

WATERSFIELD, KIRKWALL

Development Brief: March 2011

introduction

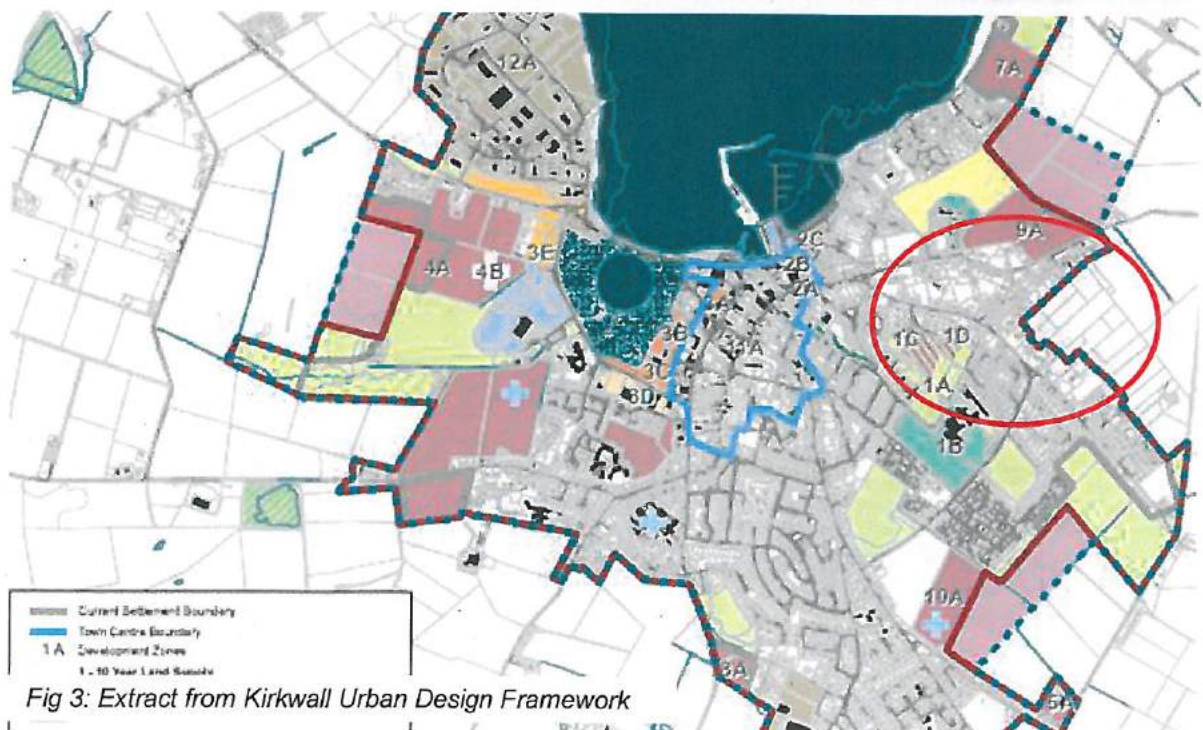
This Development Brief sets out proposals for development of land at Watersfield in Kirkwall within the context of existing planning policy, including the Kirkwall Urban Design Development Framework (KUDF) and the emerging Orkney Local Development Plan.

This will inform potential developers by summarising the main opportunities and constraints on the site and provides an outline framework for the phased and coherent development of the site.



Top: Fig 1: Aerial View of Site

Right: Fig 2:
View South across site



purpose of the development brief

The land fringing Kirkwall has seen a gradual spread of development over the past few decades. To date, there has been limited attention to ensuring a coordinated overview of development phasing or the establishment of parameters for building layout and design which reflect the sensitive setting of the sites. The Kirkwall UDF started the process of re-assessing the priorities for new development in Kirkwall. Critically, it established the overriding principle of ensuring that new development is contextually-sensitive, well-designed and of an appropriate quality to ensure it is a long term asset to Kirkwall. The purpose of this Development Brief is to provide more detail on the planning and design considerations which are critical to the successful coordinated development of the Watersfield site.

guidance to applicants

The Development Brief sets out broad planning and design principles to lead the design process for future development phases of the Watersfield site. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that their proposals respond to the principles set out in this Development Brief. This evidence should be presented in a design statement which will be submitted in support of a planning application.

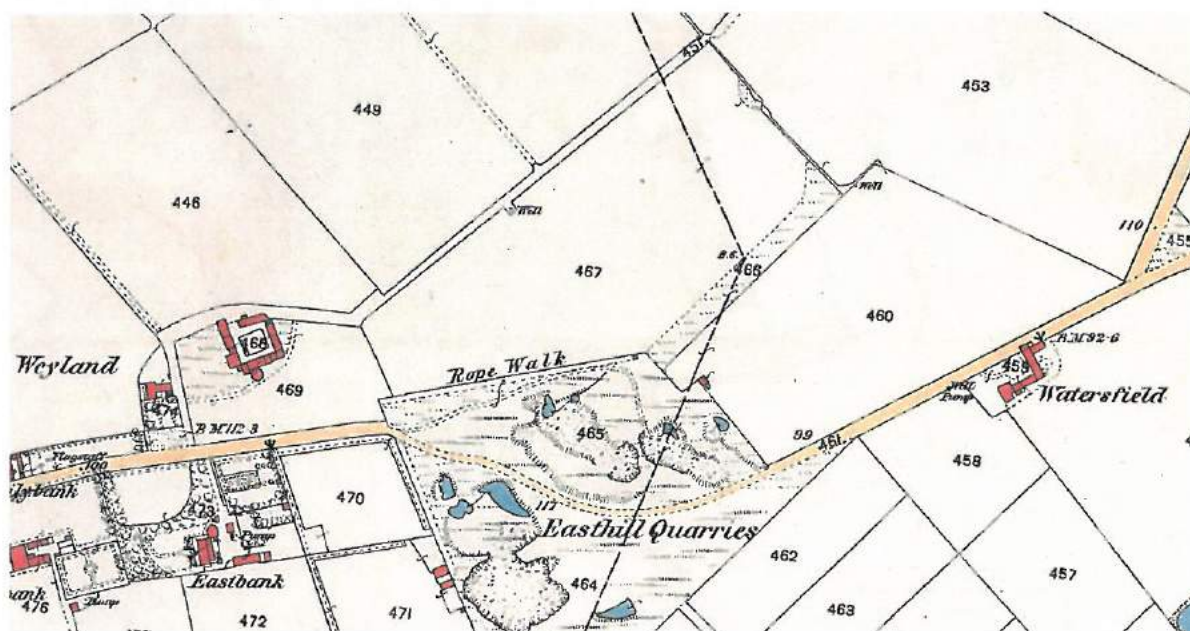
The level of information required will vary depending on the scale of development proposed. For example, it is likely that single house developments, will require quite limited information and that this will focus mainly on demonstrating that the chosen design of the building responds to the layout and design criteria set out in this Development Brief.

Larger scale developments such as multiple house developments will be expected to provide a more comprehensive assessment of the Design Criteria in the design statement.

Clarification should be sought from the planning department at the pre-application stage on the level of information that will be required. At a basic level, applicants should provide a brief written response to the Development Brief Strategy and each of the Design Criteria, explaining how the proposal addresses the issues raised under each criteria. In addition, the content of this Brief should be considered in conjunction with appropriate planning guidance given at local and national level and with the conditions set out any tender documentation that might be issued for individual parts of the site.



Top: Fig 4: looking north-west across the site from Easthill.
Below: Fig 5: 1882 Ordnance Survey Map





site description

The land is part of farmland to the East of Kirkwall which slopes down from Easthill to wards the housing area along Cromwell Road at Islands View Road and Weyland Bay.

The 1882 OS Map (Fig 7) shows that this area has been farmland for more than 100 years, fringing the Easthill Quarries.

The development site consists of one field to the South East in private ownership and one to the North, which belongs to Orkney Islands Council. A further field to the North of that is part of the grounds of Orkney College.

To the North East lies further open agricultural land.

The fields are edged by existing drystone dykes. There is a small existing farm building of traditional Orkney construction to the north-west corner of the southern field. (Fig 11)

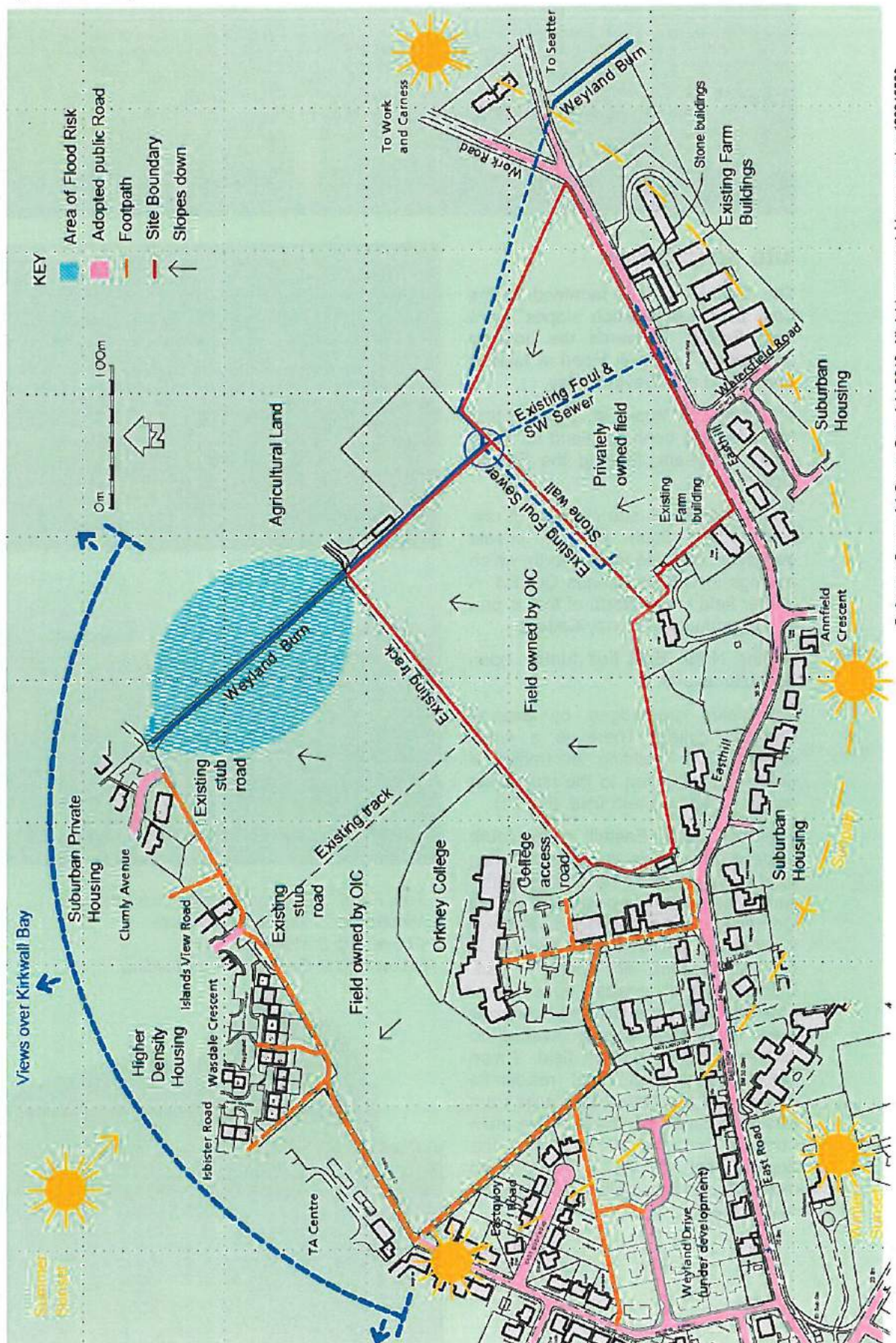
The site meets Easthill at its south eastern edge. This is the only 'main road corridor' providing access to the site. Access may be possible from the Orkney College access road, although it should be borne in mind that this is not, at present, an adopted road. Existing 'stub' roads have been provided within the housing at Islands View Road and Clumly Avenue to connect to the Northern field. These roads are through quiet residential streets and therefore the access from Easthill must be regarded as the main access to the site and the development of the southern field must provide the main access to the rest of the site.



Top: Fig 6: View North West across the site.
 Middle Fig 7: View N across Site
 Above: Fig 8: Weyland Burn
 Below: Fig 9: Existing Farm Building



Fig 10: Site Analysis



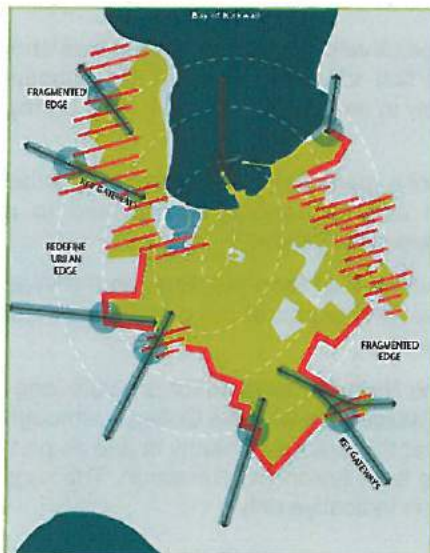
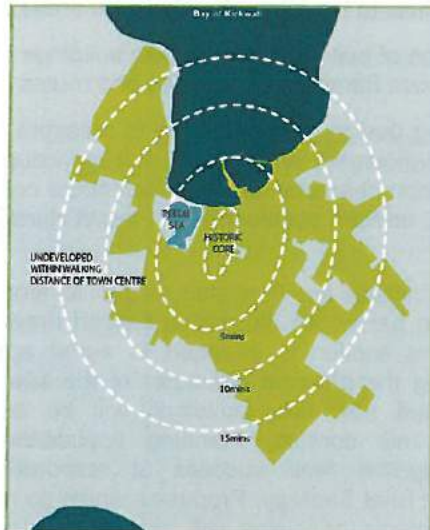
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To the North East of the site the existing Weyland Burn carries surface water towards Kirkwall Bay. Drainage infrastructure has already been installed across the site, following the natural hollow of the land.

To the South of the site lie the farm buildings at Weyland which are likely to become a development site in due course. These include some stone buildings which may be suitable for re-use. Nearby houses are a mix of 1-2 storey with some large houses at East Hill.

policy background and context

This land is allocated in the current Orkney Local Plan 2004 as a combination of 'Countryside Around Town' (Policy LP/N4) 'Proposed Industrial Land' (Policy LP/E1) in conjunction with Orkney College. The field to the North is allocated to 'Educational Facilities (Policy LP/S5) around the College.



Diagrams from KUDF
 Above: Fig 11: Walking distances from town centre – 5 min intervals
 Fig 12: Fragmented Urban Edge
 Right: Fig 13: Town Character Areas

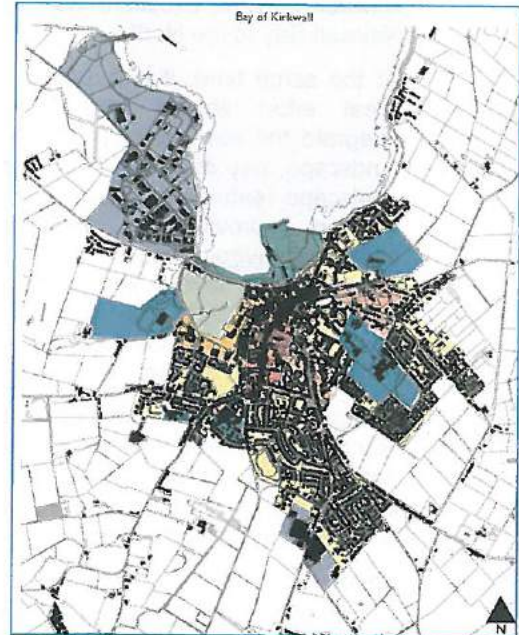


Figure B.1 Town Character Areas, scale 1 : 25,000

"Land at Watersfield is promoted for housing development. This site is within the 15 minute walking contour and has good access to existing pedestrian and cycle networks. Road access issues from East road will need to be considered through the development process. Proposals must take reference from the townscape characterisation guidance in the UDF in terms of building design, use of materials and boundary treatment. If the site is to be developed in phases then a masterplan should be prepared to accompany the first phase of development, demonstrating how later phases of development will be integrated. This must include consideration of an integrated, long term plan for road and pedestrian/cycle link networks, open spaces, access and landscaping issues for the whole site."

Kirkwall Urban Design Framework (KUDF)

However, the Kirkwall Urban Design Framework (KUDF), recognising the need for housing and the need to consolidate the fragmented edge of the Town in this area, proposes the top two fields as 'Development Site 9' for Housing. The lowest, northernmost field is designated as land for development of the activities of the College. Further future Housing is indicated in the fields to the East.

It is expected that future development of the site will respond to the Development Brief Strategy and Design Criteria set out in this document.

development aspiration

The aspiration for the site is that it should provide a high quality mixed tenure residential development which takes advantage of the site's important location close to the historic core of Kirkwall and the excellent views over Kirkwall Bay to the North.

At the same time, it is expected that great effort should be made to integrate the new development in the landscape, pay due regard to existing landscape features and local ways of building, provide a reasonably sheltered environment for new homes and adopt a layout and landscape framework which will reduce the impact of the housing on the surrounding landscape.

The development should also set new standards of building and external space which are appropriate for the 21st century and meet the aspirations of the Kirkwall community.

These aspirations reflect the community views expressed through the recent KUDF consultation that a higher standard of development is an imperative.

the development brief strategy

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

- Providing for a network of open spaces and pedestrian and cycle routes
- Establishing an appropriate distribution and scale of vehicular access points, streets and external connections (including links to the future development areas)
- Identification of building lines for new buildings which tie in with the above framework of spaces and routes
- Establishing design characteristics to measure the quality of new development and ensure that individual buildings have common characteristics and contribute collectively to a coherent, uniform development of the Watersfield site as a whole.

These key principles are illustrated on the Development Brief Strategy Plan below. An illustrative section drawing is also provided. This section is intended to assist applicants in understanding the physical character of the site and wider landscape and how new buildings will be expected to respond to this context. Planning applications will be measured against their success at responding to the Development Brief Strategy. Proposals which do not respond to these strategic principles will not be granted planning permission.

The site will be developed in three Phases as shown. Phase 1 is required first to establish basic infrastructure. Phases 2&3 may follow in any sequence and Phase 3 may be further subdivided.

The creation of a green link on the East side of the site is key to pedestrian and recreational activity and to sustainable drainage as described below.

The existing stone-built farm buildings on the West of Phase 1 will be conserved as part of the project and incorporated in the development.

The field to the North is identified for possible long-term development associated with the College, although it is recognised that this area is currently in use as part of the College's long term Agronomy Research. The suggested infrastructure is indicative only.

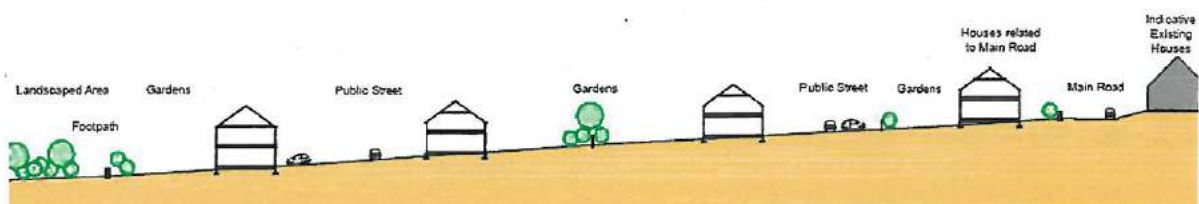
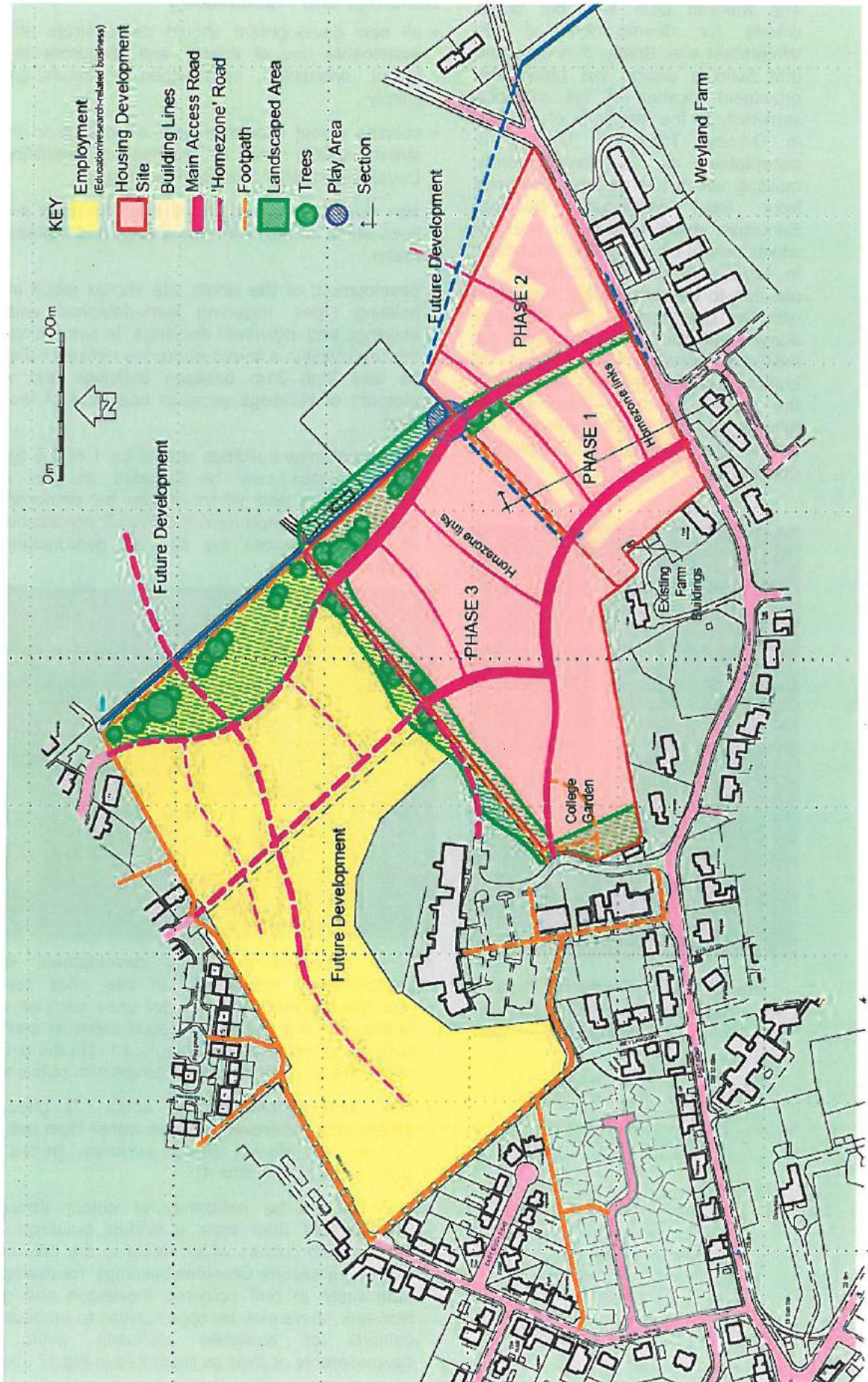


Fig 14: Indicative Section

Fig 15: Development Brief Strategy Plan



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the design criteria

The Kirkwall UDF sets out broad criteria for development of the Watersfield site. Briefly, it is expected that building design will reflect the prominent location of the site and sensitivity to the traditions of building in Orkney. Traditional building is acceptable as is contemporary building which has clearly developed from local vernacular building. Suburban styles finished in brick or which include barge boards and boxed in eaves will not be acceptable. In addition to demonstrating compliance with the Development Brief Strategy above, planning applications for individual dwellings or groups of buildings should respond to each of the specific points set out in the following 5 Design Criteria in order to deliver the development aspiration outlined above.



Below: Fig 16: Traditional Building
Right: Fig 17: Modern Building
reflecting local tradition

Design criterion 1: Buildings and Placemaking

- all new development should demonstrate efficient and sustainable use of energy and resources in terms of layout, orientation, construction, materials and energy supply
- building layout should present a frontage to the internal street system and to Easthill as identified in the Development Brief Strategy Plan (Fig 15)
- new development should achieve plot sizes and building lines which create sheltered spaces and a pleasant public realm
- development of the whole site should result in a mix of building types, including semi-detached and terraced buildings and individual dwellings. In some circumstances this will result in a layout where the minimum distances will be less than 21m between buildings and where the footprint of buildings exceeds one third of the total plot area.
- in general, new buildings should be 1 or 1.5 Storey. Two storey houses may be included as part of denser developments and where it can be demonstrated that these do not compromise the overall consistency of scale of buildings across the site, as demonstrated in the illustrative section.



- it is expected that new development should be predominantly residential but this does not preclude possible opportunities for other uses such as community facilities or a small convenience store or corner shop - such a proposal must be integrated with the overall layout of the site, in particular relationships with public space
- new development should adopt designed-in traffic amelioration wherever possible rather than traffic calming (ie: narrower streets, shared surfaces, limited regulation signs etc: See Criterion 4)
- there should be uniformity of colour throughout the Development Brief area. Individual buildings should be finished with colours which relate to the natural pigments seen in vernacular Orcadian buildings: for example ranging from white to buff coloured elevations and grey roofs. However, there may be opportunities to introduce stronger colours for designed elements within individual developments or plots as illustrated in Fig 17 above.

Design Criterion 2: Boundaries and edges

- development should orientate towards new pedestrian and cycle links both within the sites and externally: in particular linking to the new network of landscape areas as identified on the Development Brief Strategy plan (Fig 15)
- development should contribute to Placemaking objectives in line with the Scottish Government Publication, 'Designing Places - A Policy Statement for Scotland'.
- the site layout must include public landscaped spaces as part of Phases 1 & 2, which may ultimately extend as far as Clumly Avenue to establish a pedestrian link and recreational space along the Weyland Burn.
- The existing stone-built farm buildings to the West of Phase 1 shall be preserved to their original character and incorporated into the development.

- existing stone dyke field walls within the site should be retained where possible and incorporated in the new layout of the development area.
- edges along the roads through the site should take references from the surrounding countryside stone walls and grass verges
- a sense of enclosure should be created throughout the development by linked frontages and garden walls and verges with consistency of materials and heights according to the existing site boundary walls. Traditionally constructed drystone walls will be the most appropriate (Fig 20), however, block walls finished with uniformly coloured render and natural stone copes are a secondary alternative
- individual site boundaries should avoid suburban detailing such as timber hit-and-miss fencing, though timber fences will be permitted in back gardens.
- the use of brick walls, coniferous hedges or decorative gateways to individual developments is not acceptable.

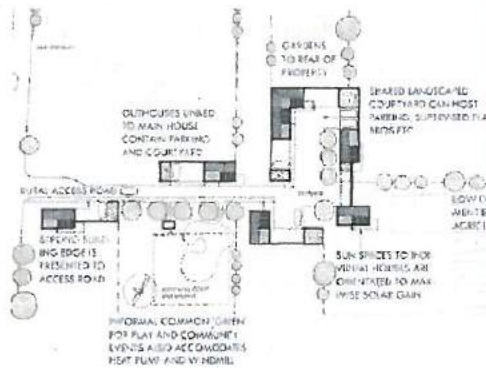


Fig 18: KUDF:
Example of Development
Fig 19: Landscape Framework
(KUDF)

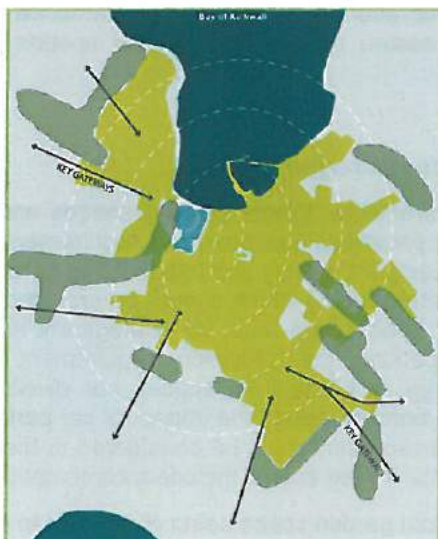


Fig 20: Stone Dykes

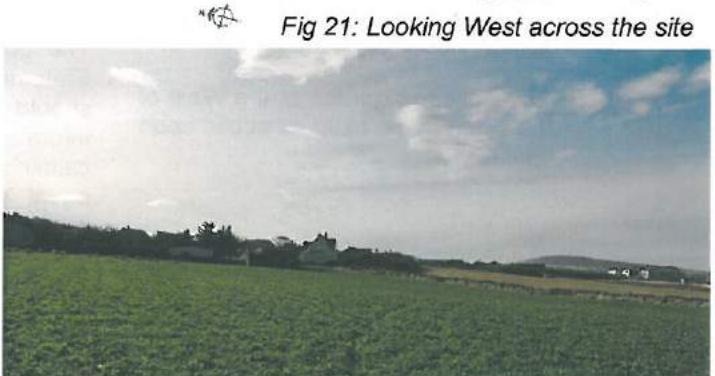


Fig 21: Looking West across the site

**Design Criterion 3:
Open space, play areas, and
landscaping**

The Development Brief Strategy plan identifies a network of linked open space areas incorporating a children's play area, passive open space and habitat supporting natural areas which may also be part of the development's Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS). These open space areas should be linked to the footpath network around the site.

- The play area(s) must be well designed and should include play equipment and seating for the enjoyment of young children and families living in the area. This should be produced and agreed in partnership between the Planning Authority and Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council.
- Native tree species of local provenance and other trees and shrubs that already grow successfully in the town, such as sycamores, should be used to establish the landscape treatment in the Development Brief area: in particular to develop the open space and pedestrian networks identified in The Development Brief Strategy plan.
- A mechanism to deliver the above landscape features and for the long term maintenance of public space throughout the development must be identified before the first phase of development is completed.
- The College's garden at the West of the site may be used as public open space.



Fig 22: The Willows (KUDF)

**Design Criterion 4:
Site access, roads and movement**

Road construction should not be conceived in isolation but as an integrated element of the overall design of the development. The Council's standards should serve as a guide but should be flexible enough so as not to inhibit the design of an innovative, less car dominant layout which respects the landform and character of the area.

There is a requirement for a Traffic Impact Assessment to be carried out to assess any potential implications and any mitigation which may be required to the wider traffic network. This will require to be carried out alongside the first planning applications for Phase 1.

It is anticipated that twin new artery roads will be established in Phase 1 of the development to provide access to the rest of the site. These will be linked by 'Homezone' streets which will provide a permeable and pedestrian friendly development. Provision will be made for connection to the existing footpath / cycleway network.

The concepts laid down in 'Designing Streets – A Policy Statement for Scotland' issued by the Scottish Government should be implemented. This document promotes an informal system of well connected streets with natural traffic calming (building lines, shared road surfaces etc) built in and equal priority given to all modes including walking and cycling. Traffic attenuation should be introduced as a self-enforcing measure to maintain vehicle speeds below 20 mph.

Specific access requirements :

Parking requirements: Where parking spaces are allocated to individual properties the provision requirement will be 2 parking spaces per dwelling unit (discounting garages) along with 25% visitor parking which should be provided in groups of at least 2 spaces and must be strategically located. For communal parking the provision requirement (including visitor parking) is 1.5 to 1.75 spaces per dwelling unit. a range of solutions to reduce the impact of car parking on the residential environment must be considered in the design of individual plots. These should include a combination of:

- avoiding front garden space being given over to parking

- using traditional front garden walls to structure the street appearance
- designing in shared small scale semi-private courtyard parking
- building shared surfaces in traditional materials rather than using coloured concrete block surfaces for example in parking zones and domestic runways.

Provision should be made to link into and extend the existing footpath / cycle path layout around the site. (Fig 23).

The width and adequacy of existing footpaths may need to be investigated at the Planning Application stage.

Fig23: Cycle Path network around the site



Design Criterion 5: Water resource management

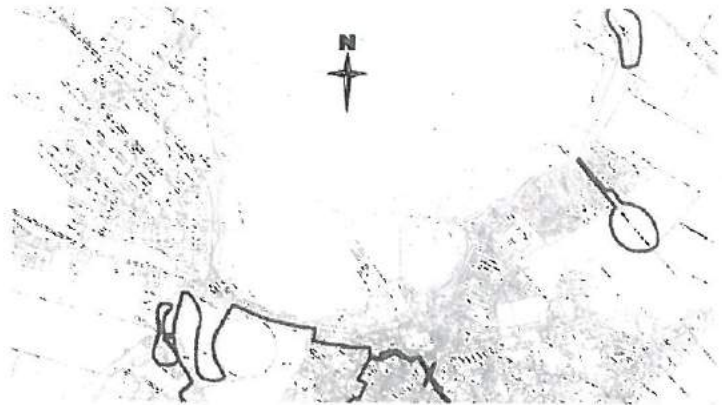


Fig 24: Extract from Flood Map

The site naturally drains to the Weyland Burn. Existing adopted mains drainage runs through the site, originally designed to service the South East of Weyland Farm Buildings. This consists of a 500mm diameter surface water culvert which flows into the burn and a 200mm foul drain. An existing 150mm foul drain runs along the line of the wall between Phase 1 and Phase 3.

The phase 1, 2 and 3 development sites are outwith the Flood risk area identified in the Kirkwall Strategic Flood Risk Assessment study. However, the future development area to the north of phase 3 has been identified as a flood risk area and a detailed Flood Risk Assessment report will be required to accompany any planning applications for this area.

Individual planning applications must demonstrate that they have considered whether there are any local sources of flooding and be designed to avoid such areas.

In line with the requirements of PAN61 'Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems', an appropriate SuDS will be required as part of planning applications for individual and multiple dwellings. This will be achieved most effectively through the open space around the Weyland Burn identified in the development brief strategy plan, which will provide a means to ensure that SUDS are visually attractive, safe and accessible for maintenance purposes. All planning applications must demonstrate that they will connect to the public foul drainage.

For further information, please contact:
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