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three villages masterplans



DOUNBY, FINSTOWN & ST MARGARET'S HOPE introduction and strategic background

Orkney Islands Council

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**3 Villages Masterplans
Final Report - Volume 1
Baseline and Strategic Picture**



March 2010

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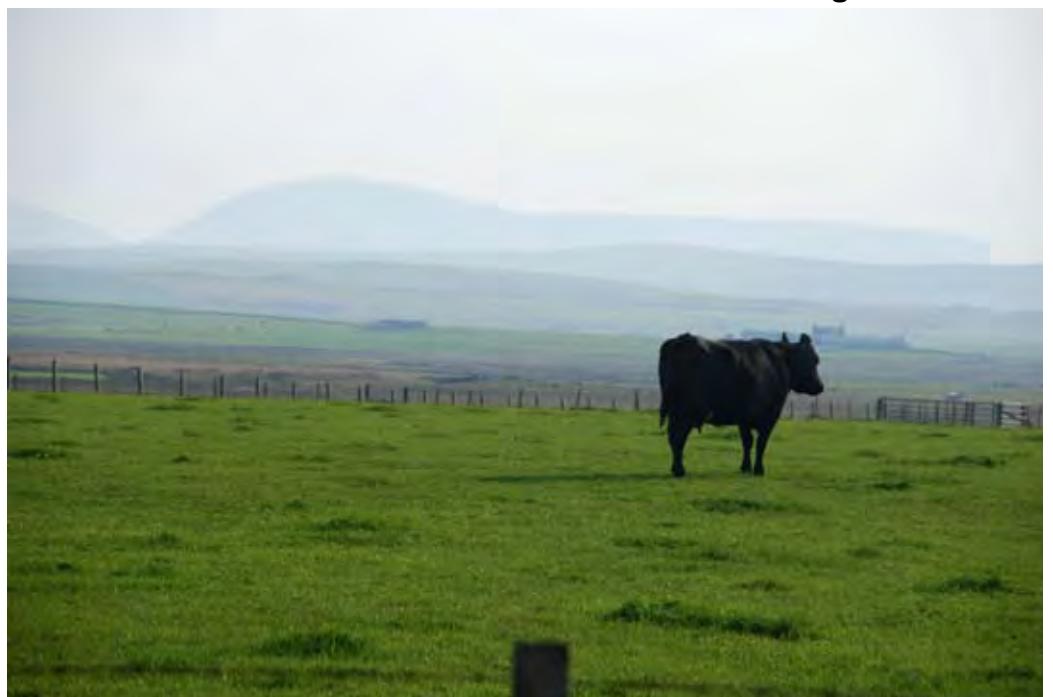
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**3 Villages Masterplans
Final Report - Volume 1
Baseline and Strategic Picture**



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introduction

Orkney Islands Council commissioned Willie Miller Urban Design (WMUD) in August 2008 to prepare masterplans for the villages of Dounby, Finstown and St Margaret's Hope. The anticipated outcomes from the study are:

- an appraisal of the historic and current role and function of the three settlements, examining the social and economic context for the villages at a strategic Orkney-wide level, identifying potential drivers for future development within each village
- linked to the above, a series of three detailed village masterplan studies which will examine in more detail the existing urban character and qualities of the each village
- an Environmental Report prepared under the Strategic Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 – it was also agreed that the SEA would be accompanied by Flood Risk Assessments for each village

THE BRIEF

Orkney Islands Council drew up a detailed and comprehensive brief for this study. In particular, the purpose of the Masterplan Study report process is to firstly identify the role and purpose of each settlement before examining in some detail the planning and urban design qualities of each village town for instance including the pattern of streets and spaces, open space, views, landmarks and vistas, permeability, heritage assets and design/massing qualities which are defining features of each village and which will influence the form and character of future development.

It is also important to identify any key weaknesses or constraints and devise strategies to overcome these where necessary.

Dounby





The objectives of the Masterplan Study report process is to:

1. To review historic economic and physical development patterns of each village, identifying opportunities and constraints and defining the current function and role of each town in Orkney's settlement hierarchy.
2. To review the role of each village within the Orkney Settlement hierarchy, with particular reference to relationships with the main towns of Kirkwall and Stromness and make recommendations for the role of the villages in Orkney's settlement hierarchy.
3. To examine the socio-economic character of

each village in order to formulate scenarios for the growth to 2017, identifying realistic and sustainable development potential for different sectors, and the impact of these scenarios on the rest of Orkney.

4. To examine capacity for future development and identify necessary infrastructure requirements and the planning management required to ensure a legible and high quality urban form.
5. To define the key spatial qualities of each village in terms of townscape character, urban form and public realm including for instance consideration of the hierarchy of streets and spaces in 2 and 3-dimensional

Finstown



forms, urban grain and permeability, landmarks, mix of uses, heights and massing, open space and trees, heritage assets and design character.

6. To advise on the necessary delivery mechanisms to implement the masterplan objectives
7. To advise on the direction of future planning policy for key land uses and development opportunities in each village in relation to the review of the Local Plan.

The aims of the Masterplan Study report process are to:

1. To provide a means of engaging with the public and other stakeholders to establish the future role for Dounby, Finstown and St Margaret's Hope within Orkney's settlement hierarchy
2. To assist the Council in directing a coordinated development pattern in each village in the determination of future planning applications
3. To identify development opportunities within each village including a review of settlement boundaries
4. To provide a document which will assist developers in the formulation of

St Margaret's Hope



**public meeting in Dounby -
10 March 2009**



proposals which contribute to a high quality and legible urban form which responds and enhances the local context and character

5. To provide a robust assessment of issues which can feed into the Local Plan review

In response to this, WMUD assembled a multi-disciplinary team to undertake this work comprising:

- Willie Miller Urban Design: project direction, urban design, masterplanning, spatial planning and urban structure, statutory planning and landscape frameworks
- Yellow Book: consultation, assessment of socio-economic conditions and prospects, workshop scenario development
- Hamilton-Baillie Associates: traffic and access, transport, strategic public realm networks, urban structure
- Leslie Burgher Architects: design guidance, design briefs, architecture
- Jacobs: Strategic Environmental Assessment and Flood Risk Assessment

KEY ISSUES AND FINDINGS

We noted in our proposal for this work that the three villages presented different challenges and have different relationships with Kirkwall, the Mainland and the Southern

Isles. All three have experienced profound changes since the mid 20th century which raise important questions about their roles in the 21st century. On the face of it, all three are commuter settlements serving Kirkwall. At the same time, Dounby and St Margaret's Hope still demonstrate some evidence of their traditional roles reflected in high levels of self employment, home-based working and agricultural employment.

While this is the underlying strategic picture, there is a distinctive local dimension reflecting concern about declining retail provision and the desire for better local community facilities. There is obvious desire to maintain facilities and retain a degree of self sufficiency rather than outright suburbanisation.

Each of the three villages is physically distinctive yet there is a sense that when it comes to new development – whether that is new private houses or public sector developments – the building traditions of Orkney count for very little and this has eroded the unique character of these villages.

As with the Stromness Urban Design Framework, we have a strong feeling that there is a need to re-learn how to build places and look after them – not so much in terms of architecture but in relation to the basic components of the external environment, the



**public meeting in Finstown
- 12 March 2009**



siting of development and the overall form of settlement. There is marked municipalisation of each village through buildings and through signage which is usually unnecessary. Our anticipated headline issues were:

- the presence of the past
- a distinctive sense of place
- the importance of the public realm
- learning how to build anew
- localising urban design
- traffic by design
- sustainability – a fundamental theme
- the importance of collaboration

These will still be the basic foundations of the masterplan.

WORK PROGRAMME

The consultant team's work programme spans a period of approximately 78 weeks. To date we have produced or carried out:

- first stage village urban design appraisals
- traffic and movement appraisals
- a first and second round of consultations with the village communities
- a background strategic review of the settlement hierarchy
- the baseline of the SEA
- outline proposals for the three settlements in a Draft Final Report issued it for consultation between July and September 2009

We have benefited from the active involvement of Council officers, key stakeholders and the residents of the three villages, many of whom attended consultation meetings held in December 2008 and March 2009. We are particularly indebted to the villages' elected members for their enthusiasm and interest.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report consists of five volumes. This is an amendment from the single volume Draft Final Report produced in May 2009 and issued for consultation:

- **Volume 1** is the introduction and strategic picture for all three villages
- **Volume 2** is the baseline, consultation, policies and proposals for Dounby
- **Volume 3** is the baseline, consultation, policies and proposals for Finstown
- **Volume 4** is the baseline, consultation, policies and proposals for St Margaret's Hope
- **Volume 5** is the consultation report for all three villages



the strategic picture

Population trends

Orkney's population fell by 1.9% between 1991 and 2001, from 19,612 to 19,245, although this is still an improvement on the low point reached in the 1970s. A significant decline in population is predicted over the next 14 years unless emigration can be reversed¹.

This modest decline masks significant shifts within the Orkney archipelago. The population of Mainland increased by 1.4%, but all the outer islands as well as Burray and South Ronaldsay experienced a decline (Figure 2-1).

Area	1991 Pop	2001 Pop	% Change
Burray	363	357	- 1.65
Eday	166	121	-27.11
Flotta	126	81	-35.71
Hoy	477	392	-17.82
Mainland	15,128	15,339	+1.39
N Ronaldsay	92	70	-23.91
P Westray	85	65	-23.53
Rousay	291	267	- 8.25
Sanday	533	478	-10.32
Shapinsay	322	300	- 6.83
S Ronaldsay	943	854	- 9.44
Stronsay	382	358	- 6.28
Westray	704	563	-20.03

Within Mainland, Kirkwall and its immediate hinterland (including Finstown) experienced

¹ See paper submitted to Orkney Economic Forum in June 2003 (LEF 04/03)

strong growth in this period, and this has continued in recent years with a further increase in the population of Kirkwall of 3% between 2001 and 2006². Most of West Mainland experienced population decline in the inter-censal period, confirming the long-term trend towards the centralisation of population in Orkney around the principal town, Kirkwall.

This is the big picture backdrop to the three villages study. Over many decades, the decline of traditional industries, followed by a shift from industry to the service sector has undermined the viability of small and remote communities in Orkney as in the rest of the

² HIE, Kirkwall Settlement: Economic Overview, December 2007

The ferry at St Margaret's Hope





Highland and Islands. These jobs have been replaced by employment in the public sector, including health and education, business services, personal and consumer services and tourism. The new jobs tend to concentrate in Kirkwall, encouraging migration from the outer isles to the local capital.

The town of Kirkwall has grown steadily but it also exerts its influence over a wider area. It is the dominant retail centre in Orkney, especially for comparison goods and retail services; Stromness is the only other centre of significant scale, while other shops are thinly scattered across the rest of the land area. Kirkwall has the only large supermarkets in Orkney, attracting convenience shoppers from across Mainland and the southern isles, and it is easily the most important centre for food, drink, leisure, recreation and cultural activities. Kirkwall's labour market also extends throughout Mainland and the southern isles: in the smaller settlements, traditional sources of local employment have declined and the outlying parishes have become commuter communities. School and FE students travel to Kirkwall to study.

SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

Orkney's settlement hierarchy is easily described: Kirkwall is at the apex; Stromness is the only other significant urban settlement; the third tier comprises a number of villages and hamlets, including Dounby, Finstown and

St Margaret's Hope. However, there has been a major change in the roles of the settlements in this hierarchy and in the relationships between them. These changes are typical of the experience of rural areas elsewhere in Scotland and the UK and they are the result of powerful driving forces including:

- structural economic change
- changing lifestyles in an era of communications technology and consumer choice, and
- greatly increased personal mobility linked to record levels of car ownership.
- The effects of these forces have been profound and complex, but the key features can be summarised as follows:
 - the settlement hierarchy has become stretched and – by most available measures of influence and wealth creation – the gap between Kirkwall and the other settlements has grown
 - Stromness still retains a significant employment base, but the commercial functions of the 3rd tier communities have been eroded with the closure of cattle markets, the decline of traditional industries and local shops – but they continue to play an important role as community service centres

- in many ways, the 3rd tier communities have become increasingly dependent on Kirkwall for employment, services and entertainment
- despite these trends, the 3rd tier communities retain some economic and community assets and agriculture continues to be an important activity throughout the rural areas
- the 3rd tier communities have been suburbanised: there is a net daily outflow of commuters and students to Kirkwall and, to a lesser degree, Stromness

THE 2001 CENSUS

Introduction

In the following pages we compare 2001 Census data for the three villages, with each other, with Kirkwall and (as appropriate) with Orkney. We have analysed data at the civil parish level in order to provide a picture of the villages and their immediate hinterland, as shown in Figure 2-2:

Settlement	Civil parishes
Dounby	Birsay & Harry Sandwich
Finstown	Evie & Rendall Firth
St Margaret's Hope	South Ronaldsay
Kirkwall	Kirkwall & St Ola



landscape near Dounby



HEADLINE DATA

Some of the headline Census data are summarised in Fig 2-3.

For the most part, the table confirms that the socio-economic profile of the three villages is very similar, and that in some respects they

are all differentiated from Kirkwall which has some urban attributes. For example:

- the overwhelming majority of people in the villages live in a separate house or bungalow; flats and apartments and communal establishments are largely confined to Kirkwall, and still about 10% of residents live in them

Figure 2-3: Settlement profiles

	Dounby	%	Finstown	%	SMH	%	Kirkwall	%	Orkney	%	
<i>Population</i>											
Total	1855		1423		1211		7615		19245		
<i>Accommodation type</i>											
House or bungalow	1831	98.7	1396	98.1	1172	96.8	6779	89.0	18002	93.5	
Flat, maisonette or apartment	8	0.4	19	1.3	27	2.2	630	8.3	927	4.8	
Caravan or mobile/temporary structure	16	0.9	4	0.3	12	1.0	22	0.3	94	0.5	
Households in shared accommodation	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	0.1	11	0.1	
Communal Establishment	0	0.0	4	0.3	0	0.0	173	2.3	211	1.1	
Medical and care establishment	0	0.0	4	0.3	0	0.0	97	1.3	133	0.7	
Other type of establishment	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	76	1.0	78	0.4	
<i>Tenure</i>											
Owned	1547	83.4	1110	78.0	992	81.9	5190	68.2	14297	74.3	
Shared ownership	14	0.8	17	1.2	3	0.2	144	1.9	201	1.0	
Rented from council	24	1.3	37	2.6	66	5.5	1009	13.3	1678	8.7	
Other social rented	52	2.8	68	4.8	15	1.2	329	4.3	657	3.4	
Private rented	163	8.8	124	8.7	97	8.0	533	7.0	1538	8.0	
Living rent free	55	3.0	63	4.4	38	3.1	237	3.1	663	3.4	
Living in a communal establishment	0	0.0	4	0.3	0	0.0	173	2.3	211	1.1	
<i>Living arrangements</i>											
Living in a couple	998	53.8	766	53.8	622	51.4	3722	48.9	9796	50.9	
Married or re-married	878	47.3	672	47.2	544	44.9	3080	40.4	8374	43.5	
Cohabiting	120	6.5	94	6.6	78	6.4	642	8.4	1422	7.4	
Not living in a couple	857	46.2	653	45.9	589	48.6	3720	48.9	9238	48.0	
Single (never married)	647	34.9	496	34.9	459	37.9	2717	35.7	6849	35.6	
Married (or re-married)	8	0.4	4	0.3	3	0.2	19	0.2	69	0.4	
Separated (but still legally married)	26	1.4	16	1.1	18	1.5	153	2.0	330	1.7	
Widowed	139	7.5	100	7.0	73	6.0	546	7.2	1344	7.0	
Divorced	37	2.0	37	2.6	36	3.0	285	3.7	646	3.4	
Living in a communal establishment	0	0.0	4	0.3	0	0.0	173	2.3	211	1.1	
<i>Family type</i>											
Lone parent family	133	7.2	81	5.7	91	7.5	718	9.4	1562	8.1	
Married couple family	1316	70.9	996	70.0	814	67.2	4528	59.5	12283	63.8	
Cohabiting couple family	157	8.5	134	9.4	116	9.6	846	11.1	1955	10.2	
Not living in a family but with others	50	2.7	34	2.4	39	3.2	203	2.7	552	2.9	
Source: Census of Population 2001, yellow book	Living alone	199	10.7	174	12.2	151	12.5	1147	15.1	2682	13.9
	Living in a communal establishment	0	0.0	4	0.3	0	0.0	173	2.3	211	1.1

- around 80% of people in the villages live in owner occupied homes; in Kirkwall, about 18% live in council or other social rented properties (4-7% in the villages)
- about 70% of people in the villages live in a married couple household, compared with about 60% in Kirkwall, which has more lone parents, cohabiting couples and people living in communal establishments

DEMOGRAPHY

Figure 2-4 analyses age structure which is broadly consistent across Orkney. However, Kirkwall has a higher proportion of younger adults aged 16-39.

Figure 2-5 shows that St Margaret's Hope is the most cosmopolitan place in this survey: 27% of residents were born outwith Scotland, compared with Dounby (15%), Finstown (20%) and Kirkwall (10%).

	Total	0-15	16-24	25-39	40-54	55-64	65-79	80+
Dounby	1855	358	141	360	420	267	235	74
%		19.3	7.6	19.4	22.6	14.4	12.7	4.0
Finstown	1423	311	104	287	322	154	190	55
%		21.9	7.3	20.2	22.6	10.8	13.4	3.9
SMH	1211	238	112	198	306	173	133	51
%		19.7	9.2	16.4	25.3	14.3	11.0	4.2
Kirkwall	7615	1521	784	1656	1545	855	887	367
%		20.0	10.3	21.7	20.3	11.2	11.6	4.8
Orkney	19245	3840	1635	3846	4215	2668	2196	845
%		20.0	8.5	20.0	21.9	13.9	11.4	4.4

Figure 2-4: Age structure

Source: Census of Population 2001, yellow book

Place of birth	Dounby	%	Finstown	%	SMH	%	Kirkwall	%	Orkney	%
Scotland	1574	84.9	1136	79.8	885	73.1	6852	90.0	16050	83.4
Rest of UK	255	13.7	266	18.7	291	24.0	624	8.2	2789	14.5
Rest of Europe	6	0.3	12	0.8	11	0.9	50	0.7	155	0.8
Rest of World	20	1.1	9	0.6	24	2.0	89	1.2	251	1.3
Total	1855	100.0	1423	100.0	1211	100.0	7615	100.0	19245	100.0

Figure 2-5: Place of birth

Source: Census of Population 2001, yellow book



ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Figure 2-6 shows that the economic activity rate is broadly consistent across all areas.

	Age 16-74	Econ active	%	Econ inactive	%
Dounby	1368	978	71.5	390	28.5
Finstown	1011	699	69.1	312	30.9
SMH	886	603	68.1	283	31.9
Kirkwall	5466	3913	71.6	1553	28.4
Orkney	13912	9866	70.9	406	29.1

Figure 2-7 analyses the status of the economically active population. The most

striking feature is the high level of self employment among residents of the three villages, especially Dounby and St Margaret's Hope. Unemployment was lowest in Dounby, but above the Orkney average in St Margaret's Hope, which has the smallest percentage of employees in employment.

Figure 2-8 analyses the economically inactive population. Dounby has the highest percentage who are retired (53%) and the lowest share of permanently sick and disabled (12%); by contrast, St Margaret's has fewer retired (42%) but more sick and disabled (19%).

Figure 2-7: Economic activity analysed

	Econ active	Full-time employed	%	Part-time employed	%	Self employed	%	Unemployed	%	Full-time student	%
Dounby	978	472	48.3	164	16.77	296	30.27	22	2.2	24	2.5
Finstown	699	363	51.9	139	19.89	149	21.32	22	3.1	26	3.7
SMH	603	279	46.3	96	15.92	174	28.86	35	5.8	19	3.2
Kirkwall	3913	2306	58.9	819	20.93	509	13.01	153	3.9	126	3.2
Orkney	9866	4994	50.6	1907	19.33	2282	23.13	420	4.3	263	2.7

Source: Census of Population 2001, yellow book

Figure 2-8: Economic inactivity analysed

	Econ inactive	Retired	%	Student	%	Home/ family	%	Perm sick or disabled	%	Other	%
Dounby	390	207	53.1	35	9.0	71	18.2	48	12.3	29	7.4
Finstown	312	149	47.8	26	8.3	62	19.9	48	15.4	27	8.7
SMH	283	119	42.0	33	11.7	48	17.0	55	19.4	28	9.9
Kirkwall	1553	763	49.1	132	8.5	268	17.3	225	14.5	165	10.6
Orkney	4046	1958	48.4	324	8.0	750	18.5	631	15.6	383	9.5

Source: Census of Population 2001, yellow book

Figure 2-9 shows the industries in which local residents work, whether or not the jobs are local. These figures take account of employment and self employment. The most notable features include:

- among Dounby residents, the exceptionally high rate of employment in agriculture and, to a lesser extent, construction; balanced by low levels of employment in the service sector and the public sector
- in Finstown, low levels of employment in the tourism sector and high levels of employment in the public sector

- in St Margaret's Hope, above average levels of employment in agriculture, fishing and transport.

TRAVEL TO WORK

Figure 2-10 shows the distance travelled to work or study. The percentage of people working at home is highest in Dounby (18%) and St Margaret's Hope (16%). Only a relatively small proportion (ranging from 19-26%) work or study close to home (less than 5km distance). A clear majority travel more than 5km, with the largest group travelling between 10 and 20km, presumably to

Figure 2-9: Employment by industry

Catchment areas	Total aged 16-74 in employment	A. Agriculture	B. Fishing	C. Mining/quarrying	D. Manufacturing	E. Electricity, gas, water	F. Construction	G. Wholesale & retail	H. Hotels and restaurants	I. Transport, storage, communications	J. Financial intermediaries	K. Real estate, business services	L. Public admin, defence, soc security	M. Education	N. Health and social work	O. Community, social, personal services
Dounby	956	192	13	18	80	5	129	110	49	53	9	51	44	62	95	44
%		20.1	1.4	1.9	8.4	0.5	13.5	11.5	5.1	5.5	0.9	5.3	4.6	6.5	9.9	4.6
Finstown	572	86	19	12	47	7	59	91	26	43	11	51	53	54	82	31
%		12.8	2.8	1.8	7.0	1.0	8.8	13.5	3.9	6.4	1.6	7.6	7.9	8.0	12.2	4.6
St Margaret's Hope	567	70	25	15	37	6	57	59	39	53	7	42	25	38	72	21
%		12.3	4.4	2.6	6.5	1.1	10.1	10.4	6.9	9.3	1.2	7.4	4.4	6.7	12.7	3.7
Kirkwall	3747	74	87	58	310	34	398	628	238	347	78	277	300	231	500	182
%		2.0	2.3	1.5	8.3	0.9	10.6	16.8	6.4	9.3	2.1	7.4	8.0	6.2	13.3	4.9
Orkney	9420	980	321	158	737	77	947	1292	528	824	133	620	601	674	1091	429
%		10.4	3.4	1.7	7.8	0.8	10.1	13.7	5.6	8.7	1.4	6.6	6.4	7.2	11.6	4.6

Source: Census of Population 2001, yellow book



Kirkwall. This confirms that all the villages are commuter communities³.

Commuting is reflected in Figure 2-11 which shows how people travel to work or study. The villages are car-dependent, especially Dounby and Finstown where about two-thirds drive to work or travel as passengers. More than 10% of Finstown and St Margaret's Hope residents travel by bus, while about 5% in all the villages walk to work.

3 Distances are measured as the crow flies

Figure 2-10: Distance travelled to work or study

	Total	Not studying	Working/ studying	At home	<2km	2-4.9km	5-9.9km	10-19.9km	20-39.9km	40km+	No fixed trip	Outside UK	Offshore
Dounby	1855	555	1300	238	128	117	210	348	139	34	79	3	4
		29.9	70.1	18.3	9.8	9.0	16.2	26.8	10.7	2.6	6.1	0.2	0.3
Finstown	1423	457	966	113	125	90	217	311	34	22	50	2	2
		32.1	67.9	11.7	12.9	9.3	22.5	32.2	3.5	2.3	5.2	0.2	0.2
SMH	1211	379	832	132	149	65	40	282	64	31	58	3	8
		31.3	68.7	15.9	17.9	7.8	4.8	33.9	7.7	3.7	7.0	0.4	1.0
Kirkwall	7615	2420	5195	293	3467	576	68	182	120	127	307	11	44
		31.8	68.2	5.6	66.7	11.1	1.3	3.5	2.3	2.4	5.9	0.2	0.8

Source: Census of Population 2001, yellow book

Figure 2-11: Mode of travel to work or study

	In work or studying	Works at home	Public transport	Car/van/ m/c	Car passenger	Taxi	Bike	On foot	Other
Dounby	1014	224	59	566	78	1	8	61	17
		22.1	5.8	55.8	7.7	0.1	0.8	6.0	1.7
Finstown	720	110	78	429	54	0	4	36	9
		15.3	10.8	59.6	7.5	0.0	0.6	5.0	1.2
SMH	623	123	74	321	48	1	4	33	19
		19.7	11.9	51.5	7.7	0.2	0.6	5.3	3.1
Kirkwall	3989	258	86	1874	373	21	144	1130	103
		6.5	2.2	47.0	9.4	0.5	3.6	28.3	2.6
Orkney	10050	1550	432	4970	763	27	229	1749	331
		15.4	4.3	49.5	7.6	0.3	2.3	17.4	3.3

Source: Census of Population 2001, yellow book

OCCUPATIONS

Figure 2-12 shows the occupational analysis of the employed population. In all the villages, but especially Dounby and St Margaret's Hope, a high proportion of people work in skilled trades, but managers and senior officers are under-represented, as are sales and customer service occupations.

QUALIFICATIONS

Figure 2-13 shows the educational and vocational qualifications of residents aged 16-74. Dounby has the highest proportion of people with no qualifications (40%) and lowest proportion with a degree or higher qualification. Residents of Finstown and St Margaret's Hope are most likely to have a degree or higher qualification.

CONCLUSIONS

Although the Census is now quite dated, the results remain the best available source of fine-grained socio-economic data at the small area level. However, the results need to be treated with some caution. In particular, the fact that we are dealing with small numbers – the “village and hinterland” populations range from 1200 to 1850 – means that quite small, absolute changes can have a significant effect on the percentages. Equally, recent developments such as the opening

	All in employment	Managers/senior officials	%	Professionals	%	Associate professionals	%	Administrative/secretarial	%	Skilled trades	%	Personal services	%	Sales/customer services	%	Process	%	Elementary	%
Dounby	956	71	7.4	76	7.9	64	6.7	89	9.3	293	30.6	76	8.0	51	5.3	85	8.9	151	15.8
Finstown	672	58	8.6	68	12.0	69	10.3	69	10.3	152	22.6	59	8.8	37	5.5	62	9.2	98	14.6
SMH	567	44	7.8	48	8.5	61	10.8	41	7.2	162	28.6	51	9.0	34	6.0	52	9.2	74	13.1
Kirkwall	3747	373	10.0	282	7.5	473	12.6	391	10.4	607	16.2	350	9.3	327	8.7	379	10.1	565	15.1
Orkney	9420	906	9.6	776	8.2	1028	10.9	821	8.7	2155	22.9	800	8.5	622	6.6	906	9.6	1405	14.9

Source: Census of Population 2001, yellow book

Figure 2-13 : Highest qualification held

	All 16-74	No qual	%	SVQ1/2	%	SVQ 3	%	SVQ 4/5	%	Degree +	%
Dounby	1368	547	40.0	321	23.5	216	15.8	61	4.5	223	16.3
Finstown	1011	334	33.0	254	25.1	175	17.3	39	3.9	209	20.7
SMH	886	306	34.5	203	22.9	145	16.4	50	5.6	182	20.5
Kirkwall	5466	1812	33.2	1480	33.2	941	17.2	255	4.7	978	17.9
Orkney	13912	4996	35.9	3404	24.5	2206	15.9	602	4.3	2704	19.4

Source: Census of Population 2001, yellow book



of Smiddybrae House in Dounby and other housing completions are not reflected here.

However, with these qualifications, the key messages from the 2001 Census can be summarised as follows:

- by most measures, the characteristics of the three villages are broadly similar, and they are in contrast to the more urban character of Kirkwall which appears to be more attractive to young adults
- however Dounby, especially, and St Margaret's Hope still betray some evidence of their traditional roles, reflected in high levels of self employment, agricultural employment, home-based working and a high proportion of people working in skilled trades/manual occupations
- Finstown appears to be further down the road of suburbanisation, but all three villages are already heavily dependent on out-commuting.

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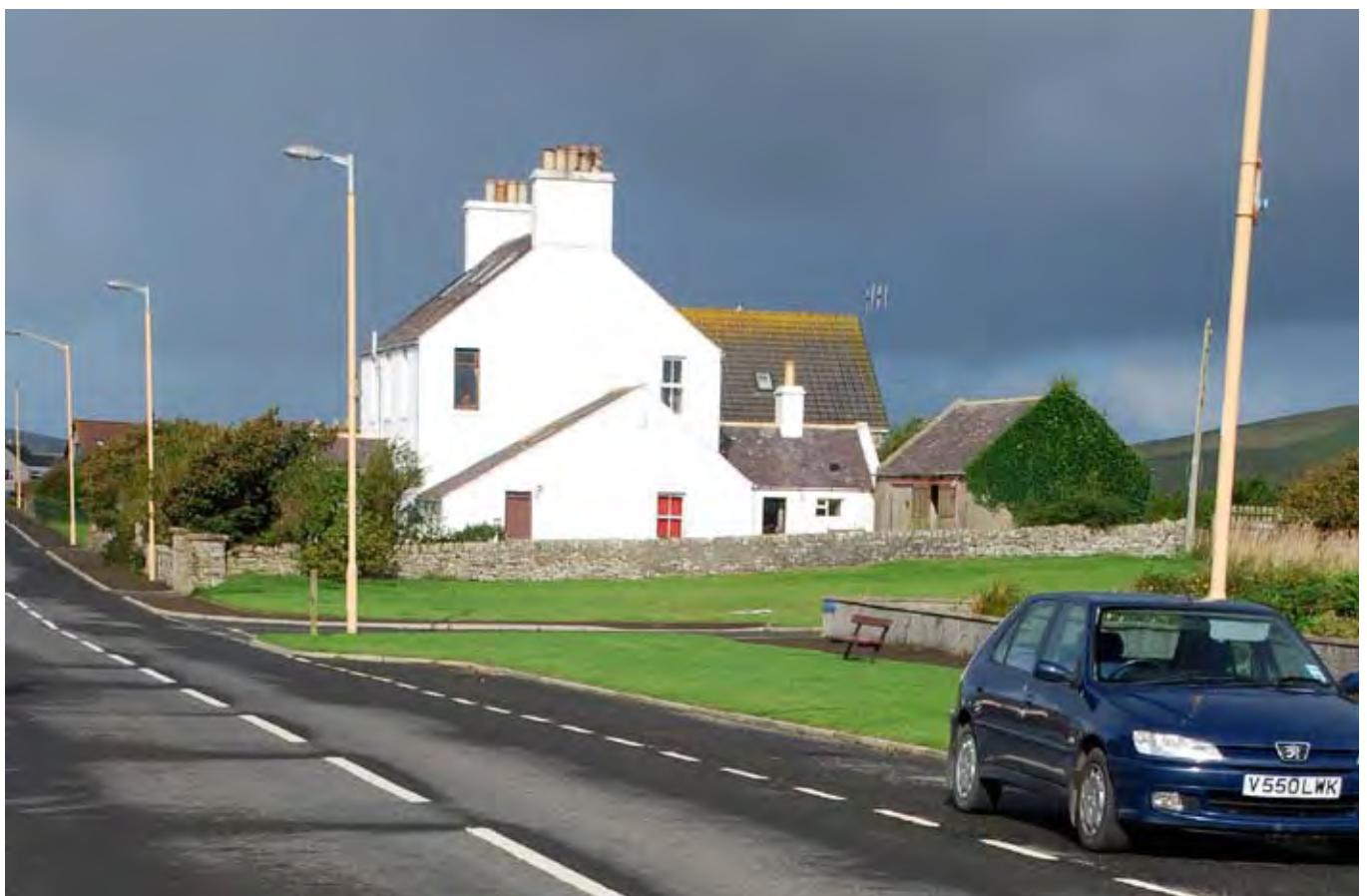
three villages masterplans



**DOUNBY
baseline and proposals**

Orkney Islands Council
Department of Development Services
Council Offices School Place
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**3 Villages Masterplans
Final Report - Volume 2
Dounby**



March 2010

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**3 Villages Masterplans
Final Report - Volume 2
Dounby**



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dounby first consultation

INTRODUCTION

This first stage of consultation consisted of informal meetings with local Community Councillors to explore with them how they think their villages should change in the future. It involved two strands:

- guided tours of each settlement by Community Council chairs
- facilitated workshop sessions with Community Council members for each settlement

- The purpose was to engage with Community Councillors, as knowledgeable community activists with a statutory role in the planning system, and explore the sort of place that they would like the settlement to become in the future
- things they don't like about the settlement
- the forces of change that are affecting the community
- what's realistic for the future – high aspirations, realistic expectations
- how we should engage with the wider community as the project moves forward

	St Margaret's Hope	Dounby	Finstown
	South Ronaldsay & Burray CC	Harray & Sandwick CC, Birsay CC	Firth & Stenness CC
Tour	21 October	22 October	23 October
Workshop	22 October	23 October	28 October

These discussions produced a wealth of invaluable information:

1. The potential changes that local communities believe are important for the future of their villages. These included strategic issues like housing, jobs and transport; and specific places within each

Dounby





village which act as a focus for change, such as underused areas of ground.

2. Rich background information about the development and character of each village – detailed knowledge that we could never have gained without input from local people, and which helps us hugely to start to understand each settlement as a place.
3. An invaluable first contact with the local community which we could build on as the project progresses, the intention being for the next stage of consultation to test initial proposals, perhaps in the form of different options or scenarios, with the wider local community in each settlement.

There was a general understanding that the masterplans could help local communities and the Council lobby for particular

proposals.

The rest of this section summarises the findings for each settlement.

DOUNBY

Issues

- **Housing** – school roll is dropping, as elsewhere in Orkney, and new housing is generally accepted throughout the community as important for its long term sustainability. Main need/demand for affordable family housing, semi-detached and detached. Although people aspire to owner occupation, OIC/OHAL rented property always goes quickly which implies demand for rented property too. In terms of built form, there is widespread concern about ribbon development and desire for new housing to be in the village

need for more small businesses for Dounby



need for more affordable family housing for Dounby



(see below for more on this).

- **Employment** – keen desire to facilitate more small-scale employment in the village, but difficult to establish what that might be. General feeling was that basic, small multi-purpose units with adaptability for use for workshops, food preparation, offices or even retail/ café (as on Westray) would be most appropriate. Could be new-build or conversion of existing property, although limited existing property is available (e.g. privately owned Masonic Hall extension which is pending conversion to apartments, Council-owned former GP surgery opposite Tait's which is being advertised for rental). Decentralisation of Council services from Kirkwall might provide an opportunity/incentive.
- **Tourism** – tourists get here and there is very little for them apart from the toilets. Suggestions include making the car park more attractive as a base for people to go for walks/cycles/horse rides in the area (already used for this) – e.g. a café (which locals could use too), a pavilion/shower building (replacing the ageing toilets), information about what there is of interest in the area (e.g. circular walks out in the surrounding countryside). There is not much tourist accommodation locally (Smithfield and Merkister are the only hotels and can be busy, little B&B), but acknowledged there is little that the

masterplan can do about this.

- **Parking** – only really an issue on the stretch of road between the crossroads and the PO/hairdresser. They say this is by far the busiest stretch in the village, with car parking and deliveries for the Co-op, pedestrian activity, bus stops and petrol pumps. See below for more on this.

Places



parking in Dounby - only an issue between PO and hairdresser



- **Ribbon development** – general feeling that this is bad and should stop. Concern that it contributes to accidents out of the village on the Kirkwall road – 3 fatalities in recent decades. General support for a more compact village form, using brownfield sites of which they recognise there are plenty (such as the privately owned brownfield land adjacent to and behind the PO).
- **Market Green** – has been fragmented by buildings/roads since its original function as common temporary grazing land. Concern that the Council-owned area by the crossroads is messy and lacks purpose. Yard area is no longer required (part of former blacksmith) and bus could park elsewhere (e.g. at the school). Open space could be revitalised (see “tourism” above) as more of a central open space and linked through to school playing fields. Could also be linked to wetland area to rear of Council houses, which could be opened up for public access with boardwalks (long-standing idea). The amount of parking was generally thought to be sufficient and should remain, but could be better organised.
- **Road in front of the Co-op** – the stretch of road between the crossroads and the PO could be improved (see “parking” above). It’s effectively the core of the village. We explored a Monderman-style shared surface approach here – they understood the concept, but felt it would not be appropriate in Dounby simply because of the farming traffic and (especially) the need for farmers to get through this area quickly during the harvest, which everyone locally understands. But they would be keen on a halfway solution – they suggested creating herringbone car parking outside the Co-op using some of the grassed area in front of the old people’s houses, where the Christmas tree is placed every year (by the fallen telegraph pole).

**Market Green in Dounby
could be revitalised as a
central open space**



- **Co-op car park** – the Co-op are apparently interested in extending this onto Council-owned land at the rear, between the recycling site and the Masonic Hall extension. There was support for this, not only to help alleviate Co-op related parking issues but also to provide:
 - A rural “park and ride” facility with Dounby as the hub for improved bus services to Stromness (particularly poor)/Kirkwall and smaller local feeder services/car parking (long-standing idea)
 - Additional parking for the Show.



**Masonic Hall, possibility
of redevelopment**





dounby - business surveys

This chapter contains a record of most businesses in the villages in late 2008 / early 2009. Details were derived primarily from the [Orkney Communities Business Directory](#) supplemented by other local sources of information.

The consultant team spoke to most of the organisations listed, including the school and homeworkers. Key issues raised by the businesses are noted in italics below, followed by summaries of points made by each individual organisation on subsequent pages.

Key themes emerging from the survey:

- The amount and distribution of **car parking** is an issue from the crossroads along to the public car park at Tait's. Parking is often difficult for people wanting to visit businesses, especially west of the Co-op –

the public car parks are used as an official “park and ride” for people sharing lifts to Kirkwall and Stromness. Parking/deliveries in front of the Co-op seem to cause traffic management problems (see bullet points under “specific local issues” below). The hotel is concerned about vehicles parking in front of it, obscuring the entrance from potential customers.

- Most **businesses are thriving**, drawing custom from across Evie, Rendall and Harry and often beyond. The village appears to function as the local service centre for NW Mainland.
- The village also has a **minor role as a hub** – both as a tourist base and as an unofficial “park and ride” for lift sharing to the towns, which affects parking availability but is also a potential opportunity.
- Enhancing the village centre as an attractive place to come for local services could encourage more custom, both from those

Dounby





living in the local area and tourists - e.g. greater range of services (e.g. improve the range of recycling facilities at amenity site), better parking, trees/landscaping around development, and a more attractive and interesting environment to encourage people to stop.

Specific local issues to be considered:



- Improve **car parking at west end of “high street”** – serving Post Office, Cutting Crew, Taits etc
- Facilitate new **rear service access to Co-op** via Back Rd/Vetquoy Rd
- **Develop unsightly sites** adjoining lane to rear of Post Office, Masonic Hall and Co-op – combined with access/parking improvements
- **Landscaping** around Smiddybrae House in particular

BUSINESSES CONSULTED

1. Cutting Room hair salon
2. Dounby Community School
3. Dounby Post Office
4. Dounby Butcher
5. Dounby Co-op
6. Dounby Surgery
7. Headwest Hairdressers
8. Orcadia Design
9. Kierfield Joinery
10. Smiddybrae House
11. Smithfield Hotel
12. A Tait & Sons, builders and funeral services



dounby - second consultation

INTRODUCTION

The project team undertook a meetings and site visits with Community Council representatives for each village to inform the teams understanding of the key local development issues as described in Chapter 3. We followed this up with also an extensive survey of most local business which is summarised in Chapter 4. The businesses listed in the Orkney Community Business Directory were contacted to identify their operational requirements and aspirations for growth and development. The directory contacts were supplemented with local

contact information, and included home-workers. Local schools and other local services were surveyed for their views.

We also undertook sessions with pupils from Dounby, Firth Primary School in Finstown and St Margaret's Hope. The sessions involved pupils discussing, writing and drawing their aspiration for their village and considering the positive and negative aspects of the villages and how they could be improved. The sessions were very informative and gave an insight into the aspirations of young people.

The second round of consultation was carried





out in March 2009 and the organisational details of this are set out below.

Advertising: The events were publicised in the following ways:

- Notification on the homepage of the Council's website (5th March 2009 onwards)
- Article in the Orkney Today and The Orcadian, discussing the events (26 February 2009)
- Invitations sent to every householder / business in each village and postcode areas around Dounby, Finstown and St Margaret's Hope (25th February 2009)
- Announcements on Radio Orkney and the Superstation Orkney (March 6th, 9th, 10th, 11th

and 12th 2009)

- Radio Orkney news feature by Gavin Barr during morning broadcast (9th March 2009)
- Public notice in The Orcadian for two weeks (26th February and 5th March 2009)
- Posters sent to shops and public buildings throughout Orkney (w/b 23rd February 2009)
- Circular E-mail sent by Press Officer to all OIC staff (7th March 2009)

Methodology: The community consultation events took the following format:

DOUNBY - Tuesday 10th March 2009, **Dounby Community School**, Community Room, informal drop-in between 5.00pm and 8.15pm, public meeting and discussion between 8.30pm – 10.00pm

ST MARGARET'S HOPE - Wednesday 11th March 2009, Cromarty Hall, informal drop-in between 4.00pm and 7.15pm, public meeting and discussion between 7.30pm – 9.00pm

FINSTOWN - Thursday 12th March 2009, Firth Primary School, informal drop-in between 4.00pm and 7.15pm, public meeting and discussion between 7.30pm – 9.00pm

The community consultation events built on the findings and emerging issues from our earlier work with Community Councils, businesses and schools.

The events were the first occasions at



**Community workshop,
Dounby, March 2009**

which the wider public were invited to learn about and contribute to the ongoing work, and precede the preparation of the draft masterplans by the WMUD team. The position of the events in the masterplanning process largely determined the message conveyed to participants and the information that the team were seeking to inform their work. The team were keen to consult on the key issues that the masterplan should address as opposed to imposing issues and solutions at this earlier stage in the process.

The informal drop-in sessions were for people to learn about the masterplanning process, discuss the findings of the teams work to date, and to think about the future of the villages. The focus was on interaction and informal discussion of the issues with members of the consultant team and fellow residents. Some people were keen to discuss, some wished to look and listen, while others chose to leave comments or questions on sticky notes and maps rather than get involved in discussion.

Materials used included:

- large printed maps of each settlement, clear and easy to understand, supported by the Proposals Map from the existing Local Plan - people were encouraged to scribble on maps and write on stickies to provide their views
- a rolling PowerPoint slideshow containing

key messages from the baseline report was on display throughout the drop-in session

The drop-in sessions were followed by a public meetings and discussions. The basic aims of the workshops were to share the main findings identified in consultations, discussions and analysis and discuss identified issues. The workshop was an opportunity for communities to let the WMUD team know if the right direction was being followed and what else should be considered. We made it clear that at this stage we were not wedded to any particular proposals and this was a chance to influence the masterplan proposals.

A series of facilitated mini-discussions formed the bulk of the workshop. These focussed around the 'emerging issues' identified in the conclusion of the Baseline Report for each settlement. The team grouped these issues by theme although in reality these themes were not mutually exclusive. Some topics, such as promoting employment, ranged across different themes. The key discussion issues for each village are presented in the following table:



	Dounby	St Margaret's Hope	Finstown
7.30 (Dounby 8.30)	introduction: welcome aims of workshop	introduction: welcome aims of workshop	introduction: welcome aims of workshop
7.45 (Dounby 8.45)	mini-discussions: traffic & parking open space & the crossroads housing & urban form other issues	mini-discussions: housing public realm & traffic wider issues – flooding & the Barriers other issues	mini-discussions: road safety, traffic & parking business housing other issues
8.45 (Dounby 9.45)	next steps	next steps	next steps
8.55 (Dounby 9.55)	close	close	close

The structure of each mini-discussion:

- a short introduction to the issues and potential responses (2-5 minutes)
- buzz groups where participants were be invited to discuss their immediate responses in twos or threes for a couple of minutes (2-5 minutes)
- facilitated plenary discussion (5-10 minutes)

The workshops concluded with a short presentation on next steps and an explanation of the next stages in the process.

Questionnaires were also available to participants that could be filled in at the event or taken home and returned to the Council, Policy and Projects Team. The

questionnaires requested views on the key issues identified in the table above and asked if the team should be considering any other issues.

Attendance

Attendees were asked to register there name and contact details at reception. Contact details were requested so that participants can engage in future consultations in the masterplanning process. The numbers of registered attendees at each event were:

- Dounby: 63 registered attendees
- St Margaret's Hope: 68 registered attendees
- Finstown: 66 registered attendees
- A number of attendees did not or did not wish to register so overall attendance

is likely to be higher. Attendance at the public meeting and discussion workshops was as follows:

- Dounby: 48 attendees
- St Margaret's Hope: 48 attendees
- Finstown: 44 attendees

Public Responses / Results

The views and comments received through the various consultation methods outlined above have been recorded and analysed to inform the development of the draft masterplans. The masterplan team were also able to gain local knowledge and gauge support for various proposals through informal discussion and debate.

FINDINGS

The following list is a summary of the various points raised by the community at the meetings under the general headings under which the discussion was organised.

DOUNBY

Business

- vacant property: not much – good or bad?
- new units may not be successful: have to be flexible, reasonable cost
- café/ drapers/garage – a loss
- need to new café and craft shop

- think about housing before business
- move away from service to sustainable environment
- facilities for children
- swimming pool
- general ok the way it is

Housing

- teletubby housing (eco housing/ green roof)
- mix of council and self-build = good mix
- shortage of self build sites
- sheltered housing next to care home/next to Smiddybrae
- don't urbanise Dounby!
- housing to focus on crossroads, single storey only, no ribbon development
- provide housing on Hiilside Road towards Quilco

Traffic and parking

- parking at coop – rear parking.... and delivery or herringbone
- crossroads – poor visibility = dangerous
- speed of traffic through village – extend speed limit zone and pavements
- further cut in pavement and lighting
- roundabout, feature?
- speed monitors?
- pedestrian crossing?
- public transport improvement
- cycle tracks
- make more use of Market Green for parking – herringbone



- cut down on parents making school run
- remove flagstones outside butcher's shop
- cycleway to Birsay
- better access to show ground
- tidy up the back road

Open space/footpaths etc

- public toilets, bus parking, other facilities
- need to find a home for the bowling green/club
- focal point
- access to countryside – relates to extended speed limits
- coordination of rural uses
- nice big park
- crossroads: park or car park, not both
- range of walks
- but plenty of walks already
- light pollution

Anything else?

- light pollution from street lighting
- bowling green – good idea but location difficult
- recycling facility needs to be bigger
- new church will provide community facility
- no urban approaches to rural issues
- toilet facility near school/ playing fields

The discussion in the three villages raged over a wide range of subjects and in general terms it is possible to address most of the issues raised, even if conflicting views have been

expresses – for example where it was said that there is too much development versus there is too little development, or too much parking versus to little parking. The most difficult issue arising from the three events, discussion and subsequent feedback is the flooding and safety at St Margaret's Hope and the various views expressed about the effect of the Churchill barriers. We acknowledge that these are of enormous concern to the St Margaret's Hope community but seeking a technical solution is outwith the scope of this study. However the issues are being examined by the Council.

Community workshop, Dounby, March 2009





dounby - urban design and movement

INTRODUCTION

This section deals with the inter-related matters of the urban form of the three villages, character, urban design issues, development pressures and road traffic matters.

SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT

DOUNBY: HISTORY AND MORPHOLOGY:

Land and agriculture:

Dounby is the only settlement of its size in Orkney not to have a close relationship with the sea. Its origins relate entirely to the land,

primarily as a place of meeting and exchange for the agricultural communities of West Mainland. Being related to agriculture rather than fishing, the village's origins are far more recent than other similar sized settlements in Orkney. The fact that the boundary between the parishes of Harry and Birsay cuts right through the village testifies that it was not the historic centre of a parish like many other larger settlements in the islands.

Early maps of Orkney – those produced in 1654¹, 1745² and 1832³ – show no trace of

- 1 Johan Blaeu *Atlas of Scotland* 1654 (courtesy of National Library of Scotland)
2 Herman Moll *County Maps of Scotland* 1745 (courtesy of National Library of Scotland)
3 John Thomson *Atlas of Scotland* 1832 (courtesy of National Library of Scotland)

Dounby in the 1880s





Dounby. The surrounding small settlements of Hourston, Sabiston and Knarston are shown, each within a mile of modern Dounby but now too small to be called considered as distinct settlements.

The name Dounby first appears on large-scale Ordnance Survey maps as late as around 1900⁴, although its exclusion from the 1912 Bartholomew map⁵ implies that Dounby had not even developed as a distinctive settlement at the beginning of the twentieth century, particularly as the surrounding ‘towns’ of Hourston, Sabiston and Knarston were named.

4 Ordnance Survey one-inch 2nd edition (1898-1904) (courtesy of National Library of Scotland)

5 Bartholomew Survey Atlas of Scotland 1912 (courtesy of National Library of Scotland)

Dounby’s emergence as a place seems to follow the appearance of the crossroads. This appears to have taken place approximately in the middle of the nineteenth century, before publication of the Ordnance Survey six-inch-to-the-mile first edition⁶.

Mid nineteenth century: the road layout

The basic road layout of the village has been largely unchanged since mid Victorian times, when the crossroads was formalised. Swartland Road already existed at this time. The only additions to the street layout in the 150 years since then are the late twentieth

6 Ordnance Survey six-inch 1st edition (1843-82) (courtesy of National Library of Scotland)

Dounby in the early 1960s



century residential culs-de-sac of Market Green (whose plots are partly defined by an old route forming a continuation of Swartland Road) and Quilco, together with Back Road (which today is still little more than a rear service lane).

Although Dounby's basic road layout emerged in the middle of the nineteenth century, there was little built development along these roads. The only buildings shown on the first and second series Ordnance Survey six-inch maps are the Smithfield Hotel and Post Office, the original school (where the playing fields are now located) and a small scattering of other buildings – certainly not a recognisable village.

In fact, most buildings in the vicinity were on surrounding more elevated land, such as along the North Bigging Road. Much of the area now occupied by the village is marked on the first edition of Ordnance Survey 6-inch maps as being 'liable to flood', heath or bog – poor ground of little agricultural value, with therefore little reason to be settled.

But being such an important junction for the agricultural communities of West Mainland, it is no surprise that the crossroads became a focus for trade and services. One of the most recognisable features of the village in the second half of the nineteenth century must have been its agricultural market, which took place where Market Green is now located. The

crossroads were clearly emerging as a new focus in the West Mainland, and the Orkney West Mainland Agricultural Society (formed in 1859) held the first Dounby Show in 1891. It is now located on a dedicated showground on the western edge of the village.

Twentieth century: developing the buildings

Orkney Motor Club opening run 1913 at Market Green, Dounby



Smithfield Hotel, Dounby in the 1950s, Dounby





It was not until the twentieth century that Dounby really began to grow as a settlement. This perhaps reflects wider changes in the economy of Orkney, particularly the appearance of service sector employment through the twentieth century (particularly during and since the Second World War) and the increase in car ownership and accessibility.

For much of the twentieth century, the village expanded relatively rapidly. Development has comprised a combination of linear development along the established network of streets, together with areas of infill at Back Road (mixed uses, today with some underused land), and – since the Second World War – Market Green (housing and open space), the A986 opposite the Co-op, and the slightly separated cluster of houses at Quilco, off Hillside Road. In contrast to earlier individually constructed buildings, these three post war developments are occupied by

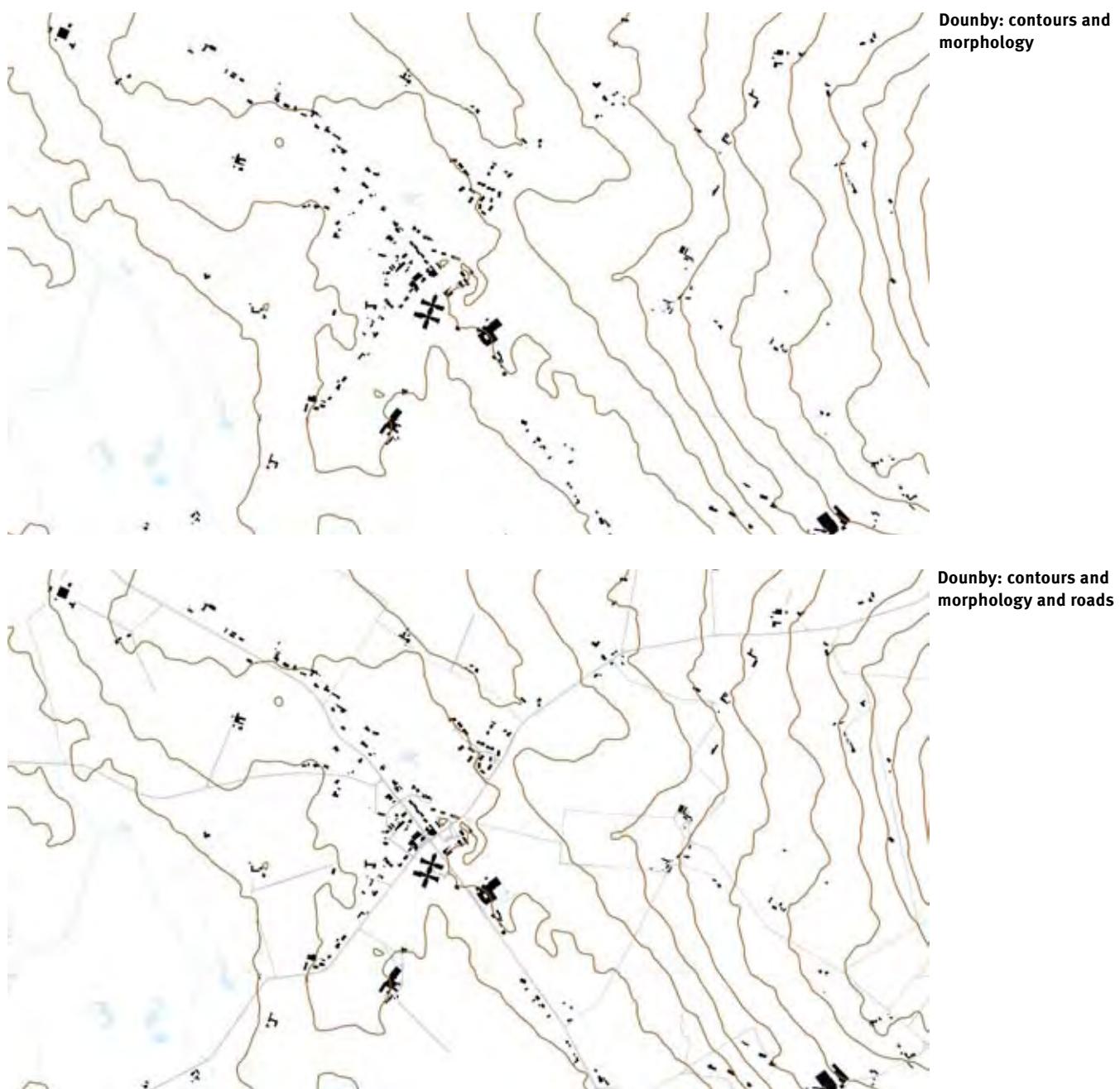
relatively large groups of houses each forming a single development.

Initially, the village grew to the north-west of the crossroads, with the stretch of the A986 from the crossroads to Swartland Road containing most commercial activities. Most of these still serve a wide hinterland well beyond the village boundaries, continuing the village's original *raison d'être*.

More recent institutional developments such as the care home/surgery and community school have taken up spare land close to the crossroads, although their frontages tend not to have such close relationships with the street as elsewhere in the village. The last thirty years have also seen the development of individual detached houses as ribbon development extending out of the village, particularly along the A986 towards both Birsay and Kirkwall and along Vetquoy Road.

Dounby buildings - similar morphology, different ages







Urban design, traffic and movement

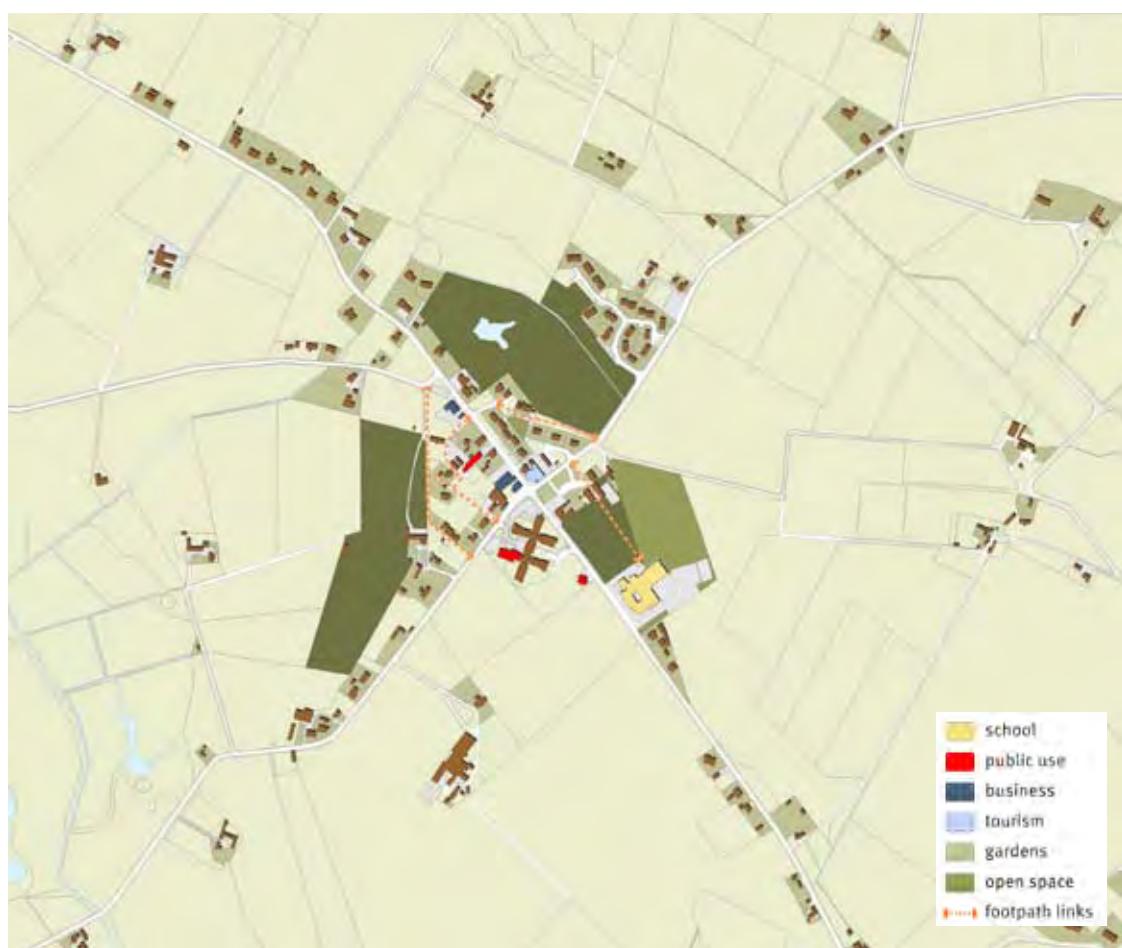
The economic foundations of towns and villages are undergoing profound changes. The larger settlements in Orkney, in common with settlements across the rest of Europe, owe their existence to the dynamics of movement and exchange. Villages were established in response to the practical realities of farming and fishing and the activities associated with trade and commerce, themselves underpinned by land and marine transport and patterns of movement. Thus settlements tend to be found either close to ports and sheltered harbours, or at the crossroads or intersection of important routes. The necessity for trade, for exchange, and for human interaction to acquire and sell goods and services underpins the market role of almost all ancient settlements.

The patterns of trade, movement and information exchange are undergoing major changes. For the first time in human history, it is no longer necessary for many to travel to, or engage with, the trading activities associated with towns. Out-of-town stores and the emergence of the internet have combined to make it perfectly possible to obtain all the goods and information we need without recourse to towns or villages – assuming connection to the internet. This development has far-reaching implications for the public realm, whether it be the city centre

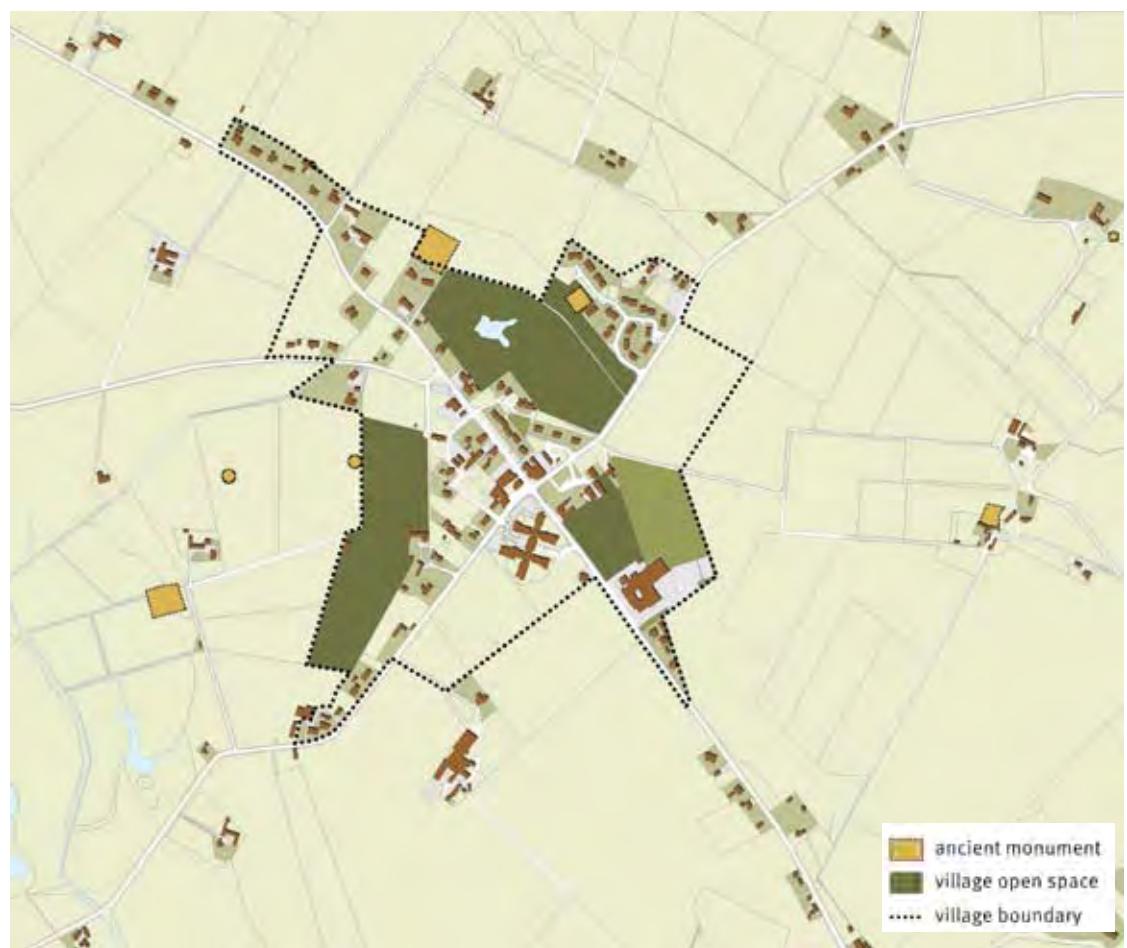
or village green. We will continue to support and visit places, but only because we **wish** to, not because we **need** to. Where formerly a distinctive quality of public space was merely a bonus on the functional purpose of places, now it is this quality itself which will increasingly support economic activity.

Dounby, Finstown and St. Margaret Hope are not immune from these changes. Like all settlements, their future depends on the extent to which they can adapt and establish a role in rapidly changing patterns of movement, trade and activity. One village, Dounby, is a classic crossroads settlement, where Hillside Road and Vetquoy Road bisect the modern A986. St Margaret's Hope is a typical fishing and harbour village. Finstown is a combination, with buildings drawn out along the waterside and around the junction of the Breck of Cruan road (the A966) with the main Kirkwall Road (the A965).

A successful masterplan should aim to build on these historic characteristics and to reinforce a sense of place around these transport roots as well as other distinct nodes and focal points within the villages.

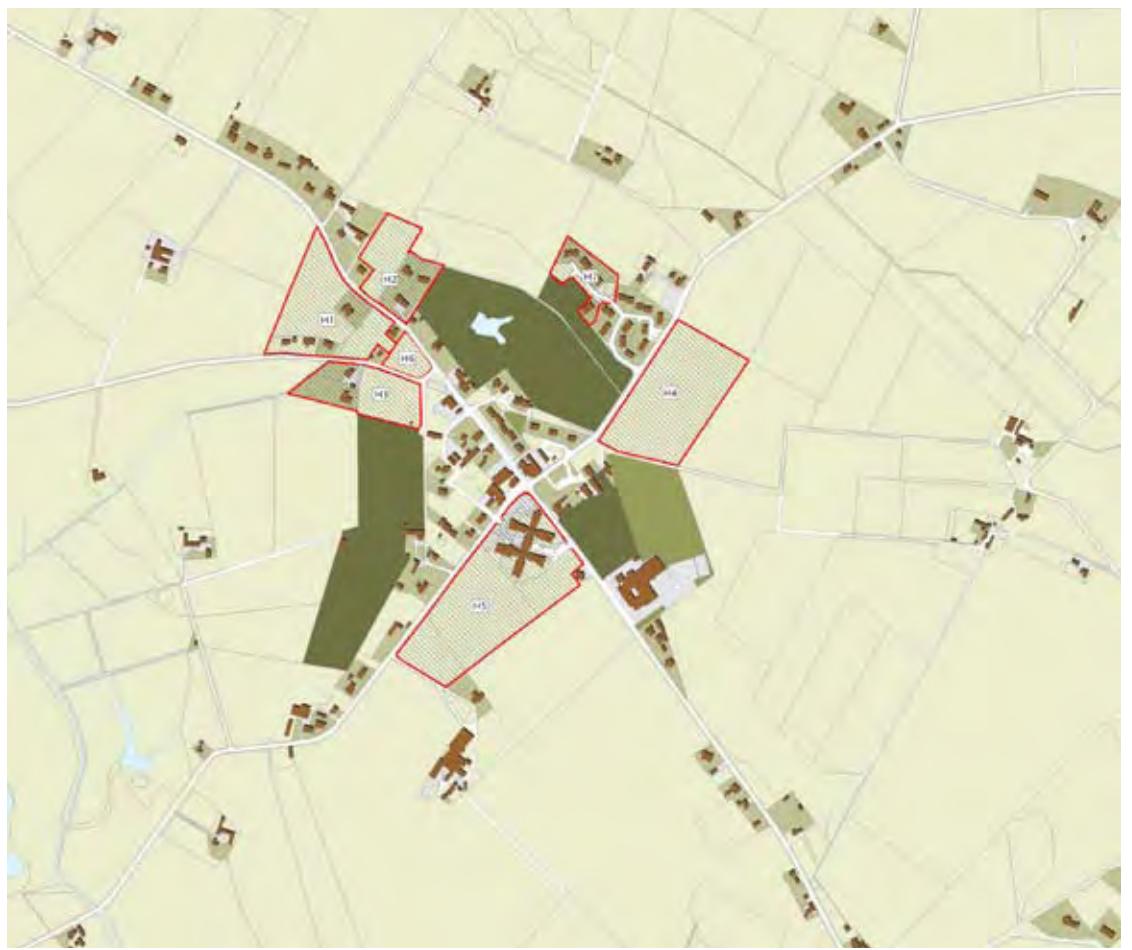


**Dounby:
constraints**





Dounby:
2004 Local Plan
housing sites







Character Areas

The character areas for the three villages are differentiated generally by the eras in which they were developed and land uses that reflect the role and function of the village. Inclusion within a particular character area does not imply homogeneity of building type or land use but instead, the character area definitions apply to a range of building types and uses that present an essential commonality that differentiates one particular area from another. In addition, the boundaries are not necessarily discrete and only suggest where one character area may begin and another ends. The villages contain a mixture of five character areas namely:

- **historic core** - a high quality dense central area with considerable historic interest in buildings, street layout and general visual and heritage value
- **traditional core** - the original hub of the village with some extant older buildings with a retained historic street pattern
- **enclave**: small cul-de-sac areas with a private quality set away from the rest of the village
- **20th century random**: development areas originating in the 20th century with little regard for the grain or street pattern of the original settlement
- **scattered/linear**: low density areas with a wide range of uses, building types and ages - typical of the edge of settlements in Orkney

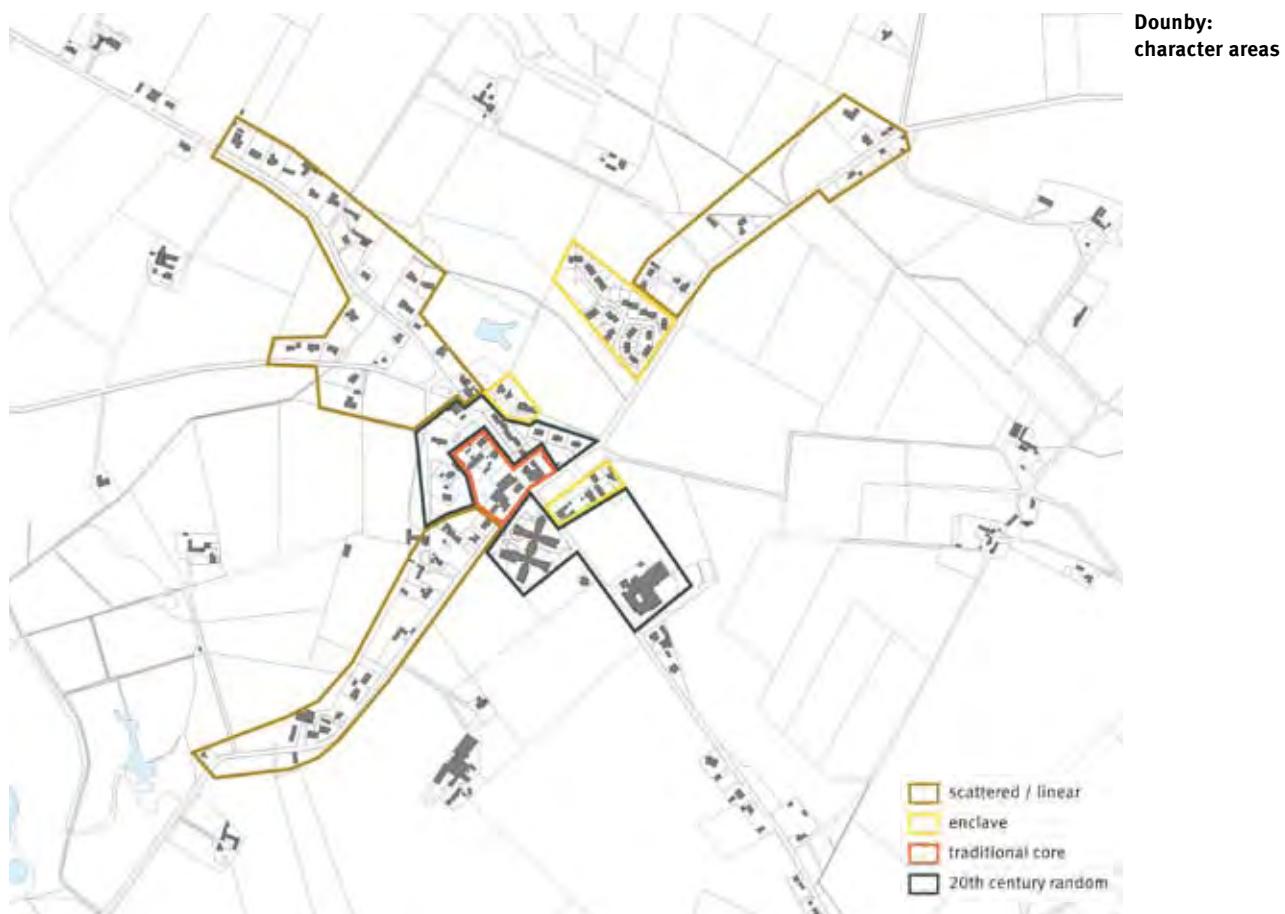
Dounby:

Dounby has four of the character area types described above - traditional core, enclave, 20th century random and linear/scattered.

Traditional core: the traditional core at Dounby is very small reflecting the fact that the settlement has very little history as a focus for development. A cluster of buildings around a crossroads, Dounby's centre amounts to less than twenty traditional buildings but what is there adheres to a tight building line along the A986. The relevant parameters in relation to this area are:

+ve	-ve
traditional buildings	fragmented form
sustainable materials	need for facelifts
flexible building types	parking issues
history and stories	dominated by road traffic
image of 'centre'	roads infrastructure
scope for change	

Enclave: these areas are made up of three clusters of residential development - two relating to the main road through the village and one remote off Hillside Road. These residential developments are culs-de-sac and therefore provide a degree of privacy. They also have a direct connection with the surrounding countryside in common with most properties in the village. The quality of environment here is marked by pedestrian scale and small scale access roads





with informal surfaces in some cases. The parameters in relation to these areas are:

+ve	-ve
predominantly residential	inappropriate styles
pedestrian scale	less concern for materials
safe and private	less concern for design
boundaries important	access issues
mixture of good and bad	

20th century random: The impact of even medium sized developments is particularly marked in a settlement of Dounby's size and so the Primary School, care home and residential developments off Hillside Road behind the Smithfield Hotel and on the east side of the A986 north of the Smithfield Hotel are very dominant. The style of these developments is quite different from any traditional development forms and they do not represent particularly good examples of how to integrate new development.

+ve	-ve
provision of facilities	non-Orkney development forms
help to reinforce 'centre'	no regard for tradition
views + access to countryside	less concern for design
opportunities for better design	

Scattered/linear: These areas represented the dominant building form in Dounby and the surrounding countryside. The characteristics

of these areas are low densities, large building plots and a lack of adherence to a building line. Architecture and building types vary considerably. Boundaries types vary considerably from stone walls, through timber railings to simple fences. The parameters in relation to these areas are:

+ve	-ve
predominantly residential	less compact form
good access	less concern for materials
views + access to countryside	less concern for design
opportunities for better design	exposed locations
flexibility - use not critical	impact on landscape
an Orkney tradition	limits to sporadic development
undervalued	

Places, nodes and focal points

An important component of the villages are the places - focal points, nodes, meeting points, landmarks and other features - which punctuate the environment. It is important to take these into account as they provide a counterbalance to describing places in terms of buildings or objects, and content rather than form.

Dounby: the majority of significant places in the village are clustered around the crossroads which itself is an important focal

point. Market Green is a significant place historically although its original function has been eroded over the years. More contemporary places include the Co-op and Post Office, the Smithfield Hotel and of course the Community School which is a focus for a range of activities across age groups.

Landscape setting and visual envelope

Dounby: the village is located in a dramatic open landscape with few trees. Although the village appears as a distinct cluster of buildings in the landscape, the countryside itself is speckled with residential and agricultural buildings as well as a significant number of sheds and ruins. This open landscape of scattered development is an important component of Dounby's character and the village and its wider visual envelope arguably have the capacity to absorb some further development in the hinterland.

Development proposals

There are few development proposals for the three villages. This reflects their size, location and market position. Nevertheless the developments that are proposed – public and private sector residential schemes – will have a significant effect on the settlements. In each village, the issue of context and the desire to blend in with existing forms creates issues for developers, their architects and for the Council who have to produce

acceptable outcomes. On Orkney, residential development is built to a relatively low standard in urban design terms – perhaps 40 years behind similar developments in England. Coupled with this, the three villages are difficult to develop in or around because:

- they are small scale and highly visible
- Dounby and Finstown are road villages where form is linear or in small groups rather than in field-sized collections of units
- contemporary residential building in Orkney requires larger areas for roads and development types which are unlike traditional building

The residential zonings for Dounby in the current Local Plan appear to be generous, have not been taken up to the extent envisaged as yet and move away from the characteristic linear settlement form. Some of these zonings would probably result in intrusive and insensitive development and these will be reviewed later in the masterplan process.

Summary and directions

This baseline paper has collected a broad range of issues that require to be addressed in the village masterplans. At a strategic level the issues are:

- in the settlement hierarchy of the islands, Kirkwall has experienced strong growth



over the past 15 years and population and employment has centralised there

- Dounby is dependent on Kirkwall for services, employment and entertainment, however it is providing a local service centre role for the west mainland and this role can be enhanced through future new planned development
- the increasing suburbanisation of the villages with Finstown further down that road than Dounby or St Margaret's Hope
- Dounby still betrays some evidence of its traditional roles

More detailed study of each village reveals a range of day-to-day practical issues as well as some longer term aspirations. these point towards masterplans that are physical in part but which also include a range of community orientated proposals for business:

Dounby: emerging issues for the masterplan

- **Prioritise infill sites** for new housing development within the village envelope, providing a mixture of semi-detached and detached dwellings, rented and owner-occupied. Other larger, more distant Local Plan housing sites H1, H3, H4 and H5 should be seen as less of a priority.
- **Incentivise development** of these infill sites so that they become “effective housing sites” in planning jargon. High risk that owners will not bring sites forward without proactive Council

involvement (e.g. grass gap sites on A986 near Swartland Road, conversion of Masonic Hall extension, Alton Tait's sites). Suggest preparation of briefs in proactive partnership with landowners, also assisting with site assembly if needed.

- **Open space at the crossroads / Market Green** should be refreshed with tourists in mind, linking with playing fields. Toilets could be replaced with slightly larger building incorporating showers and shelter (e.g. St Margaret's Hope toilet and waiting room). Local paths network within and outwith village should be promoted, with improved access to wetland area (boardwalk) and historic sites.
- Identify central location for **small, adaptable business units** on the Westray model. Could be new build or use existing premises (eg Masonic Hall extension, former GP surgery and adjacent ground).
- Possibility for **co-ordinated package of traffic management and developments in the Co-op area** – improved traffic management in front of the Co-op, extend the car park to rear, co-ordinate with redevelopment of surrounding brownfield sites and conversion of Masonic Hall extension.

SUMMARY

Urban Design and Movement:

The key issues around urban design and movement are the inseparability of traffic and village form in each case. Road safety is an important issue in Dounby. In general terms more attention needs to be put on placemaking in association with public realm and road improvements rather than highway or parking improvements in isolation. For example these might include:

- Defining clearer gateways to Dounby to mark a definite transition from highway to village. The location of such gateways should combine with the built form so that drivers have a stronger awareness of entering a distinctive place. It may be appropriate to introduce a 20 mph speed limit at such points, although this is of secondary importance to the street design.
- Removing, or not replacing, the centre line markings within the village. Research by TRL for Wiltshire County Council suggests that this measure alone can help reduce speeds by 2-3 mph.
- Reduce the apparent width of the street through the addition of an appropriate verge treatment. Such a treatment might consist of the application of a surface dressing in a contrasting colour to the asphalt of the carriageway, or the use of a locally sourced paving element.
- The introduction of lower-level, more pedestrian-friendly lighting, combined where possible with existing buildings.

Specific urban design proposals for Dounby might include traffic speed reduction measures. In addition it is anticipated that design guidance for new development works will be a necessity.





5

dounby masterplan

Introduction - Dounby in context:

This chapter of the report describes the masterplan proposals for Dounby. Drawing on the conclusions of the previous chapters it is clear that the three villages are quite similar in economic role but quite different in physical form. Dounby is a local service centre for a wider rural area, Finstown is almost a linear suburb of Kirkwall though not entirely a dormitory and St Margaret's Hope is also a local service centre which like Dounby, still betrays some evidence of its traditional roles reflected in high levels of self employment, agricultural employment, home-based working and a high proportion of people working in skilled trades and manual occupations. While Dounby is a collection of buildings around a crossroads with a scattering of detached dwellings over a wider rural area, Finstown displays a completely different morphology of linear development and cul-de-sac enclaves set in a striking landscape. St Margaret's Hope is more urban than Dounby or Finstown with many features that are reminiscent of Stromness such as the tight pedestrian environment and clusters of buildings.

The scale of the settlements and their place in the hierarchy of Orkney dictates that these are not busy places bursting with ideas for new developments, special projects or crying out for massive change. One of the things that struck us during our consultations was the high level of satisfaction that residents

have with the villages – the causes of concern were the day-to-day issues of local business, housing, traffic and parking as well as quality of life issues such as open space provision and local facilities – but fundamentally, these are places that have more positives than negatives for local residents. While the stability and scale of the settlements was considered to be important, issues of design, in the sense of individual building design, were rarely singled out as being a source of concern. The masterplans reflect this sense of making modest interventions, fixing things that are not working and setting out guidance for future development, respecting local context, street morphologies and building forms.

The exception to this, as we noted in the previous section, is the dual issue in St Margaret's Hope of flooding and the condition of and safety issues associated with the Churchill barriers. The two issues may be related to an extent but in-depth investigations of the issues are outwith the scope of this work. Nevertheless, a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is part of this work and its findings should be read in parallel with this report.

The Dounby masterplan: The masterplan for Dounby comprises two principal components – policies and proposals. The policies cover matters relating to the long term development of the village and the allocation of land



for different uses as well as the day-to-day administration of planning applications and the Council's desire to ensure a suitable quality of development. The policies aimed at improving standards of development are applicable to the character areas described in section 4 (urban design and movement).

Specific masterplan policies for the village cover:

- the role of the settlement
- future land use, especially housing land allocations
- traffic and movement
- open space, footpaths, quality of life
- general design guidance

Specific masterplan proposals for Dounby cover:

- local business
- housing
- traffic and parking
- open space and local facilities
- quality of life and other issues
- village centre improvements

Masterplan policies:

Settlement roles

Dounby is a third tier settlement in the Orkney hierarchy (after Kirkwall and Stromness) and operates as a local services centre for

the surrounding agricultural areas while the other villages have a much closer relationship with Kirkwall. This role is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future but reinforcing the role through the masterplan is a constructive proposal for the future. As we have noted, there is a high degree of satisfaction expressed by the community in Dounby and a strong sense that, with a few exceptions around particular issues, the village is a good place to live and that the masterplan should not seek to drive fundamental change. Rather it should ameliorate obvious problems and fine tune the workings of the village.

Land use allocations

The Orkney Local Plan 2004 proposed very clear and simple land use allocations for the village. The main allocations are for:

- Protection of Residential Amenity
- Proposed Housing Sites, Recreation
- Recreation, Leisure and Open Space
- Education Facilities
- Established Industrial
- Proposed Industrial Land

Within these categories, particularly under Protection of Residential Amenity, is the assumption that the village will be mixed use. There is no attempt to segregate uses into particular areas but instead to work with the reality of small scale urban and rural development where realistically it

would be impossible to make hard and fast allocations. This category of Protection of Residential Amenity is effectively a General Urban policy where a range of uses could be accommodated as long as the amenity of the rest of the village was not adversely affected. This is a positive and appropriate policy for the village.

Policy D1: mixed use development is promoted within the settlement boundary established in the masterplan. In addition, specific areas for commercial activity are identified for the area around the Coop and the Market Green.

We suggested in our proposal for this work that the quality of recent residential development in and around the villages was very low. There are a number of separate and related issues here namely:

- the suitability of particular areas of land for development
- the number of houses to be accommodated
- the siting of these houses
- the design of individual houses

Development patterns and numbers - the siting and design parameters that created the villages were all related to restriction and scarcity. The basic topography of the village, the need for shelter, the original rigg pattern, Udal Law and the limitations of traditional building all contributed to its form and layout.

As these restrictions began to disappear, the form of settlement began to change. Plot size and shape is traditionally the most significant generator of urban form and even today it generates form and layout in and around the villages. The difference today is that plots are much bigger and the shapes are completely different from traditional feu or rigg boundaries – for example a field will be divided into plots for sale on the assumption that a deep plan dwelling will sit in the middle of each plot with no physical connection with other houses. This is the antithesis of traditional building.

Developing housing sites on a field by field basis is probably the most damaging approach to residential provision for the village environments particularly on the edges of the settlements. A field filled with houses is completely non-traditional with no relationship to the existing town or surrounding landscape.

While field-filling is highly damaging to the village environment, ribbon development – which has been criticised for many years as an intrusive form of housing provision – is reasonably sensitive to the landscape. It works with existing roads, is arguably more sustainable than developing large fields and can work with existing infrastructure. In the Dounby situation, new housing needs to work with the existing landscape (which includes roads), with traditional building



and with established urban form. Ribbon development has an inherent flexibility and potential sensitivity that larger scale block development lacks. It retains the balance of built to unbuilt that is a characteristic of building in sensitive landscapes.

In allocating land for residential development it is necessary and desirable to move beyond numbers of dwellings only and deal with the actual forms that might be created as a result of the land allocation. There are no good examples of new residential development in the villages. Elsewhere in Orkney there interesting and potentially appropriate house types but the layout and external environments are insensitive and inappropriate (but quite typical of new residential development whether it is in Preston, Cardiff or Edinburgh). There has to be a recognition that new development should be ‘of the place’ and an effort has to be made to build in a special way.

Policy D2: The layout of development within the allocated sites must respect the character of the area. In most cases this is replacing larger sites with a linear configuration.

In terms of the Proposed Housing Sites, we have expressed our concern that the spatial allocations are too large, too low density in some cases and encourage unsympathetic residential development. We have proposed deleting some housing sites, reduced the

size and shape of others and introduced new sites which are more sympathetic to Orkney development forms. In this way we have increased the housing allocations for each settlement.

Looking at all three villages, the current summary of housing allocations is 82 new homes – the revised proposal in these masterplans is for 224 new homes on more appropriate sites in improved development forms.

With regard to Recreation, Leisure and Open Space, there is a need to be more specific about what the allocations are for and to try to link up land thus allocated into specific networks of green space or wildlife corridors as appropriate.

There is no change anticipated in Education Facilities. With regard to Industrial Land, which perhaps should be renamed Business and Employment Land, we have identified a desire from some members of the village community to provide informal workspace or yards with short term lease arrangements and to make new allocations to deal with expanding local businesses.

Traffic and Movement

Each of the three settlements has suffered from problems associated with measures, introduced gradually over some years, in

response to increases in volumes of traffic. Standardised traffic engineering, highway measures, municipal lighting and similar interventions have eroded the distinctive qualities of each of the three settlements to varying degrees. Traffic speeds in Dounby, appear to be contributing to a range of problems that reduce the coherence and safety of the community, discouraging pedestrian activity. A key component of our recommendations for the masterplan is a range of measures to reduce typical traffic speeds and to return a stronger sense of place to the distinctive context of Dounby. Emerging best practice from the UK and from mainland Europe suggests that the use of a range of simple measures, or sometimes the removal of highway paraphernalia, can be a cost-effective basis for reconciling safe and efficient traffic movement with enhancing spatial quality. These could include:

- removing, or not replacing, centre-line and other road markings within built-up areas
- reducing the visual width of the carriageway through the use of simple paving or surfacing materials
- defining specific on-street parking spaces as an integral component of streets and spaces
- emphasising and reinforcing clear and

distinctive gateways at the boundaries of each village to signal the change in context and to define the transition point and entry to the slower speed urban context

- replacing standard highway lighting over time with fittings designed to integrate with buildings and places and to reduce the height of light sources
- giving clearer spatial definition to key places within each settlement, typically at crossroads and intersections, and outside significant buildings or points of activity

The Scottish Government has issued Designing Streets to consultation and will publish the final version of the document in 2010. Designing Streets promotes many of the approaches to roads and traffic that would bring about an enormous positive change to these villages.

Policy D3: active traffic management methods and a focus on pedestrian orientated public realm is a requirement of new development.

Greenspace areas:

These are areas of open space within and adjacent to Dounby and the connections between these areas. These are important resources and given the ease of access to



the countryside, it is easy to overlook the importance of green space in and around the urban area.

Much green space in the village is bleak and poorly designed and while the bleakness and exposed nature of these spaces is often inevitable given the climate and exposure, poor design – particularly generic municipal design - is unnecessary. There is a need to develop a language for landscape design that is appropriate to Orkney rather than import products and styles that can be seen in Brighton or Piccadilly Circus.

The other aspect of green space is linkage between the different elements and idea of developing an obvious network of spaces rather than separate entities.

Policy D4: Development proposals must conform to the open space requirements of the masterplan. Specific proposals for development of public space must take into account the need to link into the wider network being established and opportunities to set out a common language in the use of materials and street furniture.

This should be delivered through the development process. We have included specific proposals for green space and linkages but the masterplan policy issues are:

- the Council should develop better standards

of greenspace design drawing on best practice in similar climates and combining this with local exemplars

- greenspace areas should be connected into a cohesive and obvious network – so new provision in residential areas should be linked to existing resources

Introduction to the design guidance

The remaining policies for the Dounby are based on five village character types and set out a range of generic factors which must be considered to ensure that new development enhances the local context.

Planning applications will be expected to demonstrate how they respond to each of the relevant policies and proposals and the general design guidance at the planning application stage. This information will be requested in the form of a Design Statement which will be submitted in support of planning applications. The purpose of this is to ensure that all future development that occurs in the villages responds to the common approach to design quality and key site development considerations which are established in this document.

The level of information required will vary depending on the scale of the development proposed. For example, it is likely that small scale development (such as a single house or house extension) will require very limited

information and that this will focus mostly on demonstrating that the chosen design of the building respects the local context which is established for the relevant policy area. For these small scale developments, the Design Statement is likely to be very short outlining the key factors which have influenced the chosen design. Larger developments such as multiple house or flatted developments, larger retail or commercial premises are likely to require a more comprehensive assessment of the policies in the Design Statement. Where relevant they will also be required to demonstrate how they respond to the key criteria set out for each proposal area. Clarification should be sought from the planning department at the pre-application stage on the level of information that will be required.

The General Design Guidance set out below is provided to indicate the range of information which would be considered through the Design Statement and how a Design Statement should be laid out.

General Design Guidance

The three villages are very special places but they suffer from a range of design issues that affect everything from the heart of the historic core right through to individual houses in the countryside.

At the same time, Orkney in general has a

very specific aesthetic which is markedly different from 90% of mainland Scotland though it has much in common with the Western Isles and Shetland. We think it would be completely wrong to try to impose styles or ideas from Central Scotland or from England on these unique places. However, this is in effect what is happening in many instances where dilution of local character and tradition in building, disregard for the landscape and the embracing of UK suburban style are commonplace. Design is a material consideration in determining planning applications. Councils may refuse an application and defend their decision at appeal solely on design grounds. The Scottish Government has produced advice on Design Statements and much of this section of the Urban Design Framework has drawn on PAN68.

We understand that the Council have taken some steps to improve knowledge of design issues by participating in Design Awareness Training from the Improvement Service both for officials and elected members.

Another way of moving design standards up the Council agenda is to ask applicants to do more to justify their proposals for new development. Design Statements increase design awareness, provide a sound basis for constructive discussions and negotiations, and can lead to better quality development. They can also help



individuals and communities understand why a particular approach has been adopted. Design Statements allow applicants and their clients to explain the design of their scheme in a structured way. It is an opportunity to demonstrate what has been done to appraise the context, and how the design takes account of it sensitively. The submission of a Design Statement allows officials to see the extent of analysis, as well as the quality of thought, time and effort which has been dedicated to developing the scheme. Providing the information is presented clearly, a Design Statement will help The Council to understand the thinking behind the design. It should therefore be an aid to more efficient decision making and lead to an improvement in the quality of development.

The design process

The design process can be set out in 5 stages.

Stage 1: Site and area appraisal

Stage 2: Identifying the design principles

Stage 3: Analysis

Stage 4: Design concept(s)

Stage 5: Design solution

Depending on the nature and scale of the development, there may be a need for public

involvement during the design process. This can occur at any stage, however, early consultation with the public or amenity groups should help to identify any key issues or concerns. When the design concept(s) have been worked up, it is advisable to feed these back to the contributors in order to check that nothing has been missed or interpreted incorrectly. This exercise will also help to gauge any initial reactions to the preliminary design which may help to influence the final design. Whilst each stage is presented separately, in practice the design process is often more iterative, rather than linear. This is because the site appraisal and analysis can be reviewed by testing alternative design concepts. For example, a design concept may have implications which were not initially foreseen. Once all the stages have been completed, the design statement can be assembled, bringing together all the thinking on the design issues.

The applicant should choose the most effective form of presentation, as the contents of a design statement will vary according to the nature of the development and the site's characteristics. For most applications, the design statement need not be elaborate. It can be a short document (one or two pages), which sets out the principles on which the development is based and explains the design solution. Irrespective of the scale of development, the design statement must be supported by good graphics. Requirements

and suggestions for content are set out below:

All applicants, including developers, architects, designers and agents, should consider design as an integral part of the development process. This advice aims to encourage more attention to be given to the design of developments. Although it will involve some additional work to present ideas and thinking, in many cases it can be achieved simply. It should not be an onerous task. By providing additional information, which explains and illustrates the design principles and design concept, applicants are likely to benefit from a greater degree of certainty in the planning process, and quicker decision making. The result should be improved quality of new development, lasting improvements to the built environment and successful places.

As a starting point for the content of a design statement for a proposal in or around Dounby the applicants will be required to demonstrate an understanding and consideration of the following:

- Context of the proposal in its local area
- Location of the site
- General description of the surroundings, eg urban, rural, residential and industrial
- Is the site in or near a conservation area?
- Is the site in an area of outstanding landscape?
- Site description
- Planning history
- Ownership of the site
- Adjacent land uses, and relevant planning proposals
- Heritage assets – listed buildings
- Focal points
- Landmarks
- Vistas
- Views to/from/over site
- Topography – contours on the site
- Microclimate – wind, sun orientation, exposure, shelter
- Services
- Public utilities, e.g. underground services, drainage systems, overhead power lines
- Network capacity and developer contributions
- Public services available locally, e.g. schools, public transport
- SuDS system
- Identity
- Surrounding buildings
- Building lines – groupings, rhythms and plot/feu sizes
- Entrances – styles and sizes
- Windows – styles and sizes
- Active frontages
- Scale – height and massing
- Appearance – details and materials
- Use of the space
- Use of spaces between buildings – public/private



- Day, night, seasonal variation of use
 - Prohibited activities, security arrangements
 - Hard landscaping
 - Location of street furniture
 - Condition and maintenance
 - How people use it
 - Public art/sculpture trail
 - Soft landscaping
 - Landscape character
 - Trees in the town
 - Quality of landscaping
 - Need for ground modelling
 - Nature conservation area
 - Wildlife habitats
 - Tree Preservation Orders
 - Play space/recreational space
 - Connections
 - Vehicular movement
 - Surrounding road and street layout
 - Access, parking and circulation
 - Bus stops and routes, taxi stops, cycle routes
 - Areas of vehicular/pedestrian conflict
 - Use of traffic measures
 - Servicing arrangements
 - Pedestrian access
 - Where are people coming from, going to?
 - Desire lines
 - Disabled access
 - Are people restricted from access due to any current aspects of design?
 - Infrastructure Considerations
- Further specific requirements are set out in the individual policy requirements for each character area below.
- The masterplan does not give detailed consideration to infrastructure capacity issues beyond clarifying with the statutory

providers that the principle of additional development is acceptable. It will be necessary for development projects to make contact with infrastructure providers including Scottish Water, SEPA and the Council's Roads Services Department in order to determine capacity at an early stage in the process. It is likely that upgrades may be required to be funded by the development process. As a general rule, connections to foul sewers as defined in the Sewerage (Scotland) Act 1968 will be a pre-requisite for development in the villages and efforts should be made, where possible, to coordinate this through a strategically planned public foul drainage system. In all cases, early contact with Scottish Water will be important to determine the necessary sewerage infrastructure requirements for new development. For example, a Development Impact Assessment should be requested by Scottish Water at the earliest opportunity and some proposals may require to be assessed against SEPA's Pollution Prevention Guidance.

In addition, the Strategic Environmental Assessment report has highlighted areas where flooding is likely to be a constraint on development. In coastal areas, flood risk is a reality which cannot be ignored in the development process and some sites which are identified in the masterplans as having potential for redevelopment are within flood risk zones where development may not be possible until strategic flood alleviation measures are put in place. Developers should therefore refer

to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment work which was undertaken in parallel with the masterplans process to assess the likely level of risk associated with progressing development in flood risk areas. It may be that some sites which are identified as having potential for redevelopment cannot be brought forward until appropriate formal flood alleviation measures are put in place. An assessment of the capabilities of existing formal flood protection measures (if any) will be required at an early stage to determine the extent of new works which may be required. Detailed consultation with the council as Flood Prevention Authority, and if necessary SEPA will be essential to determine the likely works which may be required.

A core objective of the masterplan study is to encourage regeneration and to promote new development in central areas. It is also at its heart a land use planning document, which seeks to direct the broad direction of new development over a 5 to 10 year period and beyond. It is therefore considered appropriate to establish how development should proceed if flooding issues can be overcome, and if innovative solutions to tackling flood risk are found and influence the development process in order to seek to overcome the requirement to avoid development in flood risk areas which are central to the long term regeneration and vitality of the central part of the villages.

Detailed consideration should be given to



flood risk at an early stage and it is likely that Flood Risk Assessment studies will be required which will influence the layout and design of the new buildings, particularly in central and coastal locations, and those next to existing watercourses. Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS) techniques should be adopted in all development proposals. There is also a need to consider sustainable building techniques and provision for recycling in new developments.

As detailed above, the masterplan study has observed the need for a step change in the approach to design of new buildings in the villages and the way in which all new land allocations, particularly those on the edge of the settlements are developed. It is anticipated that the pattern of single house and smaller scale development projects will continue to be the norm. The following guidance has been prepared to provide a context for improving the design quality of new development. It is not intended to be an exhaustive account and planning applications will be considered on their own merits.

The policies represent urban design and planning principles which will help to guide development in the villages for the foreseeable future. The policies are based largely on the character areas outlined in section 5 and are written with a view to maintaining or enhancing the qualities of these areas. As detailed above, planning

applications will required to be supported by Design Statements which demonstrate how they respond to the planning and urban design principles for each character area.

The policy areas are:

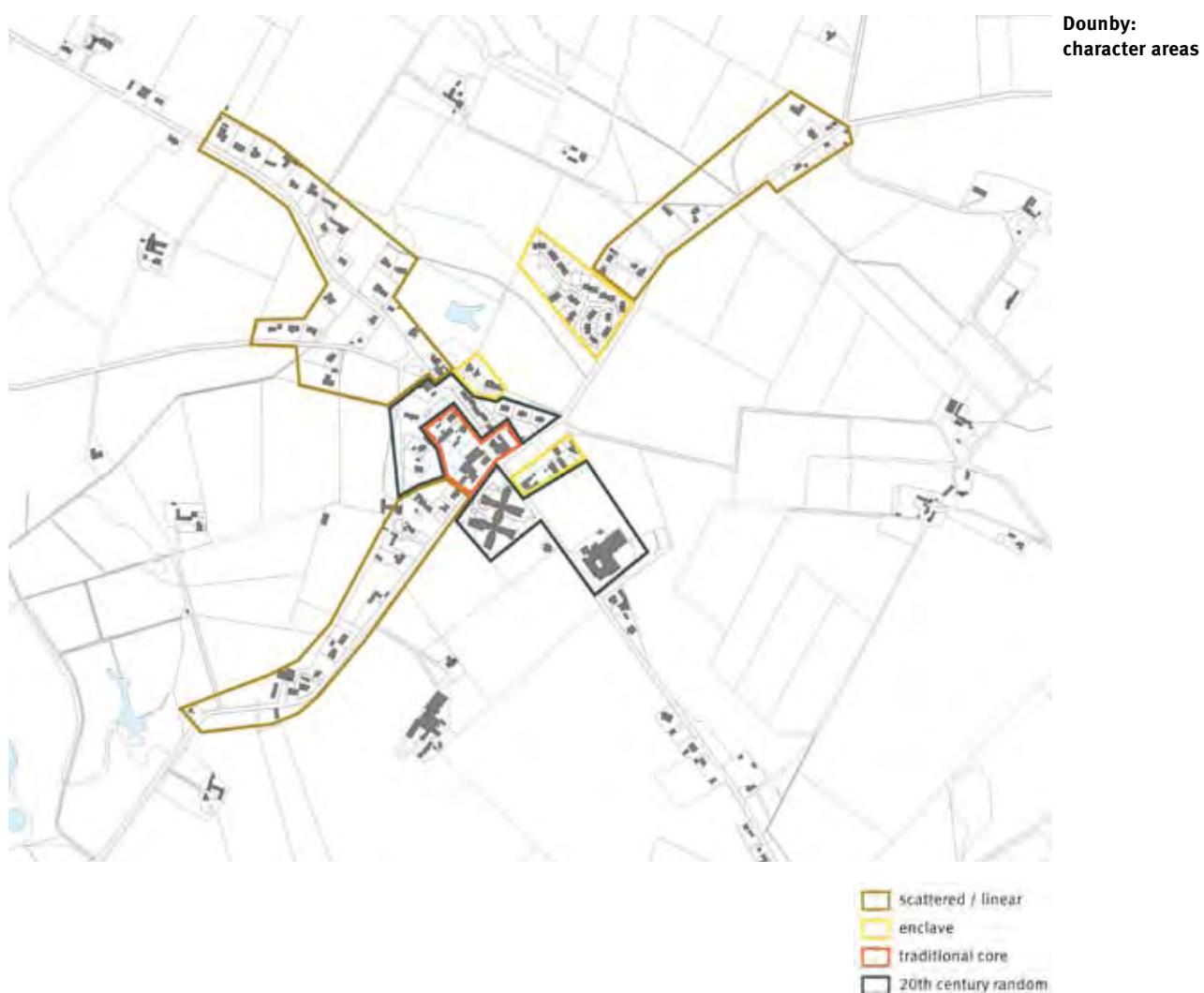
- historic core
- traditional core and new extended core areas
- enclaves
- scattered linear areas
- 20th century random

Policies by area

Policy D5: Traditional core and new extended core areas: This area is the traditional centre of Dounby while it has assets, it lacks the consistency and spatial qualities of the historic core of St Margaret's Hope and is less intensively developed. These is a relatively stable area and is important to the health and economy of the village. There is a need for very careful consideration of the design of new development especially the design of new detached residential properties.

Planning applications must demonstrate that they:

- do not exceed two storeys in height and should preferably be shallow plan wide frontage in form with a pitched roof
- consider new uses which might support activity and vitality





- work with the landscape and topography rather than against it
- maintain plot sizes, building sizes and orientation rather than amalgamating buildings and sites into larger units
- encourage the design of buildings for future changes of use without significant change to the building itself
- maintain pedestrian links to adjacent residential areas and to the countryside
- new development should take advantage of views to the surrounding countryside while making a modest impact on the landscape
- new development should involve consideration of a range of building types, including semi-detached and terraced buildings which have advantages over detached dwellings in delivering better urban form and sheltered spaces
- new development fronting a main road should present an active frontage (entrances and public windows) to the road where possible

Policy D6: Enclaves:

These are small, usual residential areas often attached to the historic or traditional core by cul-de-sac but which have characteristics which enclose and detach them from the rest of the village. They are quite private areas often with narrow vehicular accesses incorporating gravel surfaces, informal grass verges, enclosing walls and trees. Planning Applications must demonstrate that they

respond to the following urban design principles:

- new development should retain the enclosing nature of the enclave character area
- new development should be predominantly residential although there may be opportunities for other uses such as community facilities or a small convenience store or corner shop
- new development should set clear standards for plot sizes and building lines which will help to create sheltered spaces
- new development should not exceed two storeys in height and should preferably be (or appear to be) shallow plan wide frontage in form with a pitched roof
- new developments should include stone boundary walls between 600mm and 3000mm in height to public areas rather than be ‘open plan’
- new development should take advantage of views to the surrounding countryside while making a modest impact on the landscape
- new development should involve consideration of a range of building types, including semi-detached and terraced buildings which have advantages over detached dwellings in delivering better urban form and sheltered spaces
- new development can and should include natural traffic attenuation through informal surfaces
- where the boundaries are on the edges of

the settlement, the boundary treatment should be post and wire fencing

Policy D7 Scattered/linear areas :

These areas are the outer areas of the village
 - more rural than urban - containing scattered groups of houses or series of individual houses. In these areas, for the avoidance of doubt, the overriding principle is to avoid high density field filling and instead to encourage scattered development forms. The following criteria will apply:

- development will take a generally linear form avoiding crescents and culs de sac
- access will be taken directly from an existing road
- any development will be no more than two houses deep from the existing road
- there will be no fixed building line - so proposed buildings must avoid lining up with neighbouring buildings
- development must respond to and work with the topography and landscape rather than against it
- where the boundaries are on the edges of the settlement, the boundary treatment should be post and wire fencing

Policy D8 20th century random

These are areas of the village which are distinctive because they so clearly date from the second half of the 20th century when ideas about architecture and how to build

often ignored context. They do not represent the best areas of Dounby but their relative newness may ensure that they are part of the village scene for many years. Neither do they represent exemplars for new building therefore:

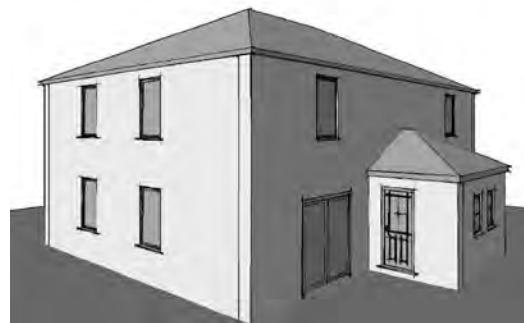
- new development in these areas should adopt the characteristics of the traditional core or scattered/linear development depending on location
- new development should adopt a traditional form in terms of layout
- new development should be predominantly residential although there may be opportunities for other uses such as community facilities or a small convenience store or corner shop
- new development should set clear standards for plot sizes and building lines which will help to create sheltered spaces
- new development should not exceed two storeys in height
- new developments should include stone boundary walls between 600mm and 3000mm in height to public areas rather than be 'open plan'
- new development should take advantage of views to the surrounding countryside while making a modest impact on the landscape
- new development should adopt designed-in traffic amelioration wherever possible rather than traffic calming (ie narrower streets, shared surfaces, limited regulation signs etc)
- where the boundaries are on the edges of



croft typology



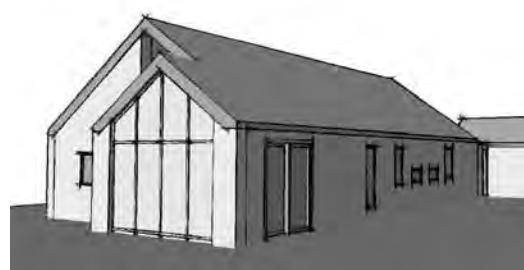
farmhouse typology



manse typology



modified single storey typology



adapted existing building typology

the settlement, the boundary treatment
should be post and wire fencing

Siting and design of buildings

The problem of fitting the standard modern bungalow into the Orkney landscape is that the form does not reflect traditional patterns - the houses inevitably look alien and out of

scale. This is not to say that houses must be copies of traditional styles – rather that they should respect local traditions of scale and proportion. Contemporary design and traditional form can be successfully combined in Orkney settlements – the Pier Arts Centre in Stromness is an example of this. At the same time it is important to reflect Orkney building styles and not generic Scottish patterns, and for crisp simple and easily-maintained detailing to be incorporated.

Croft - The traditional Orkney Croft is a long low building. It is possible to devise ‘longhouse’ style plans, although there may be cost implications. The illustration is for a semi detached pair of houses, with one bedroom at ground floor level and two low attic rooms.

Farmhouse - In the early 20th century, one and a half storey houses became commonplace. The sketch of a three bedroom house illustrates an approach which reflects this style. North Ronaldsay crofts often exhibit a distinctive one-and-a-half storey section which is unusual in Orkney.

Manse - A further alternative approach is that of the typical 18th-19th century Orkney Manse: characterised by the late Laura Grimond as the 'pepper pot'. It has two storeys and a square plan, with a symmetrical pattern. This form would lend itself to subdivision as a semi-detached block in an area of open landscape. Care needs to be taken to match the proportions of windows and ceiling heights to create the effect of the traditional building. The sketch illustrates the proportions of a pair of 3-bed houses formed in this pattern. Consideration should be given to providing a roof feature to match the original's chimneys.

Modified Single Storey - By adding a bay to a standard single storey house plan, it is possible to create an impression of a narrower plan building. This is illustrated by the above sketch which is for a three bedroom private bungalow, however the principle would adapt readily to varying house types. This has the advantage that the main body of the house is a standard kit pattern.

Adapting Existing Buildings - The narrow plan

form of traditional buildings makes it difficult to fit the required amount of accommodation in a modern house. An example of an extension to a small cottage which maintains its character is illustrated above. The scale of the extension is kept similar to the original with a parallel ridge which reflects traditional patterns. Although there are cost implications, the form of the extension can be very simple and cheap as the character is set by the original building.

The Scottish Tradition - There is a long and distinguished tradition of Scottish architecture which is alive and well today although rarely seen. A number of architectural practices have a strong reputation for merging the timeless elements of Scottish building with Modern forms to create contemporary residential buildings that are comfortable in Scottish landscapes and towns.

They are mostly highly energy efficient and use sustainable materials as much as possible. They also look energy efficient and sustainable which is increasingly a highly marketable characteristic. At the same time, until there is a widely held desire to build either traditional buildings or contemporary versions of the Scottish and Orkney traditions, there will always be a problem with new development in sensitive locations like Stromness.



Design in general should be moved up the Council agenda so that it becomes a core corporate activity rather than a fringe effort. This would give wider publicity to appropriate design and afford greater legitimacy to efforts to impose higher standards on the local community.

Masterplan Proposals

Dounby:

Proposals for Dounby are based around the three subject areas of traffic attenuation, land allocation for new uses especially housing provision and open space facilities and networks. This reflects the issues raised through the community involvement events.

Traffic and the village environment:

A crossroads has always provided opportunities for trade and interaction. Dounby's development provides a perfect illustration of this type of settlement, with the pub, shop and small businesses occupying the surroundings of the intersection, and residential buildings scattered along the four arms of the approach roads. The open space between the school and the crossroads would once have provided grazing and cattle pens for the local market.

The relevance of the crossroads as the focal point and centre of Dounby has been eroded

by recent developments, and by gradual increases in the volume and speed of passing traffic. The development to the south of the junction does little to contain or address the space, and the open space has gradually become bleak and fragmented. There is little to attract or intrigue the visitor or passing traffic in the form and treatment of the recreation area. To the north-west, ribbon development of houses set back from the A986 has eroded the sense of containment and focus around the village centre.

The few local shops continue to generate some activity, but the treatment of the roads over time has tended to ignore the natural dynamics and sense of place of a crossroads village.

Proposal D1 Village centre Improvement Area: Dounby offers an opportunity to recreate a village centre, based around the crossroads and integrated with a more coherent and renovated area of open space. This would focus on work to improve parking and traffic movement associated with the Coop and also to facilitate a park and ride type of facility associated with the role of Dounby as a local service centre. Minor changes in paving details, similar to those also suggested for Finstown and St. Margaret's Hope, could reduce the linear nature of the roads and provide a spatial focus around the shops, the pub and the village green. Configuring the roads to encourage traffic speeds of 15-20

mph within the village boundary would not significantly delay local traffic or contribute to congestion.

More sympathetic highway lighting could be an integral part of such an approach, replacing the standardised municipal columns with light fittings that define the key buildings and create a distinctive character to the space at the crossroads. Narrowing the apparent width of the carriageway could encourage the shops and activity surrounding the pub and local businesses to spill out and make use of the crossroads as a natural focal point.

Dounby could also benefit from clearer boundaries and more distinctive entry points on all four arms of the approach roads, particularly to the north-west. Such gateways would help slow traffic approaching the crossroads and act as signals for a change in scale and purpose of the highway from linear corridor to public space. Encouraging infill developments which address the street more directly than recent examples could also underpin a masterplan that could enable Dounby to better serve its role as an important exchange point for the community around the northern half of the mainland, and as a stopping-off point for visitors to the Ring of Brodgar, Skara Brae and other attractions.

Proposal D2 - Housing sites:

The provision of different types of housing in

the village was a subject of much discussion at workshops. A mix of public sector and private self build was considered to be a good idea. The current Local Plan housing provision is for 27 new dwellings on seven sites. The proposals are for 45 new dwellings on a range of amended existing Local Plan sites and new sites. In all cases, the scale of each site reflects the local character, in particular, to reflect a more linear development pattern towards the extremities of the settlement.

These are:

site	area	nos
H1 Swartland Road (reduced)	0.36 ha	5
H2 A986 North End (retained)	0.69 ha	10
H6 Swartland/A986 (retained)	0.30 ha	5
H7 Swartland/A986 (retained)	0.35 ha	5
H3 Swartland Road (reduced)	0.40 ha	6
H5 Vetquoy Road (reduced)	0.54 ha	8
H4 Hillside Road (reduced)	0.16 ha	2
H8 Hillside Road (new site)	0.27 ha	4
total	3.07 ha	45



There is a need to establish a development brief for the Swartland Road sites (H3, H6 and H7) in order to coordinate development of these sites.

Proposal D3: Other land use allocations:

The proposal for a new church on Vetquoy Road includes a community hall and a cafe. This would meet some of the community wishes for better facilities in the village. It is reasonably centrally placed.

There is a desire for a larger recycling facility to either replace the existing facility on site or to be located elsewhere. It is suggested that the current site is a good location and the Council might consider improving the facility. A general presumption is established in favour of mixed use development throughout Dounby including opportunities to establish business units through redesign of Market Green as part of the Village Centre Improvement Area.

Proposal D4 - Open space provision:

Dounby is well provided with green spaces including the showground, the Vias Moss, the facilities at the school and of course Market Green. It also has easy access to the countryside.

There is a need to find a site for a bowling green – this has been proposed as a potential new use for Market Green but there

is opposition to this, even though it might provide a suitable and attractive focus for the centre of the village. Many expressed a preference for the facility to be located near the school.

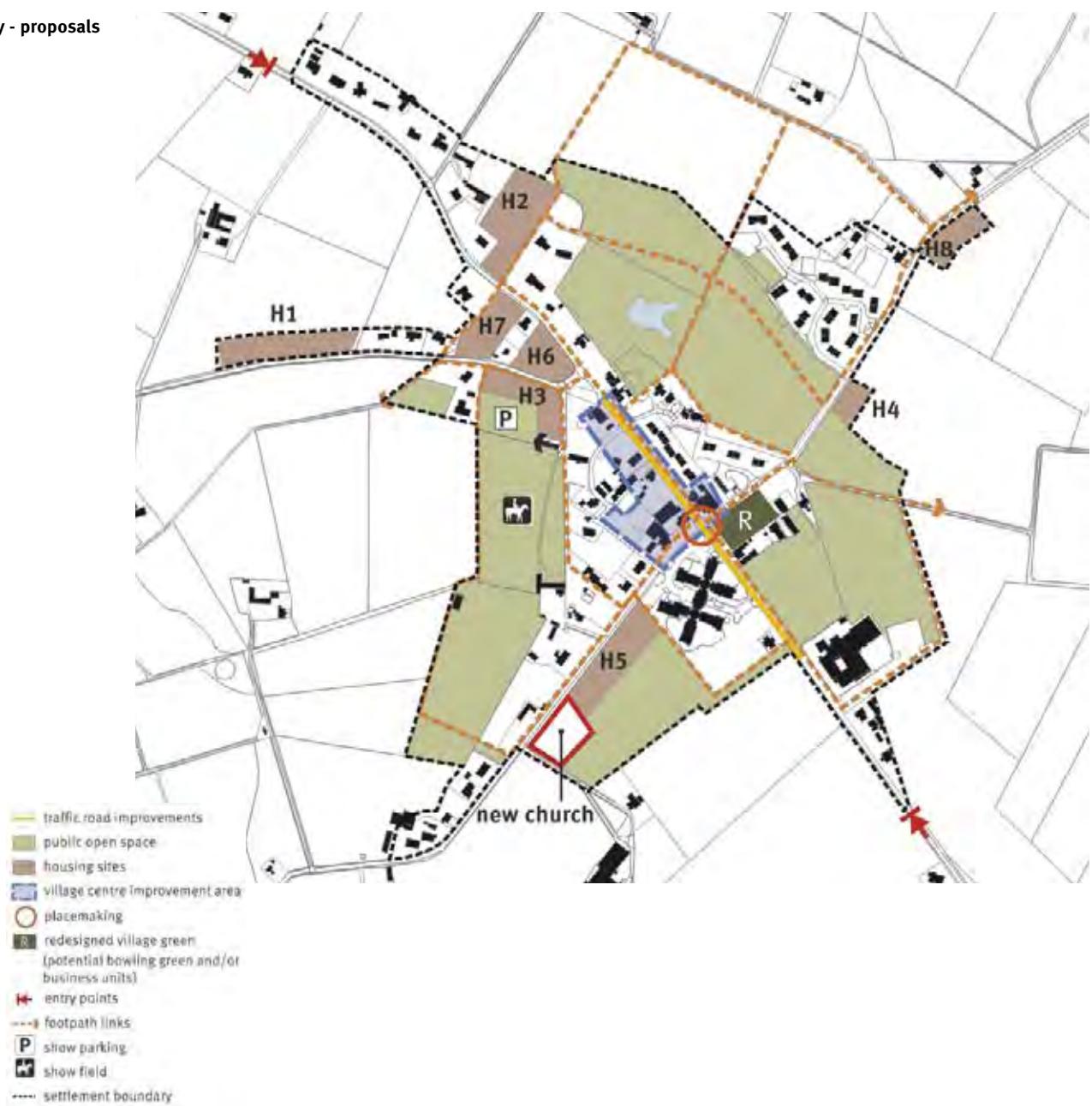
One of the issues with the extent of open space provision is that it does not link together particularly well and the Moss is largely underutilised. It would be beneficial to work up joint proposals with the community to develop a circular park around the village with a variety of different character zones ranging from formal to informal.

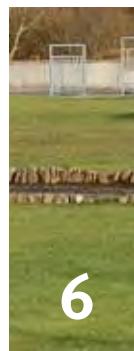


Dounby - theoretical traffic proposals



Dounby - proposals





6

dounby - implementation

This document has set out a masterplan for the villages of Dounby. The proposals are based on:

- a robust appraisal of the condition of the village and its prospects for the future
- in depth consultation and involvement of the local community in the development of the masterplan

These are not masterplans in the sense of dramatic proposals for change but sets of proposals which will help to make the village work better, make it more attractive to businesses and visitors and ensure a better quality of life for residents.

We noted that there are few capital proposals for physical change in the village. There is interest in housing development - both affordable housing and opportunities for self build private plots - and a proposal for a new church and associated community facility. Apart from these, there is very little happening in terms of development other than single dwellings and house extensions.

Our aim has been to develop a realistic, relevant and deliverable set of policies and proposals that will make a positive difference to the village.

In order to make worthwhile change in the village it is important to bear in mind that the Council is not the sole instigator of change. Just as important is the way in which other people bring change about, especially through or with

the agreement of the local community. Here we outline some of the themes that should underpin and ensure that Dounby begins to change for the better and evolve into a more diverse and robust village.

Theme 1: the importance of the local community

A Community Cooperative:

There is much local interest in the future prosperity of the village, not only from local businesses and retailers but from residents in general. This is an ideal footing for the establishment of a local community cooperative to help new projects to get off the ground.

Community Cooperatives have been shown to be effective in providing local services in marginal market circumstances where local residents want to better facilities than the Council might be able to provide or which cannot survive in normal market circumstances.

It is important that the public agencies should assist and support the setting up a local cooperative rather than dominating and micro-managing the process. To work effectively, coops need to be strongly community based rather than be the creation of the Council. A local coop will need support to find, acquire or rent premises, find suppliers, pay for marketing, ordering, budgeting, logistics and recruiting of volunteers. HIE have considerable experience of working with local communities to establish such ventures and should be involved in the process of setting this up.



Local support and project champions:

Linked to the ethos and practice of community coops is the need to encourage projects to be initiated, developed and supported by local people. The force for change should come from the local community rather than being imposed by the public sector. There is a culture of high involvement of the public sector in Orkney matched by a sense of dependency by the community – an expectation that the Council will be responsible for or be involved in the majority of change in the village. Change in Dounby is very driven by public sector finance and therefore subject to the same budgetary shortcomings that most local authorities have to work with.

What is required is for local champions and groups to take projects forward rather than relying on the public sector to do so. Community based projects or initiatives by local companies can be far more effective than the public sector in obtaining finance and promoting proposals and schemes that work for the town and with which the local community feel a sense of ownership.

Theme 2: the appreciation of place

Dounby and the surrounding landscape are unique and worthy of the highest standards maintenance and enhancement. Having a diverse economy contributes to securing a better sense of place. A committed and involved business and residential community is equally valuable. An understanding of the

physical assets of the town and its setting is the foundation of place and placemaking.

We have suggested in earlier sections of this study that this is an area of some weakness not just in the Council but also in the local community. The specific areas that have to be addressed are education, awareness and appreciation of local circumstances and context – forming a sense of what makes Orkney special and ensuring that this is not watered down by inappropriate, out of context or rootless interventions. Improving place awareness in the local community is a major project but some of the tools which can be used to achieve better standards of placemaking and design are readily available. They are:

- the introduction of compulsory design statements for all development in and around Dounby
- the production of design guides for a range of different subjects (for example shopfronts, signage, roads and infrastructure, house extensions) and/or for specific areas of the town such as the new ribbon/linear housing development area proposed in this document
- the introduction of specific design briefs for important, large or prominent sites



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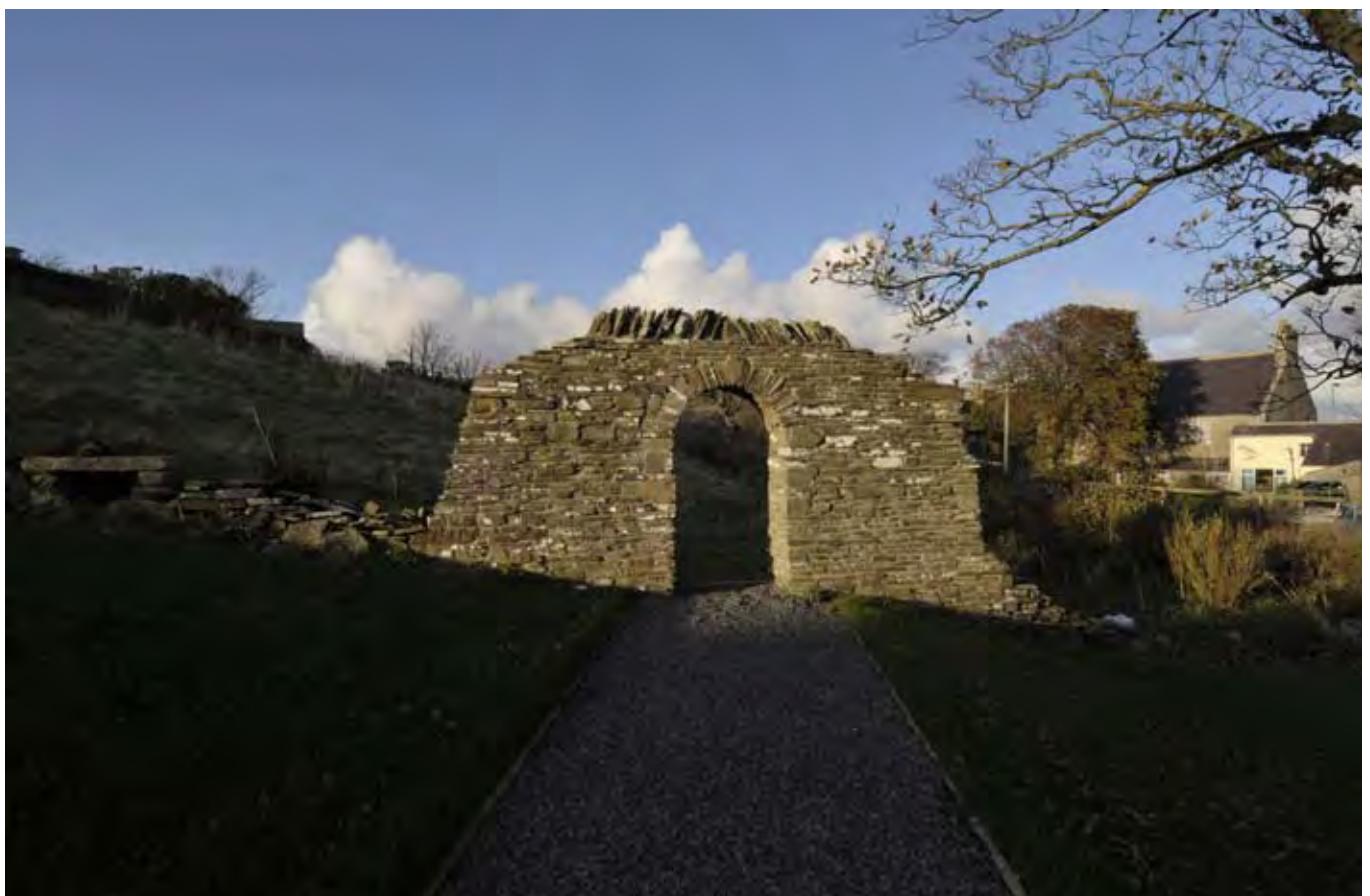
three villages masterplans



FINSTOWN
baseline and proposals

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**3 Villages Masterplans
Final Report - Volume 3
Finstown**



March 2010

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**3 Villages Masterplans
Final Report - Volume 3
Finstown**



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finstown first consultation

INTRODUCTION

This first stage of consultation consisted of informal meetings with local Community Councillors to explore with them how they think their villages should change in the future. It involved two strands:

- guided tours of each settlement by Community Council chairs
- facilitated workshop sessions with Community Council members for each settlement

- The purpose was to engage with Community Councillors, as knowledgeable community activists with a statutory role in the planning system, and explore:the sort of place that they would like the settlement to become in the future
- things they don't like about the settlement
- the forces of change that are affecting the community
- what's realistic for the future – high aspirations, realistic expectations
- how we should engage with the wider community as the project moves forward

	St Margaret's Hope	Dounby	Finstown
	South Ronaldsay & Burray CC	Harray & Sandwick CC, Birsay CC	Firth & Stenness CC
Tour	21 October	22 October	23 October
Workshop	22 October	23 October	28 October

These discussions produced a wealth of invaluable information:

1. The potential changes that local communities believe are important for the future of their villages. These included strategic issues like housing, jobs, flooding and transport; and specific

Finstown





places within each village which act as a focus for change, such as underused areas of ground.

2. Rich background information about the development and character of each village – detailed knowledge that we could never have gained without input from local people, and which helps us hugely to start to understand each settlement as a place.
3. An invaluable first contact with the local community which we could build on as the project progresses, the intention being for the next stage of consultation to test initial proposals, perhaps in the form of different options or scenarios,

need for new housing for Finstown



with the wider local community in each settlement.

There was a general understanding that the masterplans could help local communities and the Council lobby for particular proposals.

The rest of this section summarises the findings for each settlement.

FINSTOWN

Issues

- **Housing** – although some desire not to see any more housing, it seems to be generally accepted that new housing is needed to sustain the local community. In terms of housing type, it was suggested that new housing should be a mix of owner-occupied, social and serviced plots. General aspiration for detached housing – ongoing development at Flett's Corner was suggested as being too dense. There does not seem to be the same pressing need for affordable housing need as was expressed in, say, St Margaret's Hope. There was no clear steer on how much new housing is required, possibly because there were divergent views. There was, however, a concern that too little land has been zoned for housing, as owners of land

zoned for housing in the Local Plan may not necessarily release that land. During discussion, it emerged that this may not however be a concern that there needs to more housing land designated, but more that what housing land is designated is largely in a single ownership and may not be "effective" (i.e. sites H1, H3 and H4). For the largest single housing site (H3/H4), it was suggested that:

- Vehicular access could be taken not only via Grimond but also direct from the main road south-east of the kirkyard.
- Houses should be set back from the kirkyard, e.g. by landscaped open space, play area and/or road.
- Scattered roadside housing development outside the village was a concern, e.g. on the Old Finstown Road and towards Evie. It was suggested that any new housing in the countryside should be developed in clusters off but near to main roads (e.g. rural culs-de-sac), to reduce numbers of direct accesses onto main roads and take advantage of infrastructure and public transport.
- **Jobs** – the village plays host to a considerable number of jobs – notably in the quarries, garage, electrician and builders' merchant, as well as local shops, school, craft galleries etc.

Not many of these jobs appear to be held by local people – but there was nonetheless a desire to retain these sources of employment. It was noted that businesses like the garage and builders' merchant attract custom from well beyond Finstown. In terms of attracting new businesses, a desire for business units was expressed. The old school was suggested as having potential for occupying 5/6 businesses if converted from its present use as a store (which is regarded as under-utilisation).

- **Tourism** – the village has tourist accommodation (self catering and B&B), is an accessible base from which to tour and has a network of rural paths. The main deficiency for tourist at the time of consultation was somewhere to eat. The only restaurant / café / takeaway was next to the Pomona but has closed. However a new restaurant - The Waterside



lack of places to eat for visitor/tourists in Finstown



Restaurant - has opened at the east end of the village. There was a suggestion that a place for camper vans to hook up to power (such as at Deerness community centre) would be useful – although there was no obvious location for this. The car park at Finstown community centre was seen as possibly too sloping, whilst locals would not wish to promote overnight parking at the car park on the main road opposite the kirkyard (previous history here).

- **Traffic** – speed of traffic on the main road through the village is a particular concern, particularly the speed of traffic entering the village. General desire for simple traffic management measures to reduce speed. There was little appetite for interventions such as reductions in carriageway width or even pedestrian crossings (an issue which has apparently been visited before). This is despite the narrow/non-existent footways and lack

of pedestrian crossings, neither of which were a particular concern. However these interventions featured later in the public consultation.

Places

- **The community school** – the community are proud of their new school (built in 2000), having fought to obtain a non-standard design which reflects the architecture of the adjacent old school. Having also fought to retain the old school, there is also concern that it is under-utilised as a store. Desires were expressed for the old school to be converted into an outdoor centre or a boat museum, both of which would build on its shoreline location. In the absence of these ideas, conversion to business units was suggested. The school also forms the heart of a “civic cluster” – play area (largely funded by local parents), playing pitches (used by the local football

**keep green space
between main road and
shore as community area**



team) and old people's accommodation. Despite its physical separation from the village, pedestrian access to the school is seen as good.

- The **car park and open space** between main road and shore, opposite kirkyard – there was a general desire not to see its open, green aspect compromised by tree planting or buildings. The green area (west of the slipway) is used for community events like gala day, and the car park is often full for funerals, weddings etc. Funeral processions make their way along the main road from the car park to the kirk, causing traffic issues. Provision of additional hardstanding for the hearse and followers on the shore

side of the main road was seen as a potential solution to this, preferably also providing additional car parking for the builders' merchant opposite (as with the parking bays on the main road near Baikies store).

- **The centre of the village?** Consensus was that it doesn't have a centre – different people will say it is in different places (e.g. the Heddle Rd junction, Baikies, the bus stops). Consensus also that it doesn't need a single centre, either. As someone said, "Finstown is the centre" – reflecting that there are a number of different focuses that combine to make the village what it is.

**support local businesses
in Finstown**





Emerging issues for the masterplan

- Finstown appears to have **no obvious pressing issues** to fix – unlike St Margaret’s Hope (flooding and affordable housing) and Dounby (gap sites and the Market Green). Finstown may appear grey and unprepossessing to the visitor – but people are generally content and not looking for any great change.
- **Finstown's proximity to Kirkwall and Stromness** is both a curse and a blessing. Whilst it means that it is easy for residents to travel to Kirkwall for work, shopping and other facilities, it also presents an opportunity: that it is an accessible location for businesses. The success of the garage, electrician and builders' merchant demonstrate this. Locals do not see the future of the town as simply descending into being a dormitory for Kirkwall. Building on its accessibility for business employment may be the answer. This suggests:
 - Supporting existing businesses – for example by ensuring that sufficient car parking is available for the builders' merchant.
 - Encouraging new businesses to locate here – for example by conversion of the old school to business units (scope for 5 good sized units and a 6th smaller one).
- There are few gap sites for new development, meaning **greenfield release** will inevitably be necessary for housing. Some suggestions:
 - Distribution of land release should reflect common ownership of sites H1, H3 and H4 and possible reluctance of landowner to develop. Sites H3/ H4 seem obvious sites to develop for a number of reasons. To ensure that they are brought forward for development, it would be sensible for the Council to work proactively with the owners and also prepare a brief to guide their development. It may also be worthwhile proposing alternative sites in the masterplan in case there are delays in bringing forward sites H1, H3 and H4.
 - Developments should contain a mix of different housing types – owner-occupied, social and serviced plots. Density could increase upon that proposed in the Local Plan, but should bear in mind a local preference for detached housing.
- Lest we are tempted, we should think twice before trying to **create a focus for the village** as all good planners are taught to do. People seem to be content with the linear focus of the village. Why should we try and impose a more sharply defined focus?



finstown business surveys

Key themes emerging from the survey:

- Finstown is a good **location** for business, with easy access to/from Kirkwall, Stromness and right across Mainland.
- Fragility of **retail** sector, particularly in the face of increasing regulation/cost and supermarket competition – but also strong desire to support the local community, sell local goods wherever possible, and support each other.
- **Workshops** and other businesses like the centrality of Finstown.
- Limited but increasing amount of **tourist** accommodation – visitors find the village very central and accessible, and recent opening of the Waterside Restaurant should fill a gap.
- **Grant aid** for physical works would enable small businesses to implement projects which will not otherwise happen – so safeguarding jobs.

- Providing sufficient **parking** is an issue for the group of businesses at west end of village.
- The **Post Office** is an important service, particularly for home-based businesses.

Specific local issues to be considered:

- **Traffic management** in various locations:
 1. A bottleneck can develop by **Allan's of Gillock** – due to their restricted site, deliveries etc can affect traffic on the main road.
 2. **Extend pavement from east end of village** to Atlantis Lodges/Waterside Restaurant, and **extend speed limit** to the eastern end of Atlantis Lodges.
 3. **Cycle route to the school** – consider dedicated cycle route.
 4. Additional **parking at the west end of the village** would support that group of businesses – there seem to be

**business in
Finstown**





issues around both the amount and rationalisation of existing parking.

5. Extend pavement up Heddle Road
to join with footpath on Orkney Aggregates' land.

- Create a **place for young people** to hang out after school
- Consider using the **school hall for the drop-in/exhibition**, setting up at the end of the school day for pupils to visit, then public session in the evening

BUSINESSES CONSULTED

1. Allan's of Gillock Ltd
2. Atlantis Lodges

3. Auld Kirk Apartments
4. Baikie's Stores
5. Esson's Garage
6. Firth Primary School
7. E Fraser Electrical (Orkney) Ltd
8. Mr K Fraser blacksmith, heating & plumbing
9. Hillary's Guys & Dolls
10. Information Plus
11. Linnadale bed and breakfast
12. Orkney Aggregates Ltd
13. Pomona Inn
14. Post Office
15. G D Pottinger, grocer
16. T Russell, fencing contractor
17. Shorelines Gallery and Accommodation
18. T A Tait blacksmith
19. The Waterside Restaurant

business in
Finstown





finstown - consultation 2

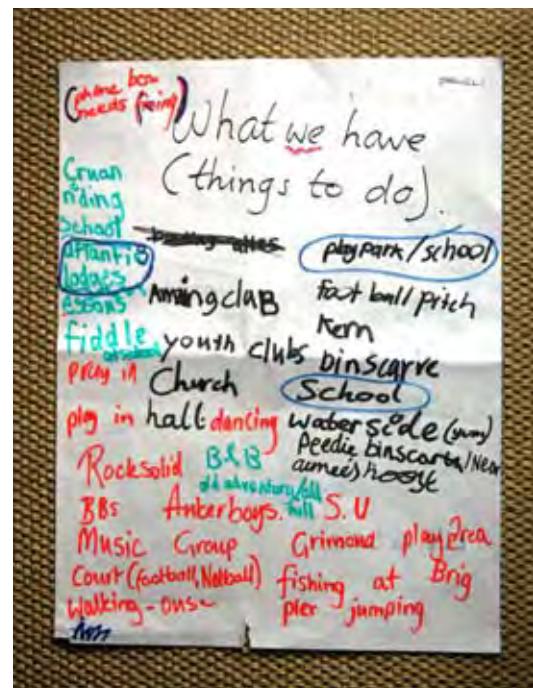
INTRODUCTION

The project team undertook a meetings and site visits with Community Council representatives for each village to inform the teams understanding of the key local development issues as described in Chapter 3. We followed this up with also an extensive survey of most local business which is summarised in Chapter 4. The businesses listed in the Orkney Community Business Directory were contacted to identify their operational requirements and aspirations for growth and development. The directory contacts were supplemented with local

contact information, and included home-workers. Local schools and other local services were surveyed for their views.

We also undertook sessions with pupils from Dounby, Firth Primary School in Finstown and St Margaret's Hope. The sessions involved pupils discussing, writing and drawing their aspiration for their village and considering the positive and negative aspects of the villages and how they could be improved. The sessions were very informative and gave an insight into the aspirations of young people.

The second round of consultation was carried





out in March 2009 and the organisational details of this are set out below.

Advertising: The events were publicised in the following ways:

- Notification on the homepage of the Council's website (5th March 2009 onwards)
- Article in the Orkney Today and The Orcadian, discussing the events (26 February 2009)
- Invitations sent to every householder / business in each village and postcode areas around Dounby, Finstown and St Margaret's Hope (25th February 2009)
- Announcements on Radio Orkney and the Superstation Orkney (March 6th, 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th 2009)
- Radio Orkney news feature by Gavin Barr during morning broadcast (9th March 2009)
- Public notice in The Orcadian for two weeks

(26th February and 5th March 2009)

- Posters sent to shops and public buildings throughout Orkney (w/b 23rd February 2009)
- Circular E-mail sent by Press Officer to all OIC staff (7th March 2009)

Methodology: The community consultation events took the following format:

DOUNBY - Tuesday 10th March 2009, **Dounby Community School**, Community Room, informal drop-in between 5.00pm and 8.15pm, public meeting and discussion between 8.30pm – 10.00pm

ST MARGARET'S HOPE - Wednesday 11th March 2009, **Cromarty Hall**, informal drop-in between 4.00pm and 7.15pm, public meeting and discussion between 7.30pm – 9.00pm

FINSTOWN - Thursday 12th March 2009, Firth

**Community workshop,
Finstown, March 2009**



Primary School, informal drop-in between 4.00pm and 7.15pm, public meeting and discussion between 7.30pm – 9.00pm

The community consultation events built on the findings and emerging issues from our earlier work with Community Councils, businesses and schools.

The events were the first occasions at which the wider public were invited to learn about and contribute to the ongoing work, and precede the preparation of the draft masterplans by the WMUD team. The position of the events in the masterplanning process largely determined the message conveyed to participants and the information that the team were seeking to inform their work. The team were keen to consult on the key issues that the masterplan should address as opposed to imposing issues and solutions at this earlier stage in the process.

The informal drop-in sessions were for people to learn about the masterplanning process, discuss the findings of the teams work to date, and to think about the future of the villages. The focus was on interaction and informal discussion of the issues with members of the consultant team and fellow residents. Some people were keen to discuss, some wished to look and listen, while others chose to leave comments or questions on sticky notes and maps rather than get involved in discussion.

Materials used included:

- large printed maps of each settlement, clear and easy to understand, supported by the Proposals Map from the existing Local Plan - people were encouraged to scribble on maps and write on stickies to provide their views
- a rolling PowerPoint slideshow containing key messages from the baseline report was on display throughout the drop-in session

The drop-in sessions were followed by a public meetings and discussions. The basic aims of the workshops were to share the main findings identified in consultations, discussions and analysis and discuss identified issues. The workshop was an opportunity for communities to let the WMUD team know if the right direction was being followed and what else should be considered. We made it clear that at this stage we were not wedded to any particular proposals and this was a chance to influence the masterplan proposals.

A series of facilitated mini-discussions formed the bulk of the workshop. These focussed around the ‘emerging issues’ identified in the conclusion of the Baseline Report for each settlement. The team grouped these issues by theme although in reality these themes were not mutually exclusive. Some topics, such as promoting employment, ranged across different themes. The key discussion issues for each village are presented in the following table:



	Dounby	St Margaret's Hope	Finstown
7.30 (Dounby 8.30)	introduction: welcome aims of workshop	introduction: welcome aims of workshop	introduction: welcome aims of workshop
7.45 (Dounby 8.45)	mini-discussions: traffic & parking open space & the crossroads housing & urban form other issues	mini-discussions: housing public realm & traffic wider issues – flooding & the Barriers other issues	mini-discussions: road safety, traffic & parking business housing other issues
8.45 (Dounby 9.45)	next steps	next steps	next steps
8.55 (Dounby 9.55)	close	close	close

The structure of each mini-discussion:

- a short introduction to the issues and potential responses (2-5 minutes)
- buzz groups where participants were be invited to discuss their immediate responses in twos or threes for a couple of minutes (2-5 minutes)
- facilitated plenary discussion (5-10 minutes)

The workshops concluded with a short presentation on next steps and an explanation of the next stages in the process.

Questionnaires were also available to participants that could be filled in at the event or taken home and returned to the Council, Policy and Projects Team. The

questionnaires requested views on the key issues identified in the table above and asked if the team should be considering any other issues.

Attendance

Attendees were asked to register there name and contact details at reception. Contact details were requested so that participants can engage in future consultations in the masterplanning process. The numbers of registered attendees at each event were:

- Dounby: 63 registered attendees
- St Margaret's Hope: 68 registered attendees
- Finstown: 66 registered attendees
- A number of attendees did not or did not wish to register so overall attendance

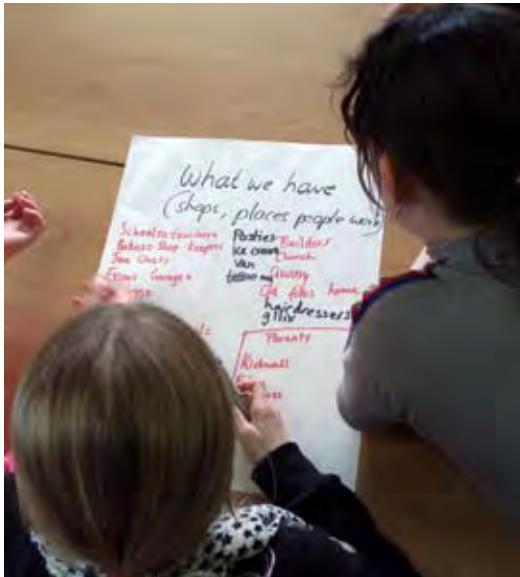
is likely to be higher. Attendance at the public meeting and discussion workshops was as follows:

- Dounby: 48 attendees
 - St Margaret's Hope: 48 attendees
 - Finstown: 44 attendees

Public Responses / Results

The views and comments received through the various consultation methods outlined above have been recorded and analysed to inform the development of the draft masterplans. The masterplan team were also able to gain local knowledge and gauge support for various proposals through informal discussion and debate.

Workshop with pupils of Firth Primary School, instown, March 2009



FINDINGS

The following list is a summary of the various points raised by the community at the meetings under the general headings under which the discussion was organised.

FINSTOWN

Business

- startup businesses may prefer Kirkwall
 - declining sustainability of shops
 - old school as business centre?
 - or hostel, home?
 - need for café/ restaurant facility – for residents and tourists
 - maybe small business site
 - create a small industrial/office park
 - need for pharmacy and resident doctor
 - business space adequate
 - Allan's of Gilock too big for the village
 - summer market in car park
 - small units for new businesses
 - industrial development should be east of Esson's Garage

Housing

- sheltered housing centrally placed
 - more housing in countryside / too much housing in countryside?
 - not enough for young people
 - housing behind cemetery wrong type



- swamping village character
- lack of plots
- new housing must be sustainable
- housing growth will affect traffic, business...
- everything needs to be inter related
- needs recreation facilities
- need 100-200 houses to sustain village
- sheltered housing near the school
- restrict housing to 29 units
- need large green belt area between housing on Heddle Hill and H3
- grants needed to improve old houses
- self build plots required
- low density and single storey

Traffic and parking

- narrow pavements – not continuous
- volume of traffic and lorries
- speed
- poor parking at nodes
- car sharing and public transport
- speed info readouts/speeding on all roads
- acceleration on leaving
- traffic calming humps
- no traffic calming humps
- removing signs and marking
- crossings
- road too narrow in places
- poor for cyclists
- need to extent 30 mph zone to the east
- better pavements – Evie Road to the shop
- zebra crossing at church
- existing car park is dead/underused
- no access to H3 from beside cemetery –

- traffic hazard
- sight lines at Heddle Road junction

Quality of life

- surgery, 24 hour pub, restaurant
- better use of water, pier, slip
- concern at scale / pace of change
- issues about integrating new residents – suburbanisation
- loss of personal feel
- role of school
- currently excellent
- very sociable commuter village
- great community spirit
- more routes for dog-walkers
- place to take children on bikes
- kissing-gate for walkers near the scrambling track

Anything else?

- need for Council information point in the village
- Buckles tower to be done up
- *no more houses on Redland Road St*

The discussion in the three villages raged over a wide range of subjects and in general terms it is possible to address most of the issues raised, even if conflicting views have been expressed – for example where it was said that there is too much development versus there is too little development, or too much parking versus to little parking. The most difficult issue arising from the three events, discussion and subsequent feedback is the flooding and safety at St Margaret's Hope and the various views expressed about the effect of the Churchill barriers. We acknowledge

that these are of enormous concern to the St Margaret's Hope community but seeking a technical solution is outwith the scope of this study. However the issues are being examined by the Council.



**Workshop with pupils
of Firth Primary School,
Finstown, March 2009**





finstown urban design and movement

INTRODUCTION

This section deals with the inter-related matters of the urban form of the three villages, character, urban design issues, development pressures and road traffic matters.

SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT

FINSTOWN: HISTORY AND MORPHOLOGY:

Sea, shelter and centrality

Although the present village of Finstown has stood at the heart of the parish of Firth

for many centuries – as indicated by Johan Blaeu's 1654 map¹ – the village is absent from the two major subsequent maps of Orkney, published in 1745² and 1832³. It was only in the nineteenth century that the village emerged as a distinct settlement; but once it started to grow, it quickly outpaced its neighbours and has now left them far behind.

The sequence of old maps give clues about the twin drivers for settlement at Finstown:

-
- 1 *Johan Blaeu Atlas of Scotland 1654 (courtesy of National Library of Scotland)*
 - 2 *Herman Moll County Maps of Scotland 1745 (courtesy of National Library of Scotland)*
 - 3 *John Thomson Atlas of Scotland 1832 (courtesy of National Library of Scotland)*

Finstown in the 1880s





- **Shelter for boats** offered by the north-facing Bay of Firth. The pier at Maitland's Place, now disused, reflects the economic importance of sheltered access to the sea. The economic relationship with the sea, although much reduced in importance, is still present today with small-scale shell fishing based in Finstown.
- **A transport node**, where the main land routes to Kirkwall from Stromness and other parishes in West Mainland converge. Over time, activities traditionally associated with a hub of this sort have progressively emerged: for example, a blacksmith, pub, cobbler and a market. As the village established and its own grew, other uses such as shops and a bakery appeared to service residents' own needs. During the twentieth century, garages and light industrial premises have become established – many of them serving customers from throughout West Mainland, again reflecting the accessible position of Finstown as a transport node.

The nineteenth century: first phase of growth

When the Old Parish Kirk (now demolished) was built in the existing kirkyard in 1813, it may have been at the geographical heart of the parish of Firth – but it was certainly not the heart of the parish's population. Finstown had not yet emerged as a distinctive settlement. Around 1820, however, the first was opened, now the Pomona Inn, following which the name Finstown seems to have been

coined for the village began to develop.

Even in 1841, Finstown was still not much to speak of. The census of that year shows that it had fewer houses than other 'towns' in the parish: Grimbister and Redland, for example, each had sixteen houses compared to Finstown's ten⁴. By 1850, however, the village had sufficient presence – when seen from the sea, at least – to be identified as "Phinstown" on the Admiralty Chart.

Unlike other settlements in Firth, Finstown grew dramatically during the rest of the nineteenth century. By 1912⁵, growth was such that today's road network was largely complete – including the new 'north road' bridging the mouth of the Ouse leading to the primary school, Evie and Rendall. Both remaining churches and the original primary school were in existence.

The 1912 map shows substantial linear development on both sides of the road from the junction of the A965 and A966 up the hill to beyond the Pomona Inn – in other words, what is now the western part of the village. This was not pure ribbon development: not all buildings fronted directly onto the road. A particular feature of this part of the village are the enclaves yards and cul-de-sac lanes onto which front small clusters of buildings.

⁴ Allan Taylor *Finstown: the village at the crossroads* 2004 (courtesy of National Library of Scotland)

⁵ Bartholomew Survey Atlas of Scotland, 1912 (courtesy of National Library of Scotland)

Firth School, Finstown in the 1950s**Main Road through Finstown in the 1950s****Hanging out washing, near the new Finstown to Lyde road 1962**

The twentieth century: the second wave of expansion

Until the First World War and beyond, the village was focussed west of the Parish Church, up the brae from the sea towards Stromness. What is now the eastern part of the village, east of the old kirkyard, consisted only of the isolated building at Maitland Place itself. This was essentially a commercial trading premises linked with the pier, which later developed to include a bakery.

The remainder of the twentieth century saw a surge in development in this eastern part of the village, separate from the bulk of the nineteenth century village. Initially, new housing stretched along the A965 to Kirkwall, together with some infill and replacement development in other parts of the village. After the Second World War, development extended up the Old Finstown Road and Heddle Road together with further infill and replacement. Industrial and commercial premises tended to cluster around the hub of Maitland's Place and the pier, although the bakery and shop have now ceased trading.

Recent developments

The post-war period has seen further housing development – either in the form of new residential cul-de-sacs such as those at Parkside, Seafield, Grimond and Jib Park (each of which is relatively large by the village's



standards), or individual houses (either infill or linear, such as along Old Finstown Road and up Heddle Road).

As the village has grown, a number of land uses have consolidated or developed on available sites – such as industrial uses primarily near the bottom of Old Finstown Road, tourist accommodation at the Kirkwall end of the village on the A965, institutional uses around the original school site across

the Ouse, and the community centre above the Old Finstown Road. An area of ground formerly used an army camp has recently been revitalised as a park and open space.

Physically, the village remains split into two, separated by the old kirkyard. A recent land reclamation project has partly filled this gap with an area of public facilities – car parking, toilets, slipway, picnic area and drainage infrastructure.

**Finstown:
contours and
morphology**





Finstown:
contours,
morphology and
roads



Urban design, traffic and movement

The economic foundations of towns and villages are undergoing profound changes. The larger settlements in Orkney, in common with settlements across the rest of Europe, owe their existence to the dynamics of movement and exchange. Villages were established in response to the practical realities of farming and fishing and the activities associated with trade and commerce, themselves underpinned by land and marine transport and patterns of movement. Thus settlements tend to be found either close to ports and sheltered harbours, or at the crossroads or intersection of important routes. The necessity for trade, for exchange, and for human interaction to acquire and sell goods and services underpins the market role of almost all ancient settlements.

The patterns of trade, movement and information exchange are undergoing major changes. For the first time in human history, it is no longer necessary for many to travel to, or engage with, the trading activities associated with towns. Out-of-town stores and the emergence of the internet have combined to make it perfectly possible to obtain all the goods and information we need without recourse to towns or villages – assuming connection to the internet. This development has far-reaching implications for the public realm, whether it be the city centre

or village green. We will continue to support and visit places, but only because we **wish** to, not because we **need** to. Where formerly a distinctive quality of public space was merely a bonus on the functional purpose of places, now it is this quality itself which will increasingly support economic activity.

Dounby, Finstown and St. Margaret Hope are not immune from these changes. Like all settlements, their future depends on the extent to which they can adapt and establish a role in rapidly changing patterns of movement, trade and activity. One village, Dounby, is a classic crossroads settlement, where Hillside Road and Vetquoy Road bisect the modern A986. St Margaret's Hope is a typical fishing and harbour village. Finstown is a combination, with buildings drawn out along the waterside and around the junction of the Breck of Cruan road (the A966) with the main Kirkwall Road (the A965).

A successful masterplan should aim to build on these historic characteristics and to reinforce a sense of place around these transport roots as well as other distinct nodes and focal points within the villages.





Finstown:
constraints





Finstown:
2004 Local
Plan housing
sites







Character Areas

The character areas for the three villages are differentiated generally by the eras in which they were developed and land uses that reflect the role and function of the village. Inclusion within a particular character area does not imply homogeneity of building type or land use but instead, the character area definitions apply to a range of building types and uses that present an essential commonality that differentiates one particular area from another. In addition, the boundaries are not necessarily discrete and only suggest where one character area may begin and another ends. The three villages contain a mixture of five character areas namely:

- **historic core** - a high quality dense central area with considerable historic interest in buildings, street layout and general visual and heritage value
- **traditional core** - the original hub of the village with some extant older buildings with a retained historic street pattern
- **enclave**: small cul-de-sac areas with a private quality set away from the rest of the village
- **20th century random**: development areas originating in the 20th century with little regard for the grain or street pattern of the original settlement
- **scattered/linear**: low density areas with a wide range of uses, building types and ages

- typical of the edge of settlements in Orkney

Finstown:

Finstown has three of the character area typologies described above - traditional core, enclaves and scattered/linear.

Traditional core: there are two traditional core areas in the village - the older core to the west of the settlement around the junction of the A965 and the A966 and a secondary core around the junction of the A965 and the Old Finstown Road to the east of the village. In these areas, buildings closely follow the historic street patterns and tend to have small building plots and adherence to building lines. These areas contain most of the shops and businesses in the village. The parameters in relation to these areas are:

+ve	-ve
traditional buildings	fragmented form
sustainable materials	need for facelifts
flexible building types	parking issues
history and stories	dominated by road traffic
image of 'centre'	roads infrastructure
scope for change	

Enclaves: these are very typical of Finstown. Although most development in the village is linear, these areas, developed off main and secondary roads in cul-de-sac form provide a contrast to roadside development. The ages of these enclaves vary considerably from



Finstown:
character areas

- [Yellow square] scattered / linear
- [Light yellow square] enclave
- [Red square] traditional core



traditional types based on farm buildings to more recent residential developments for example at Grimond Road. The relevant parameters in relation to this area are:

+ve	-ve
predominantly residential	inappropriate styles
pedestrian scale	less sensitive to materials
safe and private	less concern for design
sheltered environment	
flexibility - uses not critical	
boundaries important	
an exemplar for new development?	

Scattered/linear: These areas are represented by five groups of development on roads leading from the traditional core areas - two of these are at the east end of the village on the A965 and the Old Finstown Road, one is on Heddle Road. The others are on the A965 at the west end of the village and along Grandon Road to the north of the village around the Ouse. The characteristics of these areas are low densities, larger building plots and a lack of adherence to a building line. Architecture and building types vary considerably both in terms of age and style. Boundaries tend to be stone walls in the case of older properties or more open for more recent construction. The relevant parameters in relation to this area are:

+ve	-ve
predominantly residential	less compact form
good access	less concern for materials
views of sea and countryside	less concern for design
opportunities for better design	exposed locations
flexibility - use not critical	impact on landscape
an Orkney tradition	limits to sporadic development
undervalued	

Places, nodes and focal points

An important component of the villages are the places - focal points, nodes, meeting points, landmarks and other features - which punctuate the environment. It is important to take these into account as they provide a counterbalance to describing places in terms of buildings or objects, and content rather than form.

Finstown: most of the significant places in the village are along the A965. Local businesses especially shops become places through familiarity and use but other locations are important focal points including the car park and waterfront, the community centre and the school.

Landscape setting and visual envelope

Finstown: the village is set in a very different landscape to Dounby, looking north over the Ouse with a backdrop of hills to the north, south and west. Containment is an important quality but the most memorable feature of Finstown, especially in relation to other Orkney settlements is the degree of tree cover which creates a less severe environment and a more accommodating setting for building. Development in Finstown generally works well in the landscape but there has been a tendency to build individual houses on the rising land up Heddle Road which is regrettable - while these buildings doubtless provide excellent views they do represent an unfortunate intrusion in the landscape.

Development proposals

There are few development proposals for the three villages. This reflects their size, location and market position. Nevertheless the developments that are proposed – public and private sector residential schemes – will have a significant effect on the settlements. In each village, the issue of context and the desire to blend in with existing forms creates issues for developers, their architects and for the Council who have to produce acceptable outcomes. On Orkney, residential development is built to a relatively low standard in urban design terms – perhaps 40 years behind similar developments in

England. Coupled with this, the three villages are difficult to develop in or around because:

- they are small scale and highly visible
- St Margaret's Hope has a distinctive historic form which is difficult to recreate or build on to in the 21st century
- Dounby and Finstown are road villages where form is linear or in small groups rather than in field-sized collections of units
- contemporary residential building in Orkney requires larger areas for roads and development types which are unlike traditional building

The residential zonings for the villages in the current Local Plan appear to be generous and have not been taken up to the extent envisaged as yet. Some of these zonings would probably result in intrusive and insensitive development and these will be reviewed later in the masterplan process.

Summary and directions

This baseline paper has collected a broad range of issues that require to be addressed in the village masterplans. At a strategic level the issues are:

- in the overall settlement hierarchy of the islands, Kirkwall has experienced strong growth over the past 15 years and population and employment has centralised there



- the three villages are dependent on Kirkwall for services, employment and entertainment
- the increasing suburbanisation of the villages with Finstown further down that road than Dounby or St Margaret's Hope
- Dounby and St Margaret's Hope still betray some evidence of their traditional roles

More detailed study of each village reveals a range of day-to-day practical issues as well as some longer term aspirations. These point towards masterplans that are physical in part but which also include a range of community orientated proposals for business:

Finstown: emerging issues for the masterplan

- Finstown appears to have **no obvious pressing issues** to fix – unlike St Margaret's Hope (flooding and affordable housing) and Dounby (gap sites and the Market Green). Finstown may appear grey and unprepossessing to the visitor – but people are generally content and not looking for any great change.
- **Finstown's proximity to Kirkwall and Stromness** is both a curse and a blessing. Whilst it means that it is easy for residents to travel to Kirkwall for work, shopping and other facilities, it also presents an opportunity: that it is an accessible location for businesses. The success of the garage, electrician and builders' merchant demonstrate this.

- Locals do not see the future of the town as simply descending into being a dormitory for Kirkwall. Building on its accessibility for business employment may be the answer.

This suggests:

- Supporting existing businesses – for example by ensuring that sufficient car parking is available for the builders' merchant.
- Encouraging new businesses to locate here – for example by conversion of the old school to business units (scope for 5 good sized units + a 6th smaller one).
- There are few gap sites for new development, meaning **greenfield release** will inevitably be necessary for housing

Some suggestions:

- Distribution of land release should reflect common ownership of sites H1, H3 and H4 and possible reluctance of landowner to develop. Sites H3/ H4 seem obvious sites to develop for a number of reasons. To ensure that they are brought forward for development, it would be sensible for the Council to work proactively with the owners and also prepare a brief to guide their development. It may also be worthwhile proposing alternative sites in the masterplan in case there are delays in bringing forward sites H1, H3 and H4.
- Developments should contain a mix of different housing types – owner-occupied, social and serviced plots.

Density could increase upon that proposed in the Local Plan, but should bear in mind a local preference for detached housing.

- Lest we are tempted, we should think twice before trying to **create a focus for the village** as all good planners are taught to do. People seem to be content with the linear focus of the village. Why should we try and impose a more sharply defined focus?

SUMMARY

Urban Design and Movement:

The key issues around urban design and movement are the inseparability of traffic and village form in each case. Road safety is a significant issue in Finstown and important in Dounby too while in St Margaret's Hope, new road construction aims to improve the environment of the town although measures will be required to make the most of this. In general terms more attention needs to be put on placemaking in association with public realm and road improvements. For example these might include:

- Defining clearer gateways to the villages to mark a definite transition from highway to village. The location of such gateways should combine with the built form so that drivers have a stronger awareness of entering a distinctive place. It may be appropriate to introduce a 20 mph speed

limit at such points, although this is of secondary importance to the street design.

- Removing, or not replacing, the centre line markings within the village. Research by TRL for Wiltshire County Council suggests that this measure alone can help reduce speeds by 2-3 mph.
- Reduce the apparent width of the street through the addition of an appropriate verge treatment. Such a treatment might consist of the application of a surface dressing in a contrasting colour to the asphalt of the carriageway, or the use of a locally sourced paving element.
- The introduction of lower-level, more pedestrian-friendly lighting, combined where possible with existing buildings.

Specific urban design proposals for Finstown might include:

- measures to reduce the speed of through traffic and placemaking at specific points

In addition it is anticipated that design guidance for new development works will be a necessity in all three villages.





finstown masterplan

Introduction - Finstown in context:

This chapter of the report describes the masterplan proposals for Finstown. Drawing on the conclusions of the previous chapters it is clear that these villages are quite similar in economic role but quite different in physical form. Dounby is a local service centre for a wider rural area, Finstown is almost a linear suburb of Kirkwall though not entirely a dormitory and St Margaret's Hope is also a local service centre which like Dounby, still betrays some evidence of its traditional roles reflected in high levels of self employment, agricultural employment, home-based working and a high proportion of people working in skilled trades and manual occupations. While Dounby is a collection of buildings around a crossroads with a scattering of detached dwellings over a wider rural area, Finstown displays a completely different morphology of linear development and cul-de-sac enclaves set in a striking landscape. St Margaret's Hope is more urban than Dounby or Finstown with many features that are reminiscent of Stromness such as the tight pedestrian environment and clusters of buildings.

The scale of the settlements and their place in the hierarchy of Orkney dictates that these are not busy places bursting with ideas for new developments, special projects or crying out for massive change. One of the things that struck us during our consultations was

the high level of satisfaction that residents have with the villages – the causes of concern were the day-to-day issues of local business, housing, traffic and parking as well as quality of life issues such as open space provision and local facilities – but fundamentally, these are places that have more positives than negatives for local residents. While the stability and scale of the settlements was considered to be important, issues of design, in the sense of individual building design, were rarely singled out as being a source of concern. The masterplans reflect this sense of making modest interventions, fixing things that are not working and setting out guidance for future development, respecting local context, street morphologies and building forms.

The exception to this, as we noted in the previous section, is the dual issue in St Margaret's Hope of flooding and the condition of and safety issues associated with the Churchill barriers. The two issues may be related to an extent but in-depth investigations of the issues are outwith the scope of this work. Nevertheless, a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is part of this work and its findings should be read in parallel with this report.

The Finstown masterplan: The masterplans for each village comprise two principal components – policies and proposals. The policies cover matters relating to the long



term development of the village and the allocation of land for different uses as well as the day-to-day administration of planning applications and the Council's desire to ensure a suitable quality of development. The policies aimed at improving standards of development are applicable to the character areas described in section 4 (urban design and movement).

Specific masterplan policies for Finstown cover:

- the role of the settlement
- future land use, especially housing land allocations
- traffic and movement
- open space, footpaths, quality of life
- general design guidance

Specific masterplan proposals for the village cover:

- local business
- housing
- traffic and parking
- open space and local facilities
- quality of life and other issues

Masterplan policies:

Settlement roles

Finstown is a third tier settlement in the Orkney hierarchy (after Kirkwall and

Stromness). The village has a closer relationship with Kirkwall than Dounby or St Margaret's Hope and has been described as a suburb of the island capital, although it has a reasonable number of local businesses. This role is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future but reinforcing it through the masterplan is a constructive proposal for the future. As we have noted, there is a high degree of satisfaction expressed by the community in Finstown and a strong sense that, with a few exceptions around particular issues, the village is a good place to live and that the masterplan should not seek to drive fundamental change. Rather it should ameliorate obvious problems and fine tune the workings of the village.

Land use allocations

The Orkney Local Plan 2004 proposed very clear and simple land use allocations for the villages. In each, the main allocations are for:

- Protection of Residential Amenity
- Proposed Housing Sites, Recreation
- Recreation, Leisure and Open Space
- Education Facilities
- Established Industrial
- Proposed Industrial Land

Within these categories, particularly under Protection of Residential Amenity, is the assumption that the villages will be mixed use. There is no attempt to segregate uses

into particular areas but instead to work with the reality of small scale urban and rural development where realistically it would be impossible to make hard and fast allocations. This category of Protection of Residential Amenity is effectively a General Urban policy where a range of uses could be accommodated as long as the amenity of the rest of the village was not adversely affected. This is a positive and appropriate policy for the villages.

Policy F1: mixed use development is promoted within the settlement boundary established in the masterplan.

We suggested in our proposal for this work that the quality of recent residential development in and around the villages was very low. There are a number of separate and related issues here namely:

- the suitability of particular areas of land for development
- the number of houses to be accommodated
- the siting of these houses
- the design of individual houses

Development patterns and numbers - the siting and design parameters that created the villages were all related to restriction and scarcity. The basic topography of the villages, the need for shelter, the original rigg pattern, Udal Law and the limitations of traditional building all contributed to their form and layout.

As these restrictions began to disappear, the form of settlements began to change. Plot size and shape is traditionally the most significant generator of urban form and even today it generates form and layout in and around the villages. The difference today is that plots are much bigger and the shapes are completely different from traditional feu or rigg boundaries – for example a field will be divided into plots for sale on the assumption that a deep plan dwelling will sit in the middle of each plot with no physical connection with other houses. This is the antithesis of traditional building.

Developing housing sites on a field by field basis is probably the most damaging approach to residential provision for the village environment particularly on the edges of the settlement. A field filled with houses is a completely non-traditional intervention in Orkney with no relationship to the existing settlements or surrounding landscape.

While field-filling is highly damaging to the village environment, ribbon development – which has been criticised for many years as an intrusive form of housing provision – is reasonably sensitive to the landscape. It works with existing roads, is arguably more sustainable than developing large fields and can work with existing infrastructure. In the Finstown situation, new housing needs to work with the existing landscape (which includes roads), with traditional building



and with established urban form. Ribbon development has an inherent flexibility and potential sensitivity that larger scale block development lacks. It retains the balance of built to unbuilt that is a characteristic of building in sensitive landscapes.

In allocating land for residential development it is necessary and desirable to move beyond numbers of dwellings only and deal with the actual forms that might be created as a result of the land allocation. There are no good examples of new residential development in the villages. Elsewhere in Orkney there interesting and potentially appropriate house types but the layout and external environments are insensitive and inappropriate (but quite typical of new residential development whether it is in Preston, Cardiff or Edinburgh). There has to be a recognition that new development has to be ‘of the place’ and an effort has to be made to build in a special way.

In terms of the Proposed Housing Sites, we have already expressed our concern that the spatial allocations are too large, too low density in some cases and encourage unsympathetic residential development. We have proposed deleting some housing sites, reduced the size and shape of others and introduced new sites which are more sympathetic to Orkney development forms. In this way we have increased the housing allocations for each settlement.

Policy F2: The layout of development within the allocated sites must respect the character of the area. In most cases this is replacing larger sites with a linear configuration.

Looking at all three villages, the current summary of housing allocations for the is 82 new homes – the revised proposal in these masterplans is for 224 new homes on more appropriate sites in improved development forms.

With regard to Recreation, Leisure and Open Space, there is a need to be more specific about what the allocations are for and to try to link up land thus allocated into specific networks of green space or wildlife corridors as appropriate.

There is no change anticipated in Education Facilities. With regard to Industrial Land, which perhaps should be renamed Business and Employment Land, we have identified a desire from some members of the village communities to provide informal workspace or yards with short term lease arrangements and to make new allocations to deal with expanding local businesses.

Traffic and Movement

Each of the three settlements has suffered from problems associated with measures, introduced gradually over some years, in response to increases in volumes of traffic.

Standardised traffic engineering, highway measures, municipal lighting and similar interventions have eroded the distinctive qualities of each of the three settlements to varying degrees. Traffic speeds, particularly in Finstown, appear to be contributing to a range of problems that reduce the coherence and safety of the communities, discouraging pedestrian activity. In Finstown, there is a significant accident history associated with speeds along the A965. A key component of our recommendations for the masterplan is a range of measures to reduce typical traffic speeds and to return a stronger sense of place to the distinctive context of each community. Emerging best practice from the UK and from mainland Europe suggests that the use of a range of simple measures, or sometimes the removal of highway paraphernalia, can be a cost-effective basis for reconciling safe and efficient traffic movement with enhancing spatial quality. These could include:

- removing, or not replacing, centre-line and other road markings within built-up areas
- reducing the visual width of the carriageway through the use of simple paving or surfacing materials
- defining specific on-street parking spaces as an integral component of streets and spaces
- emphasising and reinforcing clear and

distinctive gateways at the boundaries of each village to signal the change in context and to define the transition point and entry to the slower speed urban context

- replacing standard highway lighting over time with fittings designed to integrate with buildings and places and to reduce the height of light sources
- giving clearer spatial definition to key places within each settlement, typically at crossroads and intersections, and outside significant buildings or points of activity

The Scottish Government has issued Designing Streets to consultation and will publish the final version of the document in 2010. Designing Streets promotes many of the approaches to roads and traffic that would bring about an enormous positive change to these villages.

Policy F3: active traffic management methods and a focus on pedestrian orientated public realm is a requirement of new development.

Greenspace areas:

These are areas of open space within and adjacent to the villages and the connections between these areas. These are important resources and given the ease of access to the countryside, it is easy to overlook the



importance of green space in and around the urban area.

Much green space in the villages is bleak and poorly designed and while the bleakness and exposed nature of these spaces is often inevitable given the climate and exposure, poor design – particularly generic municipal design - is unnecessary. There is a need to develop a language for landscape design that is appropriate to Orkney rather than import products and styles that can be seen in Brighton or Piccadilly Circus.

The other aspect of green space is linkage between the different elements and idea of developing an obvious network of spaces rather than separate entities. Specific proposals for development of public space must take into account the need to link into the wider network being established and opportunities to set out a common language in the use of materials and street furniture should be investigated. This should be delivered through the development process. We have included specific proposals for green space and linkages but the masterplan policy issues are:

- the Council should develop better standards of greenspace design drawing on best practice in similar climates and combining this with local exemplars
- greenspace areas should be connected into a cohesive and obvious network – so new

provision in residential areas should be linked to existing resources

Policy F4: Development proposals must conform to the open space requirements of the masterplan. Specific proposals for development of public space must take into account the need to link into the wider network being established and opportunities to set out a common language in the use of materials and street furniture.

Introduction to the design guidance

Policies for the three villages are based on five village character types and set out a range of generic factors which must be considered to ensure that new development enhances the local context.

Planning applications will be expected to demonstrate how they respond to each of the relevant policies and proposals and the general design guidance at the planning application stage. This information will be requested in the form of a Design Statement which will be submitted in support of planning applications. The purpose of this is to ensure that all future development that occurs in the villages responds to the common approach to design quality and key site development considerations which are established in this document.

The level of information required will vary

depending on the scale of the development proposed. For example, it is likely that small scale development (such as a single house or house extension) will require very limited information and that this will focus mostly on demonstrating that the chosen design of the building respects the local context which is established for the relevant policy area. For these small scale developments, the Design Statement is likely to be very short outlining the key factors which have influenced the chosen design. Larger developments such as multiple house or flatted developments, larger retail or commercial premises are likely to require a more comprehensive assessment of the policies in the Design Statement. Where relevant they will also be required to demonstrate how they respond to the key criteria set out for each proposal area. Clarification should be sought from the planning department at the pre-application stage on the level of information that will be required.

The General Design Guidance set out below is provided to indicate the range of information which would be considered through the Design Statement and how a Design Statement should be laid out.

General Design Guidance

The three villages are very special places but they suffer from a range of design issues that affect everything from the heart of the historic

core right through to individual houses in the countryside.

At the same time, Orkney in general has a very specific aesthetic which is markedly different from 90% of mainland Scotland though it has much in common with the Western Isles and Shetland. We think it would be completely wrong to try to impose styles or ideas from Central Scotland or from England on these unique places. However, this is in effect what is happening in many instances where dilution of local character and tradition in building, disregard for the landscape and the embracing of UK suburban style are commonplace. Design is a material consideration in determining planning applications. Councils may refuse an application and defend their decision at appeal solely on design grounds. The Scottish Government has produced advice on Design Statements and much of this section of the Urban Design Framework has drawn on PAN68.

We understand that the Council have taken some steps to improve knowledge of design issues by participating in Design Awareness Training from the Improvement Service both for officials and elected members.

Another way of moving design standards up the Council agenda is to ask applicants to do more to justify their proposals for new development. Design Statements



increase design awareness, provide a sound basis for constructive discussions and negotiations, and can lead to better quality development. They can also help individuals and communities understand why a particular approach has been adopted. Design Statements allow applicants and their clients to explain the design of their scheme in a structured way. It is an opportunity to demonstrate what has been done to appraise the context, and how the design takes account of it sensitively. The submission of a Design Statement allows officials to see the extent of analysis, as well as the quality of thought, time and effort which has been dedicated to developing the scheme. Providing the information is presented clearly, a Design Statement will help The Council to understand the thinking behind the design. It should therefore be an aid to more efficient decision making and lead to an improvement in the quality of development.

The design process

The design process can be set out in 5 stages.

Stage 1: Site and area appraisal

Stage 2: Identifying the design principles

Stage 3: Analysis

Stage 4: Design concept(s)

Stage 5: Design solution

Depending on the nature and scale of the development, there may be a need for public involvement during the design process. This can occur at any stage, however, early consultation with the public or amenity groups should help to identify any key issues or concerns. When the design concept(s) have been worked up, it is advisable to feed these back to the contributors in order to check that nothing has been missed or interpreted incorrectly. This exercise will also help to gauge any initial reactions to the preliminary design which may help to influence the final design. Whilst each stage is presented separately, in practice the design process is often more iterative, rather than linear. This is because the site appraisal and analysis can be reviewed by testing alternative design concepts. For example, a design concept may have implications which were not initially foreseen. Once all the stages have been completed, the design statement can be assembled, bringing together all the thinking on the design issues.

The applicant should choose the most effective form of presentation, as the contents of a design statement will vary according to the nature of the development and the site's characteristics. For most applications, the design statement need not be elaborate. It can be a short document (one or two pages), which sets out the principles on which the

development is based and explains the design solution. Irrespective of the scale of development, the design statement must be supported by good graphics. Requirements and suggestions for content are set out below:

All applicants, including developers, architects, designers and agents, should consider design as an integral part of the development process. This advice aims to encourage more attention to be given to the design of developments. Although it will involve some additional work to present ideas and thinking, in many cases it can be achieved simply. It should not be an onerous task. By providing additional information, which explains and illustrates the design principles and design concept, applicants are likely to benefit from a greater degree of certainty in the planning process, and quicker decision making. The result should be improved quality of new development, lasting improvements to the built environment and successful places.

As a starting point for the content of a design statement for a proposal in or around Finstown the applicants will be required to demonstrate an understanding and consideration of the following:

- Context of the proposal in its local area
- Location of the site
- General description of the surroundings, eg urban, rural, residential and industrial

- Is the site in or near a conservation area?
- Is the site in an area of outstanding landscape?
- Site description
- Planning history
- Ownership of the site
- Adjacent land uses, and relevant planning proposals
- Heritage assets – listed buildings
- Focal points
- Landmarks
- Vistas
- Views to/from/over site
- Topography – contours on the site
- Microclimate – wind, sun orientation, exposure, shelter
- Services
- Public utilities, e.g. underground services, drainage systems, overhead power lines
- Network capacity and developer contributions
- Public services available locally, e.g. schools, public transport
- SuDS system
- Identity
- Surrounding buildings
- Building lines – groupings, rhythms and plot/feu sizes
- Entrances – styles and sizes
- Windows – styles and sizes
- Active frontages
- Scale – height and massing
- Appearance – details and materials
- Use of the space



- Use of spaces between buildings – public/private
 - Day, night, seasonal variation of use
 - Prohibited activities, security arrangements
 - Hard landscaping
 - Location of street furniture
 - Condition and maintenance
 - How people use it
 - Public art/sculpture trail
 - Soft landscaping
 - Landscape character
 - Trees in the town
 - Quality of landscaping
 - Need for ground modelling
 - Nature conservation area
 - Wildlife habitats
 - Tree Preservation Orders
 - Play space/recreational space
 - Connections
 - Vehicular movement
 - Surrounding road and street layout
 - Access, parking and circulation
 - Bus stops and routes, taxi stops, cycle routes
 - Areas of vehicular/pedestrian conflict
 - Use of traffic measures
 - Servicing arrangements
 - Pedestrian access
 - Where are people coming from, going to?
 - Desire lines
 - Disabled access
 - Are people restricted from access due to any current aspects of design?
 - Infrastructure Considerations
- Further specific requirements are set out in the individual policy requirements for each character area below.
- The masterplan does not give detailed

consideration to infrastructure capacity issues beyond clarifying with the statutory providers that the principle of additional development is acceptable. It will be necessary for development projects to make contact with infrastructure providers including Scottish Water, SEPA and the Council's Roads Services Department in order to determine capacity at an early stage in the process. It is likely that upgrades may be required to be funded by the development process. As a general rule, connections to foul sewers as defined in the Sewerage (Scotland) Act 1968 will be a pre-requisite for development in the villages and efforts should be made, where possible, to coordinate this through a strategically planned public foul drainage system. In all cases, early contact with Scottish Water will be important to determine the necessary sewerage infrastructure requirements for new development. For example, a Development Impact Assessment should be requested by Scottish Water at the earliest opportunity and some proposals may require to be assessed against SEPA's Pollution Prevention Guidance.

In addition, the Strategic Environmental Assessment report has highlighted areas where flooding is likely to be a constraint on development. In coastal areas, flood risk is a reality which cannot be ignored in the development process and some sites which are identified in the masterplans as having potential for redevelopment are within flood risk zones where development may not be possible

until strategic flood alleviation measures are put in place. Developers should therefore refer to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment work which was undertaken in parallel with the masterplans process to assess the likely level of risk associated with progressing development in flood risk areas. It may be that some sites which are identified as having potential for redevelopment cannot be brought forward until appropriate formal flood alleviation measures are put in place. An assessment of the capabilities of existing formal flood protection measures (if any) will be required at an early stage to determine the extent of new works which may be required. Detailed consultation with the council as Flood Prevention Authority, and if necessary SEPA will be essential to determine the likely works which may be required.

A core objective of the masterplan study is to encourage regeneration and to promote new development in central areas. It is also at its heart a land use planning document, which seeks to direct the broad direction of new development over a 5 to 10 year period and beyond. It is therefore considered appropriate to establish how development should proceed if flooding issues can be overcome, and if innovative solutions to tackling flood risk are found and influence the development process in order to seek to overcome the requirement to avoid development in flood risk areas which are central to the long term regeneration and vitality of the central part of the villages.



Detailed consideration should be given to flood risk at an early stage and it is likely that Flood Risk Assessment studies will be required which will influence the layout and design of the new buildings, particularly in central and coastal locations, and those next to existing watercourses. Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS) techniques should be adopted in all development proposals. There is also a need to consider sustainable building techniques and provision for recycling in new developments. Applicants should refer to the Council's emerging Energy Efficiency and Sustainability in Planning Development Management Guidance to ensure that best practice is followed on these matters.

As detailed above, the masterplan study has observed the need for a step change in the approach to design of new buildings in the village and the way in which all new land allocations, particularly those on the edge of the settlements are developed. It is anticipated that the pattern of single house and smaller scale development projects will continue to be the norm. The following guidance has been prepared to provide a context for improving the design quality of new development. It is not intended to be an exhaustive account and planning applications will be considered on their own merits.

The policies represent urban design and planning principles which will help to

guide development in the villages for the foreseeable future. The policies are based largely on the character areas outlined in section 5 and are written with a view to maintaining or enhancing the qualities of these areas. As detailed above, planning applications will require to be supported by Design Statements which demonstrate how they respond to the planning and urban design principles for each character area.

The policy areas are:

- historic core
- traditional core and new extended core areas
- enclaves
- scattered linear areas
- 20th century random

Policies by area

Policy F5: Traditional core and new extended core areas: This area is the traditional centres of Finstown and while it has many assets, it lacks the consistency and spatial qualities of the historic core of St Margaret's Hope and is less intensively developed. This is a relatively stable area and is important to the health and economy of the village. There is a need for very careful consideration of the design of new development especially the design of new detached residential properties. Planning applications must demonstrate that they:



Finstown:
character areas

- [Yellow square] scattered / linear
- [Yellow square] enclave
- [Red square] traditional core



- do not exceed two storeys in height and should preferably be shallow plan wide frontage in form with a pitched roof
- consider new uses which might support activity and vitality
- work with the landscape and topography rather than against it
- maintain plot sizes, building sizes and orientation rather than amalgamating buildings and sites into larger units
- encourage the design of buildings for future changes of use without significant change to the building itself
- maintain pedestrian links to adjacent residential areas and to the countryside
- new development should take advantage of views to the surrounding countryside while making a modest impact on the landscape
- new development should involve consideration of a range of building types, including semi-detached and terraced buildings which have advantages over detached dwellings in delivering better urban form and sheltered spaces

Policy F6: Enclaves:

These are small, usual residential areas often attached to the historic or traditional core by cul-de-sac but which have characteristics which enclose and detach them from the rest of the village. They are quite private areas often with narrow vehicular accesses incorporating gravel surfaces, informal grass verges, enclosing walls and trees. Planning

Applications must demonstrate that they respond to the following urban design principles:

- new development should retain the enclosing nature of the enclave character area
- new development should be predominantly residential although there may be opportunities for other uses such as community facilities or a small convenience store or corner shop
- new development should set clear standards for plot sizes and building lines which will help to create sheltered spaces
- new development should not exceed two storeys in height and should preferably be (or appear to be) shallow plan wide frontage in form with a pitched roof
- new developments should include stone boundary walls between 600mm and 3000mm in height to public areas rather than be ‘open plan’
- new development should take advantage of views to the surrounding countryside while making a modest impact on the landscape
- new development should involve consideration of a range of building types, including semi-detached and terraced buildings which have advantages over detached dwellings in delivering better urban form and sheltered spaces
- new development can and should include natural traffic attenuation through informal surfaces

- where the boundaries are on the edges of the settlement, the boundary treatment should be post and wire fencing

Policy F7: Scattered/linear areas:

These areas are the outer parts of the village - more rural than urban - containing scattered groups of houses or series of individual houses. In these areas, for the avoidance of doubt, the overriding principle is to avoid high density field filling and instead to encourage scattered development forms. The following criteria will apply:

- development will take a generally linear form avoiding crescents and culs de sac
- access will be taken directly from an existing road
- any development will be no more than two houses deep from the existing road
- there will be no fixed building line - so proposed buildings must avoid lining up with neighbouring buildings
- no more than three buildings should be sited consecutively on adjacent plots - the fourth building of a linear sequence should be placed at least 50m from its neighbour
- development must respond to and work with the topography and landscape rather than against it
- where the boundaries are on the edges of the settlement, the boundary treatment should be post and wire fencing

Siting and design of buildings

The problem of fitting the standard modern bungalow into the Orkney landscape is that the form does not reflect traditional patterns - the houses inevitably look alien and out of scale. This is not to say that houses must be copies of traditional styles – rather that they should respect local traditions of scale and proportion. Contemporary design and traditional form can be successfully combined in Orkney settlements – the Pier Arts Centre in Stromness is an example of this. At the same time it is important to reflect Orkney building styles and not generic Scottish patterns, and for crisp simple and easily-maintained detailing to be incorporated.

Croft - The traditional Orkney Croft is a long low building. It is possible to devise 'longhouse' style plans, although there may be cost implications. The illustration is for a semi detached pair of houses, with one bedroom at ground floor level and two low attic rooms.

Farmhouse - In the early 20th century, one and a half storey houses became commonplace. The sketch of a three bedroom house illustrates an approach which reflects this style. North Ronaldsay crofts often exhibit a distinctive one-and-a-half storey section which is unusual in Orkney.

Manse - A further alternative approach is that of the typical 18th-19th century Orkney



croft typology



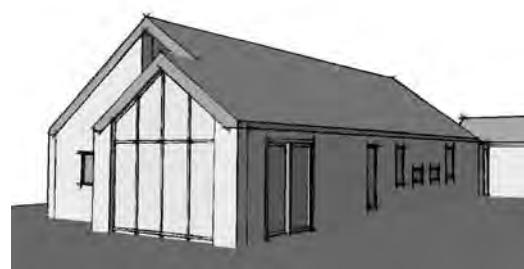
farmhouse typology



manse typology



modified single storey typology



adapted existing building typology

Manse: characterised by the late Laura Grimond as the ‘pepper pot’. It has two storeys and a square plan, with a symmetrical pattern. This form would lend itself to subdivision as a semi-detached block in an area of open landscape. Care needs to be taken to match the proportions of windows and ceiling heights to create the effect of the traditional building. The sketch illustrates the

proportions of a pair of 3-bed houses formed in this pattern. Consideration should be given to providing a roof feature to match the original’s chimneys.

Modified Single Storey - By adding a bay to a standard single storey house plan, it is possible to create an impression of a narrower plan building. This is illustrated by the above sketch which is for a three bedroom private bungalow, however the principle would adapt readily to varying house types. This has the advantage that the main body of the house is a standard kit pattern.

Adapting Existing Buildings - The narrow plan form of traditional buildings makes it difficult to fit the required amount of accommodation

in a modern house. An example of an extension to a small cottage which maintains its character is illustrated above. The scale of the extension is kept similar to the original with a parallel ridge which reflects traditional patterns. Although there are cost implications, the form of the extension can be very simple and cheap as the character is set by the original building.

The Scottish Tradition - There is a long and distinguished tradition of Scottish architecture which is alive and well today although rarely seen. A number of architectural practices have a strong reputation for merging the timeless elements of Scottish building with Modern forms to create contemporary residential buildings that are comfortable in Scottish landscapes and towns.

They are mostly highly energy efficient and use sustainable materials as much as possible. They also look energy efficient and sustainable which is increasingly a highly marketable characteristic. At the same time, until there is a widely held desire to build either traditional buildings or contemporary versions of the Scottish and Orkney traditions, there will always be a problem with new development in sensitive locations like Stromness.

Design in general should be moved up the Council agenda so that it becomes a core

corporate activity rather than a fringe effort. This would give wider publicity to appropriate design and afford greater legitimacy to efforts to impose higher standards on the local community.

Masterplan Proposals

Finstown:

Proposals for Finstown are based around the three subject areas of traffic attenuation, land allocation for new uses especially housing provision and open space facilities and networks. This reflects the issues raised through the community involvement events.

Proposal F1: Traffic and the village environment:

Finstown represents a more complex village form than Dounby or St Margaret's Hope. The linear settlement includes housing and a few businesses stretching up the hill to the north-west from the intersection of the A966 and the A965, together with buildings and activities associated with the intersection of the Old Finstown Road with the Kirkwall Road, combined with the pier and slipways scattered along the shores of the Bay of Firth. The crossing of The Ouse at the mouth of the bay, combined with the school, forms a clear entry from the north. The approach from the west is less well defined, and the approach from the Kirkwall direction merges with the



nearby hamlet of Grimbister.

The most significant spaces along this sequence of buildings are the car-park and area of grassy open space alongside the pier, and the small shop and former garage around the main T-junction. At present the alignment and detailing of the A965 does little to reflect these key locations, and indeed there is little change in the width or configuration of the main road to respond to the context of the village. This lack of a relationship between street and settlement is likely to be a factor in contributing to the higher than appropriate traffic speeds, and to the poor accident record.

Finstown may not necessarily need to focus on one particular centre. However, there would be clear benefits in planning a series of minor interventions aimed at extending the presence of the village onto the main road and slowing passing traffic through a reduction in the design speed of the road. Typical traffic speeds could be significantly reduced through a combination of measures, including:

- defining clearer gateways to the village to mark a definite transition from highway to village - the location of such gateways should combine with the built form of Finstown so that drivers have a stronger awareness of entering a distinctive place
- using places, focal points and traffic

junctions as opportunities to calm traffic through public realm interventions

- the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit at gateways points, although this is of secondary importance to the street design
- removing, or not replacing, the centre line markings within the village - research by TRL for Wiltshire County Council suggests that this measure alone can help reduce speeds by 2-3 mph
- reduce the apparent width of the street through the addition of an appropriate verge treatment - such a treatment might consist of the application of a surface dressing in a contrasting colour to the asphalt of the carriageway, or the use of a locally sourced paving element
- the introduction of lower-level, more pedestrian-friendly lighting, combined where possible with existing buildings

In addition, speeds could be reduced by creating and emphasizing a sequence of spaces to emphasize the form and morphology of the village. Such spaces might merely consist of simple paving details to punctuate the linearity of the main road, and draw attention to key buildings or activities, or to mark the main junctions. The buildings framing the edge of the open space at the Pier, the picnic area and car park overlooking the Bay, and the front of the small shop near the junction of the A966 are potential candidates for additional attention and integrated spatial design.

Minor interventions of this nature could be carried out in several phases, and could contribute towards a stronger identity and sense of place for Finstown. Lower traffic speeds will contribute to greater safety and a higher propensity for locals and visitors to walk and bicycle along the main thoroughfare. Greater engagement by drivers and passing traffic with the village is likely to benefit local businesses, without diminishing the highway function of the main A965 Kirkwall Road. The relationships with local businesses are particularly important as their visibility to the street is a key factor in their success.

Proposal F2: Housing sites:

The provision of different types of housing in the village was again the subject of much discussion at workshops. A mix of public sector and private self build was considered to be a good idea. The current Local Plan housing provision is for 21 new dwellings on seven sites. The proposals in this plan are for 129 new dwellings on a range of amended existing Local Plan sites and new sites. These are:

site	area	nos
H1 deleted (l'scape impact)	0.0 ha	0
H2 deleted (l'scape intrusion)	0.0 ha	0
H3 existing	3.3 ha	43
H4 existing	1.5 ha	28
H5 (new site)	0.62 ha	9
H6 (new site)	0.54 ha	8
H7 (new site)	0.33 ha	5
H8 (new site)	0.95 ha	12
H9 (new site)	0.36ha	4
H10 (new site)	0.83 ha	20
total	8.43 ha	129

Both H3 and H4 have been the subject of design guidance and H4 is now the subject of a Design Brief produced by the Council. These documents regulate the layout of the site and ensure the provision of adequate facilities as well as setting higher standards of design for new development. There will be a similar requirement for development briefs to be put



in place for the other sites at the first stage of the development process

Other land use allocations:

The old school buildings on the north side of the Ouse represent an opportunity to create a new use or new facility for the village. A facility for start-up businesses was one suggestion and a youth hostel was another. The subject of business start ups was not an area of clear agreement as some members of the community thought that the best location for a new business would be in Kirkwall and that a local facility was not required – others took a different view, suggesting that new businesses could start up in the village without much support. Any proposal would

need further investigation but both would require a large degree of public support. It may also be the case that some businesses would find it difficult to operate so far from the main road with little public profile. Another issue is that the site is shown to be prone to flooding on the SEPA indicative River and Coastal Flood Map (Scotland).

On the south side of the Ouse, the H1 housing site in the Local Plan also features on the SEPA Flood Map. This site was the subject of discussion at the community workshops where some thought the H1 housing site should be used to accommodate Allans of Gillock which many consider to be too big for their current site.

**Finstown:
theoretical traffic proposals**



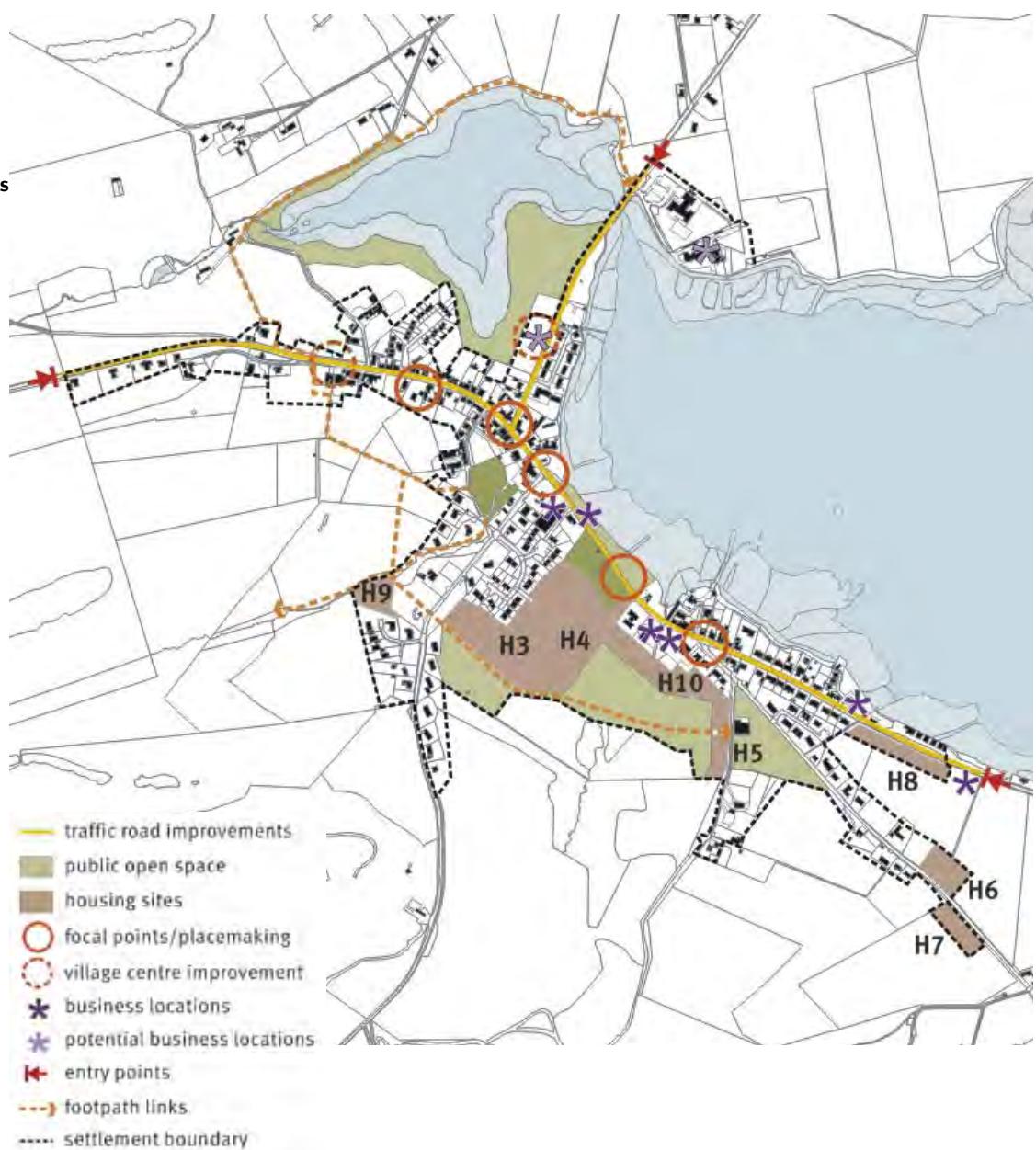
Village Centre Improvement Areas (VCIA) are identified where a range of land uses including business and/or housing will be acceptable. In the case of the VCIA at Firth Road, great care will be required to produce a development of a satisfactory standard on this sensitive site and this will be reflected in the requirement for a Design Statement to be submitted in support of any planning application for the area.

Proposal F3: Open space provision:

Finstown is well provided with green spaces throughout the village. The community have built a new park to the rear of the church west of Heddle Road (S3 in the Local Plan 2004) and S1 and S2 have been allocated as open space but there has been no progress with improvement works. These sites have the potential to provide an excellent local facility of benefit to the residents of the proposed housing on the adjacent sites H3 and H4.

Many residents worried about the dangers of walking on rural roads, especially around the Ouse and it would be worthwhile trying to create a circular network of paths around the village as an expansion of the Core Paths.

Finstown - proposals





finstown - implementation

This document has set out a masterplan for the village of Finstown. The proposals are based on:

- a robust appraisal of the condition of the village and its prospects for the future
- in depth consultation and involvement of the local community in the development of the masterplan

These are not masterplans in the sense of dramatic proposals for change but sets of proposals which will help to make the village work better, make it more attractive to businesses and visitors and ensure a better quality of life for residents.

We noted that there are few capital proposals for physical change in the village. There is interest in housing development - both affordable housing and opportunities for self build private plots. Apart from these, there is very little happening in terms of development other than single dwellings and house extensions.

Our aim has been to develop a realistic, relevant and deliverable set of policies and proposals that will make a positive difference to the village.

In order to make worthwhile change in the village it is important to bear in mind that the Council is not the sole instigator of change. Just as important is the way in which other people bring change about, especially through or with the agreement of the local community. Here we outline some of the themes that should underpin

and ensure that Finstown begins to change for the better and evolve into a more diverse and robust village.

Theme 1: the importance of the local community

A Community Cooperative:

There is much local interest in the future prosperity of the village, not only from local businesses and retailers but from residents in general. This is an ideal footing for the establishment of a local community cooperative to help new projects to get off the ground. Community Cooperatives have been shown to be effective in providing local services in marginal market circumstances where local residents want to better facilities than the Council might be able to provide or which cannot survive in normal market circumstances.

It is important that the public agencies should assist and support the setting up a local cooperative rather than dominating and micro-managing the process. To work effectively, coops need to be strongly community based rather than be the creation of the Council. A local coop will need support to find, acquire or rent premises, find suppliers, pay for marketing, ordering, budgeting, logistics and recruiting of volunteers. HIE have considerable experience of working with local communities to establish such ventures and should be involved in the process of setting this up.

Local support and project champions:

Linked to the ethos and practice of community



coops is the need to encourage projects to be initiated, developed and supported by local people. The force for change should come from the local community rather than being imposed by the public sector. There is a culture of high involvement of the public sector in Orkney matched by a sense of dependency by the community – an expectation that the Council will be responsible for or be involved in the majority of change in the village. Change in Finstow is very driven by public sector finance and therefore subject to the same budgetary shortcomings that most local authorities have to work with.

What is required is for local champions and groups to take projects forward rather than relying on the public sector to do so. Community based projects or initiatives by local companies can be far more effective than the public sector in obtaining finance and promoting proposals and schemes that work for the town and with which the local community feel a sense of ownership.

Theme 2: the appreciation of place

Finstown and the surrounding landscape are unique and worthy of the highest standards of maintenance and enhancement. Having a diverse economy contributes to securing a better sense of place. A committed and involved business and residential community is equally valuable. An understanding of the physical assets of the town and its setting is the foundation of place and placemaking.

We have suggested in earlier sections of this study that this is an area of some weakness not just in the Council but also in the local community. The specific areas that have to be addressed are education, awareness and appreciation of local circumstances and context – forming a sense of what makes Orkney special and ensuring that this is not watered down by inappropriate, out of context or rootless interventions. Improving place awareness in the local community is a major project but some of the tools which can be used to achieve better standards of placemaking and design are readily available. They are:

- the introduction of compulsory design statements for all development in and around Finstown
- the production of design guides for a range of different subjects (for example shopfronts, signage, roads and infrastructure, house extensions) and/or for specific areas of the town such as the new ribbon/linear housing development area proposed in this document
- the introduction of specific design briefs for important, large or prominent sites

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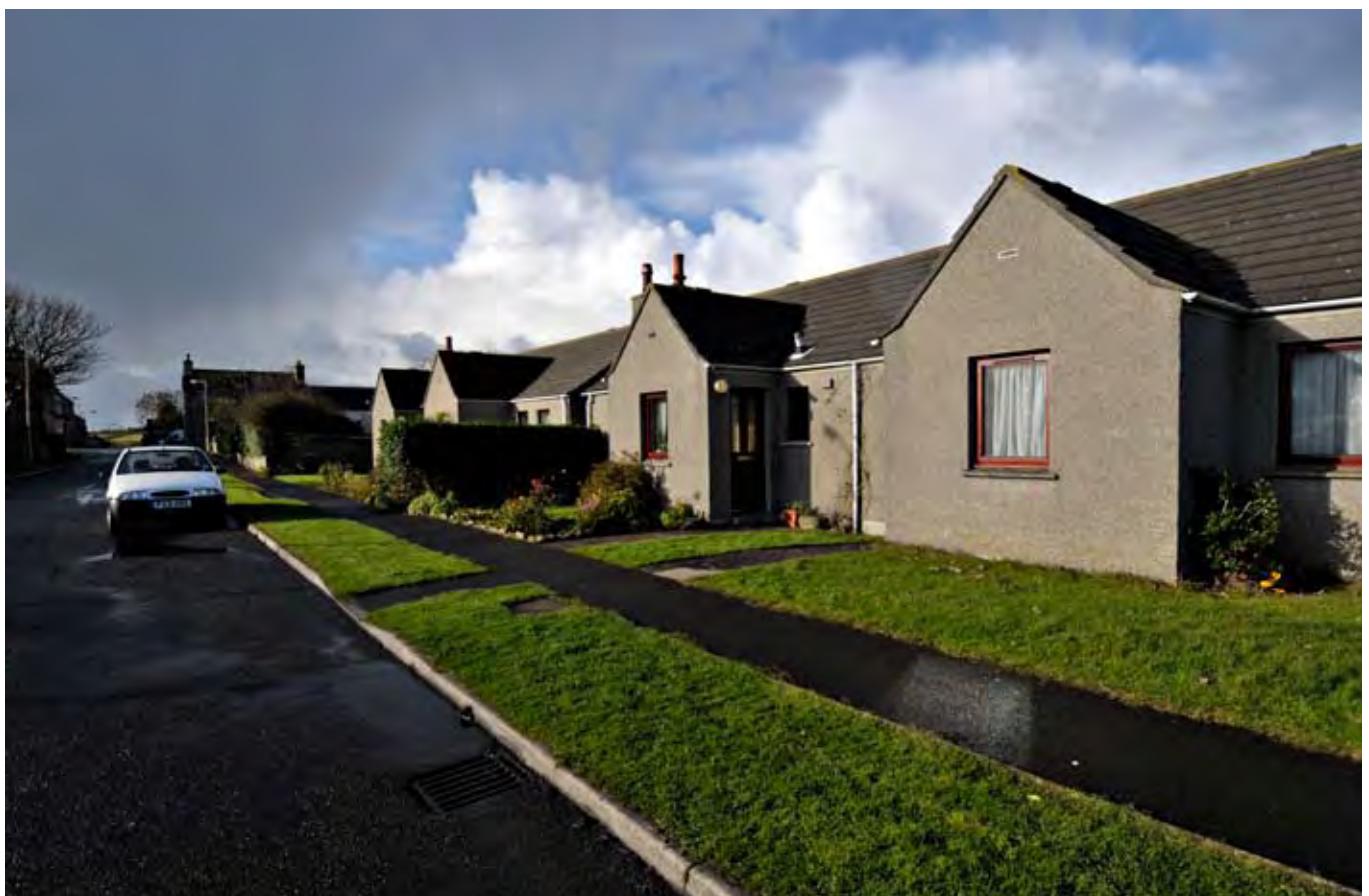
three villages masterplans



ST MARGARET'S HOPE
baseline and proposals

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Department of Development Services
Council Offices School Place
Kirkwall
Orkney
KW15 1NY

**3 Villages Masterplans
Final Report - Volume 4
St Margaret's Hope**



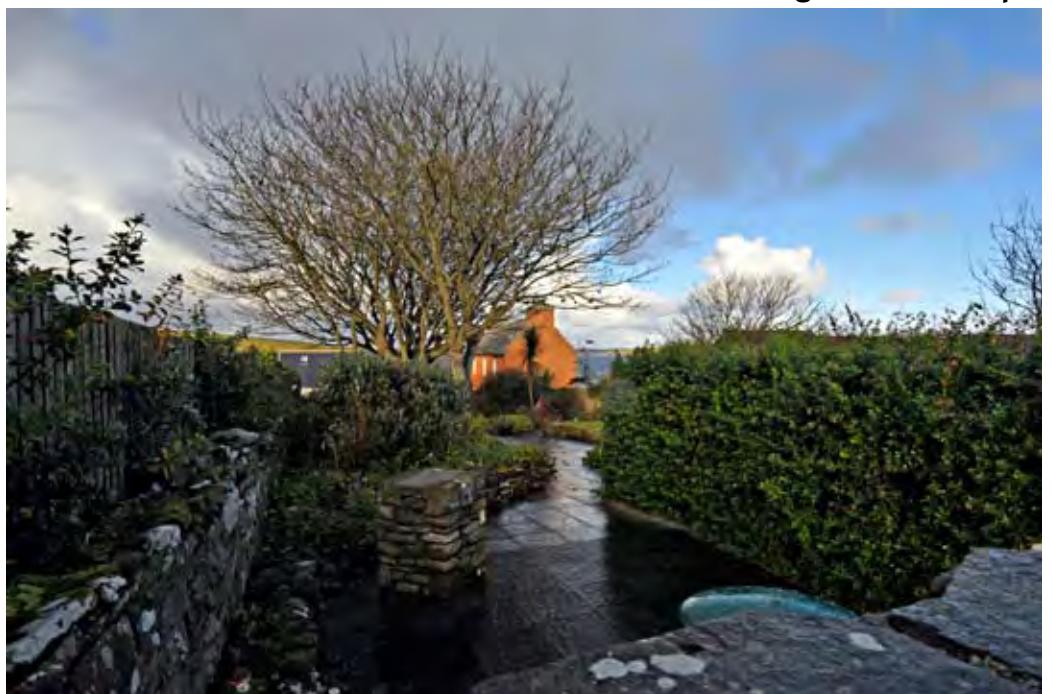
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**3 Villages Masterplans
Final Report - Volume 4
St Margaret's Hope**



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st margaret's hope first consultation

INTRODUCTION

This first stage of consultation consisted of informal meetings with local Community Councillors to explore with them how they think their villages should change in the future. It involved two strands:

- guided tours of each settlement by Community Council chairs
- facilitated workshop sessions with Community Council members for each settlement

- The purpose was to engage with Community Councillors, as knowledgeable community activists with a statutory role in the planning system, and explore:the sort of place that they would like the settlement to become in the future
- things they don't like about the settlement
- the forces of change that are affecting the community
- what's realistic for the future – high aspirations, realistic expectations
- how we should engage with the wider community as the project moves forward

	St Margaret's Hope	Dounby	Finstown
	South Ronaldsay & Burry CC	Harray & Sandwick CC, Birsay CC	Firth & Stenness CC
Tour	21 October	22 October	23 October
Workshop	22 October	23 October	28 October

These discussions produced a wealth of invaluable information:

1. The potential changes that local communities believe are important for the future of their villages. These included strategic issues like housing, jobs, flooding and transport; and specific

A boat at the jetty,
St Margaret's Hope





places within each village which act as a focus for change, such as underused areas of ground.

2. Rich background information about the development and character of each village – detailed knowledge that we could never have gained without input from local people, and which helps us hugely to start to understand each settlement as a place.
3. An invaluable first contact with the local community which we could build on as the project progresses, the intention being for the next stage of consultation to test initial proposals, perhaps in the form of different options or scenarios, with the wider local community in each settlement.

**flooding in St Margaret's Hope,
January 2005**



There was a general understanding that the masterplans could help local communities and the Council lobby for particular proposals.

The rest of this section summarises the findings of the consultation.

ST MARGARET'S HOPE

Issues

- **Flooding** – easily the single biggest issue affecting the future of the community. The photos of the Jan 2005 floods show that the flooding affects a substantial part of the settlement – Front Road, Cromarty Square, and the area around the Murray Arms and the

Trading Post. Affected residents say that when properties change hands, it is difficult for new owners/tenants to get flood insurance – which in turn affects business viability and demography. There was a unanimous view that prevention must be the solution, not managed retreat (see below for more on this).

- **Sustainability** – a fear that the trend towards being a commuter dormitory will undermine its viability/sustainability as a community. There is a desire to make the community more sustainable in the broadest sense of the word. More local jobs, more family housing, more compact settlement form.
- **Employment** – decentralisation of Council services from Kirkwall is encouraged, with St Margaret's Hope seen as a

potential beneficiary. Outsourcing of boat maintenance etc could utilise and support existing skills in the village. Strong desire to protect existing jobs at the pier – said to be around 50 jobs there - so easily the biggest focus of local employment. Noted that there is spare space at the industrial estate on the main road – suggested that incentives need to be provided to encourage businesses to locate there, such as footloose new businesses from other parts of Mainland. New speculative business units should cater for “cleaner” small businesses such as crafts and renewables – generally office-based rather than manual trades. There could also be potential for properties specifically designed for working at home (live-work). There is reluctance for businesses/residents to relocate to the southern isles because of



**attracting more families
to St Margaret's Hope**



the hazards of the Churchill Barriers in bad weather, so some extra incentive is required.

- **Housing** – concerns about the ageing population, older folk coming to live, younger folk not being able to stay, falling school roll etc. The solution is seen as attracting more families – a demand for family housing has been building up for years apparently. Desire to avoid further ribbon development outwith the village. There is also a concern that too little land has been zoned for housing, as owners of land zoned for housing in the Local Plan will not necessarily release that land – although it is acknowledged that the bypass will open up more sites. Desire for

two types of family / affordable housing - semi-detached owner-occupied or rented, and serviced self-build plots at cost (i.e. no profit to the Council). Also potential for live-work. Concern expressed about the logic homeless accommodation for people from outwith the area given the lack of employment opportunities or police presence.

- **Tourism** – people are keen to improve the attractiveness of the village for tourists, although they are realistic enough not to expect tourists coming off the ferry to stop and stay in St Margaret's Hope on impulse. One long-standing local idea is a caravan/camper van/camping site in or near the village. Generally felt that tourism is unlikely to sustain full time, year round jobs – more likely to be a source of extra income. Noted that there are a lot of holiday lets (figure of 22 was quoted) but mixed views on whether the numbers should be managed
- **Sewerage** – simple technical question: is there enough capacity?

Places

- **Care home** – strong feeling that this should be located adjacent to the OHAL old people's housing at Marengo Rd (by demolishing garage and extending road), with easy level access to village facilities for residents, good views and flat land.

improve tourism facilities



Council-owned site at top of Church Road is not seen as appropriate – too far from centre of village, and access difficult for residents because of steep hill (this issue has been superceded by events which have resulted in the location of the Care Hoe on the edge of the town).

- **Church Road** – lack of pavements, pedestrian safety and accessibility are an issue (even with the bypass).
- **Junction of Church Road, bypass and main road** – suggested that car park should be created for “park and ride” to Kirkwall. Already fulfils this function informally. The Council own the garage on the west side of the junction (but not the adjacent house).

Emerging issues for the masterplan

- The masterplan must refer to the need for **flood prevention works** to safeguard the long term sustainability of the settlement. But we need not propose solutions as part of this commission - that will involve further studies, and could involve solutions involving changes to the Churchill Barriers rather than simply something in St Margaret's Hope bay. We must state clearly that prevention of flooding, rather than managed retreat from affected properties, is vital for the long term sustainability of the settlement. This is relevant for our commission for

two reasons:

- The strategy will be based on continued habitation and use of the flood affected areas, and for this flood prevention works are required.
- To access funding for flood prevention works in the future, the community and the Council will need to demonstrate that they are necessary, not least through their inclusion in documents such as this masterplan.
- The dangers of the **Churchill Barriers** in easterly storms were also cited as having a major impact on the viability/sustainability of St Margaret's Hope and the southern isles, with residents and businesses concerned about accessibility during the winter. This is of less direct relevance to our commission, but it is



Church Road safety improvements in St Margaret's Hope



worth mentioning as a factor affecting community sustainability.

- The new bypass offers an opportunity for an easy win to **improve pedestrian safety on Church Road**, with through traffic removed from the road. A public realm / traffic management scheme would improve pedestrian access and safety at the shops (particularly Doull's) and facilitate easier/safer pedestrian access up and down the hill.
- A more comprehensive package of measures to make the village **more attractive for tourists**, building on the success of the golf course and the built heritage, could include:
 - Renovation of historic buildings in poorer condition along Front Road, some of which are underused (THI?).
 - Public realm/traffic management initiatives particularly at busier places such as around the Trading Post (Back Rd/Cromarty Square) and Church Road (Doull's and Robertson's).
 - Public realm improvements along Front Road with improved access to the shore (e.g. at the small Scottish Water building).
 - Public realm improvements at the pier, following recent land reclamation. Potential for creating yacht berths – current facilities are not ideal.
- Proactive support for local enterprise – bearing in mind also that The Creel and The Galley are both for sale and the Murray Arms wants to convert to flats. The commercial and community success of the golf course is an example.
- Locals are keen to see the Council's proposed care home immediately to **east of Marengo Rd**. If this is not possible for any reason, this site should be considered as a potential housing site – level access to the village, and although it is privately owned it is said to be available.
- A sequence of implementation actions to enable **compact settlement form**:
 - Identify preferred housing sites which will contribute to compact settlement form – including review sites already identified / not identified in Local Plan. May need to bring forward more sites than necessary to satisfy demand, as some sites (e.g. Local Plan H1) may not be released by owners.
 - Identify specific types of housing at higher densities than proposed in Local Plan.
 - Prepare briefs for preferred sites in proactive partnership with landowners, also assisting with site assembly if needed.



st margaret's hope business surveys

Key themes emerging from the survey:

- The Hope is currently seen as having **good community facilities** (retail, pubs, ferry and buses, recreational facilities etc), perhaps punching above its weight for a village of its size. That said, **extending the range** of facilities and attractions was regarded as necessary to bring in more residents and visitors. Some concern was also expressed about the **vulnerability and fragility** of some of the existing services and facilities.
- Also perceived as a **good location for small business** – meeting/events spaces, ferry to the mainland, good community facilities etc. But some **improvements** could be made (e.g. better bus services, evening taxi service to support patronage of pubs and restaurants).
- Some suggestion, however, that promoting the Hope as a **viable small business location needs incentives** – better public transport, capture business from lorry traffic using ferry (e.g. fish processing), providing start-up units at affordable rents – plus retaining all the other facilities and services that make a small community viable. Otherwise people and business start-ups will tend to gravitate to Kirkwall.
- The lack of new housing in recent years – particularly the **shortage of family housing** – is perceived as a brake on the creation of new full time, year round employment.
- **Potential for additional employment** is thought to focus around pier/marine/ engineering activities and tourism. There may be an opportunity for further investment in the pier and related infrastructure, perhaps by supporting the activities of the Pier Trust.
- **New ferry service** generally perceived as a good opportunity for tapping into additional tourism markets. Need to ensure that signage etc is appropriate to ensure that heavy traffic is channelled along the new

Ferry at St Margaret's Hope





road, and **visitor traffic through the village** past businesses.

- Tourism would be helped by **environmental improvements** (e.g. interpretation, signage, benches, tidying up, bus shelters on Cromarty Square new extended picnic area and open space by the propeller) in the historic core of the village, and **improved car and coach parking** around Cromarty Square/ Front Road.
- Suggestion of a **collaborative working space** for artists (especially those starting out or for group projects), even up at the industrial estate. Has previously been investigated

by local artists; design, rental levels and management need careful thought.

- Suggested that a group of outside knowledgeable, experienced business/ social economy people should be set up to give **experienced advice to local businesses**, perhaps on a one to one basis. The kind of advice that traditionally was given by accountants and bank managers – not traditional consultancy advice, but sharing information and putting people in touch with each other.

businesses in St Margaret's Hope



Specific local issues to be considered:

- Managing **heavy goods vehicle movements to/from Robertson's yard** on Marengo Rd – turning at the Church Rd/Marengo Rd junction and parking at the entrance to the yard.
- **Signage to local visitor amenities** which create employment – within the village (e.g. the golf club) and nearby (e.g. Hoxa Tapestry Gallery)
- **More car and coach parking in the bottom of the village** – one suggestion was to extend the green area with propeller (by The Galley) for picnic benches and parking.
- **Small-scale environmental improvement** (e.g. outside seating, interpretation) in the historic core of the village.
- **Re-use of the old school building** would be welcomed.

BUSINESSES CONSULTED

1. The Galley Inn
2. Bellevue Hotel
3. Creel Restaurant
4. Doctors surgery - Drs S & C Kemp
5. B Doull & Son, general merchant
6. Peter Finnigan Architects
7. Hope Community School
8. Marengo Centre
9. Maynes Coaches
10. Murray Arms Hotel
11. Inkstone Gallery



businesses in St Margaret's Hope





12. Jason Bishop, Pelagicus
13. Orkney Dive Scallops
14. Pentland Ferries Ltd
15. Pier Trust
16. Richmond Villa B&B
17. G Robertson & Sons
18. St Margaret's Cottage
19. South Ronaldsay Golf Club
20. Trading Post
21. Watson press / art
22. West End House B&B
23. The Workshop & Loft Gallery





st margaret's hope consultation 2

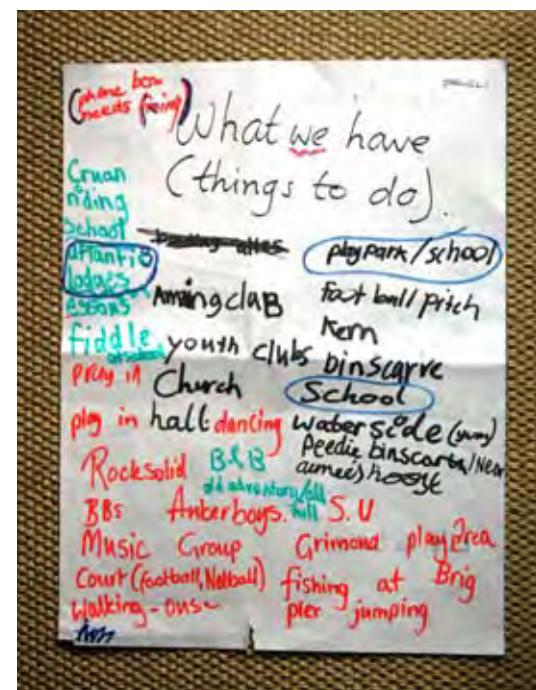
INTRODUCTION

The project team undertook a meetings and site visits with Community Council representatives for each village to inform the teams understanding of the key local development issues as described in Chapter 3. We followed this up with also an extensive survey of most local business which is summarised in Chapter 4. The businesses listed in the Orkney Community Business Directory were contacted to identify their operational requirements and aspirations for growth and development. The directory contacts were supplemented with local

contact information, and included home-workers. Local schools and other local services were surveyed for their views.

We also undertook sessions with pupils from Dounby, Firth Primary School in Finstown and St Margaret's Hope. The sessions involved pupils discussing, writing and drawing their aspiration for their village and considering the positive and negative aspects of the villages and how they could be improved. The sessions were very informative and gave an insight into the aspirations of young people.

The second round of consultation was carried





out in March 2009 and the organisational details of this are set out below.

Advertising: The events were publicised in the following ways:

- Notification on the homepage of the Council's website (5th March 2009 onwards)
- Article in the Orkney Today and The Orcadian, discussing the events (26 February 2009)
- Invitations sent to every householder / business in each village and postcode areas around Dounby, Finstown and St Margaret's Hope (25th February 2009)
- Announcements on Radio Orkney and the Superstation Orkney (March 6th, 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th 2009)
- Radio Orkney news feature by Gavin Barr during morning broadcast (9th March 2009)
- Public notice in The Orcadian for two weeks (26th February and 5th March 2009)
- Posters sent to shops and public buildings throughout Orkney (w/b 23rd February 2009)
- Circular E-mail sent by Press Officer to all OIC staff (7th March 2009)

Methodology: The community consultation events took the following format:

DOUNBY - Tuesday 10th March 2009,
Dounby Community School, Community Room, informal drop-in between 5.00pm and 8.15pm, public meeting and discussion between 8.30pm – 10.00pm

ST MARGARET'S HOPE - Wednesday 11th

March 2009, Cromarty Hall, informal drop-in between 4.00pm and 7.15pm, public meeting and discussion between 7.30pm – 9.00pm

FINSTOWN - Thursday 12th March 2009, Firth

Primary School, informal drop-in between 4.00pm and 7.15pm, public meeting and discussion between 7.30pm – 9.00pm

The community consultation events built on the findings and emerging issues from our earlier work with Community Councils, businesses and schools.

The events were the first occasions at which the wider public were invited to learn about and contribute to the ongoing work, and precede the preparation of the draft masterplans by the WMUD team. The position of the events in the masterplanning process largely determined the message conveyed to participants and the information that the team were seeking to inform their work. The team were keen to consult on the key issues that the masterplan should address as opposed to imposing issues and solutions at this earlier stage in the process.

The informal drop-in sessions were for people to learn about the masterplanning process, discuss the findings of the teams work to date, and to think about the future of the villages. The focus was on interaction and informal discussion of the issues with

members of the consultant team and fellow residents. Some people were keen to discuss, some wished to look and listen, while others chose to leave comments or questions on sticky notes and maps rather than get involved in discussion.

Materials used included:

- large printed maps of each settlement, clear and easy to understand, supported by the Proposals Map from the existing Local Plan - people were encouraged to scribble on maps and write on stickies to provide their views
- a rolling PowerPoint slideshow containing key messages from the baseline report was on display throughout the drop-in session

The drop-in sessions were followed by a public meetings and discussions. The basic aims of the workshops were to share the main findings identified in consultations, discussions and analysis and discuss identified issues. The workshop was an opportunity for communities to let the WMUD team know if the right direction was being followed and what else should be considered. We made it clear that at this stage we were not wedded to any particular proposals and this was a chance to influence the masterplan proposals.

A series of facilitated mini-discussions formed the bulk of the workshop. These focussed

around the 'emerging issues' identified in the conclusion of the Baseline Report for each settlement. The team grouped these issues by theme although in reality these themes were not mutually exclusive. Some topics, such as promoting employment, ranged across different themes. The key discussion issues for each village are presented in the table on the next page:



	Dounby	St Margaret's Hope	Finstown
7.30 (Dounby 8.30)	introduction: welcome aims of workshop	introduction: welcome aims of workshop	introduction: welcome aims of workshop
7.45 (Dounby 8.45)	mini-discussions: traffic & parking open space & the crossroads housing & urban form other issues	mini-discussions: housing public realm & traffic wider issues – flooding & the Barriers other issues	mini-discussions: road safety, traffic & parking business housing other issues
8.45 (Dounby 9.45)	next steps	next steps	next steps
8.55 (Dounby 9.55)	close	close	close

The structure of each mini-discussion:

- a short introduction to the issues and potential responses (2-5 minutes)
- buzz groups where participants were be invited to discuss their immediate responses in twos or threes for a couple of minutes (2-5 minutes)
- facilitated plenary discussion (5-10 minutes)

The workshops concluded with a short presentation on next steps and an explanation of the next stages in the process.

Questionnaires were also available to participants that could be filled in at the event or taken home and returned to the Council, Policy and Projects Team. The

questionnaires requested views on the key issues identified in the table above and asked if the team should be considering any other issues.

Attendance

Attendees were asked to register there name and contact details at reception. Contact details were requested so that participants can engage in future consultations in the masterplanning process. The numbers of registered attendees at each event were:

- Dounby: 63 registered attendees
- St Margaret's Hope: 68 registered attendees
- Finstown: 66 registered attendees
- A number of attendees did not or did not wish to register so overall attendance

is likely to be higher. Attendance at the public meeting and discussion workshops was as follows:

- Dounby: 48 attendees
- St Margaret's Hope: 48 attendees
- Finstown: 44 attendees

Public Responses / Results

The views and comments received through the various consultation methods outlined above have been recorded and analysed to inform the development of the draft masterplans. The masterplan team were also able to gain local knowledge and gauge support for various proposals through informal discussion and debate.

FINDINGS

The following list is a summary of the various points raised by the community at the meetings under the general headings under which the discussion was organised.

ST MARGARET'S HOPE

Business

- lack of infrastructure for tourists
- no specific visitor attraction
- short season for tourism
- something to get tourists to stop
- employment = more homes

- council property too expensive
- move of council jobs from Kirkwall
- big project: flooding/ sustainability/ energy
- flexible approach to working
- care home yes/no?
- threat from barriers and flooding
- not enough work for young people
- heritage schemes and localism would create work
- stem the commuter culture
- ferry service will benefit jobs and businesses

Housing

- no more 2-bedroom flats
- more family homes
- too many new houses
- housing should be around bay – not at back
- new development should follow history
- self build/ family homes/ locally built
- not good to have just 1 type of housing
- more “emergency” housing than needed
- bypass not best location for family homes
- keep character
- solar panels/ energy
- not good to zone big areas for housing – mixed use instead
- renovate schoolhouse
- build at Thorfinn and Marengo
- issues with potential of vacant property
- why build new houses when some are lying empty



- too much development will change the character of the village

Traffic and parking

- managing tourists
- bus shelters but they might be vandalised
- too much parking on main streets
- Cromarty Square – safety issues
- there may be less increase in traffic
- build pier on other side of bay
- silly to base strategy around ferry
- Cromarty Square 20mph limit?
- one way around – big loop = might help maintain vitality of SMH
- not enough parking – tourist coaches?
- double yellow lines on back road
- pedestrian crossing at Cromarty Square for school pupils
- Cromarty Square is centre of village now to be a traffic throughway
- need for traffic calming
- school crossing patrol
- new road will encourage boy racers

Open Space

- extending paths into countryside / better condition of existing paths
- Burwick Road not accessible
- rights of way – OIC should clarify
- core paths plan – status?
- play park needs update – drainage and better access
- quiet space / former nice space/ Creel Inn

- paths should be used and route through parks and open space
- more attention to planting
- best view of Hope from Main Road –viewpoint, landmark, footpath link
- new development should include OS
- create circular walks
- repair and maintain play equipment

Quality of life

- existing green and yellow signs clash with native pink stone
- salting of roads and pavements in winter

Anything else?

- light pollution
- flooding
- barriers
- better conservation measures
- health care – where?
- number 2 barrier needs urgent attention
- police presence in the village
- need for a breakwater
- better off as an island
- need a swimming pool

The discussion in the three villages ranged over a wide range of subjects and in general terms it is possible to address most of the issues raised, even if conflicting views have been expressed – for example where it was said that there is too much development versus there is too little development, or too much parking versus to little parking. The most difficult issue arising from the three events, discussion and subsequent feedback is the flooding and safety at St Margaret's Hope and the various views expressed about the effect of the Churchill barriers. We acknowledge that these are of enormous concern to the St Margaret's Hope community but seeking a technical solution is outwith the scope of this study. However the issues are being examined by the Council.





st margaret's hope urban design and movement

INTRODUCTION

This section deals with the inter-related matters of the urban form of the three villages, character, urban design issues, development pressures and road traffic matters.

ST MARGARET'S HOPE: HISTORY AND MORPHOLOGY:

History

St Margaret's Hope has a venerable history amongst settlements in Orkney. Although a far smaller settlement than Kirkwall or

Stromness, it has traditionally been Orkney's third administrative centre, for example being the only settlement outside the two towns to hold regular circuit courts in Victorian times.

The importance of the village stems from its shallow, accessible and sheltered bay (the Hope, from Old Norse *hop* meaning shallow bay), fishing, and its independence from Kirkwall and Mainland – the Churchill Barriers are of course very recent. Blaeu's 1654 map of Orkney¹, one of the earliest representations of Orkney, shows St Margaret's Hope as being one of the very few anchorages for boats – indeed the only significant anchorage in the southern isles.

¹ Johan Blaeu *Atlas of Scotland 1654* (courtesy of National Library of Scotland)

St Margaret's Hope 1880s





A survey of Scotland in the 1880s² describes St Margaret's Hope as being “one of the safest and best harbours for small vessels in the kingdom” which was “for many years the only regular fishery in Orkney”.

Nineteenth century census data shows that the village was well established by this time. Its population grew to between 300 and 400 in the second half of the nineteenth century – roughly a tenth of the size of Kirkwall and a quarter of the size of Stromness, whose populations experienced similar fluctuations at that time.

Urban morphology

The close reliance of the village on the sea is clear in its street layout. Front Street, Back Street and Cromarty Square all relate to the shore. The older buildings in this part of the village date mainly from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The dense layout of the buildings and narrow plots accessing the shore reflect the importance of access to the water for local residents, as in Stromness. The pier dates from the eighteenth century, and was reputedly built for lobster fishing – a trade which continues in the village to this day, although ferry traffic is perhaps now a more prominent user of the pier. The first edition of the Ordnance Survey’s six-inch-to-

² Francis H Groome (ed.) *Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland: A Survey of Scottish Topography, Statistical, Biographical and Historical 1882-1885* (used with permission from The Gazetteer for Scotland at <http://www.geo.ed.ac.uk/scotgaz/>)

old gateway at Smiddybanks, St Margaret's Hope



St Margaret's Hope, early 1900s



St Margaret's Hope, early 1900s



the-mile maps (1843-92)³ show the present street layout had been established by that time – Front Road, Back Road, Cromarty Square, School Road, Pier Road and Church Road are all shown. The only significant additional streets to have been created since then are the late twentieth century culs-de-sac of Marengo Road.

This mid-nineteenth century series of maps shows the dense built-up area was concentrated along Front Road, fronting directly onto the shore with a number of short piers. The only groups of buildings not facing the shore were those clustered around

3 Ordnance Survey six-inch-to-the-mile 1st edition (1843-82) (courtesy of National Library of Scotland)

Cromarty Square and a row

of buildings along Back Road where it turns into Church Road. A number of individual buildings relating to the village, but slightly isolated from it, had also begun to appear: at today's ferry pier, the primary school on School Road, the U.P. Church and manse on Church Road, and at the junction of Church Road with the main road.

This basic morphology was still largely unchanged in 1900⁴, although frontage development was appearing along the south side of Back Road and the village was

4 Ordnance Survey one-inch 2nd edition (1898-1904) (courtesy of National Library of Scotland)



**St Margaret's Hope:
contours and morphology**



beginning to extend up Church Road.

Other similar extensions to the village took place through the twentieth century. They are generally characterised by having a less direct relationship with streets, either due to larger setbacks or not fronting onto the street at all.

A number of these were relatively dense accretions to the historic core, particularly Thorfinn Place and Marengo Road. Others could be regarded as extensions to the village, often – but not exclusively – linking to the isolated developments that had appeared around the village in the nineteenth century.

**St Margaret's Hope:
contours, morphology and
roads**



These include development along School Road and west of Cromarty Square, up the hill west of Pier Road, and around the junction with the main road at the top of Church Road. Development in this latter area in particular is relatively sprawling, and has started to extend south along the main road (such as the industrial estate).

We are now on the cusp of a new phase of morphological change, as the construction of the new road from Cromarty Square to the top of Church Road brings the first major change in the village's road network for centuries .

Urban design, traffic and movement

The economic foundations of towns and villages are undergoing profound changes. The larger settlements in Orkney, in common with settlements across the rest of Europe, owe their existence to the dynamics of movement and exchange. Villages were established in response to the practical realities of farming and fishing and the activities associated with trade and commerce, themselves underpinned by land and marine transport and patterns of movement. Thus settlements tend to be found either close to ports and sheltered harbours, or at the crossroads or intersection of important routes. The necessity for trade, for exchange, and for human interaction to acquire and sell goods and services underpins the market role of almost all ancient settlements.

The patterns of trade, movement and information exchange are undergoing major changes. For the first time in human history, it is no longer necessary for many to travel to, or engage with, the trading activities associated with towns. Out-of-town stores and the emergence of the internet have combined to make it perfectly possible to obtain all the goods and information we need without recourse to towns or villages – assuming connection to the internet. This development has far-reaching implications for the public realm, whether it be the city centre

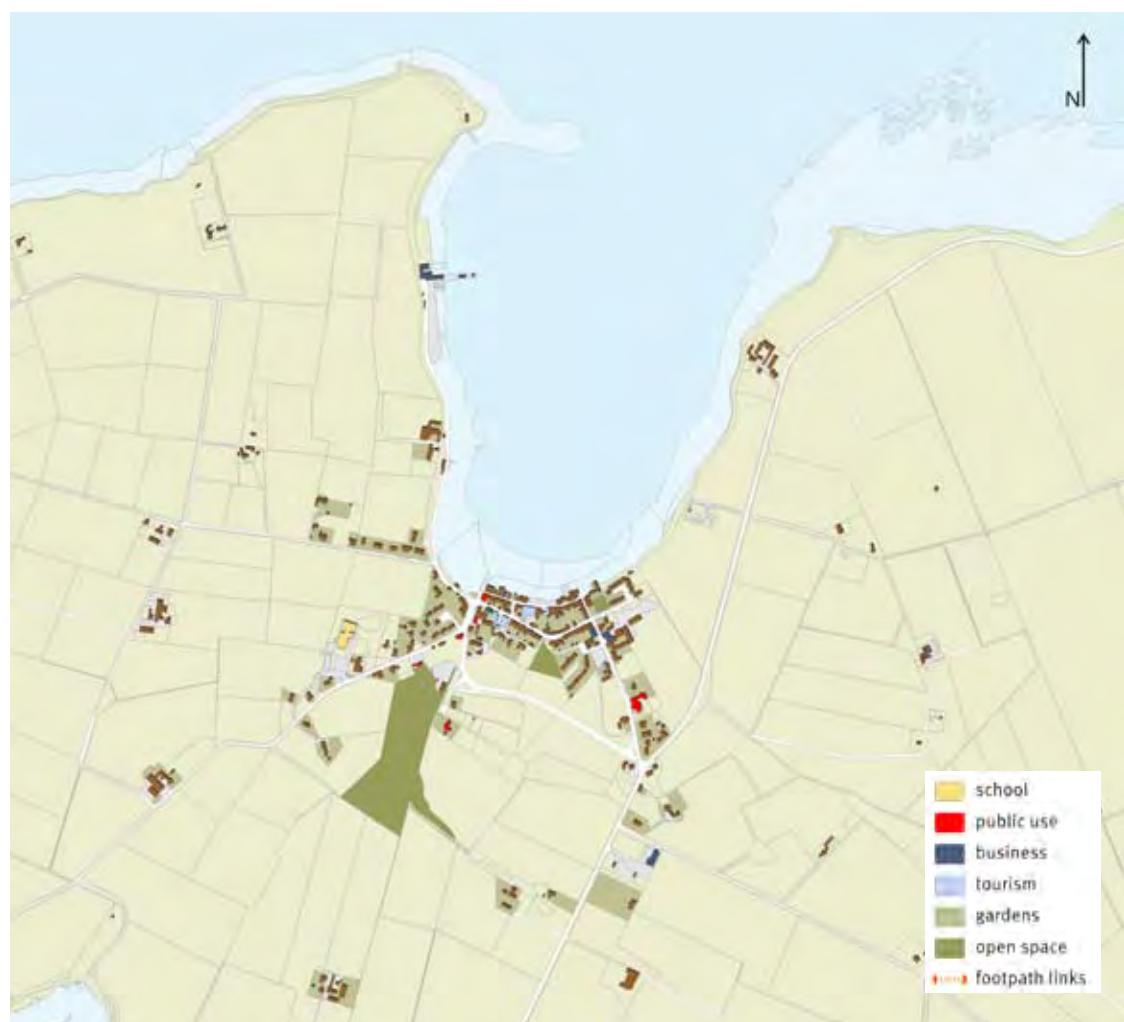
or village green. We will continue to support and visit places, but only because we **wish** to, not because we **need** to. Where formerly a distinctive quality of public space was merely a bonus on the functional purpose of places, now it is this quality itself which will increasingly support economic activity.

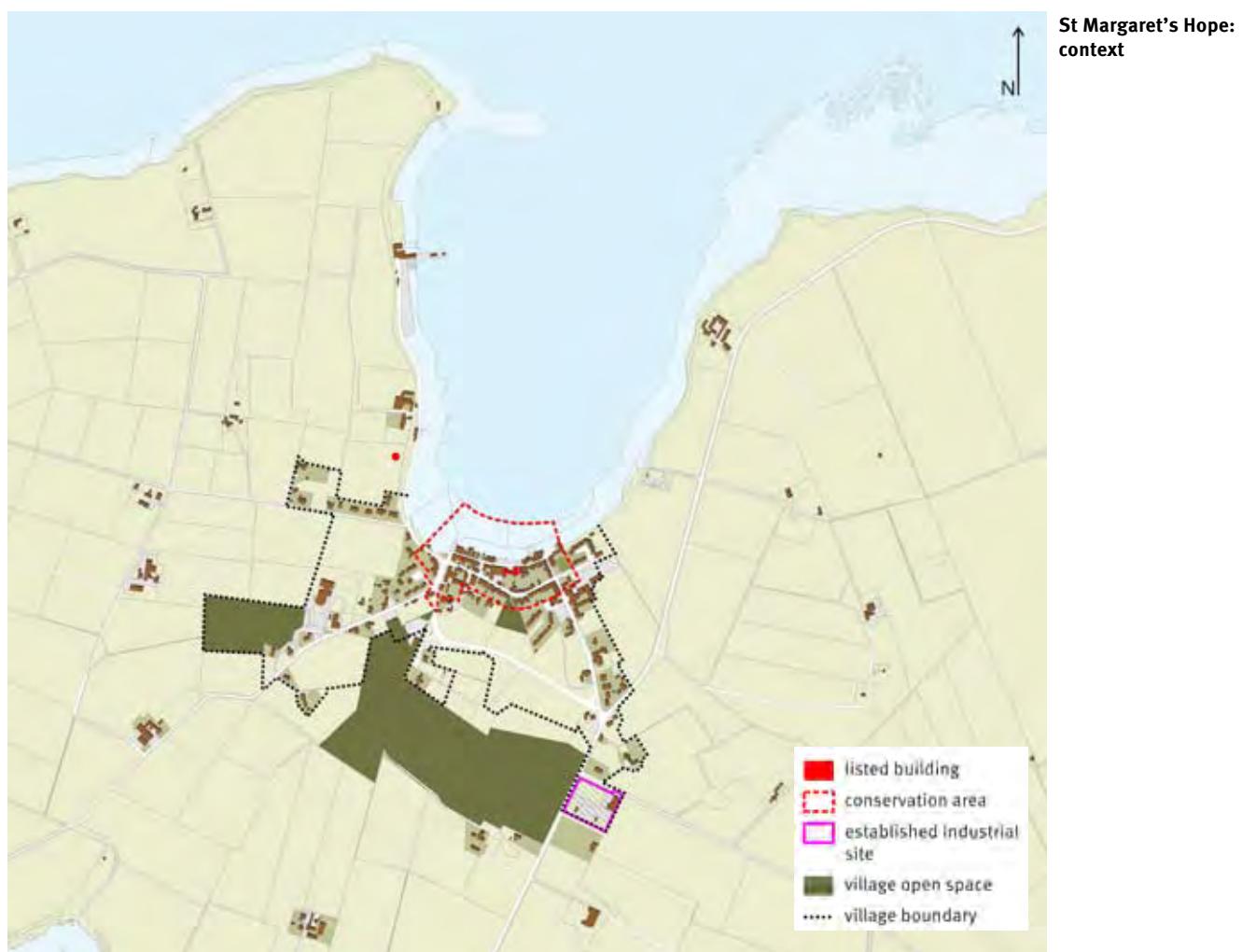
Dounby, Finstown and St. Margaret Hope are not immune from these changes. Like all settlements, their future depends on the extent to which they can adapt and establish a role in rapidly changing patterns of movement, trade and activity. One village, Dounby, is a classic crossroads settlement, where Hillside Road and Vetquoy Road bisect the modern A986. St Margaret's Hope is a typical fishing and harbour village. Finstown is a combination, with buildings drawn out along the waterside and around the junction of the Breck of Cruan road (the A966) with the main Kirkwall Road (the A965).

A successful masterplan should aim to build on these historic characteristics and to reinforce a sense of place around these transport roots as well as other distinct nodes and focal points within the villages.



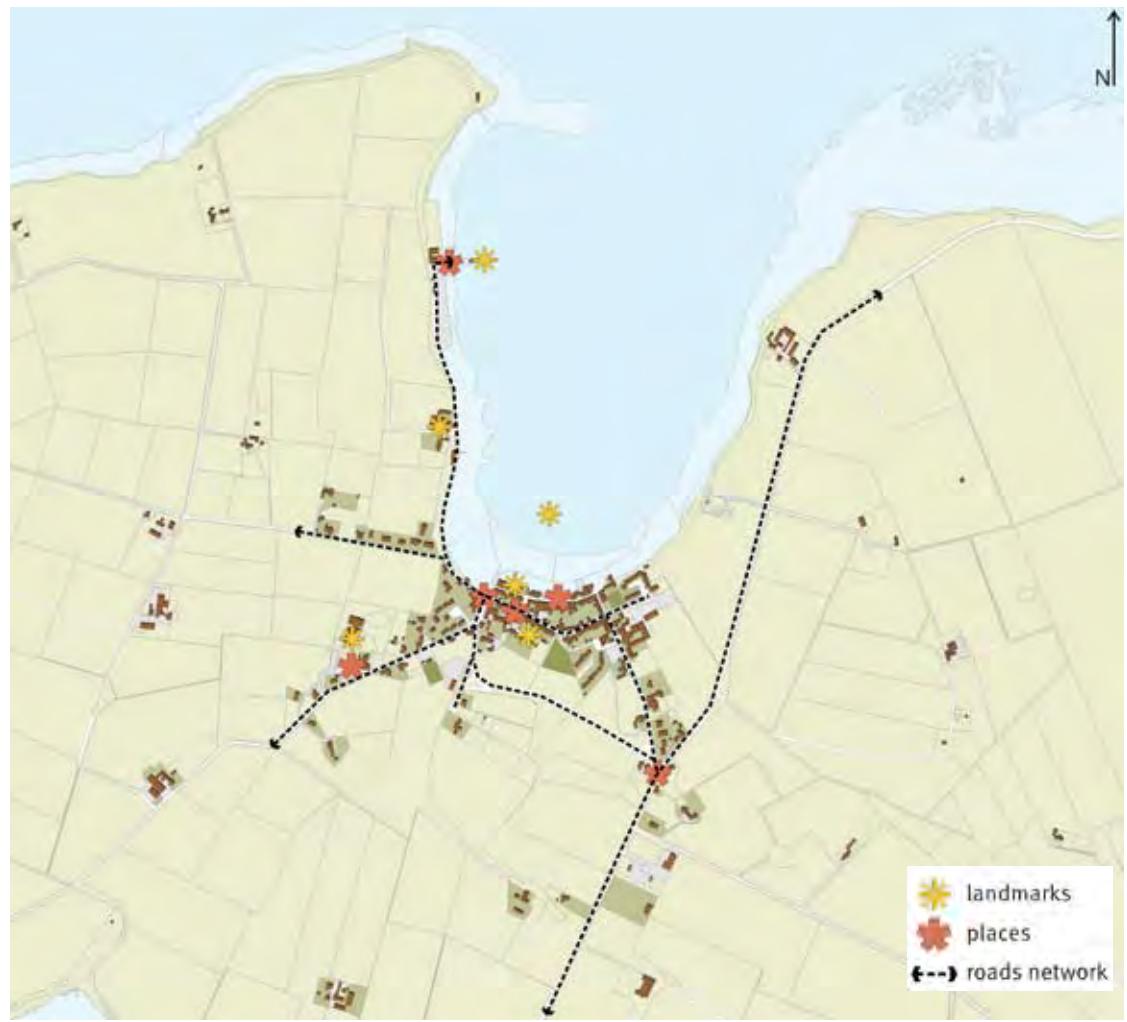
St Margaret's Hope:
land use





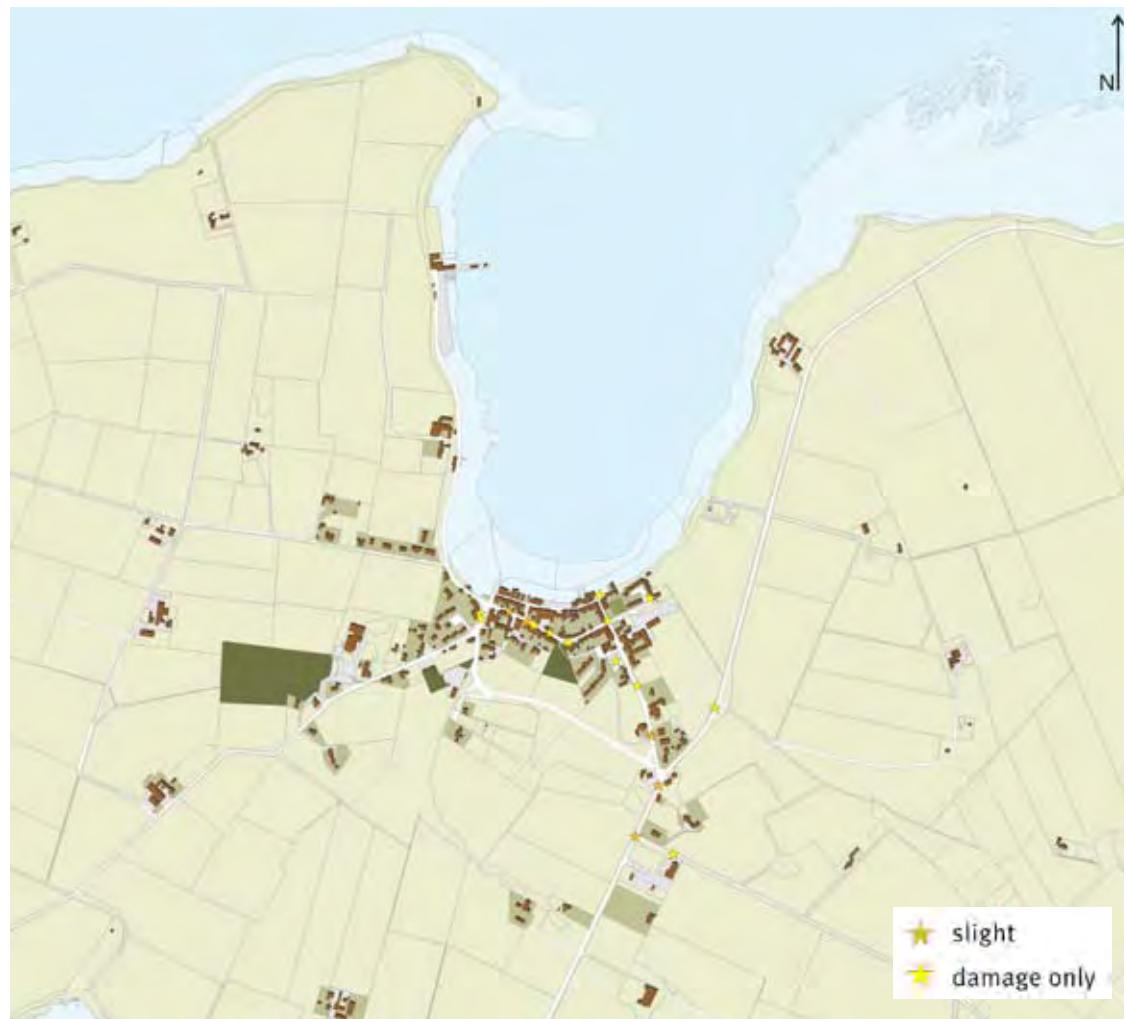


**St Margaret's Hope:
constraints**





**St Margaret's Hope:
accidents**



Character Areas

The character areas for the three villages are differentiated generally by the eras in which they were developed and land uses that reflect the role and function of the village. Inclusion within a particular character area does not imply homogeneity of building type or land use but instead, the character area definitions apply to a range of building types and uses that present an essential commonality that differentiates one particular area from another. In addition, the boundaries are not necessarily discrete and only suggest where one character area may begin and another ends. The three villages contain a mixture of five character areas namely:

- **historic core** - a high quality dense central area with considerable historic interest in buildings, street layout and general visual and heritage value
- **traditional core** - the original hub of the village with some extant older buildings with a retained historic street pattern
- **enclave**: small cul-de-sac areas with a private quality set away from the rest of the village
- **20th century random**: development areas originating in the 20th century with little regard for the grain or street pattern of the original settlement
- **scattered/linear**: low density areas with a wide range of uses, building types and ages

- typical of the edge of settlements in Orkney

St Margaret's Hope:

St Margaret's Hope has three of these character area typologies - historic core, enclave and scattered/linear.

Historic core: the historic core of the village is characterised by the densely developed Front Road and Back Road and the structures relating to them and leading off them. Much of this area is run down in appearance with many buildings appearing to be in poor condition or under-used. Nevertheless it is an intricate and visually stunning environment. The relevant parameters in relation to this area are:

+ve	-ve
high quality environment	loss of traditional roles
sustainable materials	vacancy
shelter and climate response	historic buildings at risk
history and stories	dominated by road traffic
pedestrian scale	parking issues
relationship with the sea	municipalisation
architecture and tradition	risk of flooding
a suitable place for the arts	nothing to do
unstable	

Enclave: these areas are made up of four clusters of development that are closely attached to the historic core but which have



characteristics which enclose and detach them. These are the residential developments at Marengo Road, Wards Park and Thorfinn Place all of which are public sector housing developments from the last 50 years. The other enclave area is a remarkable collection of houses along a lane leading off Back Road. The quality of environment here is marked by pedestrian scale, a small scale access road, trees, stone boundary walls and general feeling of shelter and privacy. The parameters in relation to these areas are:

+ve	-ve
predominantly residential	inappropriate style (1950s)
pedestrian scale	less concern for materials
safe and private	less concern for design
sheltered environment	access issues
flexibility - use not critical	impact on landscape
boundaries important	capacity issues with cars

an exemplar for new development?

Scattered/linear: These areas are represented by the three routes out of the historic core - Church Road, School Road and Pier Road. The characteristics of these areas are low densities, large building plots and a lack of adherence to a building line. Architecture and building types vary considerably. Boundaries tend to be stone walls (in the case of Pier Road quite dramatic) in the case of older properties or more open for more recent construction. The parameters in relation to

these areas are:

+ve	-ve
predominantly residential	less compact form
good access	less concern for materials
views of sea and countryside	less concern for design
opportunities for better design	exposed locations
flexibility - use not critical	impact on landscape
an Orkney tradition	limits to sporadic development

undervalued

Places, nodes and focal points

An important component of the villages are the places - focal points, nodes, meeting points, landmarks and other features - which punctuate the environment. It is important to take these into account as they provide a counterbalance to describing places in terms of buildings or objects, and content rather than form.

St Margaret's Hope: the village has a number of memorable focal points and landmarks. The most important of these are Cromarty Square and the area around the propellor on the waterfront. The waterfront is the focus for a number of significant places including the ferry, car parks and view points. Away from the sea, local shops in Back Road and Church Road are important as is the school.

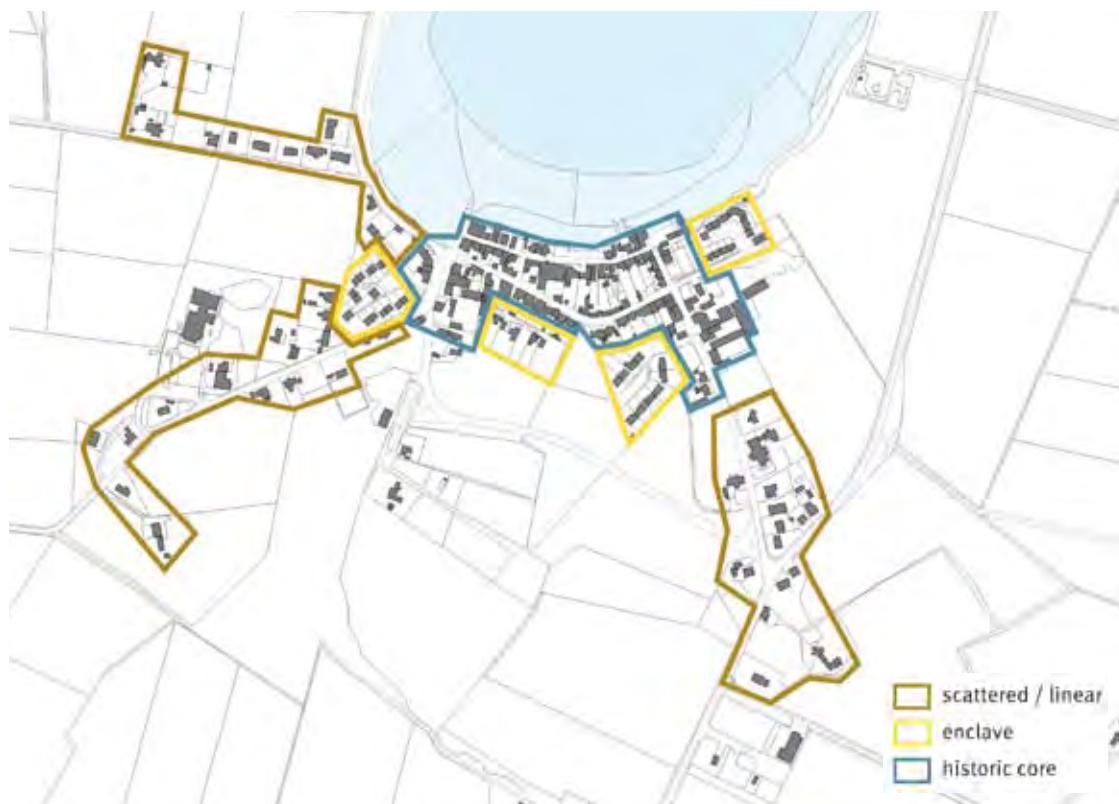
Landscape setting and visual envelope

St Margaret's Hope: like Finstown, the dominant themes of the village in its setting are containment and the sea. While the historic core of the village huddles round the south end of the bay, expansion up Church Road and School Road see the village breaking out of its original setting and the skyline is broken by buildings in these areas. There is a possibility that this tendency will

lead to more intrusive development with the completion of the new road leading from the current entrance to the village to Cromarty Square. The masterplan proposals section examines opportunities for more sensitive options for expansion.

Development proposals

There are few development proposals for the three villages. This reflects their size,





location and market position. Nevertheless the developments that are proposed – public and private sector residential schemes – will have a significant effect on the settlements. In each village, the issue of context and the desire to blend in with existing forms creates issues for developers, their architects and for the Council who have to produce acceptable outcomes. On Orkney, residential development is built to a relatively low standard in urban design terms – perhaps 40 years behind similar developments in England. Coupled with this, the three villages are difficult to develop in or around because:

- they are small scale and highly visible
- St Margaret's Hope has a distinctive historic form which is difficult to recreate or build on to in the 21st century
- Dounby and Finstown are road villages where form is linear or in small groups rather than in field-sized collections of units
- contemporary residential building in Orkney requires larger areas for roads and development types which are unlike traditional building

The residential zonings for the villages in the current Local Plan appear to be generous and have not been taken up to the extent envisaged as yet. Some of these zonings would probably result in intrusive and insensitive development and these will be reviewed later in the masterplan process.

Summary and directions

This baseline paper has collected a broad range of issues that require to be addressed in the village masterplans. At a strategic level the issues are:

- in the overall settlement hierarchy of the islands, Kirkwall has experienced strong growth over the past 15 years and population and employment has centralised there
- the three villages are dependent on Kirkwall for services, employment and entertainment
- the increasing suburbanisation of the villages with Finstown further down that road than Dounby or St Margaret's Hope
- Dounby and St Margaret's Hope still betray some evidence of their traditional roles

More detailed study of each village reveals a range of day-to-day practical issues as well as some longer term aspirations. these point towards masterplans that are physical in part but which also include a range of community orientated proposals for business:

St Margaret's Hope: emerging issues for the masterplan

- The masterplan should refer to the need for **flood prevention works** to safeguard the long term sustainability of the settlement. Although it cannot propose solutions as part of this commission - that will involve further study

- Prevention of flooding, rather than managed retreat from affected properties, is important for the long term sustainability of the settlement. This is relevant for two reasons:
 - The strategy is based on continued habitation and use of the flood affected areas, and for this flood prevention works are required.
 - To access funding for flood prevention works in the future, the community and the Council will need to demonstrate that they are necessary, not least through their inclusion in documents such as this.
- The dangers of the **Churchill Barriers** in easterly storms were also cited as having a major impact on the viability/sustainability of St Margaret's Hope and the southern isles, with residents and businesses concerned about accessibility during the winter. This is of less direct relevance to our commission, but it is worth mentioning as a factor affecting community sustainability.
- The new bypass offers an opportunity for an easy win to **improve pedestrian safety on Church Road**, with through traffic removed from the road. A public realm / traffic management scheme would improve pedestrian access and safety at the shops (particularly Doull's) and facilitate easier/safer pedestrian access up and down the hill.
- A more comprehensive package of measures to make the village **more attractive for tourists**, building on the success of the golf

course and the built heritage, could include:

- Renovation of historic buildings in poorer condition along Front Road, some of which are underused (THI?).
- Public realm/traffic management initiatives particularly at busier places such as around the Trading Post (Back Road/Cromarty Square) and Church Road (Doull's and Robertson's).
- Public realm improvements along Front Road with improved access to the shore (eg at the small Scottish Water building).
- Public realm improvements at the pier, following recent land reclamation. Potential for creating yacht berths – current facilities are not ideal.
- Proactive support for local enterprise – bearing in mind also that The Creel and The Galley are both for sale and the Murray Arms wants to convert to flats. The commercial and community success of the golf course is an example.
- Locals are keen to see the Council's proposed care home immediately to **east of Marengo Road**. As this has not been possible, the site is a potential housing site with level access to the village, and although it is privately owned it is said to be available.
- A sequence of implementation actions to enable **compact settlement form**:
 - Identify preferred housing sites which will contribute to compact settlement form – including review sites already



identified / not identified in Local Plan. May need to bring forward more sites than necessary to satisfy demand, as some sites (eg Local Plan H1) may not be released by owners

- Identify specific types of housing at higher densities than proposed in Local Plan.
- Prepare briefs for preferred sites in proactive partnership with landowners, also assisting with site assembly if needed.

The Business Surveys highlighted a rich vein of information on the functioning of each settlement:

SUMMARY

Urban Design and Movement:

The key issues around urban design and movement are the inseparability of traffic and village form in each case. Road safety is a significant issue in Finstown and important in Dounby too while in St Margaret's Hope, new road construction aims to improve the environment of the town although measures will be required to make the most of this. In general terms more attention needs to be put on placemaking in association with public realm and road improvements. For example these might include:

- Defining clearer gateways to the villages to mark a definite transition from highway to village. The location of such gateways should combine with the built form so that drivers have a stronger awareness of entering a distinctive place. It may be appropriate to introduce a 20 mph speed limit at such points, although this is of secondary importance to the street design.
- Removing, or not replacing, the centre line markings within the village. Research by TRL for Wiltshire County Council suggests that this measure alone can help reduce speeds by 2-3 mph.
- Reduce the apparent width of the street through the addition of an appropriate verge treatment. Such a treatment might consist of the application of a surface dressing in a contrasting colour to the asphalt of the carriageway, or the use of a locally sourced paving element.
- The introduction of lower-level, more pedestrian-friendly lighting, combined where possible with existing buildings.

Specific urban design proposals for St Margaret's Hope might include:

- St Margaret's Hope: Cromarty Square, the junction of Back Road and Church Road, School Road

In addition it is anticipated that design guidance for new development works will be a necessity in all three villages.



st margaret's hope masterplan

Introduction - St Margaret's Hope in context:

This chapter of the report describes the masterplan proposals for St Margaret's Hope. Drawing on the conclusions of the previous chapters it is clear that these villages are quite similar in economic role but quite different in physical form. Dounby is a local service centre for a wider rural area, Finstown is almost a linear suburb of Kirkwall though not entirely a dormitory and St Margaret's Hope is also a local service centre which like Dounby, still betrays some evidence of its traditional roles reflected in high levels of self employment, agricultural employment, home-based working and a high proportion of people working in skilled trades and manual occupations. While Dounby is a collection of buildings around a crossroads with a scattering of detached dwellings over a wider rural area, Finstown displays a completely different morphology of linear development and cul-de-sac enclaves set in a striking landscape. St Margaret's Hope is more urban than Dounby or Finstown with many features that are reminiscent of Stromness such as the tight pedestrian environment and clusters of buildings.

The scale of the settlements and their place in the hierarchy of Orkney dictates that these are not busy places bursting with ideas for new developments, special projects or crying out for massive change. One of the things that struck us during our consultations was the high level of satisfaction that residents have with the villages – the causes of concern

were the day-to-day issues of local business, housing, traffic and parking as well as quality of life issues such as open space provision and local facilities – but fundamentally, these are places that have more positives than negatives for local residents. While the stability and scale of the settlements was considered to be important, issues of design, in the sense of individual building design, were rarely singled out as being a source of concern. The masterplans reflect this sense of making modest interventions, fixing things that are not working and setting out guidance for future development, respecting local context, street morphologies and building forms.

The exception to this, as we noted in the previous section, is the dual issue in St Margaret's Hope of flooding and the condition of and safety issues associated with the Churchill barriers. The two issues may be related to an extent but in-depth investigations of the issues are outwith the scope of this work. Nevertheless, a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is part of this work and its findings should be read in parallel with this report.

The St Margaret's Hope masterplan:

The masterplan for the village comprises two principal components – policies and proposals. The policies cover matters relating to the long term development of the village and the allocation of land for different uses as well as the day-to-day



administration of planning applications and the Council's desire to ensure a suitable quality of development. The policies aimed at improving standards of development are applicable to the character areas described in section 4 (urban design and movement).

Specific masterplan policies for St Margaret's Hope cover:

- the role of the settlement
- future land use, especially housing land allocations
- traffic and movement
- open space, footpaths, quality of life
- general design guidance

Specific masterplan proposals for the village cover:

- local business
- housing
- traffic and parking
- open space and local facilities
- quality of life and other issues

Masterplan policies:

Settlement roles

St Margaret's Hope is a third tier settlement in the Orkney hierarchy and operates as a local service centre for the agricultural areas around them. This role is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future but

reinforcing it through the masterplan is a constructive proposal for the future. As we have noted, there is a high degree of satisfaction expressed by the communities in the settlement and a strong sense that, with a few exceptions around particular issues, the village is a good place to live and that the masterplan should not seek to drive fundamental change. Rather it should ameliorate obvious problems and fine tune the workings of each village.

Land use allocations

The Orkney Local Plan 2004 proposed very clear and simple land use allocations for the villages. In each, the main allocations are for:

- Protection of Residential Amenity
- Proposed Housing Sites, Recreation
- Recreation, Leisure and Open Space
- Education Facilities
- Established Industrial
- Proposed Industrial Land

Within these categories, particularly under Protection of Residential Amenity, is the assumption that the villages will be mixed use. There is no attempt to segregate uses into particular areas but instead to work with the reality of small scale urban and rural development where realistically it would be impossible to make hard and fast allocations. This category of Protection of Residential Amenity is effectively a General

Urban policy where a range of uses could be accommodated as long as the amenity of the rest of the village was not adversely affected. This is a positive and appropriate policy for the villages.

Policy SMH1: mixed use development is promoted within the settlement boundary established in the masterplan.

We suggested in our proposal for this work that the quality of recent residential development in and around the villages was very low. There are a number of separate and related issues here namely:

- the suitability of particular areas of land for development
- the number of houses to be accommodated
- the siting of these houses
- the design of individual houses

Development patterns and numbers - the siting and design parameters that created the villages were all related to restriction and scarcity. The basic topography of the villages, the need for shelter, the original rigg pattern, Udal Law and the limitations of traditional building all contributed to their form and layout.

As these restrictions began to disappear, the form of settlements began to change. Plot size and shape is traditionally the most significant generator of urban form and even

today it generates form and layout in and around the villages. The difference today is that plots are much bigger and the shapes are completely different from traditional feu or rigg boundaries – for example a field will be divided into plots for sale on the assumption that a deep plan dwelling will sit in the middle of each plot with no physical connection with other houses. This is the antithesis of traditional building.

Developing housing sites on a field by field basis is probably the most damaging approach to residential provision for the village environments particularly on the edges of the settlements. A field filled with houses is completely non-traditional with no relationship to the existing town or surrounding landscape.

While field-filling is highly damaging to the village environments, ribbon development – which has been criticised for many years as an intrusive form of housing provision – is reasonably sensitive to the landscape. It works with existing roads, is arguably more sustainable than developing large fields and can work with existing infrastructure. In the Stromness situation, new housing needs to work with the existing landscape (which includes roads), with traditional building and with established urban form. Ribbon development has an inherent flexibility and potential sensitivity that larger scale block development lacks. It retains the balance



of built to unbuilt that is a characteristic of building in sensitive landscapes.

In allocating land for residential development it is necessary and desirable to move beyond numbers of dwellings only and deal with the actual forms that might be created as a result of the land allocation. There are no good examples of new residential development in the villages. Elsewhere in Orkney there interesting and potentially appropriate house types but the layout and external environments are insensitive and inappropriate (but quite typical of new residential development whether it is in Preston, Cardiff or Edinburgh). There has to be a recognition that new development has to be 'of the place' and an effort has to be made to build in a special way.

In terms of the Proposed Housing Sites, we have already expressed our concern that the spatial allocations are too large, too low density in some cases and encourage unsympathetic residential development. We have proposed deleting some housing sites, reduced the size and shape of others and introduced new sites which are more sympathetic to Orkney development forms. In this way we have increased the housing allocations for each settlement.

Policy SMH2: The layout of development within the allocated sites must respect the character of the area. In most cases

this is replacing larger sites with a linear configuration.

Looking at all three villages, the current summary of housing allocations for the three villages is 82 new homes – the revised proposal in these masterplans is for 224 new homes on more appropriate sites in improved development forms.

With regard to Recreation, Leisure and Open Space, there is a need to be more specific about what the allocations are for and to try to link up land thus allocated into specific networks of green space or wildlife corridors as appropriate.

There is no change anticipated in Education Facilities. With regard to Industrial Land, which perhaps should be renamed Business and Employment Land, we have identified a desire from some members of the village communities to provide informal workspace or yards with short term lease arrangements and to make new allocations to deal with expanding local businesses.

Traffic and Movement

Each of the three settlements has suffered from problems associated with measures, introduced gradually over some years, in response to increases in volumes of traffic. Standardised traffic engineering, highway measures, municipal lighting and similar

interventions have eroded the distinctive qualities of each of the three settlements to varying degrees. A key component of our recommendations for the masterplans is a range of measures to reduce typical traffic speeds and to return a stronger sense of place to the distinctive context of each community. Emerging best practice from the UK and from mainland Europe suggests that the use of a range of simple measures, or sometimes the removal of highway paraphernalia, can be a cost-effective basis for reconciling safe and efficient traffic movement with enhancing spatial quality. These could include:

- removing, or not replacing, centre-line and other road markings within built-up areas
- reducing the visual width of the carriageway through the use of simple paving or surfacing materials
- defining specific on-street parking spaces as an integral component of streets and spaces
- emphasising and reinforcing clear and distinctive gateways at the boundaries of each village to signal the change in context and to define the transition point and entry to the slower speed urban context
- replacing standard highway lighting over

time with fittings designed to integrate with buildings and places and to reduce the height of light sources

- giving clearer spatial definition to key places within each settlement, typically at crossroads and intersections, and outside significant buildings or points of activity

The Scottish Government has issued Designing Streets to consultation and will publish the final version of the document in 2010. Designing Streets promotes many of the approaches to roads and traffic that would bring about an enormous positive change to these villages.

Policy SMH3: active traffic management methods and a focus on pedestrian orientated public realm is a requirement of new development

Greenspace areas:

These are areas of open space within and adjacent to the village and the connections between these areas. These are important resources and given the ease of access to the countryside, it is easy to overlook the importance of green space in and around the urban area.

Much green space in the village is bleak and poorly designed and while the bleakness and exposed nature of these spaces is often



inevitable given the climate and exposure, poor design – particularly generic municipal design - is unnecessary. There is a need to develop a language for landscape design that is appropriate to Orkney rather than import products and styles and that can be seen in Brighton or Piccadilly Circus.

The other aspect of green space is linkage between the different elements and idea of developing an obvious network of spaces rather than separate entities. Specific proposals for development of public space must take into account the need to link into the wider network being established and opportunities to set out a common language in the use of materials and street furniture should be investigated. This should be delivered through the development process. We have included specific proposals for green space and linkages but the masterplan policy issues are:

- the Council should develop better standards of greenspace design drawing on best practice in similar climates and combining this with local exemplars
- greenspace areas should be connected into a cohesive and obvious network – so new provision in residential areas should be linked to existing resources

Policy SMH4: Development proposals must conform to the open space requirements of the masterplan. Specific proposals for

development of public space must take into account the need to link into the wider network being established and opportunities to set out a common language in the use of materials and street furniture.

Introduction to the design guidance

Policies for the three villages are based on five village character types and set out a range of generic factors which must be considered to ensure that new development enhances the local context.

Planning applications will be expected to demonstrate how they respond to each of the relevant policies and proposals and the general design guidance at the planning application stage. This information will be requested in the form of a Design Statement which will be submitted in support of planning applications. The purpose of this is to ensure that all future development that occurs in the villages responds to the common approach to design quality and key site development considerations which are established in this document.

The level of information required will vary depending on the scale of the development proposed. For example, it is likely that small scale development (such as a single house or house extension) will require very limited information and that this will focus mostly on demonstrating that the chosen design of the

building respects the local context which is established for the relevant policy area. For these small scale developments, the Design Statement is likely to be very short outlining the key factors which have influenced the chosen design. Larger developments such as multiple house or flatted developments, larger retail or commercial premises are likely to require a more comprehensive assessment of the policies in the Design Statement. Where relevant they will also be required to demonstrate how they respond to the key criteria set out for each proposal area. Clarification should be sought from the planning department at the pre-application stage on the level of information that will be required.

The General Design Guidance set out below is provided to indicate the range of information which would be considered through the Design Statement and how a Design Statement should be laid out.

General Design Guidance

The three villages are very special places but they suffer from a range of design issues that affect everything from the heart of the historic core right through to individual houses in the countryside.

At the same time, Orkney in general has a very specific aesthetic which is markedly different from 90% of mainland Scotland

though it has much in common with the Western Isles and Shetland. We think it would be completely wrong to try to impose styles or ideas from Central Scotland or from England on these unique places. However, this is in effect what is happening in many instances where dilution of local character and tradition in building, disregard for the landscape and the embracing of UK suburban style are commonplace. Design is a material consideration in determining planning applications. Councils may refuse an application and defend their decision at appeal solely on design grounds. The Scottish Government has produced advice on Design Statements and much of this section of the Urban Design Framework has drawn on PAN68.

We understand that the Council have taken some steps to improve knowledge of design issues by participating in Design Awareness Training from the Improvement Service both for officials and elected members.

Another way of moving design standards up the Council agenda is to ask applicants to do more to justify their proposals for new development. Design Statements increase design awareness, provide a sound basis for constructive discussions and negotiations, and can lead to better quality development. They can also help individuals and communities understand why a particular approach has been adopted.



Design Statements allow applicants and their clients to explain the design of their scheme in a structured way. It is an opportunity to demonstrate what has been done to appraise the context, and how the design takes account of it sensitively. The submission of a Design Statement allows officials to see the extent of analysis, as well as the quality of thought, time and effort which has been dedicated to developing the scheme. Providing the information is presented clearly, a Design Statement will help The Council to understand the thinking behind the design. It should therefore be an aid to more efficient decision making and lead to an improvement in the quality of development.

The design process

The design process can be set out in 5 stages.

Stage 1: Site and area appraisal

Stage 2: Identifying the design principles

Stage 3: Analysis

Stage 4: Design concept(s)

Stage 5: Design solution

Depending on the nature and scale of the development, there may be a need for public involvement during the design process. This can occur at any stage, however, early

consultation with the public or amenity groups should help to identify any key issues or concerns. When the design concept(s) have been worked up, it is advisable to feed these back to the contributors in order to check that nothing has been missed or interpreted incorrectly. This exercise will also help to gauge any initial reactions to the preliminary design which may help to influence the final design. Whilst each stage is presented separately, in practice the design process is often more iterative, rather than linear. This is because the site appraisal and analysis can be reviewed by testing alternative design concepts. For example, a design concept may have implications which were not initially foreseen. Once all the stages have been completed, the design statement can be assembled, bringing together all the thinking on the design issues.

The applicant should choose the most effective form of presentation, as the contents of a design statement will vary according to the nature of the development and the site's characteristics. For most applications, the design statement need not be elaborate. It can be a short document (one or two pages), which sets out the principles on which the development is based and explains the design solution. Irrespective of the scale of development, the design statement must be supported by good graphics. Requirements and suggestions for content are set out below:

All applicants, including developers, architects, designers and agents, should consider design as an integral part of the development process. This advice aims to encourage more attention to be given to the design of developments. Although it will involve some additional work to present ideas and thinking, in many cases it can be achieved simply. It should not be an onerous task. By providing additional information, which explains and illustrates the design principles and design concept, applicants are likely to benefit from a greater degree of certainty in the planning process, and quicker decision making. The result should be improved quality of new development, lasting improvements to the built environment and successful places.

As a starting point for the content of a design statement for a proposal in or around St Margaret's Hope the applicants will be required to demonstrate an understanding and consideration of the following:

- Context of the proposal in its local area
- Location of the site
- General description of the surroundings, eg urban, rural, residential and industrial
- Is the site in or near a conservation area?
- Is the site in an area of outstanding landscape?
- Site description
- Planning history
- Ownership of the site
- Adjacent land uses, and relevant planning proposals
- Heritage assets – listed buildings
- Focal points
- Landmarks
- Vistas
- Views to/from/over site
- Topography – contours on the site
- Microclimate – wind, sun orientation, exposure, shelter
- Services
- Public utilities, e.g. underground services, drainage systems, overhead power lines
- Network capacity and developer contributions
- Public services available locally, e.g. schools, public transport
- SuDS system
- Identity
- Surrounding buildings
- Building lines – groupings, rhythms and plot/feu sizes
- Entrances – styles and sizes
- Windows – styles and sizes
- Active frontages
- Scale – height and massing
- Appearance – details and materials
- Use of the space
- Use of spaces between buildings – public/private
- Day, night, seasonal variation of use



- Prohibited activities, security arrangements
- Hard landscaping
- Location of street furniture
- Condition and maintenance
- How people use it
- Public art/sculpture trail
- Soft landscaping
- Landscape character
- Trees in the town
- Quality of landscaping
- Need for ground modelling
- Nature conservation area
- Wildlife habitats
- Tree Preservation Orders
- Play space/recreational space
- Connections
- Vehicular movement
- Surrounding road and street layout
- Access, parking and circulation
- Bus stops and routes, taxi stops, cycle routes
- Areas of vehicular/pedestrian conflict
- Use of traffic measures
- Servicing arrangements
- Pedestrian access
- Where are people coming from, going to?
- Desire lines
- Disabled access
- Are people restricted from access due to any current aspects of design?
- Infrastructure Considerations

Further specific requirements are set out in the individual policy requirements for each character area below.

The masterplans do not give detailed consideration to infrastructure capacity issues beyond clarifying with the statutory providers that the principle of additional development is acceptable. It will be

necessary for development projects to make contact with infrastructure providers including Scottish Water, SEPA and the Council's Roads Services Department in order to determine capacity at an early stage in the process. It is likely that upgrades may be required to be funded by the development process. As a general rule, connections to foul sewers as defined in the Sewerage (Scotland) Act 1968 will be a pre-requisite for development in the villages and efforts should be made, where possible, to coordinate this through a strategically planned public foul drainage system. In all cases, early contact with Scottish Water will be important to determine the necessary sewerage infrastructure requirements for new development. For example, a Development Impact Assessment should be requested by Scottish Water at the earliest opportunity and some proposals may require to be assessed against SEPA's Pollution Prevention Guidance.

In addition, the Strategic Environmental Assessment report has highlighted areas where flooding is likely to be a constraint on development. In coastal areas, flood risk is a reality which cannot be ignored in the development process and some sites which are identified in the masterplans as having potential for redevelopment are within flood risk zones where development may not be possible until strategic flood alleviation measures are put in place. Developers should therefore refer to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment work which was undertaken in parallel with the

masterplans process to assess the likely level of risk associated with progressing development in flood risk areas. It may be that some sites which are identified as having potential for redevelopment cannot be brought forward until appropriate formal flood alleviation measures are put in place. An assessment of the capabilities of existing formal flood protection measures (if any) will be required at an early stage to determine the extent of new works which may be required. Detailed consultation with the council as Flood Prevention Authority, and if necessary SEPA will be essential to determine the likely works which may be required.

A core objective of the masterplan study is to encourage regeneration and to promote new development in central areas. It is also at its heart a land use planning document, which seeks to direct the broad direction of new development over a 5 to 10 year period and beyond. It is therefore considered appropriate to establish how development should proceed if flooding issues can be overcome, while ensuring that solutions are compliant with Scottish Planning Policy and relevant Planning Advice Notes.

Detailed consideration should be given to flood risk at an early stage and it is likely that Flood Risk Assessment studies will be required which will influence the layout and design of the new buildings, particularly in central and coastal locations, and those next to existing watercourses. Sustainable Urban



Drainage System (SuDS) techniques should be adopted in all development proposals. There is also a need to consider sustainable building techniques and provision for recycling in new developments. Applicants should refer to the Council's emerging Energy Efficiency and Sustainability in Planning Development Management Guidance to ensure that best practice is followed on these matters.

As detailed above, the masterplans study has observed the need for a step change in the approach to design of new buildings in the villages and the way in which all new land allocations, particularly those on the edge of the settlements are developed. It is anticipated that the pattern of single house and smaller scale development projects will continue to be the norm. The following guidance has been prepared to provide a context for improving the design quality of new development. It is not intended to be an exhaustive account and planning applications will be considered on their own merits.

The policies represent urban design and planning principles which will help to guide development in the villages for the foreseeable future. The policies are based largely on the character areas outlined in section 5 and are written with a view to maintaining or enhancing the qualities of these areas. As detailed above, planning applications will required to be supported

by Design Statements which demonstrate how they respond to the planning and urban design principles for each character area.

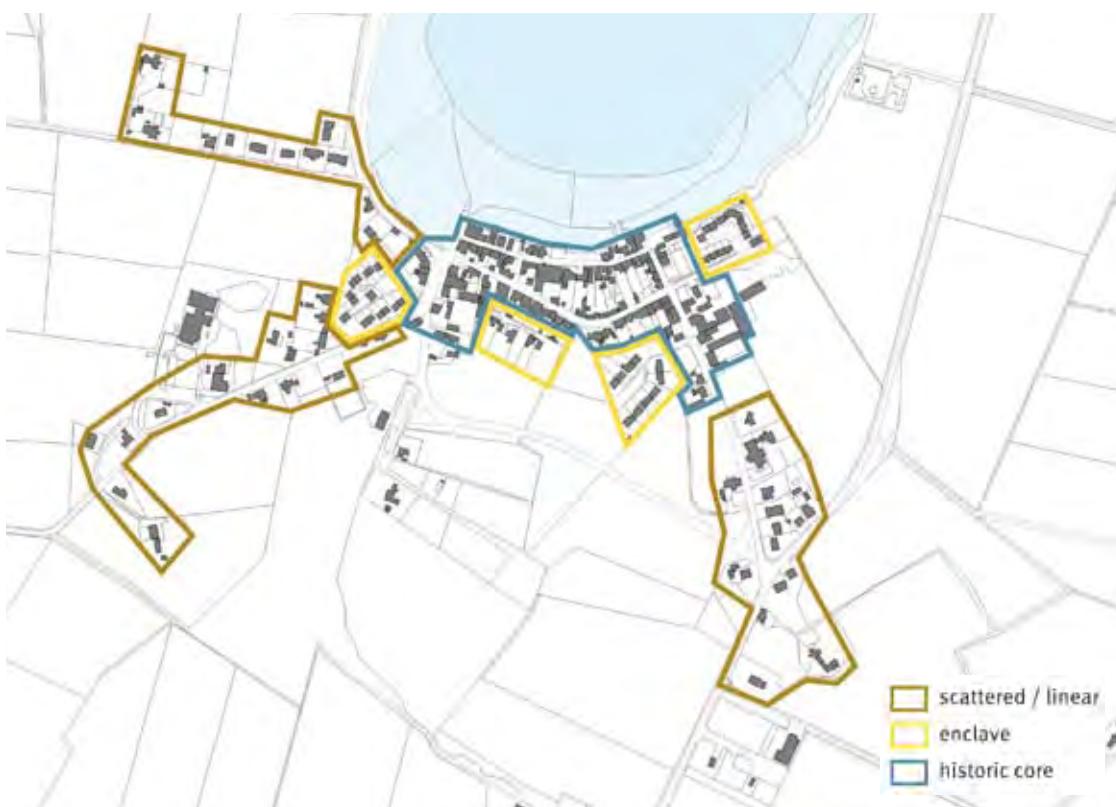
The policy areas are:

- historic core
- traditional core and new extended core areas
- enclaves
- scattered linear areas
- 20th century random

Policies by area

Policy SMH5: The historic core: this is a remarkable area that demands special attention in terms of the protection of its physical fabric as well as its health and viability as an economic entity and a place to live and work. Most of the area is an Conservation Area so to an extent it is unlikely to be heavily damaged by new development – the threats are more likely to be through vacancy, neglect and the slow undermining of the area's authenticity through unnecessary or inappropriate signage, poor repairs, ill-chosen street furniture and roads and transport infrastructure.

Nevertheless there are important urban design principles to be observed in the historic core. Planning Applications must demonstrate that they:



- enhance the walkable nature of the area through designing for pedestrians rather than for the car
- use natural sustainable materials throughout the core area wherever possible
- learn from the area's qualities of shelter and climate response
- work with the landscape and topography rather than against it
- maintain plot sizes, building sizes and orientation rather than amalgamating buildings into larger units

- maintain building lines
- are flexible and designed for future changes of use without significant change to the building

In addition to these application specific considerations, the Council should also promote the highest standards of authenticity and appropriateness in signage, public realm repair and maintenance and:

- ensure that every attempt is made to keep



its buildings in use or to actively promote surplus buildings for positive uses that will transform the area

- engage with public bodies, charities, the voluntary sector, private individuals and companies to promote the historic core as a centre for science and technology, arts and the creative industries
- investigate reuse of vacant buildings before building new elsewhere

Policy SMH6: Enclaves:

These are small, usual residential areas often attached to the historic or traditional core by cul-de-sac but which have characteristics which enclose and detach them from the rest of the village. They are quite private areas often with narrow vehicular accesses incorporating gravel surfaces, informal grass verges, enclosing walls and trees. Planning Applications must demonstrate that they respond to the following urban design principles:

- new development should retain the enclosing nature of the enclave character area
- new development should be predominantly residential although there may be opportunities for other uses such as community facilities or a small convenience store or corner shop
- new development should set clear standards for plot sizes and building lines which will help to create sheltered spaces

- new development should not exceed two storeys in height and should preferably be (or appear to be) shallow plan wide frontage in form with a pitched roof
- new developments should include stone boundary walls between 600mm and 3000mm in height to public areas rather than be 'open plan'
- new development should take advantage of views to the surrounding countryside while making a modest impact on the landscape
- new development should involve consideration of a range of building types, including semi-detached and terraced buildings which have advantages over detached dwellings in delivering better urban form and sheltered spaces
- new development can and should include natural traffic attenuation through informal surfaces
- where the boundaries are on the edges of the settlement, the boundary treatment should be post and wire fencing

Policy SMH7: Scattered/linear areas

These areas are the outer areas of the villages - more rural than urban - containing scattered groups of houses or series of individual houses. In these areas, for the avoidance of doubt, the overriding principle is to avoid high density field filling and instead to encourage scattered development forms. The following criteria will apply:

- development will take a generally linear



croft typology



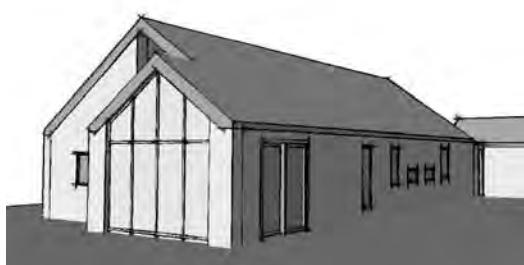
farmhouse typology



manse typology



modified single storey typology



adapted existing building typology

form avoiding crescents and culs de sac

- access will be taken directly from an existing road
- any development will be no more than two houses deep from the existing road
- there will be no fixed building line - so proposed buildings must avoid lining up with neighbouring buildings
- development must respond to and work with

the topography and landscape rather than against it

- where the boundaries are on the edges of the settlement, the boundary treatment should be post and wire fencing

Siting and design of buildings

The problem of fitting the standard modern bungalow into the Orkney landscape is that the form does not reflect traditional patterns - the houses inevitably look alien and out of scale. This is not to say that houses must be copies of traditional styles – rather that they should respect local traditions of scale and proportion. Contemporary design and traditional form can be successfully combined in Orkney settlements – the Pier Arts Centre in Stromness is an example of this. At the same



time it is important to reflect Orkney building styles and not generic Scottish patterns, and for crisp simple and easily-maintained detailing to be incorporated.

Croft - The traditional Orkney Croft is a long low building. It is possible to devise 'longhouse' style plans, although there may be cost implications. The illustration is for a semi detached pair of houses, with one bedroom at ground floor level and two low attic rooms.

Farmhouse - In the early 20th century, one and a half storey houses became commonplace. The sketch of a three bedroom house illustrates an approach which reflects this style. North Ronaldsay crofts often exhibit a distinctive one-and-a-half storey section which is unusual in Orkney.

Manse - A further alternative approach is that of the typical 18th-19th century Orkney Manse: characterised by the late Laura Grimond as the 'pepper pot'. It has two storeys and a square plan, with a symmetrical pattern. This form would lend itself to subdivision as a semi-detached block in an area of open landscape. Care needs to be taken to match the proportions of windows and ceiling heights to create the effect of the traditional building. The sketch illustrates the proportions of a pair of 3-bed houses formed in this pattern. Consideration should be given to providing a roof feature to match the

original's chimneys.

Modified Single Storey - By adding a bay to a standard single storey house plan, it is possible to create an impression of a narrower plan building. This is illustrated by the above sketch which is for a three bedroom private bungalow, however the principle would adapt readily to varying house types. This has the advantage that the main body of the house is a standard kit pattern.

Adapting Existing Buildings - The narrow plan form of traditional buildings makes it difficult to fit the required amount of accommodation in a modern house. An example of an extension to a small cottage which maintains its character is illustrated above. The scale of the extension is kept similar to the original with a parallel ridge which reflects traditional patterns. Although there are cost implications, the form of the extension can be very simple and cheap as the character is set by the original building.

The Scottish Tradition - There is a long and distinguished tradition of Scottish architecture which is alive and well today although rarely seen. A number of architectural practices have a strong reputation for merging the timeless elements of Scottish building with Modern forms to create contemporary residential buildings that are comfortable in Scottish landscapes and towns.

They are mostly highly energy efficient and use sustainable materials as much as possible. They also look energy efficient and sustainable which is increasingly a highly marketable characteristic. At the same time, until there is a widely held desire to build either traditional buildings or contemporary versions of the Scottish and Orkney traditions, there will always be a problem with new development in sensitive locations like Stromness.

Design in general should be moved up the Council agenda so that it becomes a core corporate activity rather than a fringe effort. This would give wider publicity to appropriate design and afford greater legitimacy to efforts to impose higher standards on the local community.

Masterplan Proposals St Margaret's Hope

Proposals for St Margaret's Hope reflect considerable discussion at the March 2009 workshop which centred on the same three areas of traffic, land allocation for new uses especially housing provision and open space facilities and networks. Also discussed at length was the relationship between tourism and local business. This reflects the issues raised through the community involvement events although there were many other views and concerns raised about flooding and the danger posed by the Churchill Barriers.

Proposal SMH1: Local business

The community discussed local business at some length, especially in relation to tourism. There was a general feeling that St Margaret's Hope needed something extra to give it more appeal and something that could keep tourists longer in the village. We think that concentrating on improving the quality of the environment of the village would be a significant first step in securing a better foundation for business. At the moment the village appears as beautiful, run down, over municipalised and lacking life – these are good reasons for visitors to go somewhere else. Successful tourism villages or towns are often distinguished by the fact that they are great places to live rather than by the attractions they have. This masterplan cannot provide a magic formula for ensuring that visitors stay in the village – after all if Stromness struggles, then St Margaret's Hope certainly will. What the masterplan can do is try to breathe some life into the village through increasing the population by providing more housing, by tackling the worst aspects of municipalisation, by addressing property vacancy and by instilling a new sense of place.

Proposal SMH2: Traffic and the village environment:

The new road nearing completion presents a rare opportunity for strengthening the



highly attractive qualities of this harbour village. The clear and legible structure of the settlement, with Front Road and Back Road as the principal streets running parallel to the harbour, and the approach roads of Church Road, School Road and Pier Road, could be enhanced through careful street treatment, enhanced gateways, and a strengthening of certain focal points.

The primary focal point for the village is Cromarty Square, at the western end of Back Road, with its open views across the harbour. The space forms the intersection of School Road and Pier Road, and will require some measures as a result of the new road. The square is well defined by its surrounding buildings and commands a memorable position overlooking the bay. The potential for this space to serve as a landmark for St Margaret's Hope is enhanced by the large propeller on the harbour side, although its position undermines its potential contribution to the wider square. The use of road markings and wide kerb radii further diminish the square's spatial qualities, leaving it little more than a standard highway junction.

We would recommend giving priority to this Cromarty Square and a range of measure to respond to altered traffic patterns resulting from the new road. There may also be opportunities associated with flood protection at this point, which could combine engineering with public realm enhancement. A simple, robust palette of paving materials

could be introduced to provide a strong definition to Cromarty Square, and to transform it into a memorable focal point and landmark space for visitors arriving from Pier Road. It may be appropriate to introduce an additional object, such as a lamp column, tree, or piece of local public art to the centre of the space to create a marker for the end of Back Road (the village's High Street), and to serve as an informal roundabout.

At the other end of Back Road, we would recommend a similar set of measures to transform the intersection of Church Road, Marengo Road and Back Road into a second key public space from its existing character as merely a sharp bend in the road. The space marks an important transition from the shops and facilities on Church Road, into the more formal and residential character of Back Road and Marengo Road, and commands magnificent views out over the harbour. Again, the deployment of a simple palette of paving materials with some minor improvements to lighting and street furniture would be sufficient to achieve such a change, which could improve safety and reduce speeds.

Additional measures for St Margaret's Hope could include the creation of clearer entry-points at the village boundaries. The new road will necessitate a junction with the upper end of Church Road, and it is important that the contrasting speed context and function of Church Road as an entry point is enhanced. At the top of School Road, a much clearer

transition from “highway” to “place” could be achieved through minor street interventions that could be associated with the new school. It is vital that the length of School Road, between the school and Cromarty Square, should be treated as a slow-speed, pedestrian-focused environment appropriate to the link between village and primary school.

Pier Road will need to combine its function as an extension to the village and a link between pier and harbour-front, whilst accommodating waiting vehicles and significant pulses of traffic associated with ferry arrivals. It is important that this integral part of St Margaret's Hope is protected from over-engineered measures often generated by port traffic, and should aim to retain an historic and psychological connection with the harbour and its associated settlement.

Proposal SMH3: Housing sites:

The provision of different types of housing in the village was again the subject of much discussion at workshops, especially in relation to the siting of any new housing developments along the new road to the south of the village. A mix of public sector and private self build was considered to be a good idea. The current Local Plan housing provision is for 34 new dwellings on five sites. The proposals in this plan are for 72 new dwellings on a range of amended existing Local Plan sites and new sites. These are:

site	area	nos
H1 deleted -landscape intrusion	0.00 ha	0
H2 reduced - frontage development	0.50 ha	7
H3 reduced – new road site	0.60 ha	12
H4 reduced – new road site	0.70 ha	6
H5 reduced by care home proposal	1.18 ha	18
H6 Bay side off Marengo Road (new)	0.50 ha	7
H6 Land side of Marengo Road (new)	1.10 ha	16
H7 East of Care Home	0.20 ha	4
total	4.78 ha	72

The construction of the new road raises a number of issues about the housing sites that it now provides access to. Firstly it would be undesirable to create the same situation in St Margaret's Hope that the road is trying to relieve – the construction of houses close in to a new road which may generate considerable noise through trucks negotiating the steep hill. Secondly, there is a sense in the community, which we share, that the south side of the road is too far from the rest of the town – especially for older people - and that better integration is necessary if new development is to work properly. It is possible to create a satisfactory sequence of developments on the north side of the road and these should be carefully controlled through design briefs which should set out:

- the orientation and height of buildings
- the materials to be used
- specification of boundary walls and verges
- points of access and connections to the centre of the village



**St Margaret's Hope
Back Road before**

The site is prominent and will become more so when the road opens and it is important to set out development parameters from the outset. Buildings running with the contours across the slope may work better in the landscape than following the line of the road which is designed to highway standards rather than as a piece of the village.

Three new housing sites are proposed on the east side of the village serviced from Marengo Road or Church Road. These sites will allow a sympathetic expansion of the village but will



**St Margaret's Hope
Back Road after**



have to be carefully controlled through design briefs. These sites are major opportunities to demonstrate that art of sensitive building in the village and are not the place for standard off-the-shelf products.

Related to the housing is the issue of vacant buildings. In a remarkable settlement like St Margaret's Hope, it is important for the Council to give serious consideration to what it can do to reuse vacant property rather than building new.

Proposal SMH4: Open space provision:

St Margaret's Hope, like Finstown, has been active in taking the initiative in providing new open space for the village - the new golf course is an excellent facility as is the small garden at Marengo Road. The village has two other areas of green space - a children's play area to the south of Back Road and an extensive area next to the new school. There is a need to create a larger network of green spaces stretching from the village into the countryside and to improve the condition of existing paths. There is also a need to upgrade the children's play area and to think about trees and landscaping as an integral part of a broader approach to greenspace provision. It is proposed that:

- a new network of open spaces be examined to complement and work with the Core Paths
- these paths should extend into the countryside in circular loops to facilitate

- short and long walks
- this network of paths should include urban spaces in the village and ultimately relate to Cromarty Square and the car parking areas facing the bay
- new development should demonstrate that it links to the open space network

Other issues:

Flooding: the issue of flooding is interwoven through all the consultations with the community. There is a sense in the community that nothing can happen in the area of Front Street until there is some action or reassurance regarding flooding of properties. Related to this is the issue of the Churchill Barriers and whether or not they are in part responsible for the flooding.

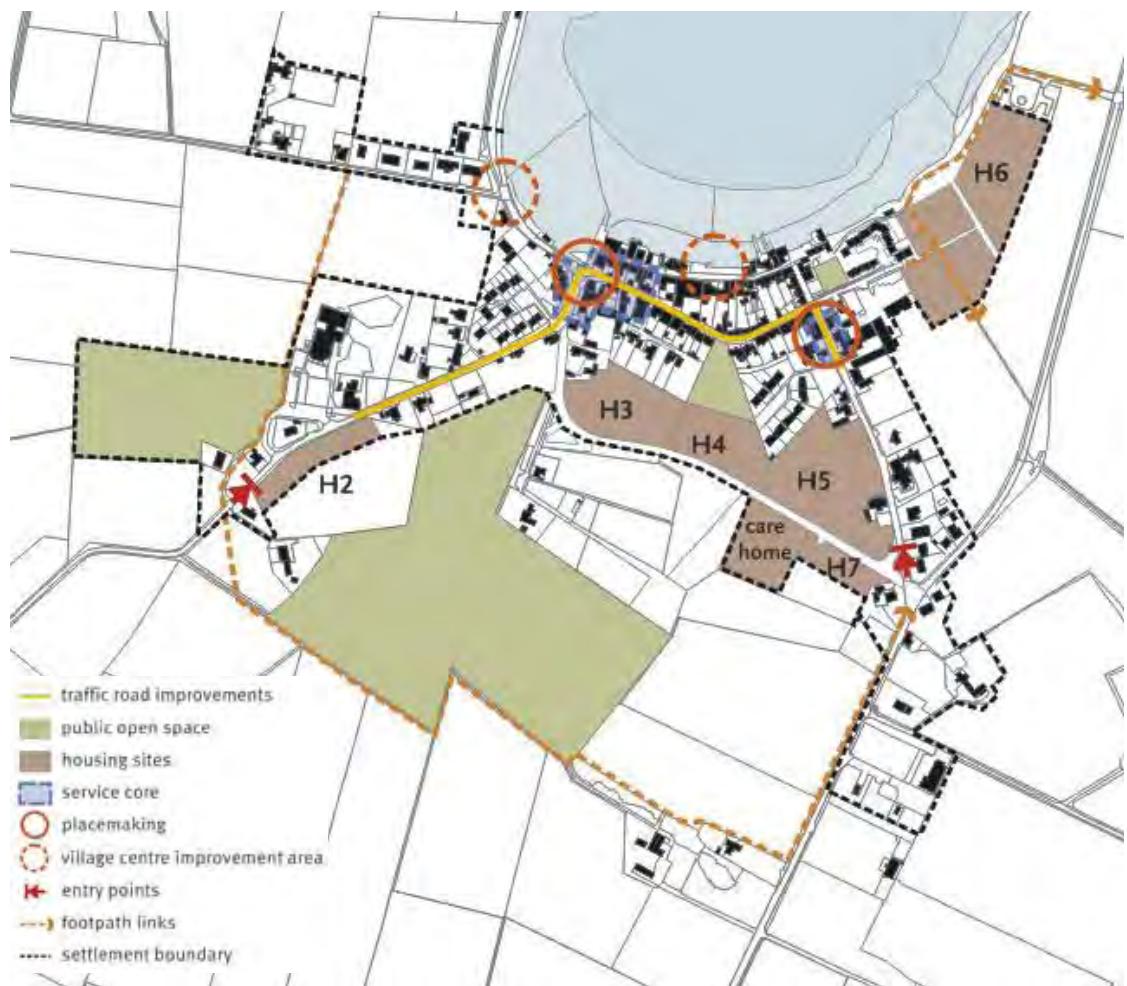
Network capacity: St Margaret's Hope experiences network capacity issues and this would need to be addressed before additional development could take place. Should there be insufficient capacity for development at their water or waste water treatment works in the future. Scottish Water would provide additional capacity as long as development complied with their criteria. Developers must submit a Development Impact Assessment (DIA) Form, available from www.scottishwater.co.uk. Scottish Water will use the information supplied on this form to assess their assets capability in servicing the developer's sites. If investigations show that the development



would have a detrimental effect on the service received by existing customers, the developer will be required to fund works to mitigate the effect of the development although Scottish Water would make a Reasonable Cost Contribution (RCC) towards this. Scottish Water supports the principle of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS). Scottish

Water will not adopt surface water drainage systems that require the flows to be pumped.

St Margaret's Hope proposals





st margaret's hope implementation

This document has set out a masterplan for the village of St Margaret's Hope. The proposals are based on:

- a robust appraisal of the condition of the village and its prospects for the future
- in depth consultation and involvement of the local community in the development of the masterplan

These are not masterplans in the sense of dramatic proposals for change but sets of proposals which will help to make the village work better, make it more attractive to businesses and visitors and ensure a better quality of life for residents.

We noted that there are few capital proposals for physical change in the villages. There is interest in housing development - both affordable housing and opportunities for self build private plots. There are proposals for a care home in St Margaret's Hope but apart from this, there is very little happening in terms of development other than single dwellings and house extensions.

Our aim has been to develop a realistic, relevant and deliverable set of policies and proposals that will make a positive difference to the village.

In order to make worthwhile change in the village it is important to bear in mind that the Council is not the sole instigator of change. Just as important is the way in which other people bring change about, especially through or with

the agreement of the local community. Here we outline some of the themes that should underpin and ensure that St Margaret's Hope begins to change for the better and evolve into a more diverse and robust village.

Theme 1: the importance of the local community

A Community Cooperative:

There is much local interest in the future prosperity of the village, not only from local businesses and retailers but from residents in general. This is an ideal footing for the establishment of a local community cooperative to help new projects to get off the ground. Community Cooperatives have been shown to be effective in providing local services in marginal market circumstances where local residents want to better facilities than the Council might be able to provide or which cannot survive in normal market circumstances.

It is important that the public agencies should assist and support the setting up a local cooperative rather than dominating and micro-managing the process. To work effectively, coops need to be strongly community based rather than be the creation of the Council. A local coop will need support to find, acquire or rent premises, find suppliers, pay for marketing, ordering, budgeting, logistics and recruiting of volunteers. HIE have considerable experience of working with local communities to establish such ventures and should be involved in the process of setting this up.



Local support and project champions:

Linked to the ethos and practice of community coops is the need to encourage projects to be initiated, developed and supported by local people. The force for change should come from the local community rather than being imposed by the public sector. There is a culture of high involvement of the public sector in Orkney matched by a sense of dependency by the community – an expectation that the Council will be responsible for or be involved in the majority of change in the village. Change in St Margaret's Hope is very driven by public sector finance and therefore subject to the same budgetary shortcomings that most local authorities have to work with.

What is required is for local champions and groups to take projects forward rather than relying on the public sector to do so. Community based projects or initiatives by local companies can be far more effective than the public sector in obtaining finance and promoting proposals and schemes that work for the town and with which the local community feel a sense of ownership.

Theme 2: the appreciation of place

St Margaret's Hope and the surrounding landscape are unique and worthy of the highest standards of maintenance and enhancement. Having a diverse economy contributes to securing a better sense of place. A committed and involved business and residential

community is equally valuable. An understanding of the physical assets of the town and its setting is the foundation of place and placemaking.

We have suggested in earlier sections of this study that this is an area of some weakness not just in the Council but also in the local community. The specific areas that have to be addressed are education, awareness and appreciation of local circumstances and context – forming a sense of what makes Orkney special and ensuring that this is not watered down by inappropriate, out of context or rootless interventions. Improving place awareness in the local community is a major project but some of the tools which can be used to achieve better standards of placemaking and design are readily available. They are:

- the introduction of compulsory design statements for all development in and around St Margaret's Hope
- the production of design guides for a range of different subjects (for example shopfronts, signage, roads and infrastructure, house extensions) and/or for specific areas of the town such as the new ribbon/linear housing development area proposed in this document
- the introduction of specific design briefs for important, large or prominent sites



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5

three villages masterplans



DOUNBY, FINSTOWN & ST MARGARET'S HOPE consultation report

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**3 Villages Masterplans
Final Report - Volume 5
Consultation Report**



March 2010

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**3 Villages Masterplans
Final Report - Volume 5
Consultation Report**



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first round consultation

INTRODUCTION

This first stage of consultation consisted of informal meetings with local Community Councillors to explore with them how they think their villages should change in the future. It involved two strands:

- guided tours of each settlement by Community Council chairs
- facilitated workshop sessions with Community Council members for each settlement

- The purpose was to engage with Community Councillors, as knowledgeable community activists with a statutory role in the planning system, and explore:the sort of place that they would like the settlement to become in the future
- things they don't like about the settlement
- the forces of change that are affecting the community
- what's realistic for the future – high aspirations, realistic expectations
- how we should engage with the wider community as the project moves forward

	St Margaret's Hope	Dounby	Finstown
	South Ronaldsay & Burray CC	Harray & Sandwick CC, Birsay CC	Firth & Stenness CC
Tour	21 October	22 October	23 October
Workshop	22 October	23 October	28 October

These discussions produced a wealth of invaluable information:

1. The potential changes that local communities believe are important for the future of their villages. These included strategic issues like housing, jobs, flooding and transport; and specific

Dounby





places within each village which act as a focus for change, such as underused areas of ground.

2. Rich background information about the development and character of each village – detailed knowledge that we could never have gained without input from local people, and which helps us hugely to start to understand each settlement as a place.
3. An invaluable first contact with the local community which we could build on as the project progresses, the intention being for the next stage of consultation to test initial proposals, perhaps in the form of different options or scenarios, with the wider local community in each settlement.

There was a general understanding that the masterplans could help local communities

and the Council lobby for particular proposals.

The rest of this section summarises the findings for each settlement.

DOUNBY

Issues

- **Housing** – school roll is dropping, as elsewhere in Orkney, and new housing is generally accepted throughout the community as important for its long term sustainability. Main need/demand if for affordable family housing, semi-detached and detached. Although people aspire to owner occupation, OIC/OHAL rented property always goes quickly which implies demand for rented property too. In terms of built form, there is widespread concern about ribbon development and

need for more small businesses for Dounby



need for more affordable family housing for Dounby



desire for new housing to be in the village (see below for more on this).

- **Employment** – keen desire to facilitate more small-scale employment in the village, but difficult to establish what that might be. General feeling was that basic, small multi-purpose units with adaptability for use for workshops, food preparation, offices or even retail/café (as on Westray) would be most appropriate. Could be new-build or conversion of existing property, although limited existing property is available (e.g. privately owned Masonic Hall extension which is pending conversion to apartments, Council-owned former GP surgery opposite Tait's which is being advertised for rental). Decentralisation of Council services from Kirkwall might provide an opportunity/incentive.
- **Tourism** – tourists get here and there is very little for them apart from the toilets. Suggestions include making the car park more attractive as a base for people to go for walks/cycles/horse rides in the area (already used for this) – e.g. a café (which locals could use too), a pavilion/shower building (replacing the ageing toilets), information about what there is of interest in the area (e.g. circular walks out in the surrounding countryside). There is not much tourist accommodation locally (Smithfield and Merkister are the only hotels and can be busy, little B&B),

but acknowledged there is little that the masterplan can do about this.

- **Parking** – only really an issue on the stretch of road between the crossroads and the PO/hairstresser. They say this is by far the busiest stretch in the village, with car parking and deliveries for the Co-op, pedestrian activity, bus stops and petrol pumps. See below for more on this.



parking in Dounby - only an issue between PO and hairdresser



Places

- **Ribbon development** – general feeling that this is bad and should stop. Concern that it contributes to accidents out of the village on the Kirkwall road – 3 fatalities in recent decades. General support for a more compact village form, using brownfield sites of which they recognise there are plenty (such as the privately owned brownfield land adjacent to and behind the PO).
- **Market Green** – has been fragmented by buildings/roads since its original function as common temporary grazing land. Concern that the area by the Council-owned area by the crossroads is messy and lacks purpose. Yard area is no longer required (part of former blacksmith) and bus could park elsewhere (e.g. at the school). Open space could be revitalised (see “tourism” above) as more of a central open space and linked through to school playing fields. Could also be linked to wetland area to rear of Council houses, which could be opened up for public access with boardwalks (long-standing idea). The amount of parking was generally thought to be sufficient and should remain, but could be better organised.
- **Road in front of the Co-op** – the stretch of road between the crossroads and the PO could be improved (see “parking” above). It’s effectively the core of the village. We explored a Monderman-style shared surface approach here – they understood the concept, but felt it would not be appropriate in Dounby simply because of the farming traffic and (especially) the need for farmers to get through this area quickly during the harvest, which everyone locally understands. But they would be keen on a halfway solution –

Market Green in Dounby could be revitalised as a central open space



they suggested creating herringbone car parking outside the Co-op using some of the grassed area in front of the old people's houses, where the Christmas tree is placed every year (by the fallen telegraph pole).

- **Co-op car park** – the Co-op are apparently interested in extending this onto Council-owned land at the rear, between the recycling site and the Masonic Hall extension. There was support for this, not only to help alleviate Co-op related parking issues but also to provide:

- A rural “park and ride” facility with Dounby as the hub for improved bus services to Stromness (particularly poor)/Kirkwall and smaller local feeder services/car parking (long-standing idea).
- Additional parking for the Show.

Emerging issues for the masterplan

- **Prioritise infill sites** for new housing development within the village envelope, providing a mixture of semi-detached and detached dwellings, rented and owner-occupied. Other larger, more distant Local Plan housing sites H1, H3, H4 and H5 should be seen as less of a priority.



Masonic Hall, possibility of redevelopment



- **Incentivise development** of these infill sites so that they become “effective housing sites” in planning jargon. High risk that owners will not bring sites forward without proactive Council involvement (e.g. grass gap sites on A986 near Swartland Rd, conversion of Masonic Hall extension, Alton Tait’s sites). Suggest preparation of briefs in proactive partnership with landowners, also assisting with site assembly if needed.
- **Open space at the crossroads / Market Green** should be refreshed with tourists in mind, linking with playing fields. Toilets could be replaced with slightly larger building incorporating showers and shelter (e.g. St Margaret’s Hope toilet and waiting room). Local paths network within and outwith village should be promoted, with improved access to wetland area (boardwalk) and historic sites.
- Identify central location for **small, adaptable business units** on the Westray model. Could be new build or use existing premises (e.g. Masonic Hall extension, former GP surgery and adjacent ground).
- Possibility for **co-ordinated package of traffic management and developments in the Co-op area** – improved traffic management in front of the Co-op, extend

the car park to rear, co-ordinate with redevelopment of surrounding brownfield sites and conversion of Masonic Hall extension.

ST MARGARET’S HOPE

Issues

- **Flooding** – easily the single biggest issue affecting the future of the community. The photos of the Jan 2005 floods show that the flooding affects a substantial part of the settlement – Front Road, Cromarty Square, and the area around the Murray Arms and the Trading Post. Affected residents say that when properties change hands, it is difficult for new owners/tenants to get flood insurance – which in turn affects business viability and demography. There was a unanimous view that prevention must be the solution, not managed retreat (see below for more on this).
- **Sustainability** – a fear that the trend towards being a commuter dormitory will undermine its viability/sustainability as a community. There is a desire to make the community more sustainable in the broadest sense of the word. More local jobs, more family housing, more compact settlement form.

- **Employment** – decentralisation of Council services from Kirkwall is encouraged, with St Margaret's Hope seen as a potential beneficiary. Outsourcing of boat maintenance etc could utilise and support existing skills in the village. Strong desire to protect existing jobs at the pier – said to be around 50 jobs there - so easily the biggest focus of local employment. Noted that there is spare space at the industrial estate on the main road – suggested that incentives need to be provided to encourage businesses to locate there, such as footloose new businesses from other parts of Mainland. New speculative business units should cater for “cleaner” small businesses such as crafts and renewables – generally office-based rather than manual trades. There could also be potential for properties specifically designed for working at home (live-work). There is reluctance for businesses/residents to relocate to the southern isles because of

the hazards of the Churchill Barriers in bad weather, so some extra incentive is required.

- **Housing** – concerns about the ageing population, older folk coming to live, younger folk not being able to stay, falling school roll etc. The solution is seen as attracting more families – a demand for family housing has been building up for years apparently. Desire to avoid further ribbon development outwith the village. There is also a concern that too little land has been zoned for housing, as owners of land zoned for housing in the Local Plan will not necessarily release that land – although it is acknowledged that the bypass will open up more sites. Desire for two types of family / affordable housing - semi-detached owner-occupied or rented, and serviced self-build plots at cost (i.e. no profit to the Council). Also potential for live-work. Concern expressed about the logic homeless accommodation for

flooding in St Margaret's Hope, January 2005



attracting more families to St Margaret's Hope





people from outwith the area given the lack of employment opportunities or police presence.

- **Tourism** – people are keen to improve the attractiveness of the village for tourists, although they are realistic enough not to expect tourists coming off the ferry to stop and stay in St Margaret's Hope on impulse. One long-standing local idea is a caravan/camper van/camping site in or near the village. Generally felt that tourism is unlikely to sustain full time, year round jobs – more likely to be a

improve tourism facilities



source of extra income. Noted that there are a lot of holiday lets (figure of 22 was quoted) but mixed views on whether the numbers should be managed

- **Sewerage** – simple technical question: is there enough capacity?

Places

- **Care home** – strong feeling that this should be located adjacent to the OHAL old people's housing at Marengo Rd (by demolishing garage and extending road), with easy level access to village facilities for residents, good views and flat land. Council-owned site at top of Church Road is not seen as appropriate – too far from centre of village, and access difficult for residents because of steep hill.

- **Church Road** – lack of pavements, pedestrian safety and accessibility are an issue (even with the bypass).

- **Junction of Church Road, bypass and main road** – suggested that car park should be created for “park and ride” to Kirkwall. Already fulfils this function informally. The Council own the garage on the west side of the junction (but not the adjacent house).

Emerging issues for the masterplan

- The masterplan must refer to the need for **flood prevention works** to safeguard the long term sustainability of the settlement. But we need not propose solutions as part of this commission - that will involve further studies, and could involve solutions involving changes to the Churchill Barriers rather than simply something in St Margaret's Hope bay. We must state clearly that prevention of flooding, rather than managed retreat from affected properties, is vital for the long term sustainability of the settlement. This is relevant for our commission for two reasons:
 - The strategy will be based on continued habitation and use of the flood affected areas, and for this flood prevention works are required.
 - To access funding for flood prevention works in the future, the community and the Council will need to demonstrate that they are necessary, not least through their inclusion in documents such as this masterplan.
- The dangers of the **Churchill Barriers** in easterly storms were also cited as having a major impact on the viability/sustainability of St Margaret's Hope and the southern isles, with residents and businesses concerned about accessibility

during the winter. This is of less direct relevance to our commission, but it is worth mentioning as a factor affecting community sustainability.

- The new bypass offers an opportunity for an easy win to **improve pedestrian safety on Church Road**, with through traffic removed from the road. A public realm / traffic management scheme would improve pedestrian access and safety at the shops (particularly Doull's) and facilitate easier/safer pedestrian access up and down the hill.



Church Road safety improvements in St Margaret's Hope



- A more comprehensive package of measures to make the village **more attractive for tourists**, building on the success of the golf course and the built heritage, could include:
 - Renovation of historic buildings in poorer condition along Front Road, some of which are underused (THI?).
 - Public realm/traffic management initiatives particularly at busier places such as around the Trading Post (Back Rd/Cromarty Square) and Church Road (Doull's and Robertson's).
 - Public realm improvements along Front Road with improved access to the shore (e.g. at the small Scottish Water building).
 - Public realm improvements at the pier, following recent land reclamation. Potential for creating yacht berths – current facilities are not ideal.
- Proactive support for local enterprise – bearing in mind also that The Creel and The Galley are both for sale and the Murray Arms wants to convert to flats. The commercial and community success of the golf course is an example.
- Locals are keen to see the Council's proposed care home immediately to **east of Marengo Rd**. If this is not possible for any reason, this site should be considered as a potential housing site – level access to the village, and although it is privately owned it is said to be available.
- A sequence of implementation actions to enable **compact settlement form**:
 - Identify preferred housing sites which will contribute to compact settlement form – including review sites already identified / not identified in Local Plan. May need to bring forward more sites than necessary to satisfy demand, as some sites (e.g. Local Plan H1) may not be released by owners.
 - Identify specific types of housing at higher densities than proposed in Local Plan.
 - Prepare briefs for preferred sites in proactive partnership with landowners, also assisting with site assembly if needed.

public realm/traffic management initiatives for Back Road



FINSTOWN

Issues

- **Housing** – although some desire not to see any more housing, it seems to be generally accepted that new housing is needed to sustain the local community. In terms of housing type, it was suggested that new housing should be a mix of owner-occupied, social and serviced plots. General aspiration for detached housing – ongoing development at Flett's Corner was suggested as being too dense. There does not seem to be the same pressing need for affordable housing need as was expressed in, say, St Margaret's Hope. There was no clear steer on how much new housing is required, possibly because there were divergent views. There was, however, a concern that too little land has been zoned for housing, as owners of land zoned for housing in the Local Plan may not necessarily release that land. During discussion, it emerged that this may not however be a concern that there needs to more housing land designated, but more that what housing land is designated is largely in a single ownership and may not be “effective” (i.e. sites H1, H3 and H4). For the largest single housing site (H3/H4), it was suggested that:

- Vehicular access could be taken

not only via Grimond but also direct from the main road south-east of the kirkyard.

- Houses should be set back from the kirkyard, e.g. by landscaped open space, play area and/or road.
- Scattered roadside housing development outside the village was a concern, e.g. on the Old Finstown Road and towards Evie. It was suggested that any new housing in the countryside should be developed in clusters off but near to main roads (e.g. rural culs-de-sac), to reduce numbers of direct accesses onto main roads and take advantage of infrastructure and public transport.



need for new housing for Finstown



- **Jobs** – the village plays host to a considerable number of jobs – notably in the quarries, garage, electrician and builders' merchant, as well as local shops, school, craft galleries etc. Not many of these jobs appear to be held by local people – but there was nonetheless a desire to retain these sources of employment. It was noted that businesses like the garage and builders' merchant attract custom from well beyond Finstown. In terms of attracting new businesses, a desire for business units was expressed. The old school was suggested as having potential for occupying 5/6 businesses if converted from its present use as a store (which is regarded as under-utilisation).
- **Tourism** – the village has tourist accommodation (self catering and B&B), is an accessible base from which to tour

lack of places to eat for visitor/tourists in Finstown



and has a network of rural paths. The main deficiency for tourist at the time of consultation was somewhere to eat. The only restaurant / café / takeaway was next to the Pomona but has closed. However a new restaurant - The Waterside Restaurant - has opened at the east end of the village. There was a suggestion that a place for camper vans to hook up to power (such as at Deerness community centre) would be useful – although there was no obvious location for this. The car park at Finstown community centre was seen as possibly too sloping, whilst locals would not wish to promote overnight parking at the car park on the main road opposite the kirkyard (previous history here).

- **Traffic** – speed of traffic on the main road through the village is a particular concern, particularly the speed of traffic entering the village. General desire for simple traffic management measures to reduce speed. There was little appetite for interventions such as reductions in carriageway width or even pedestrian crossings (an issue which has apparently been visited before). This is despite the narrow/non-existent footways and lack of pedestrian crossings, neither of which were a particular concern. However these interventions featured later in the public consultation.

Places

- **The community school** – the community are proud of their new school (built in 2000), having fought to obtain a non-standard design which reflects the architecture of the adjacent old school. Having also fought to retain the old school, there is also concern that it is under-utilised as a store. Desires were expressed for the old school to be converted into an outdoor centre or a boat museum, both of which would build on its shoreline location. In the absence of these ideas, conversion to business units was suggested. The school also forms the heart of a “civic cluster” – play area (largely funded by local parents), playing pitches (used by the local football team) and old people’s accommodation. Despite its physical separation from the village, pedestrian access to the school is seen as good.

- The **car park and open space** between main road and shore, opposite kirkyard – there was a general desire not to see its open, green aspect compromised by tree planting or buildings. The green area (west of the slipway) is used for community events like gala day, and the car park is often full for funerals, weddings etc. Funeral processions make their way along the main road from the car park to the kirk, causing traffic issues. Provision of additional hardstanding for the hearse and followers on the shore side of the main road was seen as a potential solution to this, preferably also providing additional car parking for the builders’ merchant opposite (as with the parking bays on the main road near Baikies store).
- **The centre of the village?** Consensus was that it doesn’t have a centre – different people will say it is in different places



**keep green space
between main road and
shore as community area**



(e.g. the Heddle Rd junction, Baikies, the bus stops). Consensus also that it doesn't need a single centre, either. As someone said, "Finstown is the centre" – reflecting that there are a number of different focuses that combine to make the village what it is.

Emerging issues for the masterplan

- Finstown appears to have **no obvious pressing issues** to fix – unlike St Margaret's Hope (flooding and affordable housing) and Dounby (gap sites and the Market Green). Finstown may appear grey and unprepossessing to the visitor – but people are generally content and not

looking for any great change.

- **Finstown's proximity to Kirkwall and Stromness** is both a curse and a blessing. Whilst it means that it is easy for residents to travel to Kirkwall for work, shopping and other facilities, it also presents an opportunity: that it is an accessible location for businesses. The success of the garage, electrician and builders' merchant demonstrate this. Locals do not see the future of the town as simply descending into being a dormitory for Kirkwall. Building on its accessibility for business employment may be the answer. This suggests:
 - Supporting existing businesses – for

**support local businesses
in Finstown**



example by ensuring that sufficient car parking is available for the builders' merchant.

- Encouraging new businesses to locate here – for example by conversion of the old school to business units (scope for 5 good sized units and a 6th smaller one).
- There are few gap sites for new development, meaning **greenfield release** will inevitably be necessary for housing. Some suggestions:
 - Distribution of land release should reflect common ownership of sites H1, H3 and H4 and possible reluctance of landowner to develop. Sites H3/ H4 seem obvious sites to develop for a number of reasons. To ensure that they are brought forward for development, it would be sensible for the Council to work proactively with the owners and also prepare a brief to guide their development. It may also be worthwhile proposing alternative sites in the masterplan in case there are delays in bringing forward sites H1, H3 and H4.
 - Developments should contain a mix of different housing types – owner-occupied, social and serviced plots. Density could increase upon that proposed in the Local Plan, but should bear in mind a local preference for detached housing.
 - Lest we are tempted, we should think twice before trying to **create a focus for the village** as all good planners are taught to do. People seem to be content with the linear focus of the village. Why should we try and impose a more sharply defined focus?





second round consultation

INTRODUCTION

The project team undertook a meetings and site visits with Community Council representatives for each village to inform the teams understanding of the key local development issues as described in Chapter 3. We followed this up with also an extensive survey of most local business which is summarised in Chapter 4. The businesses listed in the Orkney Community Business Directory were contacted to identify their operational requirements and aspirations for growth and development. The directory contacts were supplemented with local contact information, and included home-

workers. Local schools and other local services were surveyed for their views.

We also undertook sessions with pupils from Dounby, Firth Primary School in Finstown and St Margaret's Hope. The sessions involved pupils discussing, writing and drawing their aspiration for their village and considering the positive and negative aspects of the villages and how they could be improved. The sessions were very informative and gave an insight into the aspirations of young people.

The second round of consultation was carried out in March 2009 and the organisational details of this are set out below.





Advertising: The events were publicised in the following ways:

- Notification on the homepage of the Council's website (5th March 2009 onwards)
- Article in the Orkney Today and The Orcadian, discussing the events (26 February 2009)
- Invitations sent to every householder / business in each village and postcode areas around Dounby, Finstown and St Margaret's Hope (25th February 2009)
- Announcements on Radio Orkney and the Superstation Orkney (March 6th, 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th 2009)

- Radio Orkney news feature by Gavin Barr during morning broadcast (9th March 2009)
- Public notice in The Orcadian for two weeks (26th February and 5th March 2009)
- Posters sent to shops and public buildings throughout Orkney (w/b 23rd February 2009)
- Circular E-mail sent by Press Officer to all OIC staff (7th March 2009)

Methodology: The community consultation events took the following format:

DOUNBY - Tuesday 10th March 2009, **Dounby Community School**, Community Room, informal drop-in between 5.00pm and 8.15pm, public meeting and discussion between 8.30pm – 10.00pm

ST MARGARET'S HOPE - Wednesday 11th March 2009, Cromarty Hall, informal drop-in between 4.00pm and 7.15pm, public meeting and discussion between 7.30pm – 9.00pm

FINSTOWN - Thursday 12th March 2009, Firth Primary School, informal drop-in between 4.00pm and 7.15pm, public meeting and discussion between 7.30pm – 9.00pm

The community consultation events built on the findings and emerging issues from our earlier work with Community Councils, businesses and schools.

The events were the first occasions at which the wider public were invited to learn

**Community workshop,
Dounby, March 2009**



about and contribute to the ongoing work, and precede the preparation of the draft masterplans by the WMUD team. The position of the events in the masterplanning process largely determined the message conveyed to participants and the information that the team were seeking to inform their work. The team were keen to consult on the key issues that the masterplan should address as opposed to imposing issues and solutions at this earlier stage in the process.

The informal drop-in sessions were for people to learn about the masterplanning process, discuss the findings of the teams work to date, and to think about the future of the villages. The focus was on interaction and informal discussion of the issues with members of the consultant team and fellow residents. Some people were keen to discuss, some wished to look and listen, while others chose to leave comments or questions

on sticky notes and maps rather than get involved in discussion.

Materials used included:

- large printed maps of each settlement, clear and easy to understand, supported by the Proposals Map from the existing Local Plan - people were encouraged to scribble on maps and write on stickies to provide their views
- a rolling PowerPoint slideshow containing key messages from the baseline report was on display throughout the drop-in session

The drop-in sessions were followed by a public meetings and discussions. The basic aims of the workshops were to share the main findings identified in consultations, discussions and analysis and discuss identified issues. The workshop was an opportunity for communities to let the WMUD



**Community workshop,
Finstown, March 2009**



team know if the right direction was being followed and what else should be considered. We made it clear that at this stage we were not wedded to any particular proposals and this was a chance to influence the masterplan proposals.

A series of facilitated mini-discussions formed the bulk of the workshop. These focussed around the ‘emerging issues’ identified in the conclusion of the Baseline Report for each settlement. The team grouped these issues by theme although in reality these themes were not mutually exclusive. Some topics, such as promoting employment, ranged across different themes. The key discussion issues for each village are presented in the following table:

The structure of each mini-discussion:

- a short introduction to the issues and potential responses (2- 5 minutes)
- buzz groups where participants were invited to discuss their immediate responses in twos or threes for a couple of minutes (2-5 minutes)
- facilitated plenary discussion (5-10 minutes)

The workshops concluded with a short presentation on next steps and an explanation of the next stages in the process.

Questionnaires were also available to participants that could be filled in at the

	Dounby	St Margaret's Hope	Finstown
7.30 (Dounby 8.30)	introduction: welcome aims of workshop	introduction: welcome aims of workshop	introduction: welcome aims of workshop
7.45 (Dounby 8.45)	mini-discussions: traffic & parking open space & the crossroads housing & urban form other issues	mini-discussions: housing public realm & traffic wider issues – flooding & the Barriers other issues	mini-discussions: road safety, traffic & parking business housing other issues
8.45 (Dounby 9.45)	next steps	next steps	next steps
8.55 (Dounby 9.55)	close	close	close

event or taken home and returned to the Council, Policy and Projects Team. The questionnaires requested views on the key issues identified in the table above and asked if the team should be considering any other issues.

Attendance

Attendees were asked to register their name and contact details at reception. Contact details were requested so that participants can engage in future consultations in the masterplanning process. The numbers of registered attendees at each event were:

- Dounby: 63 registered attendees
- St Margaret's Hope: 68 registered attendees
- Finstown: 66 registered attendees
- A number of attendees did not or did not wish to register so overall attendance is likely to be higher. Attendance at the public meeting and discussion workshops was as follows:
- Dounby: 48 attendees
- St Margaret's Hope: 48 attendees
- Finstown: 44 attendees

Public Responses / Results

The views and comments received through the various consultation methods outlined above



**Community workshop,
Finstown, March 2009**



have been recorded and analysed to inform the development of the draft masterplans. The masterplan team were also able to gain local knowledge and gauge support for various proposals through informal discussion and debate.

FINDINGS

The following list is a summary of the various points raised by the communities at the three meetings under the general headings under which the discussion was organised.

**Community workshop,
Dounby, March 2009**



DOUNBY

Business

- vacant property: not much – good or bad?
- new units may not be successful: have to be flexible, reasonable cost
- café/ drapers/garage – a loss
- need to new café and craft shop
- think about housing before business
- move away from service to sustainable environment
- facilities for children
- swimming pool
- general ok the way it is

Housing

- teletubby housing (eco housing/ green roof)
- mix of council and self-build = good mix
- shortage of self build sites
- sheltered housing next to care home/next to Smiddybrae
- don't urbanise Dounby!
- housing to focus on crossroads, single storey only, no ribbon development
- provide housing on Hillside Road towards Quilco

Traffic and parking

- parking at coop – rear parking.... and delivery or herringbone
- crossroads – poor visibility = dangerous
- speed of traffic through village – extend

- speed limit zone and pavements
- further cut in pavement and lighting
- roundabout, feature?
- speed monitors?
- pedestrian crossing?
- public transport improvement
- cycle tracks
- make more use of Market Green for parking
 - herringbone
- cut down on parents making school run
- remove flagstones outside butcher's shop
- cycleway to Birsay
- better access to show ground
- tidy up the back road

Open space/footpaths etc

- public toilets, bus parking, other facilities
- need to find a home for the bowling green/club
- focal point
- access to countryside – relates to extended speed limits
- coordination of rural uses
- nice big park
- crossroads: park or car park, not both
- range of walks
- but plenty of walks already
- light pollution

Anything else?

- light pollution from street lighting
- bowling green – good idea but location difficult

- recycling facility needs to be bigger
- new church will provide community facility
- no urban approaches to rural issues
- toilet facility near school/ playing fields

FINSTOWN

Business

- startup businesses may prefer Kirkwall
- declining sustainability of shops
- old school as business centre?
- or hostel, home?
- need for café/ restaurant facility – for



**Community workshop,
Finstown, March 2009**



- residents and tourists
- maybe small business site
- create a small industrial/office park
- need for pharmacy and resident doctor
- business space adequate
- Allan's of Gilock too big for the village
- summer market in car park
- small units for new businesses
- industrial development should be east of Esson's Garage
- housing behind cemetery wrong type
- swamping village character
- lack of plots
- new housing must be sustainable
- housing growth will affect traffic, business...
- everything needs to be inter related
- needs recreation facilities
- need 100-200 houses to sustain village
- sheltered housing near the school
- restrict housing to 29 units
- need large green belt area between housing on Heddle Hill and H3
- grants needed to improve old houses
- self build plots required
- low density and single storey

Housing

- sheltered housing centrally placed
- more housing in countryside / too much housing in countryside?
- not enough for young people

**Workshop with pupils
of Firth Primary School,
Finstown, March 2009**



Traffic and parking

- narrow pavements – not continuous
- volume of traffic and lorries
- speed
- poor parking at nodes
- car sharing and public transport
- speed info readouts/speeding on all roads
- acceleration on leaving
- traffic calming humps
- no traffic calming humps
- removing signs and marking
- crossings
- road too narrow in places
- poor for cyclists
- need to extent 30 mph zone to the east
- better pavements – Evie Road to the shop
- zebra crossing at church
- existing car park is dead/underused
- no access to H3 from beside cemetery – traffic hazard
- sight lines at Heddle Road junction

Quality of life

- surgery, 24 hour pub, restaurant
- better use of water, pier, slip
- concern at scale / pace of change
- issues about integrating new residents – suburbanisation
- loss of personal feel
- role of school
- currently excellent
- very sociable commuter village
- great community spirit
- more routes for dog-walkers
- place to take children on bikes
- kissing-gate for walkers near the scrambling track

Anything else?

- need for Council information point in the village
- Buckles tower to be done up
- *no more houses on Redland Road St*



**Workshop with pupils
of Firth Primary School,
Finstown, March 2009**

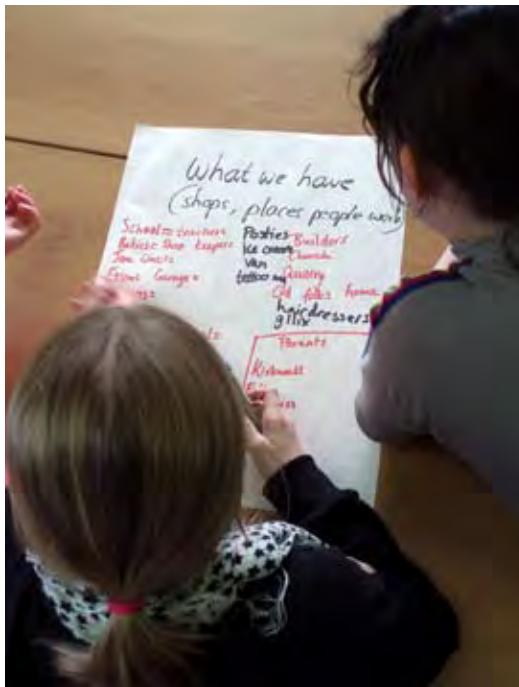


ST MARGARET'S HOPE

Business

- lack of infrastructure for tourists
- no specific visitor attraction
- short season for tourism
- something to get tourists to stop
- employment = more homes
- council property too expensive
- move of council jobs from Kirkwall
- big project: flooding/ sustainability/ energy
- flexible approach to working
- care home yes/no?
- threat from barriers and flooding

Workshop with pupils
of Firth Primary School,
Finstown, March 2009



- not enough work for young people
- heritage schemes and localism would create work
- stem the commuter culture
- ferry service will benefit jobs and businesses

Housing

- no more 2-bedroom flats
- more family homes
- too many new houses
- housing should be around bay – not at back
- new development should follow history
- self build/ family homes/ locally built
- not good to have just 1 type of housing
- more “emergency” housing than needed
- bypass not best location for family homes
- keep character
- solar panels/ energy
- not good to zone big areas for housing – mixed use instead
- renovate schoolhouse
- build at Thorfinn and Marengo
- issues with potential of vacant property
- why build new houses when some are lying empty
- too much development will change the character of the village

Traffic and parking

- managing tourists
- bus shelters but they might be vandalised
- too much parking on main streets

- Cromarty Square – safety issues
- there may be less increase in traffic
- build pier on other side of bay
- silly to base strategy around ferry
- Cromarty Square 20mph limit?
- one way around – big loop = might help maintain vitality of SMH
- not enough parking – tourist coaches?
- double yellow lines on back road
- pedestrian crossing at Cromarty Square for school pupils
- Cromarty Square is centre of village now to be a traffic throughway
- need for traffic calming
- school crossing patrol

- new road will encourage boy racers

Open Space

- extending paths into countryside / better condition of existing paths
- Burwick Road not accessible
- rights of way – OIC should clarify
- core paths plan – status?
- play park needs update – drainage and better access
- quiet space / former nice space/ Creel Inn
- paths should be used and route through parks and open space
- more attention to planting



**Workshop with pupils
of Firth Primary School,
Finstown, March 2009**



- best view of Hope from Main Road –viewpoint, landmark, footpath link
- new development should include OS
- create circular walks
- repair and maintain play equipment

Quality of life

- existing green and yellow signs clash with native pink stone
- salting of roads and pavements in winter

Anything else?

- light pollution
- flooding
- barriers
- better conservation measures
- health care – where?
- number 2 barrier needs urgent attention
- police presence in the village
- need for a breakwater
- better off as an island
- need a swimming pool

The discussion in the three villages raged over a wide range of subjects and in general terms it is possible to address most of the issues raised, even if conflicting views have been expressed – for example where it was said that there is too much development versus there is too little development, or too much parking versus to little parking. The most difficult issue arising from the three events, discussion and subsequent feedback is the

flooding and safety at St Margaret's Hope and the various views expressed about the effect of the Churchill barriers. We acknowledge that these are of enormous concern to the St Margaret's Hope community but seeking a technical solution is outwith the scope of this study. However the issues are being examined by the Council.

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