and has a southern outlook over agricultural rolling hills. The woodland edge to the south of this area forms a defensible boundary to the south.

3. Visual Appraisal

- 3.1 Consideration has been given to the visibility of the site in relation to surrounding receptors. The locations of viewpoints are indicated on Figure 4: Viewpoint Locations and photographs are shown in Figures 5a to 5e.

Viewpoint 1: View south from Tweed-dale

- 3.2 The landscape character of land to the south of the Keith Hall estate differs considerably from the rest of the estate. The belt of woodland planting to the south of the estate remains fairly dense, which separates the southern fields from the rest of the estate. The land sits on a gradual south facing slope, which allows for long views to be enjoyed to the landscape to the south and west of Inverurie. There is therefore a visual relationship between this land and the open countryside to the south.

Viewpoint 2: Monk's Hillock

- 3.3 Looking westwards from dwelling houses at Monk's Hillock to the east of the site, the policy woodlands of the Keith Hall estate are visible. The woodland is mature and blocks views into the site from this location.

Viewpoint 3: South of Southwest Lodge into Keith Hall (B993)

- 3.4 Land within the site boundary is visible in the foreground from the B993 road. A mature bank of broadleaf woodland runs to the south east of this area of the site which forms the southern woodland edge of the estate. This blocks views into the rest of the estate from this area of the site. These fields are therefore relatively isolated from the wider estate area, and have a stronger visual relationship with the B993 en route into Inverurie.

Viewpoint 4: Leggat

- 3.5 From this viewpoint, the southern area of the Keith Hall estate can be seen stretching out westwards, adjacent to the B993 road. The woodland belt through the southern area of the estate can be seen along the northern edge of the fields. This provides visual separation between the southern part of the site and the rest of the Keith Hall estate. A broken line of mature trees runs along the edge of the B993 on the southern edge of the site which provides some enclosure to the site.

Viewpoint 5: East Lodge

- 3.6 The east lodge is located within the woodland belt to the east of the Keith Hall estate. From this location, views westwards are limited by the existing woodland cover and the landform, which rises gradually northwards to form a slight plateau in the central farmland area of the estate. These factors combine to prevent views into the formal parkland area close to Keith Hall.

Viewpoint 6: Farmland looking west

- 3.7 This viewpoint looks westwards from the road which provides access to the central farmland area of the estate. Looking westwards, the buildings of Home Farm are visible and the agricultural landscape is evident. A woodland belt surrounds the farmland area which prevents views to other areas of the estate and the wider landscape.

Viewpoint 7: Farmland looking east

- 3.8 The fields within the central farmland area of the estate are linked due to the relatively open nature of the landscape. There is a significant area of woodland situated to the south of the access road through this part of the estate that provides some shelter within the farmland. This blocks views to the parkland at the west of the estate from this viewpoint. A woodland edge surrounds the farmland, which prevents views outwith the estate from this central area.

Viewpoint 8: Southwest drive looking west

- 3.9 The southwest drive provides the main access route from the B993 to Keith Hall. Looking westwards, glimpsed views of the urban edge of Inverurie are possible across the flood plain. The landscape is flat and punctuated by occasional mature specimen trees. The visual linkages between the estate and the urban area apparent from this viewpoint illustrate that the western edge of the Keith Hall estate is less well enclosed by the woodland edge than the other boundaries to the estate.

Viewpoint 9: North Drive looking west into site

- 3.10 Looking west from the North Drive, lands within the site is visible in the foreground. This area of the site well contained by woodland on all edges, which blocks views to the surrounding landscape.

Viewpoint 10: Landscape character around Keith Hall (outwith the site)

- 3.11 This viewpoint looks directly southwards from the driveway area at the south entrance to Keith Hall. The formal gardens of the designed landscape are visible, comprising a mix of maintained lawns, shrubs and mature specimen trees. This landscape provides enclosure to the house, reducing views in and out of the surrounding landscape. Views to the site are blocked.

Summary

- 3.12 The purpose of the visual appraisal is to inform the spatial development of the site. To this aim, a series of governing principles can be established to guide the development of the site (built form, open space, landscape, etc). Key observations / principles include:
- The land at the south of the site has an open aspect to the south and therefore has a visual relationship with the adjacent land.
 - Land within the woodland boundary of the estate is screened from the surrounding countryside. This restricts views into the central area of the site from the surrounding countryside.
 - Land in the northwest area of the site, adjacent to the North Drive, is completely contained by woodland.
 - Land at the southwest of the site is visible from the B993 above the stone wall which forms its western boundary. An area of woodland to the west of the site screens the site from the view of visual receptors and the built up area of the town.
 - Keith Hall and its adjacent formal gardens are not visible from other parts of the designed landscape.

4. Conclusions

- 4.1 The landscape character and visual appraisal for the site considers its sensitivity to development in terms of visual impact and landscape character. This appraisal will inform a spatial strategy for the Keith Hall estate.
- 4.2 The woodland setting of the Keith Hall Estate matches the landscape characteristics set out in the SNH landscape character appraisal for Aberdeenshire, which includes areas of policy woodland within a more widespread landscape of low hills and wide valleys. The woodland setting of Keith Hall Estate adds diversity to the landscape around Inverurie and plays a significant role in the wider landscape character.
- 4.3 The Designed Landscape at Keith Hall is ranked highly by Historic Scotland's Inventory of Designed Landscapes and Gardens. Many of the key features of the landscape are located outwith the areas of site, largely around Keith Hall itself. The woodland canopy is identified as a key feature of the landscape; therefore proposed development must fit sensitively within this setting.
- 4.4 The blocks of woodland around the periphery of the estate enclose much of the land within the site from external viewpoints. Only land to the south of the southern woods is visible from the wider area. In particular, the land on the southern edge of the site adjacent to the B993 has a strong visual and landscape relationship with the open countryside to the south.
- 4.5 The site's topography further contributes to the sense of enclosure of land within the woodland boundary of the estate. The estate sits in a shallow valley which, combined with the woodland setting, reduces the visibility of the land from the surrounding area.
- 4.6 It is considered that development on the subject site could be accommodated within the Keith Hall estate. The landscape setting of the estate will require due care to be taken in the location and type of development proposed, to ensure that the integrity of the estate is not lost.

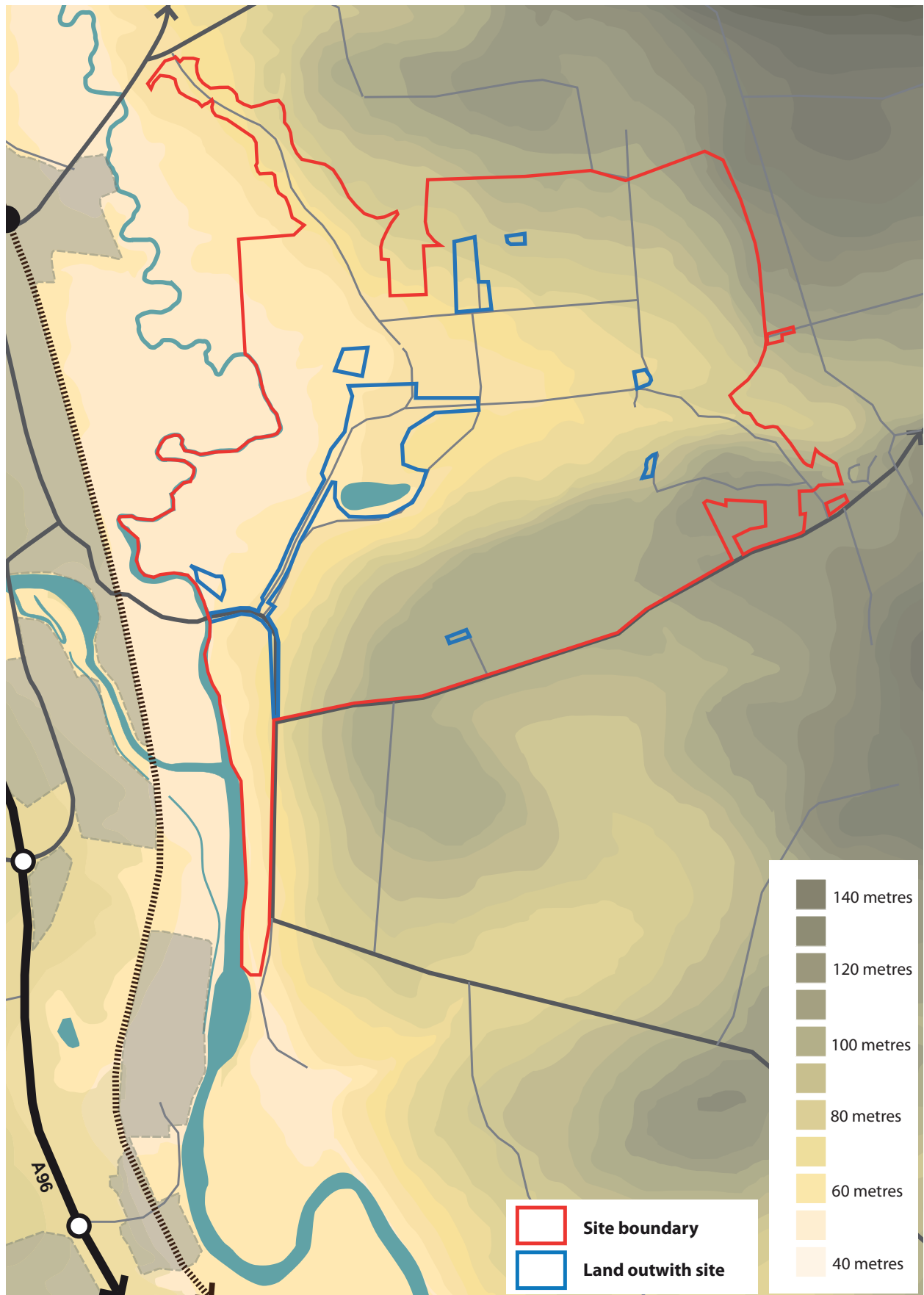
Appendix 1: Figures 1 - 5



Client: Bancon Developments Ltd
Project: Keith Hall, Inverurie
Title: Figure 1 - Location Plan
Reference: BDEE1005
Date: November 2008
Scale: NTS

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Client: Bancon Developments Ltd
Project: Keith Hall, Inverurie
Title: Figure 2 - Topography
Reference: BDEE1005
Date: November 2008
Scale: NTS

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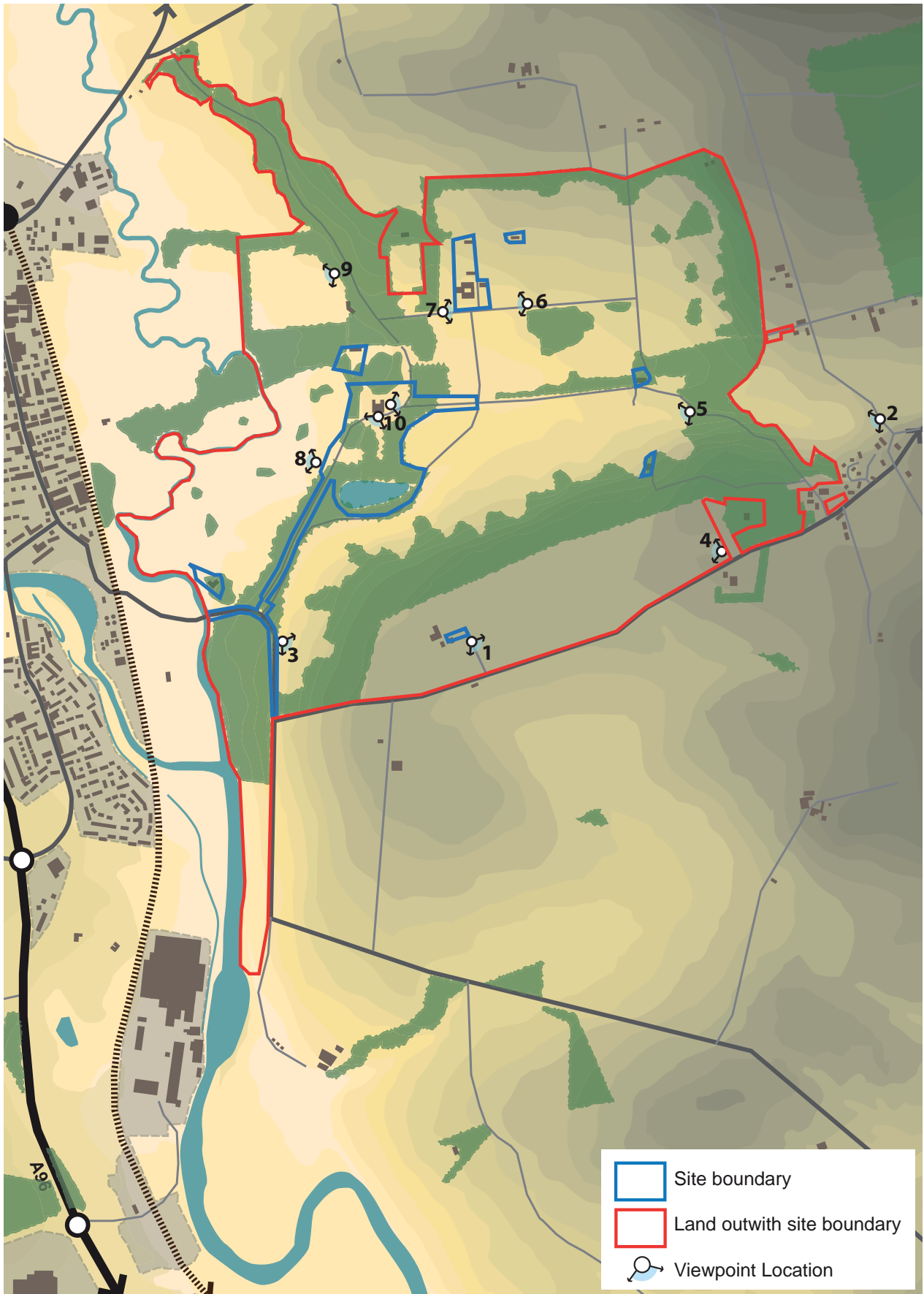




Client: Bancon Developments Ltd
Project: Keith Hall, Inverurie
Title: Figure 3 - Landscape and Visual Appraisal
Reference: BDEE1005
Date: November 2008
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Project: Keith Hall, Inverurie
Title: Figure 4 - Viewpoint Locations
Reference: BDEE1005
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Viewpoint 1 - View south from Tweed-dale



Viewpoint 2 - Monk's Hillock

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Project: Keith Hall, Inverurie
Title: Figure 5a - Viewpoint Locations, Keith Hall
Reference: BDEE1005
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Viewpoint 3 - Looking west from B993 north of Keith Hall East



Viewpoint 4 - Looking west from Leggat

Client: Bancon Developments Ltd
Project: Keith Hall, Inverurie
Title: Figure 5b - Viewpoint Locations, Keith Hall
Reference: BDEE1005
Date: November 2008
Scale: NTS

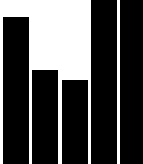


Viewpoint 5 - Looking west from the East Lodge



Viewpoint 6 - Keith Hall former parkland, looking west towards Home Farm

Client: Bancon Developments Ltd
Project: Keith Hall, Inverurie
Title: Figure 5c - Viewpoint Locations, Keith Hall
Reference: BDEE1005
Date: November 2008
Scale: NTS





Viewpoint 7 - Keith Hall former parkland, looking east



Viewpoint 8 - South-west Drive looking west

Client: Bancon Developments Ltd
Project: Keith Hall, Inverurie
Title: Figure 5d - Viewpoint Locations, Keith Hall
Reference: BDEE1005
Date: November 2008
Scale: NTS

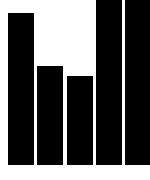


Viewpoint 9 - North Drive looking west



Viewpoint 10 - View south from Keith Hall of formal landscape

Client: Bancon Developments Ltd
Project: Keith Hall, Inverurie
Title: Figure 5e - Viewpoint Locations, Keith Hall
Reference: BDEE1005
Date: November 2008
Scale: NTS



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