

**ORKNEY**  
ISLANDS COUNCIL

# Development Brief

Land North of Muddisdale Road, Kirkwall K4

October 2023



**ORKNEY  
ISLANDS  
COUNCIL**  
Development &  
Marine Planning

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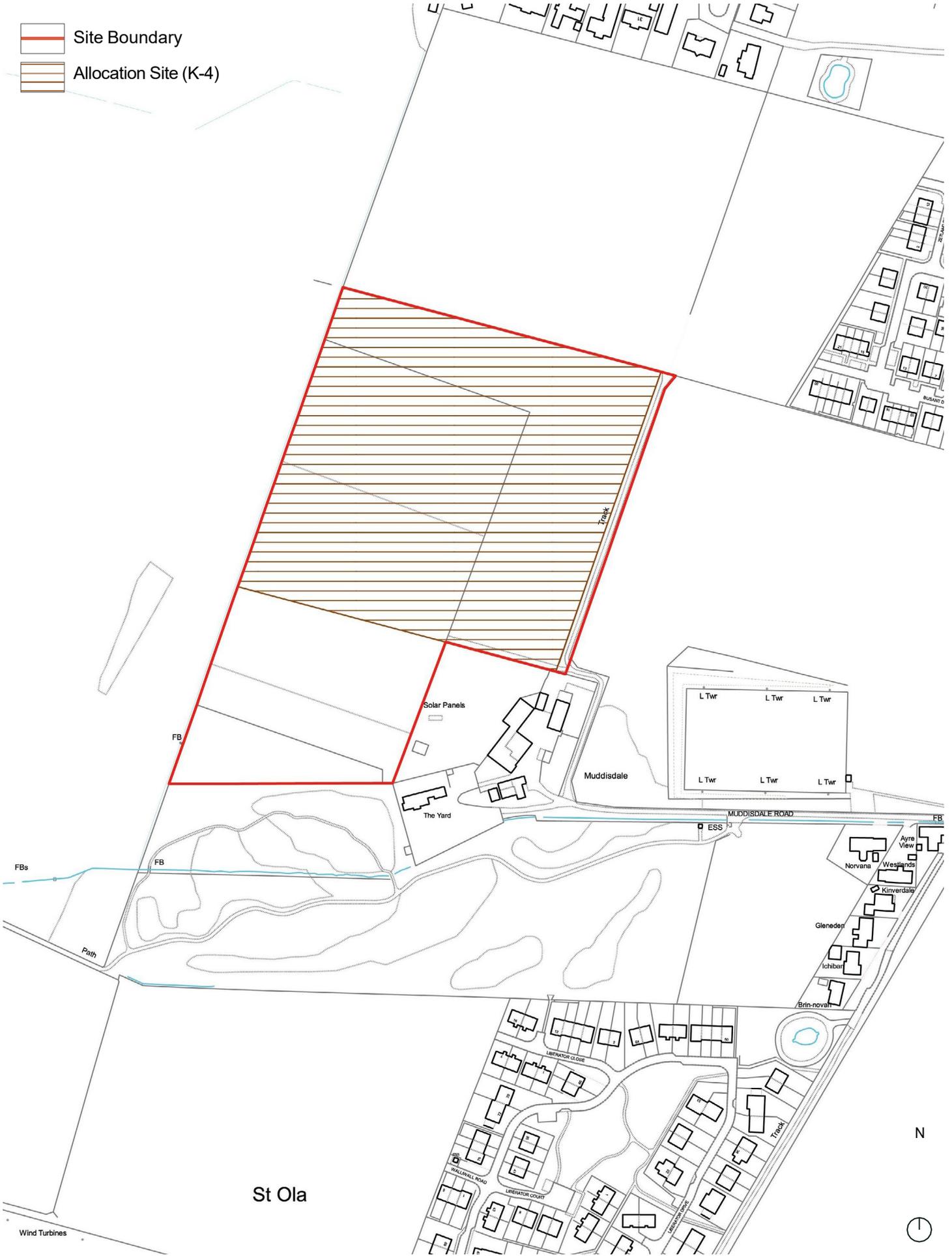


Figure 1: Site Boundary Plan

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

This development brief has been prepared to inform the potential for recreational development within the area north of Muddisdale Road (Figure 1) , which includes the allocation identified as K4 from the Orkney Local Development Plan 2017 (OLDP2017). The allocation is located in the north west of Kirkwall and to the east of Kirkwall Golf Course.

## 1.2 Purpose

As stated in the OLDP2017, the K4 site requires a Development Brief be produced prior to seeking application. This brief has been produced to outline the suitability of the site, for its allocated use or another within the settlement statement.

## 1.3 Status and Use

This Development Brief will be approved as Supplementary Guidance and will be material in the consideration of planning applications on this site. It aims to provide a development concept and considerations on what supporting information future applications on this site will be expected to demonstrate. The document will also inform the review of the OLDP2017.

## 1.4 Policy Background

Housing Allocation K4 was established through the OLDP2017 for long-term housing (Figure 2). The site area is 4.3 hectare and the Supplementary Guidance: Settlement Statements notes a capacity of 20 units.

Following early review of the west Kirkwall area, the need for surface water management improvements and the desire to improve the Green Infrastructure Network (GIN) around Kirkwall, it is considered that this area, including the K4 allocation provides an opportunity to strengthen the recreation and open space offer for Kirkwall, whilst tying into a wider GIN.

Such uses could be linked with the existing neighbouring Pickaquoy Estate to create a cohesive green corridor of recreational green space running from the Peedie Sea up to the Golf Course and along the Muddisdale Core Path network to Wideford Hill.

## 1.5 Background to work

As part of continually reviewing and working to deliver housing land; the suitability of K4 for housing development has been considered. For the surrounding location there has been significant pressure on surface water management with the creation of new housing, the location contains trees and their carbon capture value has to be considered and the future need for the Pickaquoy Centre to expand their external facilities.

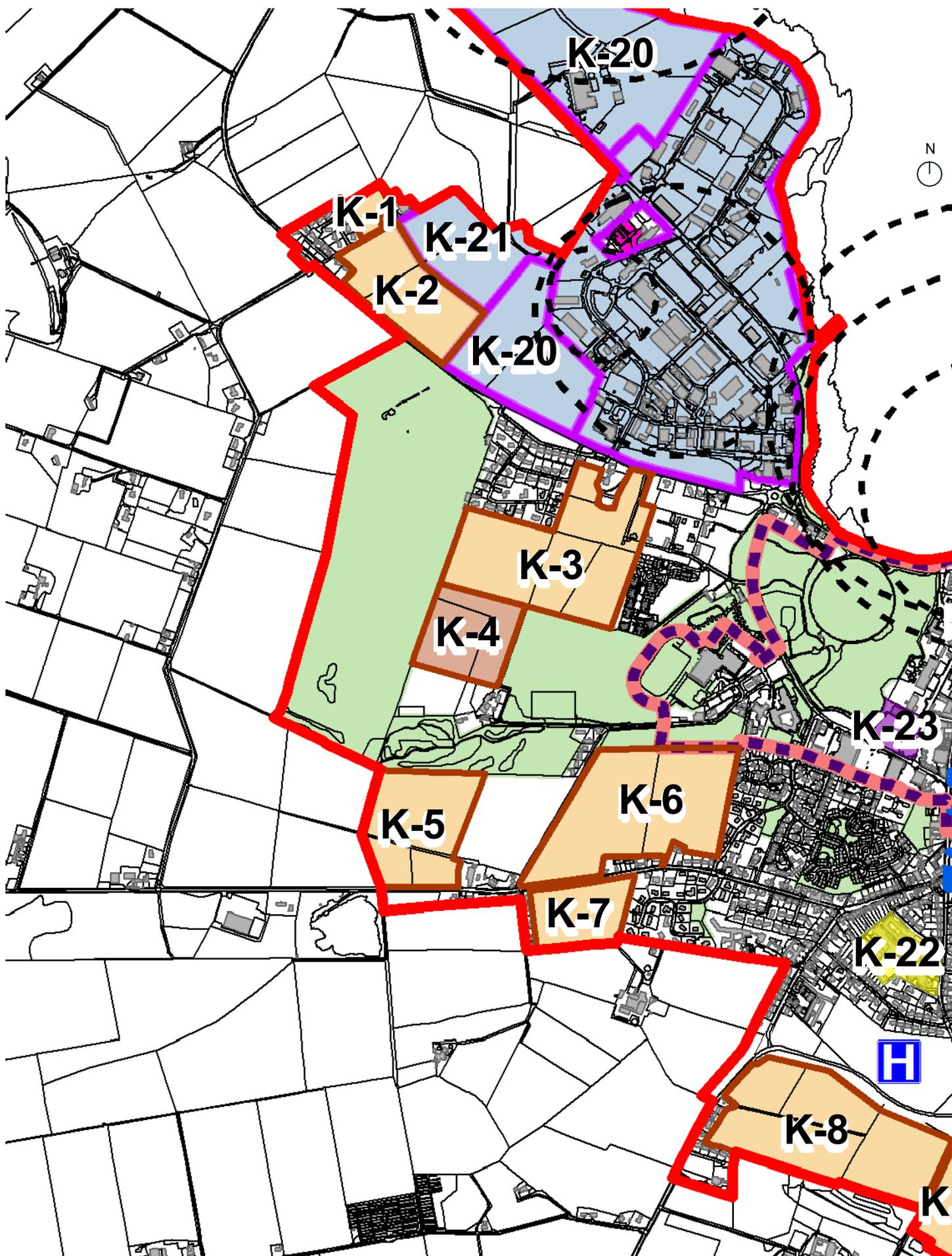


Figure 2: Kirkwall Proposals Plan

## 2.0 Site Context

### 2.1 Location

The site is located to the west of Kirkwall, in a location that is currently considered to be within the settlement edge of Kirkwall, which is open and predominantly green. The site boundary incorporates the K4 allocation, alongside additional land to the south and east. Directly to the west is the Kirkwall Golf Course with farmland beyond. On the northern boundary of the site, housing allocation K3 is currently being built out. To the south is Muddisdale Farm and Muddisdale Strategic Openspace, and to the east lies the grounds of the Pickaquoy Centre and the Orkney Rugby Club.

### 2.2 Use and Topography

The site is currently in agricultural use and is part of the agronomy institute of Orkney College. There are two significant areas of Willow tree planting within the site. The site has stone dykes forming the northern, eastern and part of the southern boundary treatments with the remainder of the south being open and the western edge being post and wire and wooden fencing. The site slopes down from west to east, with an approximately 15m level change.

### 2.3 Access and Connectivity

The site is currently accessed through Muddisdale Farm track to the south. This track is considered to be private and not a public road.

### 2.4 Biodiversity and Carbon Capture

The site is predominately crop and grassland with two blocks of trees, comprising mainly of densely planted willow. Originally planted as a potential biomass crop, they do not appear to be actively managed. The edge of the area closest to Muddisdale Strategic Openspace has a wider variety of species, but is also densely planted.

The site provides an opportunity to provide future Biodiversity enhancements as well as opportunities for carbon capture with more tree planting alongside existing trees.

### 2.5 Flooding and Drainage

The K4 site lies within the larger Kirkwall catchment and contributes to the Peedie Sea via the Muddisdale and Pickaquoy sub-catchments. A primary school, a number a day care centres, a leisure centre and an increasing number of houses lie within the adjacent Muddisdale and Pickaquoy sub-catchments. Currently, surface water flooding occurs frequently within both the Pickaquoy and Muddiesdale catchments. Every opportunity should be taken to minimise runoff to limit flooding in this area in future years.



# 3. Vision

## 3.1 Vision

The Vision for this location is to extend the existing green corridor that will provide opportunities for sustainable surface water management, tree planting, biodiversity enhancement and the strategic expansion of open space for sports and leisure.

The Your Kirkwall Place Plan (2018) highlights the need for an improved Green Infrastructure Network (GIN) within the Muddisdale Area to provide improved surface water flood management in conjunction with better connectivity and active travel infrastructure within a multi-purpose, connected green and blue landscape corridor.

The site provides the opportunity to build-on the existing GIN, incorporating natural flood management, biodiversity enhancement and improved opportunities for sports and recreation.

## 3.2 Biodiversity Value and Climate Change

Any development within the site will be required to enhance biodiversity and create more areas of shrub and woodland planting.

New woodland planting will have to increase the diversity of tree species, consider appropriate spacing for specific species, the use of planting to create shelter and therefore open areas within the planting. There is also an opportunity to connect with the wooded areas with the Muddisdale woodland by way of a woodland strip/additional planting.

In relation to climate change and carbon sequestration, research from The Woodland Trust find that 1 hectare of young woodland can capture over 400 tonnes of carbon in the trees, roots and soil.

## 3.2 Natural Flood Management

Incorporating the K4 site into a green infrastructure network would maximise the potential to employ natural flood management (NFM) techniques aimed at enhancing present-day flood resilience and mitigating the predicted effects of future climate change.

NFM on the site would be aimed at minimising surface water run-off, maximising groundwater recharge and surface water storage and encouraging take up by trees and other vegetation.

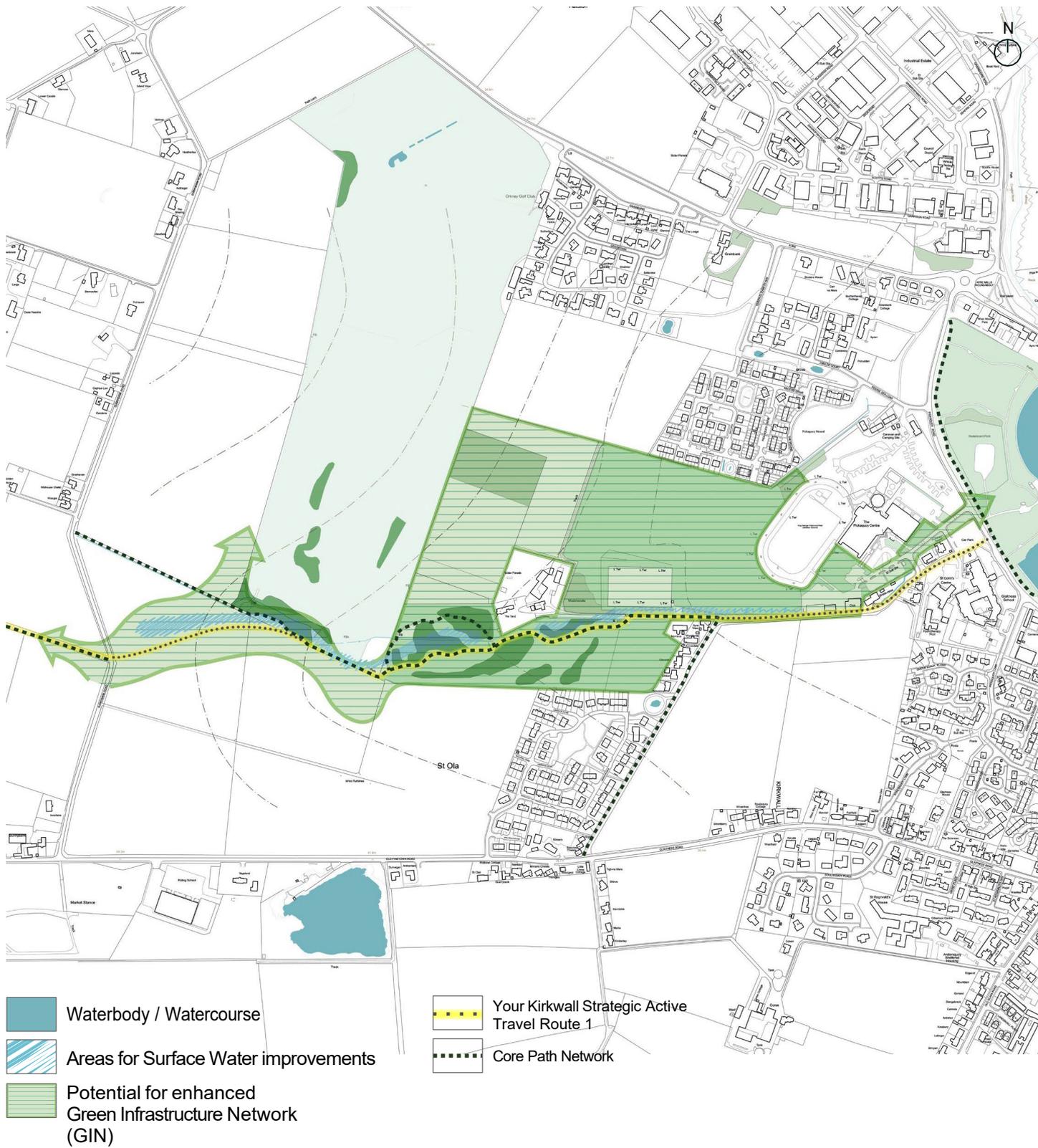


Figure 4: Indicative drawing of the West Kirkwall Green Infrastructure Strategy

## 4. Development Principles

Development of the site should adhere to the following principles:



### Strategic Green and Blue Corridor

The site should support and tie in with the wider strategic Green Infrastructure Network (GIN) of Muddisdale.



### Connected and Varied Open Space

The site and proposed use should compliment and build on the existing openspace offer in this part of Kirkwall and the Pickaquoy Centre Estate.



### Surface Water Management

Development of the site should carefully consider it's impact and opportunity to improve the surface water manement within the wider context of the Muddisdale and west Kirkwall Area.



### Tree Preservation and Enhancement

Development of the site should seek to retain the existing tree planting and include opportunites to provide additional planting.



### Connectivity and Active Travel

The site and its use should be de designed to favour access by modes of Active Travel, utilising the existing core path connections in its immediate context. Proposals should seek to demonstrate how private vehicle access will be minimise or negated where appropriate.



### Sustainable Design and Construction

Proposals should follow sustaiaable design and construction methods, limiting impact on the existing landscape and neighbouring dwellings.

# 5. Delivery and Monitoring

## 5.1 Future Planning Applications

It is considered that future leisure and recreational users, when seeking planning permission, need to consider and include within the applications:

- Design principles and design statement.
- Landscape plan, including any changes to levels.
- Management and Maintenance plan.
- Services information including SUDS proposal and Scottish Water correspondence (if appropriate).
- Flood risk information.
- Transport statement.
- Ecology and ground water statement.
- Archaeology statement.
- Existing Tree survey and Planting Plan
- Construction method statement.

Any pre-application advice is completed by the Development Management Team ([planning@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:planning@orkney.gov.uk))

For further information please contact Development and Marine Planning team by email:  
[devplan@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:devplan@orkney.gov.uk)



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