

BLACK BUILDING SITE INGANESS ROAD, KIRKWALL

development brief - *May 2011*



approaching the site from south



above - entrance to the site from Inganess Road
below - looking at the site from Berstane Loan



introduction

This Development Brief has been prepared within the context of the Orkney Local Plan Proposed Plan (April 2011) and the Kirkwall Urban Design Framework (August 2009). The Brief outlines the main opportunities and constraints relating to the Black Building site at Inganess Road, Kirkwall and comprises an outline design framework for the development of the site. It is intended that the future development of the site should adhere to the key principles contained within this Brief.

purpose of the development brief

The southern edge of Kirkwall has been subject to sporadic and piecemeal



view from the site across Kirkwall

development over time. The Black Building site has a unique history but its position relative to the adjoining urban form creates a challenge in terms of building layout, boundaries and ridgeline views from Kirkwall Bay. The Kirkwall Urban Design Framework has provided a contextual setting for the town and the key development sites. While this Framework sets the wider strategy, this Brief provides detailed site-level guidance. The Black Building has potential for the provision of serviced sites and this Brief aims to set out the key principles associated with the development of a mixed tenure development with a focus on serviced sites.

The intention of the Development Brief is to ensure that there is a framework set in place to ensure that the development of the site either for serviced sites or a mix of building types will result in a coherent, well coordinated housing development where plots relate well to one another and frame a well defined public space.

guidance to applicants

The Brief sets out design criteria and a development brief strategy plan which establishes the key building lines, access and pedestrian routes and open spaces. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that proposals respond to the design criteria and the driving principles of the development brief strategy plan. Design Statements are a useful tool for demonstrating this and should be encouraged for each phase of the plot development. Further information and a Design Statement template is provided in the Orkney Local Development Plan Supplementary Guidance Development Quality within settlements.

Clarification should be sought from the planning department at the pre-application stage on the level of information that will be required for a Design Statement. At a basic level, applicants should provide a brief written response to each of the Design Criteria with supporting plans explaining how the proposal addresses the development brief strategy plan and each of the detailed development criteria.

site description

The Black Building site extends to approximately 1.296 ha and comprises a generally rectangular area, situated at the southern edge of Kirkwall at the junction of Inganess Road and Berstane

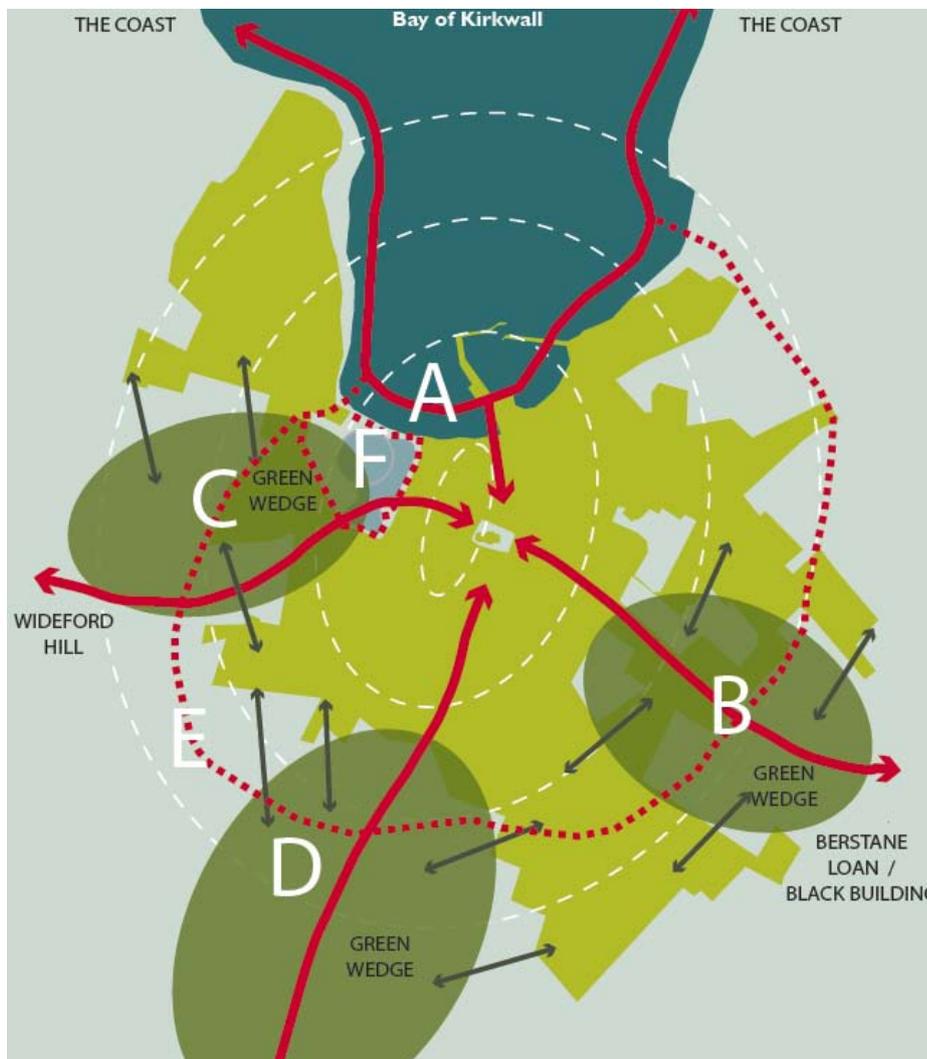


fig 1 illustration from the Kirkwall UDF showing the Black Building site and potential connectivity

Loan. The former RAF buildings on site have been demolished to leave a north-sloping site with extensive views towards the town centre, harbour and beyond.

The site adjoins established bungalow development along Inganess Road on its southern boundary, the minor road of Berstane Loan on its eastern boundary (with dry-stone wall) and open countryside to the north and north-west. Access is currently provided from Inganess Road.

policy background and context

The Orkney Local Plan (2004) allocated the site as a Redevelopment Opportunity, with consideration at the time given to re-use of the former RAF communications centre or 'Black Building'. Residential, business or light-industry were all deemed suitable alternative uses.

The Kirkwall Urban Design Framework (2009) reinforced this allocation and the site comprised 'Development Zone 5A' with a preference for housing as the principal use. The Framework seeks to establish a stronger context for any redevelopment and to link proposals with the wider design strategy for the area, namely:

- walking and cycling links from the site via a potentially enhanced greenspace network to the town centre
- a distinctive design which refers to the Black Building's significance as an important Second World War strategic defence location
- the repair of an urban site with potential for a denser development pattern
- acknowledging the landscape and ridgeline setting through suitable building scale and planting to reinforce edges and improve the site's setting.
- linking pedestrian connectivity at Berstane Loan and the green wedge to the north of site by enhancing routes and providing a seating area and a focus for the wider town greenspace network
- enhancing the woodland framework and recognising the gateway nature of Inganess Road
- redefining a fragmented urban edge through a landmark design with strong linkages
- recognising the site's location



fig 2 the Black Building site in context

within 'Hierarchy 3' of public realm objectives by creating a community focus with a small civic space and home-zone principles

- adhering to energy efficiency and climate shelter through suitable layout aspect and recycling of materials where possible

The Black Building has now been demolished but the Council recognise the historic significance of the site and wish to make specific reference to this in the proposed development. The Orkney Local Development Plan Proposed Plan identifies the site as site KW-P with capacity for 15 houses.

This development brief moves forward this policy context to establish a realistic and deliverable strategic plan for the development of the site allowing for necessary flexibility in the range of building types which may ultimately be proposed for the site.

site layout and development phasing

The development of the site for individual (or small group) plots allows the site to respond to the key urban design principles of creating small-scale, connected,



local boundary materials

flexible and useable spaces. The Scottish Government’s ‘Designing Streets’ provides guidance on street design and it is intended that all access and public areas should conform to the standards for shared spaces outlined in this key policy document.

The site infrastructure, comprising roads, paths, landscaping and planting will provide a high-quality setting for individual plot development. The site’s far-reaching views and unique history provide an opportunity for the site to provide a stopping point on the wider Kirkwall walking route and this is reflected in the provision for public/amenity space at the eastern part of the site. This responds to the aspirations of the KUDF to provide for a public viewpoint and future connections to the wider greenspace network on land to the north and east of the site.

The development brief strategic plan (fig 3) sets out the key site components of building lines, access, pedestrian and vehicle routes and public space which must form the foundation to the development of the site. All planning applications must demonstrate that they have responded to these key components and will not



current condition of the site

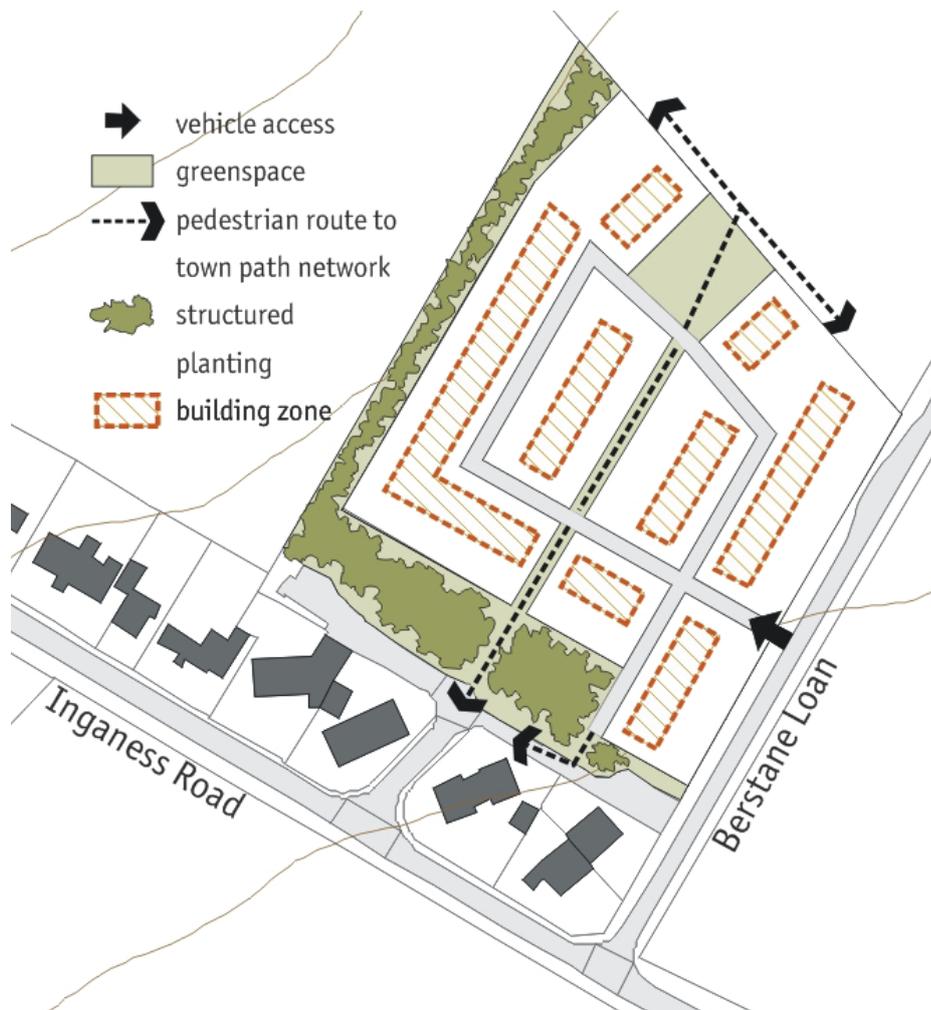


fig 3 development brief strategic plan: Black Building Site development layout

compromise the development brief strategy plan.

The strategy plan takes into account the 30m ‘no build’ zone which is established in the land title in relation to the neighbouring properties of Cairndhu and Breidafiord. It may be possible to incorporate this area in private garden ground associated with the development. Alternatively, the area should be planted as part of the site servicing. There are also access and servitude rights in favour of other neighbouring properties at Gatewood Cottage, Mirlytoft and Rhonsa. These issues should be addressed at an early stage in the development process.

It is expected that will be an element of flexibility in the plot size which will be developed within the site. This is likely to be predominantly serviced

plots, but also some semi-detached or terraced dwellings. As supported in the Kirkwall UDF, there is the opportunity for a higher density urban form for this brownfield site. The illustrative site layout plan at figure 4 demonstrates potential for up to 18 houses on the site. Other configurations of plot size and number of plots are possible. The development brief strategy plan allows sufficient flexibility for varied building types, whilst maintaining the necessary common structure to the orientation of building lines and provision of access and public space.

The western part of the site will provide public open space, overlooked by neighbouring properties. This area could include a public art linked to the site’s history, a seating/viewing area and structured landscaping. There is also the opportunity for this space to

provide a link to future green space/path networks to the north and east as envisaged by the Kirkwall UDF. These links are not currently deliverable due to neighbouring agricultural land uses.

The site is situated behind existing houses at Inganess Road and the connection of the site with the surrounding streets through utilisation of two points of pedestrian access is important. The development along Berstane Loan which will include the vehicular access to the rest of the site will also allow for new buildings to create a new urban edge with a street frontage.

The initial phase of site infrastructure should provide the shared surface streets, site servicing (including Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) and any offsite improvements to local transport and utilities which may be required in addition to the structured planting and boundary walls for the main pedestrian routes and site boundaries. Subsequent phases of development will be required to ensure that buildings are orientated to align with the building lines established in the development brief strategic plan, and to positively address the street frontages, pedestrian routes and areas

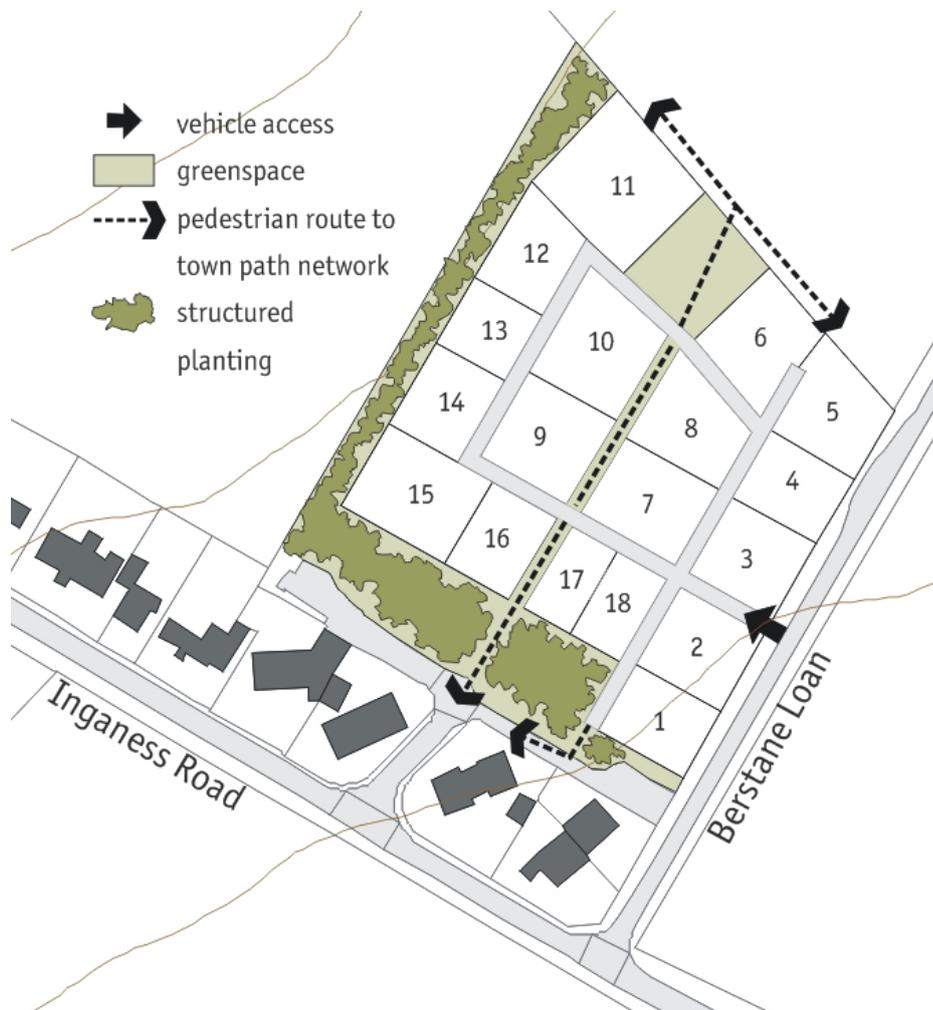


fig 4 illustrative site layout plan

of public space.

In addition to the above key strategic considerations, the following development criteria must also be addressed.

the development criteria

It is not the intention to dictate architectural style or impose a particular fashion on the development. However, it is important to establish a strong sense of place and built form. To achieve this it will be necessary for planning applications for individual sites to demonstrate that they have responded well to the development brief strategy plan and the following development criteria. Design Statements are a useful tool for demonstrating this and should be encouraged for each phase of the development. Further information and a Design Statement template is provided in the Orkney Local Development Plan Supplementary Guidance Development Quality within settlements.

development criterion 1 – plot size

The illustrative site layout plan at figure 4 provides a guide to the form and size of house plots which is expected could be accommodated on the site. However, there is scope to amend plot sizes to accommodate potential purchaser



typical roadside verge detail close to the site



fig 5 future landscape and greenspace concept with shelterbelts and footpath links

requirements which could allow for larger or smaller plots than indicated. This could include detached, semi-detached or terraced buildings.

In all cases the division of plots must take into account the key components of the development brief strategy plan outlined on page 4.

development criteria 2 - the position of buildings within the plot

The key components of the development brief strategy plan will create a closer relationship between buildings and the street. The key principle is that of creating conditions for the street to be used as a sociable,

safe space rather than simply a space for cars. To achieve this, it is important that in addition to responding to the key components of the development brief strategy plan, all development addresses the following:

- buildings must be orientated to front onto the street and pedestrian/public realm elements of the development brief strategy plan.
- buildings on the south part of the site must establish a formal frontage to Berstane Loan as well as an effective secondary frontage onto the internal street and pedestrian routes
- structured tree and shrub planting of appropriate, locally successful species will be undertaken along the western and northern site boundaries and along the pedestrian routes to contain the development and mitigate any impact views toward the site from Kirkwall Bay
- the positioning of ancillary buildings including sheds and garages must be considered to ensure that where possible these match with the key components of the development brief strategy plan



panorama of the site and beyond to the north

development criteria 3 – buildings and placemaking

Due to the site’s prominent position on a slope overlooking the town it is important that the detailed massing and choice of materials ensure that the development does not overly dominate the townscape when viewed from Kirkwall Bay. The proposed structured landscaping will assist in this but it is also important that all development responds to the following factors:

- buildings should adopt a contemporary vernacular style with a simply form – avoiding where possible overly decorative features
- where possible, buildings should be linked by walls and hedging to create shelter and microclimates
- buildings should follow the contours of the topography and avoid excessive under-building
- buildings should have dark grey roofs and light, single tone coloured walls. Where a dry-dash material is used the base render should be as closely coloured to the stone chip as possible
- as a general rule, (with the exception of plots on Berstane Loan) buildings should not exceed 1.5 storeys. This will enable a second level of accommodation within the roofline whilst avoiding

a significant massing of buildings on the site when viewed from Kirkwall Bay. Any exceptions to this general rule must be supported by a site analysis study which demonstrates that the proposed building would not overly dominate neighbouring properties or views of the site from Kirkwall Bay

- buildings on the plots fronting Berstane Loan could step up to a level of 1.75 storeys.

development criteria 4 – private open space and ancillary buildings

The intention is to provide a degree of flexibility in the design of each individual plot but given the higher density development which is anticipated it is important to ensure sufficient private open space is provided. To achieve this, it is important that all development responds to the following factors:

- as a general rule, the built footprint should not exceed 50% of the plot area
- outwith the main building unit, the creation of ancillary buildings are encouraged to accommodate separate spaces for garages, storage, office/workshop or flexible living accommodation - ancillary buildings are expected

to front the street and public space areas to the rear of the plots and are restricted by the general building height and private open space criteria

development criteria 6 – access, car parking and street design

The development brief strategy plans identify a framework of routes and spaces which will ensure that access and roads are not designed in isolation and are rather an integrated element of the overall design. Street design should therefore follow the principles of ‘shared space’ areas. This is in line with the strategic vision of the Kirkwall UDF. Reference should be made to the Scottish Government’s Designing Streets – A Policy Statement for Scotland and the Council’s Roads Development Guide in planning the detailed design of these areas.

There is likely to be requirements for upgrade to existing road infrastructure at Berstane Loan, Inganess Road and Inganess Place to accommodate this development. The extent of these requirements must be defined through a Traffic Assessment which must be submitted in support of the first planning application for the site. The Traffic Assessment should also examine detailed issues in relation to car parking requirements and the definition of the shared space areas.



In addition, all development must address the following factors:

- the vehicular access will be from Berstane Loan
- a pedestrian route will be created to lead from Inganess Place through the centre of the site, ending at a shared public amenity area at the western part of the site
- streets must be designed with natural traffic calming features as shared multi-purpose surfaces. The shared-surface should use high quality materials with a width of approximately 7.5m to allow for a 2.5m on-street parking strip for visitors parking - the parking strip should be defined by differentiation of materials with an avoidance of kerbs or standard suburban features
- the principle pedestrian access to plots should be on the primary street frontage (including those plots on Berstane Loan which will accommodate private gardens to the front)
- where possible, car parking within front garden areas should be avoided with the alternative being parking at the rear of plots and communal parking to be integrated with the public realm and shared space areas

development criteria 7– open space and site boundaries

Open space and boundary treatments will be the key to establishing a successful definition of public space, semi-private space and private space this and the following factors should be addressed to achieve this:

- plot boundaries on street frontages



view looking north from the site

or fronting pedestrian routes or the public amenity space should not dominate the public areas. This will mean that as a general rule these boundaries should be less than 1m high stone dykes or timber fences

- the existing stone dyke on Berstane Loan should be extended to provide the southern boundary to the site
- site boundaries to the north, east and west should be demarcated by structured tree-planting and post and wire fencing
- the ‘no-build’ zone between the development area and Inganess Place should be included as garden ground or as an area of structured planting with post and wire fence boundary fencing
- a SuDS area should be formed as part of the structured planting of sufficient capacity for the proposed plots
- A landscaped public amenity space should be created at the central

eastern part of the site providing a public viewpoint and a linking footpath to connect Inganess Place to a future greenspace network to the north and east. Various end uses of this space are possible including a children’s play area, seating and/or historic interpretation to reflect upon the former use of the site.

- The street and new pedestrian routes within the site and also linking to Inganess Road should adopt best practice in the use of SUDS materials

development criteria 8 – energy efficiency

The positioning of the plots have taken account of the prevailing sunlight direction and every opportunity should be made to ensure that development of the plots maximises the benefits of solar energy creation, passive daylighting and energy retention in general orientation.

development criteria 9 – water, drainage and SUDS

The site is located within the Kirkwall Settlement boundary. There is therefore a requirement that all development on the site is connected to the public foul sewer. There is a potential restriction to the existing capacity of the local sewer network. A Drainage Impact Assessment will therefore be required to be submitted in support of the first planning application for the site to determine any upgrades which may be necessary. Developers should make early contact with Scottish Water to establish the scope for this assessment.

All surface water drainage will require to be treated by a SUDS system as per the current Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems Design Manual and must be designed to adoptable standard. The fall of the site means that there is an opportunity to integrate SUDS techniques in the northern part of the site associated with the structured planting.



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