



Site STRA, Stromness

Development Brief

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Introduction

This Development Brief sets out the principles for the development of the site STR-A on Hillside Road in Stromness as informed by local and national planning and design guidance. The brief informs applicants of the site constraints and opportunities, and establishes development aspirations and design criteria to be considered as part of the planning application process.

Purpose of the development brief

This Development Brief has been prepared to provide guidance on the design of site STR-A to ensure high quality development that is sensitive to the local context. This is to reflect the long term aspirations of the County and users of the development. This brief offers a clear and detailed explanation of the Council's expectations of proposals for this site and the principles that should be considered in its development.

Guidance to applicants

This Development Brief has been prepared by Orkney Islands Council's Development and Marine Planning function. The Development Brief has the status of Development Management Guidance and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The Development Brief sets out planning and design principles to guide the future development of the site. Applicants will be required to demonstrate how the proposal responds to the principles set out in this Development Brief. This evidence should be presented in a Design Statement which will be submitted in support of a planning application. The level of information required in this Design Statement will vary according to the scale of development proposed. See Supplementary Guidance: "Development Briefs and Design Statements" for further information. It is recommended that applicants appoint a suitably qualified design professional to maximise the value which may be added to any development.

Site STR-A is located within the Hoy and West Mainland NSA and this should be taken into account in the design and layout of any new development on the site.

Pre-application guidance

Prior to submission of a planning application it is necessary to consult with OIC Roads, Scottish Water, SEPA and related public bodies to ensure infrastructure expectations and requirements are met as part of a high quality development proposal. Clarification should be sought from the planning department at the pre-application stage on the level of information that will be required. It should be noted the content of this brief is not exhaustive and proposals should refer to applicable policy and supplementary guidance as outlined in local and national planning policy.

Site description

Site STR-A is situated on farmland surrounded by residential development to the north of Stromness. The site benefits from an elevated position with views across the town and harbour towards the hills of Hoy to the south. The Hillside Park development to the south is understood to have been developed by Orkney Housing

Association Ltd (OHAL) in such a way as to enable future access to the site, and a footpath connects this development back to Cairston Road towards the Stromness Primary School and the town centre. The site offers an opportunity to create development with a southerly aspect to make use of the solar gain whilst enjoying the views to the south, however, it is important that a landscape sensitive solution is also achieved. Please refer to Figure 1 Site Analysis Plan on page 5.

Policy background

Stromness Urban Design Framework (UDF)

The site is identified as a 'first tier area' in the Stromness UDF. It is stated that 'Higher density development is encouraged'. It is expected that development in this area can achieve a higher density form towards 24 dwellings per hectare.

National policy

The value of good design is stressed within National Policy documents, and the role it plays in wider aspects other than aesthetics. "**Creating Places**" outlines the values as:

- Physical value – enhances a setting.
- Functional value – meets and adapts to the long-term needs of all users.
- Viability – provides good value for money.
- Social value – develops a positive sense of identity and community.
- Environmental value - efficient and responsible use of our resources.

This in conjunction with "**Designing Places**", which highlights the importance of distinctiveness, safety, ease of movement, welcoming, adaptable and resource efficient; "**Designing Streets**" placing emphasis on contextual responses rather than generic standards based street design solutions. Development proposals should marry these aspirations by creating a well-considered design response which adds value to the setting and creates an attractive environment for users to enjoy.

Development aspiration

The aspiration for the site is that it should provide a high quality residential development which takes advantage of the site's proximity to the town centre and the excellent views to the south. At the same time, it is expected that great effort should be made to integrate the new development with the landscape through site layout and building levels to reduce visual impact.

The development should be well connected to its surroundings, and encourage pedestrian and cycle access to the town centre. This includes consideration of potential future developments that may take place in proximity to the site to enable through routes to be established. Use of appropriate building lines and layouts should promote an attractive pedestrian environment that is easy to navigate with open space and building layouts promoting social interaction and a sense of community. Proposals should reflect the community aspirations expressed through the 'Stromness UDF' consultation that a higher standard of development is essential.

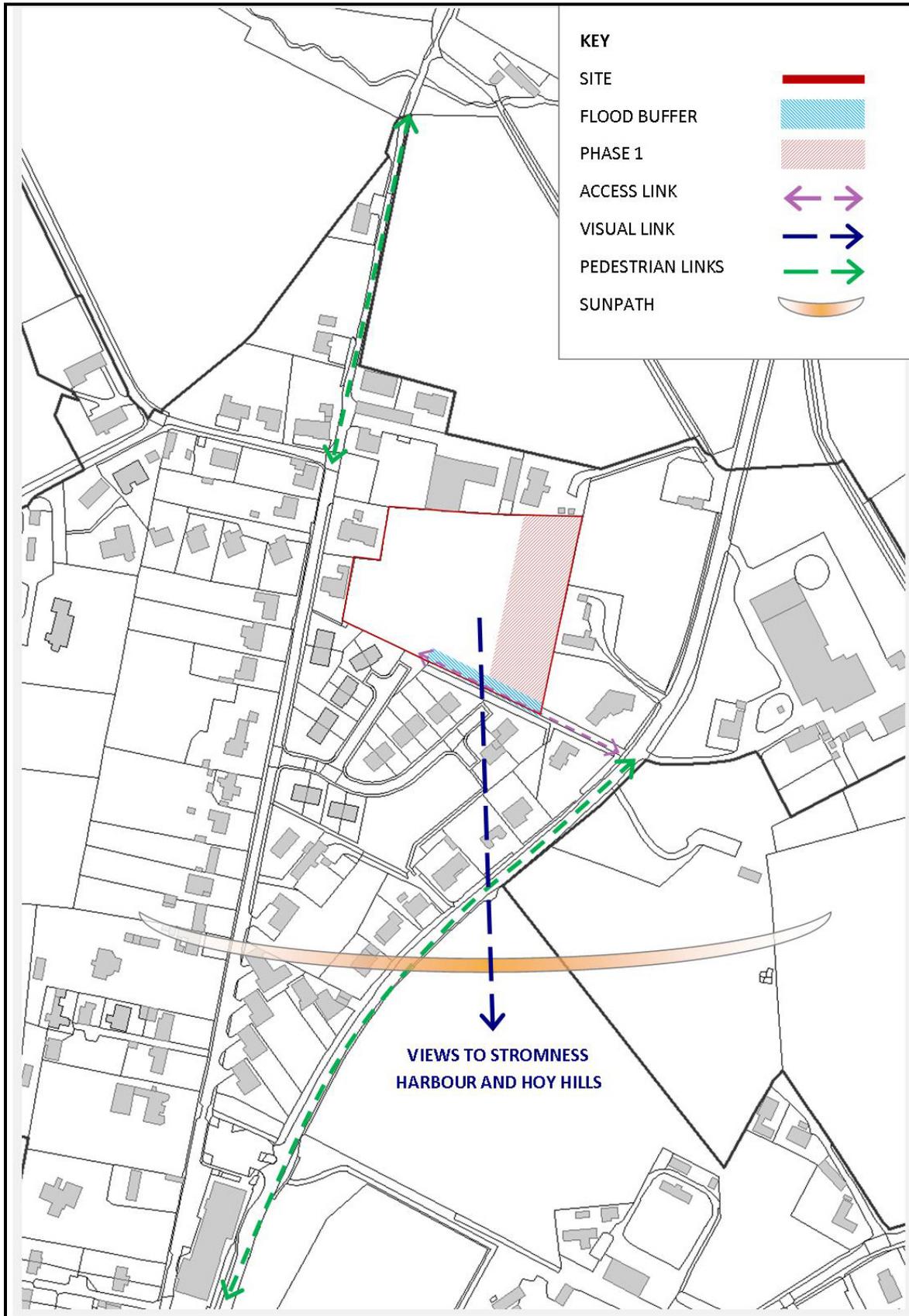


Figure. 1 Site analysis plan.

Development brief strategy

The role of this Development Brief is to establish common planning and design principles for all kinds of housing development in order that the site as a whole is coordinated and well designed – creating a high quality and highly valued addition to Stromness. To achieve this, new development proposals must respond to the following strategic principles:

- Providing for a network of open spaces and pedestrian and cycle routes.
- Establishing an appropriate distribution and scale of vehicular access points, streets and external connections.
- Establishing design characteristics which reflect the high quality of new development the County aspires to and ensures that individual buildings have common characteristics and contribute collectively to the coherent development of the site as a whole.

These key principles are illustrated in the Development Brief Strategy Plan at Figure 2 on page 7. Planning applications will be measured against their success at responding to the Development Brief Strategy. **Proposals which do not respond to these strategic principles will not be granted planning permission.**

Phasing considerations

Phasing of the development should take account of infrastructure requirements before proceeding with building phases as appropriate to proposed development timescales. Phasing should also accommodate for establishing greenspace, integration of pedestrian and cycle routes, and sustainable drainage as described below to ensure a high quality development appropriate to phase completion. The development brief sets out the extents of the anticipated first phase. This is indicated by the land owner to be the intended development in the short term.

Road infrastructure is to be completed in accordance with the proposed phases of the development site before any housing is built or individual plots are sold relevant to that particular phase. This is to be achieved through consultation with OIC Roads. Proposed phasing schemes should take into account the quality and functionality of the development upon phase completion whilst the entirety of the site is not fully realised.

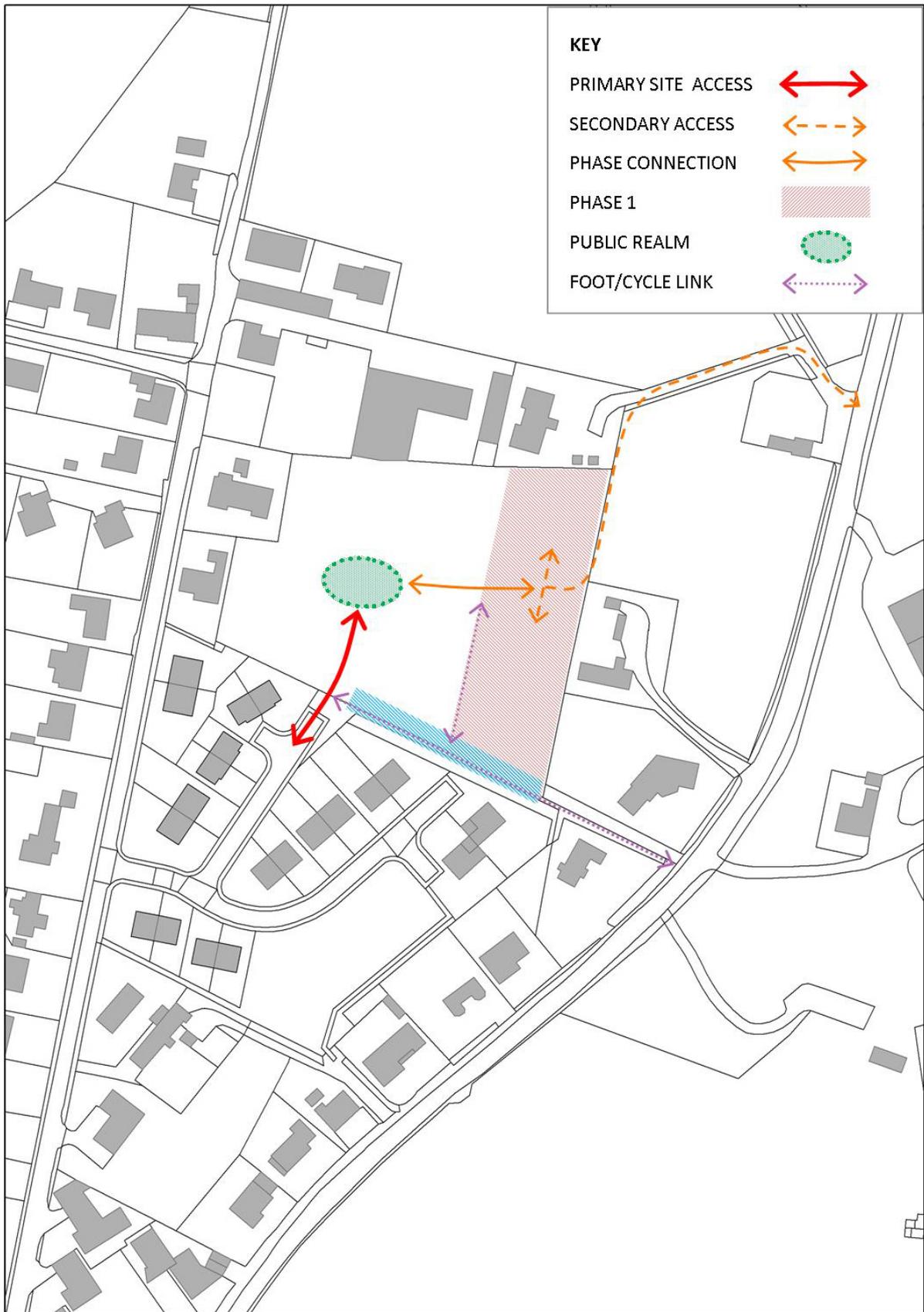


Figure. 2 Development Brief Strategy Plan.

Design criteria

The Stromness UDF sets out broad criteria for development in line with local and national policy. Briefly, it is expected that building design will reflect the prominent location of the site and the traditions of building in Orkney. Attention must be paid to the site context. Suburban styles finished in brick or which include barge boards and boxed in eaves will not be acceptable. In addition to demonstrating compliance with the Development Brief Strategy above, planning applications for individual dwellings or groups of buildings should respond to each of the specific points set out in the following 5 Design Criteria in order to deliver the development aspiration outlined above.

Design criterion 1: Buildings and Placemaking

Firstly development should contribute to the Placemaking objectives as follows:

Context driven

- Vehicle speeds influenced through design.
- Street and junction design that is not standards based.
- SuDS design and requirements.

Better design outcomes

- Achieved through collaborative multi-disciplinary approach.
- Through early consideration of signage and street marking to ensure minimal application required.
- That promote social interaction and movement network integration.
- That are not service and utility driven.
- That integrate natural landscape features.
- That utilise distinctive, easily maintained, durable and visually appealing quality materials.

Pedestrian and cyclist priority

- Balance place and movement requirements with pedestrians put first and vehicles last, including traffic junctions.

This is in line with the Council approved Placemaking Principles and the Scottish Government Publications - '**Designing Streets**' and '**Creating Places**'.

Secondly proposals should be energy efficient, context specific and promote a pedestrian environment through the following:

- All new development should demonstrate efficient and sustainable use of energy and resources in terms of layout, orientation, construction, materials and energy supply.
- Building layout should present a frontage to the internal street system as identified in the Development Brief Strategy Plan (figure 2).
- New development should achieve building lines which create sheltered spaces and a pleasant public realm (with consideration of predominant wind directions and utilising deviated building lines). The housing density should be reflective of the edge of town, suburban typology appropriate to the site location.

- Buildings must be articulated to enable clearly defined public frontages to promote natural surveillance of public places, and private frontages to maintain privacy of tenants. Conflicting public onto private frontage relationships are to be avoided.
- New buildings should be 1 to 2 storeys in height in keeping with the local context. Building heights must be carefully considered and justified in terms of the gradient of the slope, the provision of shelter, the effect on neighbouring properties and the provision of views.
- It is expected that new development should be predominantly residential but this does not prevent possible opportunities for other uses such as community facilities, small scale business premises i.e. office, corner shop etc. - such a proposal must be integrated with the overall layout of the site, in particular relationships with public space.
- New development should promote a better relationship between likely users wherever possible (i.e. narrower streets, shared surfaces, tree clusters, limited regulation signs etc.: see criterion 4) rather than generic traffic calming measures. Development should orientate towards new pedestrian and cycle links both within the sites and externally, in particular linking to the amenity areas as identified on the Development Brief Strategy Plan (figure 2) including consideration to linkages to the town centre.
- The site layout must include a foot/cycle path as part of Phase 1, as well as formalising the existing route along the burn towards Cairston Road.

Design criterion 2: Boundaries and edges

Proposals should clearly define public space and differentiate between public and private realms through the following:

- A sense of enclosure should be created throughout the development by linked frontages and garden walls with materials and heights consistent with existing site boundary walls and throughout the proposed development. This will also aid the location of bin storage area locations that will ideally not be visible from the public realm and will help to prevent any negative impact on the streetscape.
- Consideration should be given to buildings having shared satellite points to minimise any visual impact upon the overall quality of the development site.
- The use of brick walls, coniferous hedges or decorative gateways is not acceptable.

Design criterion 3: Open space and landscaping

Proposals should demonstrate how open space is considered as an important part of the development proposal in proportion to the likely user demands of the development through the following:

- Adhering to the Open Space requirements in new developments, and Planning and Design Principles within the “Orkney Open Space Strategy: Planning for Open Space Supplementary Guidance” in relation to Policy D6.
- The flood buffer area is envisaged to take the form of greenspace.
- Trees and natural landscaping species should be appropriate to envisaged site conditions and enhance the context due to their presence. Whilst native species are favoured, non-native species will be considered on their merits if successful

examples in Orkney already exist. Please refer to the Woodland Design Guide for further guidance available at <http://www.outdoororkney.com/explore-further/orkney-woodland-project-resources> .

- Maintenance details for public realm and open space areas directly applicable to the development phase requiring planning permission will need to be agreed with the planning authority prior to commencement of development to ensure its value to residents and users is sustained.

Design criterion 4: Site access, streets and movement

As part of meeting the following expectations in relation to site access, roads and movement, the developer should engage with the council as Roads Authority at the earliest opportunity to determine requirements for roads, lighting and drainage for each phase of the development. Furthermore proposals should convey that road construction has not been conceived in isolation but as an integrated element of the overall design of the development through consideration of the following:

- The design of an innovative, less car dominant layout which respects the landform and character of the area.
- With reference to the Development Brief Strategy Plan, the primary access will consist of 'Homezone' streets which utilise surface and texture variations to provide a pedestrian orientated environment that accommodates vehicular access. The secondary access route is envisaged to be for pedestrian and cyclist usage in the longer term once development beyond phase 1 has been undertaken. It will therefore be a narrower route, though minimal vehicle access still permissible.
- Implementation of the concepts laid down in 'Designing Streets – A Policy Statement for Scotland' issued by the Scottish Government. This document promotes an informal system of well-connected streets with natural traffic calming (building lines, shared road surfaces etc.) built in and equal priority given to all modes including walking and cycling. Traffic calming should be introduced as a self-enforcing measure to maintain vehicle speeds below 20 mph. This should be aided by utilising deviated building lines, natural landscaping elements and narrower streets without resorting to a formal pavement and road arrangement.
- Use of shared surfaces must respond to blind and partially sighted user requirements through continuous building lines and surface edging details.
- The Council has approved a series of Placemaking Principles which underpins all Placemaking projects within the Placemaking Strategy and will inform revisions to the 'Roads Development Guide 2006'. In the meantime reference should be made to the Placemaking objectives summarised at the start of criterion 1.

Specific access requirements

Parking requirements: Shared parking arrangements will be preferred over individual parking allocations. Individual parking allocations should be avoided where it will have an adverse impact on the character of the street and should be appropriate to the scale and context of the development site. In the case of planning applications for individual plots, meeting the above parking arrangements should be achieved to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority which does not undermine the functionality of the development site as a whole.

A range of solutions to reduce the impact of car parking on the residential environment must be considered in the design of individual plots. These should include a combination of:

- Avoiding front garden space being given over to parking.
- Using front garden walls to structure the street appearance.
- Designing in shared small scale semi-private courtyard parking.
- Building shared surfaces in traditional materials rather than using coloured concrete block surfaces.

Provision must be made to link into and extend the existing pedestrian / cycle path as highlighted in Figure 2.. Access requirements specific to this brief include:

- Establishing pedestrian and cycle links to connect with North End Road.

All phases of the development site are to contribute towards this link as it will benefit the whole of the development site once realised. Upgrades and improvements to the existing road network required as part of the development must be completed prior to any housing sites being developed. Other requirements may be identified as the design progresses.

Design criterion 5: Water resource management

The site naturally drains to the burn which runs along the north boundary of the site. All surface water run-off to be treated by SuDS in line with Scottish Planning Policy (Paragraph 209) 'PAN 61 Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems' and 'PAN 79 Water and Drainage'. Proposals are required to carry out a SuDS assessment which should include for full attenuation, filtration and treatment, identifying any requirements for upgrading the existing drainage system where appropriate. This should take SuDS provision implications for the whole site into consideration. Discharges to combined sewers should be avoided to free up capacity for waste water discharges. Further guidance on the design of SuDS systems and appropriate levels of treatment can be found in the CIRIA C697 manual entitled 'The SUDS Manual, Sewers for Scotland Second Edition' standards and 'SuDS for Roads' to ensure best practice. Scottish Water should be consulted as part of proposed adoption of SuDS schemes. Details of regulatory requirements and good practice advice for applicants can also be found at www.sepa.org.uk/planning.aspx.

In line with the requirements of 'PAN61 Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems', appropriate SuDS will be required as part of planning applications for individual and multiple dwellings. This will be achieved most effectively as identified in the Development Brief Strategy Plan. All planning applications must demonstrate that they will connect to the public foul drainage and the proposed layout of wastewater infrastructure in response to site layout of the development. Completion of a Pre Development Enquiry Form is to be submitted to Scottish Water's Customer Connections Team as early as possible.