

Corse West, Kirkwall Development Brief



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1 - INTRODUCTION

The preparation of a Development Brief for the site at Corse Farm is a requirement of the Orkney Local Plan and the Kirkwall Urban Design Framework 2009 ("Kirkwall UDF"). The Kirkwall UDF specifically states that a Site Masterplan should be prepared for both the Grainbank Site and the Corse West Site to demonstrate how coordinated development can be achieved. This Development Brief fulfils this requirement for the Corse West Site. It sets out the main opportunities and constraints relating to the phased development of the site.

For the purpose of this Development Brief, this site will be referred to as Corse West. This is seen to the best name as to describe the location within Kirkwall and that does not conflict with existing development names.

The Purpose of the Development Brief

It is expected that planning applications for development on the Corse West Site will respond positively to the provisions of this Development Brief. This includes the broad parameters set out in the Masterplan in terms of site layout, open spaces, land use, access and travel networks, as well as in the more detailed Design Criteria. In doing so, the Development Brief will result in development that is integrated into the surrounding landscape, the town of Kirkwall and the surrounding countryside.

Guidance to Applicants

Applicants will be required to prepare a Design Statement which demonstrates that their proposals respond to the Development Brief. The Design Statement will be required to be submitted alongside a planning application to support the proposal. The Development Brief makes reference to the relevant Design Principles from the Kirkwall UDF throughout. However, applicants are advised to refer to the Kirkwall UDF for further information on neighbouring site development issues (for example the Peedie Sea, Grainbank and Old Finstown Road sites which neighbours the Corse West Site).

The level of information required will vary depending on the scale of development proposed. Larger scale developments will be expected to provide a more comprehensive assessment of the Design Criteria. Clarification should be sought from the Local Planning Authority on the level of information that applicants should provide.



2 – SITE DESCRIPTION

The Development Area is a substantial area of land that is located on the western edge of Kirkwall, in close proximity to the Pickaquoy Sports and Leisure Complex and the existing housing areas of Soulisquoy and Glaitness. Further more it lies between the Glaitness Road to the south and the Muddisdale Road to the north. The site has a high profile, as it is visible from key vantage points throughout Kirkwall including Carness Road, Berstane Road and Hatston Brae. Presently the site is a green-field with some amenity uses associated with the Orkney Rugby Club. Generally the site slopes from the south to the north with the lower amenity part of the site having flooding issues associated with the Muddisdale Burn. The boundary for the majority of the site is that of traditional stone dyking system. The plans at Figure 2 and Figure 3 depict the site in context with its surrounding uses and routes.

Together these physical factors establish a sensitive site context which provides the opportunity to create a distinctive and high profile new development on the edge of Kirkwall.

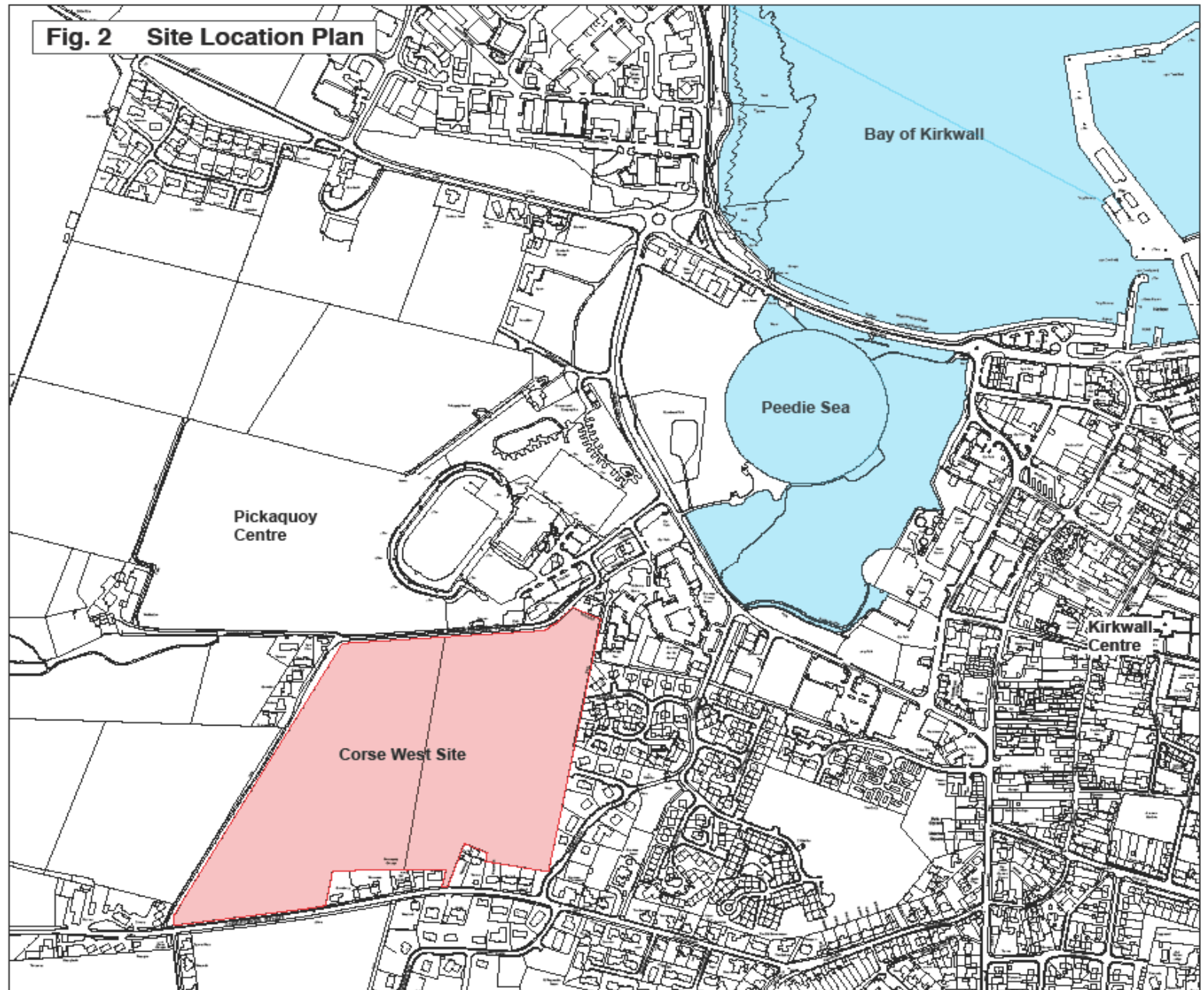
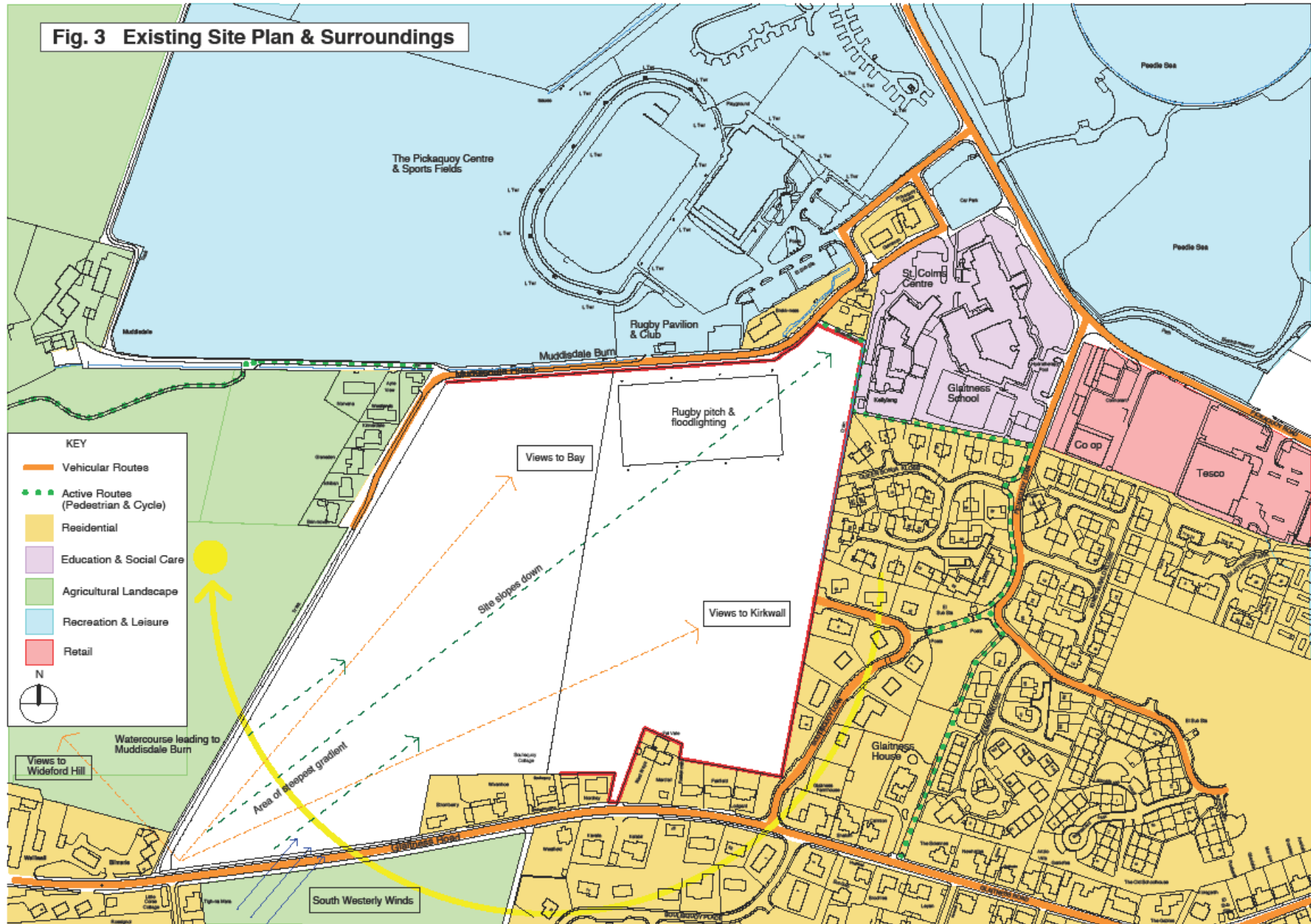


Fig. 3 Existing Site Plan & Surroundings



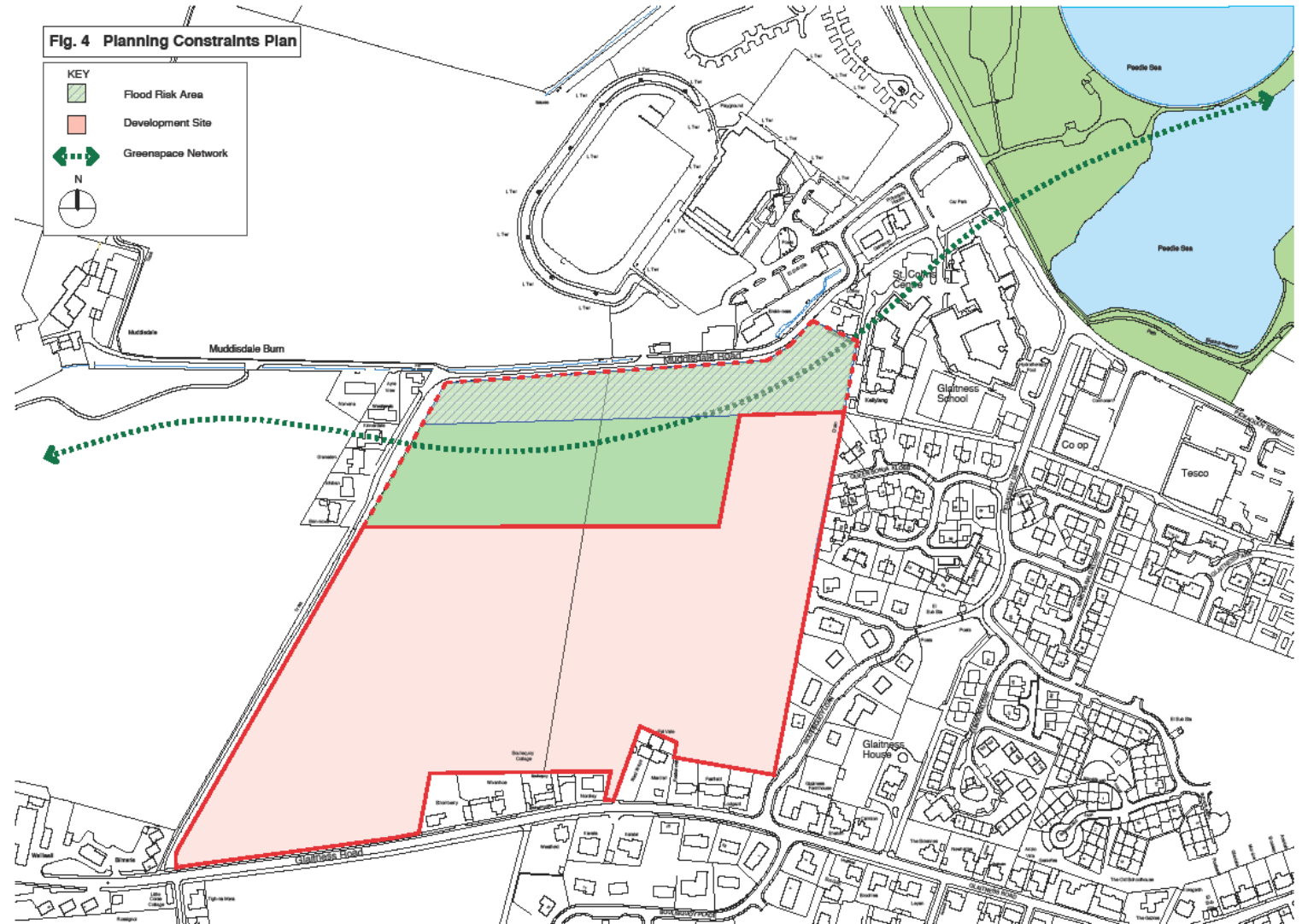
3 – PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND AND DESIGNATION

The Orkney Local Plan 2004 identifies the site as H6 Corse II that should be developed to accommodate future high/medium density housing in a mix of public and private housing. Land that forms part of the site, off the Muddisdale Road and in close proximity to the Pickaquooy Centre, is designated as recreation, leisure and amenity open space.

The Kirkwall UDF discusses the development opportunities of this site as part of the Kirkwall West expansion area. It notes the potential location for a new hospital, social care facilities and the location for a medium density housing development on the site. The Kirkwall UDF states that housing on the site would benefit from the slightly elevated position, being of mixed size and tenures, adopting a contemporary style that responds to traditional built form.

Habitat & Amenity Enhancement

The Kirkwall UDF notes in Principle 6 and 7 that flooding issues relating to the low lying areas off the Muddisdale Road (associated with the burn) will provide an opportunity for habitat and amenity enhancement, in conjunction with the existing amenity and green link from the Peedie Sea/ Harbour that runs through to the Muddisdale Recreational Area. Such enhancement would integrate with the existing green link and provide a positive focus for new development at Corse West. The flooding area is shown at Figure 4 – Planning Constraints Plan, as the Flood Risk Area from the Kirkwall Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (September 2009).



Connectivity and Traffic Impact

The phased development of Corse West and allocated sites to the northeast of the site at Grainbank should be based on the creation of joined up pedestrian and cycle routes. Prior to the development of Grainbank and Corse West, a traffic impact assessment must be completed. The existing vehicular and active transport routes are shown at Figure 5 – Existing Routes.

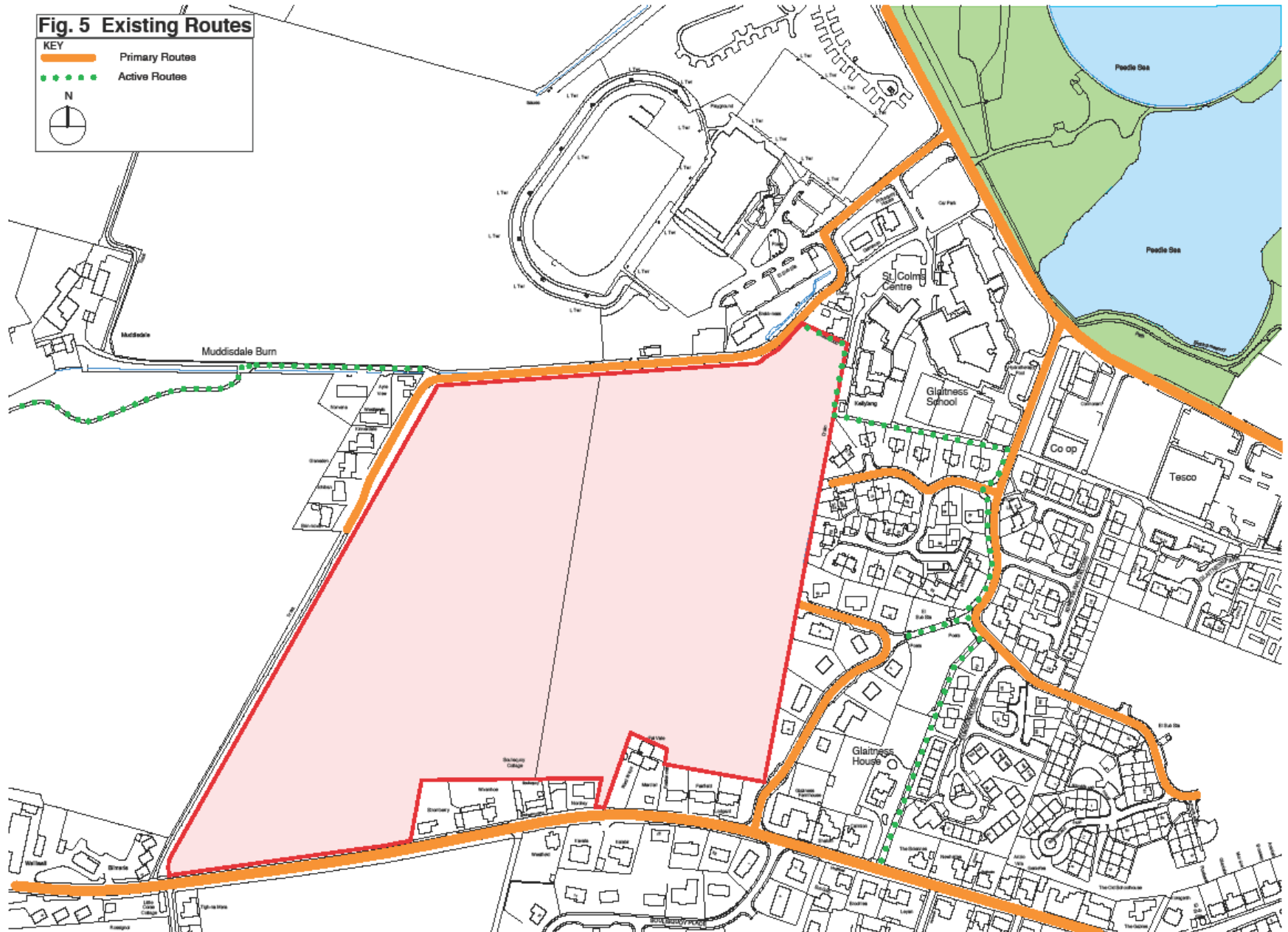
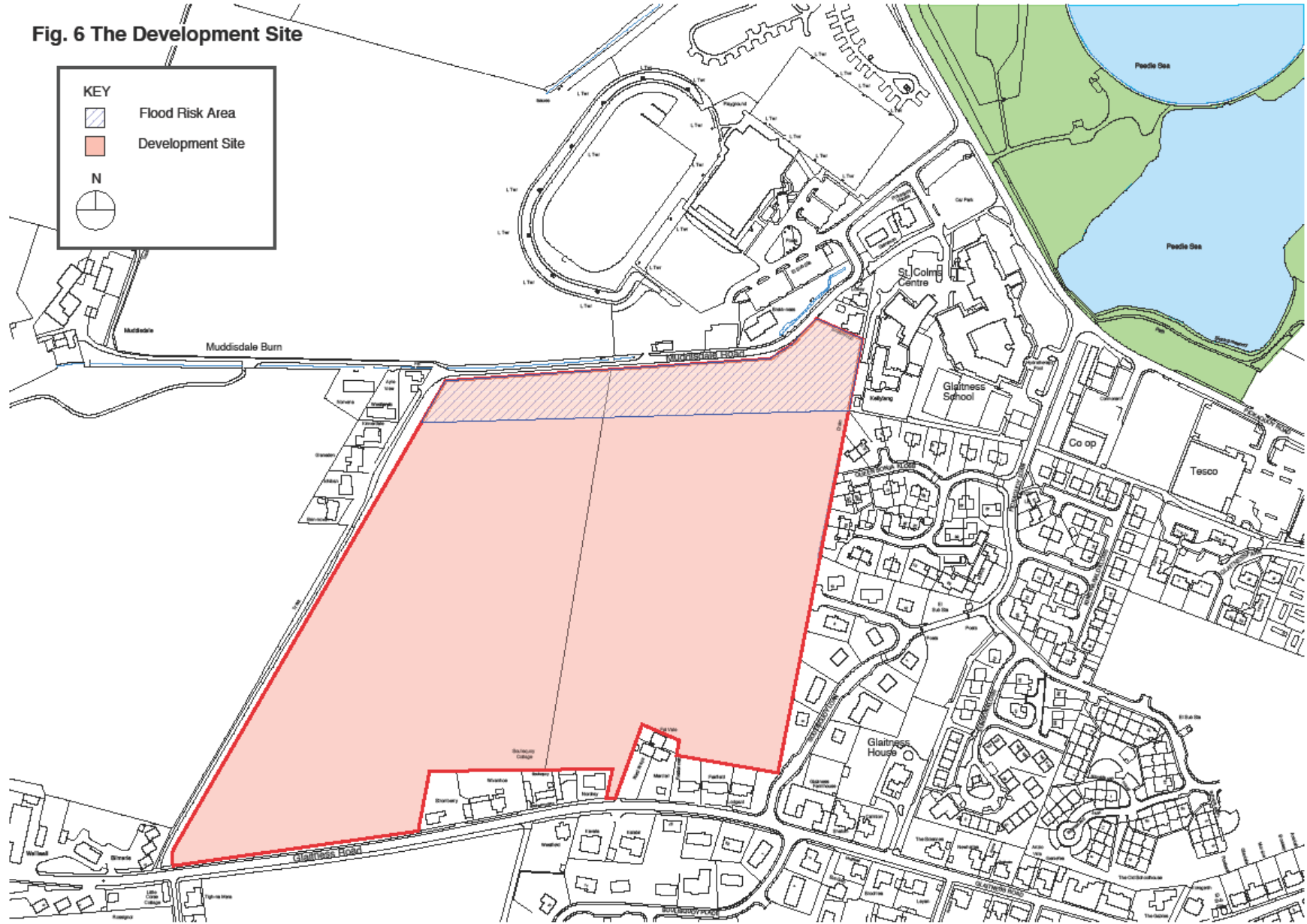


Fig. 6 The Development Site



4 – DEVELOPMENT ASPIRATION

The aspiration for this site is that it should provide a high quality mixed use development of health and social care uses as well as mixed density and tenure residential use. Future development of this site should take advantage of the site's location, and pay due regard to the existing landscape features, local ways of construction and design. The layout and landscape framework of this new development should be legible by its uses and look to see new standards for built form and external spaces, which are appropriate for the 21st century and meet the aspirations of the Kirkwall Community, as well as the wider Orkney Community.

5 – DESIGN CRITERIA

Planning applications on the site must be accompanied by a Design Statement, which demonstrates how the proposal responds to the Design Criteria on the following pages.



Design Criterion 1 – MASTERPLAN LAYOUT & DEVELOPMENT NEIGHBOURHOODS

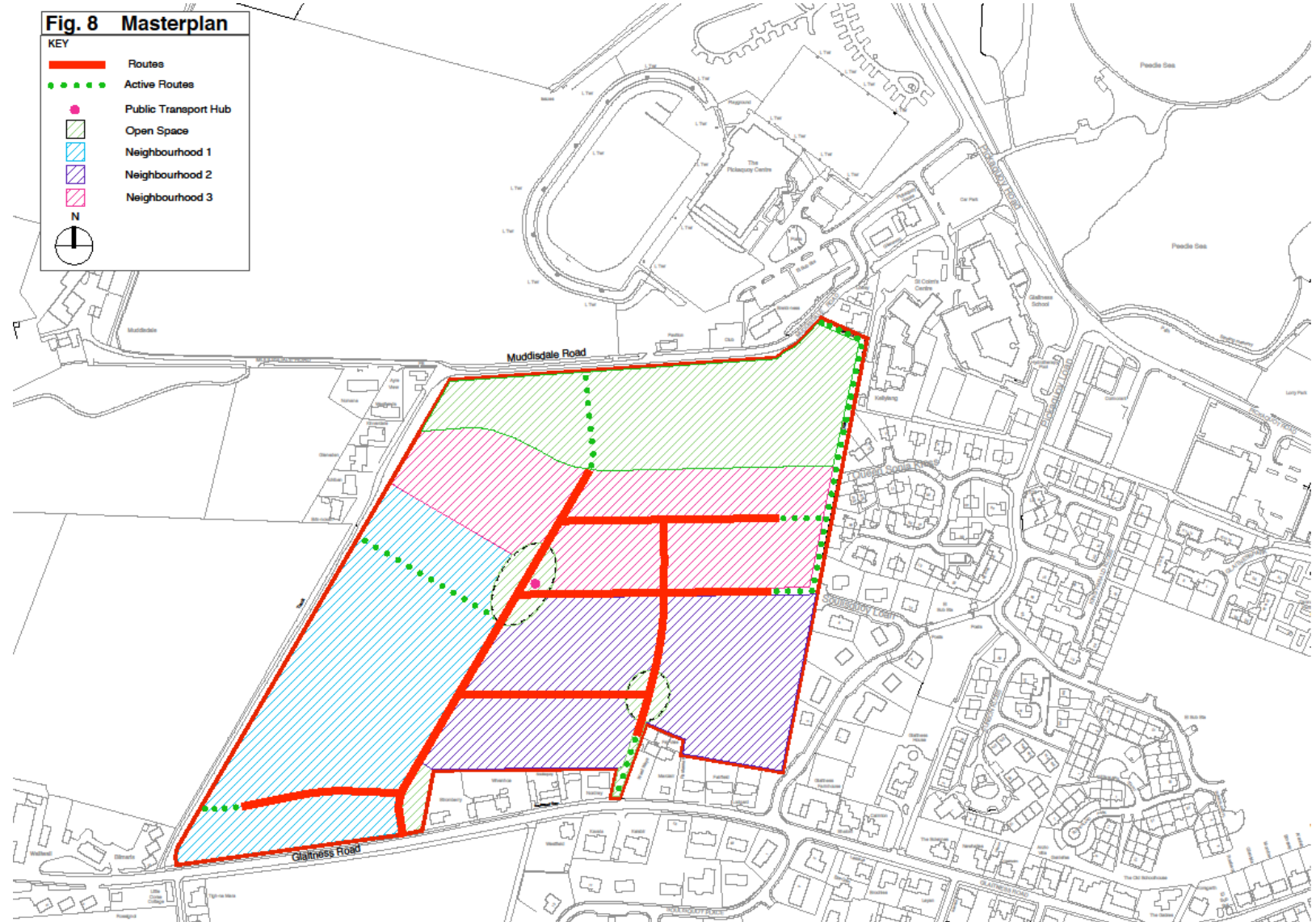
This site is of key importance to the further expansion of Kirkwall with development potential having been identified in the Kirkwall UDF for housing, health care and social care land uses. These land uses are provided for in this Development Brief. The Development Brief goes a stage further and sets out a structure for the development process to follow in the form of a Masterplan. The aim of the Site Masterplan is to establish the main components for the site development, which are essential to the creation of an effective new neighbourhoods and community orientated environment (Design Criterion 2). In developing the Site Masterplan, the Development Brief has taken into account Kirkwall UDF Principle 1, that development should centre the community in the heart of Kirkwall. The arrangement of buildings, spaces and travel networks are therefore orientated towards the Peedie Sea and the Town Centre.

When work on this Development Brief commenced NHS Orkney had not formally fixed a site for the location of a new health facility. This site is mentioned in the Kirkwall UDF as a possible location for further health care provision with the preferred site for new health provision being the nearby Grainbank site. Through the draft Development Brief (28th January 2010) locating a new hospital facility on the site was investigated. It was seen that a healthcare facility (hospital and dental facility) at 13 acres would take up the majority of the site and would have road safety as well as land ownership issues. The consultation process concluded that the Corse West site was not a favoured site for a new hospital although the Masterplan Layout should look to accommodate a future dental facility.



THE MASTERPLAN LAYOUT

The Masterplan Layout is shown at Figure 8 looks at incorporating on the site, health care provision in terms of a dental facility, a health care facility for elderly persons and further housing provision for Kirkwall. The layout indicates how the hierarchy of routes (shared surfaces and active routes) provides for connectivity and assists in forming Neighbourhood Areas for the Corse West Site. The Masterplan Layout is indicative only. As discussed further in this Development Brief, this site will be developed over the next 10 year period. At this point in time some of the development elements are not “firmed up” as they are either subject to public funding or have to reactive to the changes in the housing market and social housing provision.



THE NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Neighbourhoods may be subject to some limited change so as to respond to the pressures discussed previously. Each Neighbourhood will have an element of phasing and/or mixed use. Key to these Neighbourhoods is that they will work together to form an integrated development that will not be inward in terms of form or functionality. As much information that is known is provided in the individual Neighbourhood Descriptions.

Neighbourhood 1 - The Health and Care Facility and Housing

The Health and Care Facility is proposed to be on site in 2011 and completed by 2012. It will provide residential accommodation and communal social and care facilities for elderly persons. Off the Glaitness Road, part of this Neighbourhood is proposed to be for housing with a shared surface dividing this development parcel into manageable housing sites. This housing should physically address Glaitness Road and the proposed shared surfaces of the site. The Expansion Area of this Neighbourhood that lies to the north of the Health and Care Facility is primarily intended to be an expansion area for the Health and Care Facility, providing additional residential accommodation in the form of 12 separate units. If it is not used in conjunction with the Health and Care Facility, it will be used for further housing provision.

Neighbourhood 2 - Housing

This Neighbourhood is in the ownership of Orkney Housing Association Limited and will be developed to incorporate a mix of housing types and tenures in line with the social housing provision requirements at the time of individual planning applications. Orkney Housing Association Limited have stated that this Neighbourhood will be developed in 2 elements with approximately 25 housing units proposed for 2013/2014 and a further 25 housing units proposed for 2016/2017.

Neighbourhood 3 - Mixed Use

It is proposed that this Neighbourhood will be made up of a NHS dental facility, mix of housing types and open space with proposed recreation, amenity and biodiversity value. The new dental facility should be centrally located within this Neighbourhood in close proximity to planned open space. Within this Neighbourhood there should be an opportunity to develop mixed use buildings with the dental facility and other uses on the ground floor fronting onto the public space and housing above. Built form should address the main routes of this Neighbourhood. Through the provision of public and active travel, car-parking provision for the dental facility should be kept to a minimum and incorporated into shared surfaces and in car parking courtyards at the rear of built form.

Design Criterion 2 - A NETWORK OF ROUTES

The Kirkwall UDF establishes a strong focus on high quality public realm and the importance of creating effective pedestrian and cycle routes in order to encourage active travel (Principles 6 and 10). To achieve this, it is essential that a clear hierarchy of routes and network of public spaces are established at the outset of the development process. This will provide the underlying framework for the layout and siting of buildings on the site, which then form discrete 'parcels' of development area, which can be developed to have their own identity and sense of place.

Figure 9 provides the proposed Hierarchy of Routes for the site. The detailed design of the various phases of development is expected to conform to this underlying framework.

The concepts that have been laid down by the Scottish Government in the new policy statement on Designing Streets should be used when developing the detailed design of street and pedestrian routes throughout the site, in conjunction with the Council's Road Standards. The overall approach should be flexible enough so as not to inhibit the design of an innovative, less car dominant layout that joints up with existing routes. Natural traffic calming methods such as building lines and shared road surfaces should be built into the design that will provide for equal priority to all modes of transport. Traffic attenuation should be introduced as a self-enforcing measure to maintain vehicle speeds below 20 mph. Different colours and materials should be used to indicate changes in the proposed road hierarchy and different users. These colours and materials should be drawn from Development Criterion 3 - Building and Placemaking.

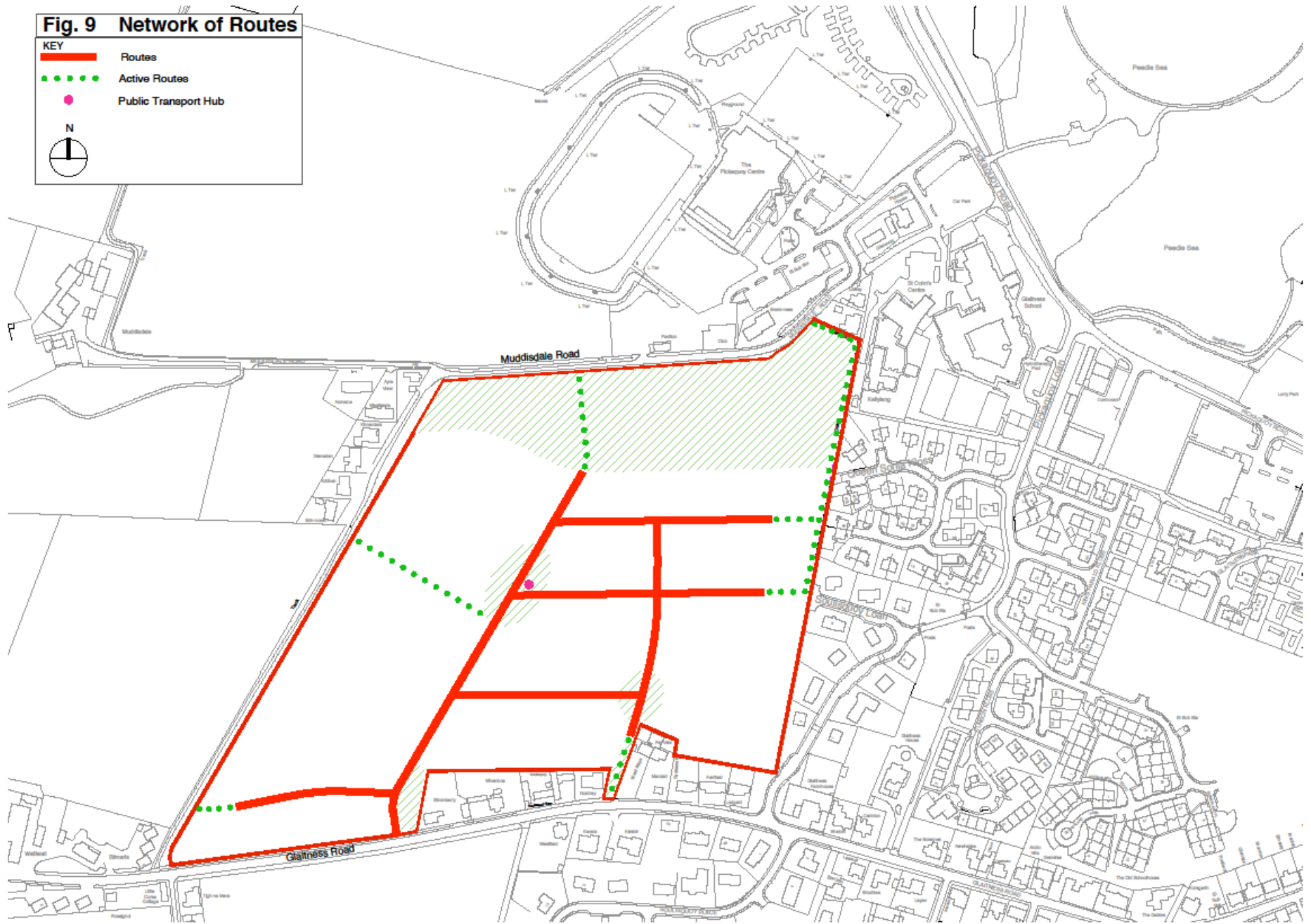
It is a priority of the access and road design that an active travel network is planned through the site that links in with the existing active travel network and provides links to the proposed public health and care facilities of the site (Heath and Care Facility and NHS Dental Facility). All vehicle routes should include pedestrian and cycle access. At the proposed public health and care facilities, provision for secure and sheltered cycle racks should be made. Access to public transport should be provided centrally on the site so that is assessable to the majority of users and visitors to the site.

Parking requirements for the site will be dependent on the use proposed. Standards are set down in Road Services' Parking Standards. For domestic properties it is proposed that each property has provision for 2 spaces along with a 25% visitor parking that is required to be strategically located within the development. All parking provision should respond to the following:

- To avoid the use of front residential gardens been given over to parking provision.
- Parking should be designed where possible in shared small scale semi-private courtyards.
- Parking should be incorporated into shared surfaces with dedicated on street parking zones.
- Construction material for shared surfaces, parking zones and domestic runways should be where possible be porous in nature to aid a successful Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme as well as the overall look of the development. Where possible natural sets or blocks should be used instead of concrete. Large areas of coloured tarmac should also be avoided.

Fig. 9 Network of Routes

- KEY**
- Routes
 - Active Routes
 - Public Transport Hub



Design Criterion 3 – BUILDING AND PLACEMAKING

The Kirkwall UDF Principle 2 requires that development in this location reinforces Kirkwall's distinctiveness and improves gateways to the town. The characteristics of this site are such that traditional building design as well as contemporary building design that has a clear link to local vernacular building is considered acceptable. As detailed in Design Criterion 2, the Masterplan defines Neighbourhoods, a network of routes and proposed open spaces across the site. It is critical that in developing the detailed design of buildings, which slot into the Design Criteria of this Development Brief, that design also responds to the landscape setting and capacity of the site (Kirkwall UDF Principle 4).

The site lies on the edge of the town and the country, providing an opportunity to embrace this traditional location through a higher density urban character at the lower part of the site and a more rural character towards the edge or higher part of the site. For the avoidance of doubt, design and materials that are overtly suburban and out of place will not be acceptable (for example the use of brick and bargeboards and boxed-in eaves). In addition to the above, development proposals must respond to the following:

- The development should demonstrate efficient use of energy and resources, in terms of layout, orientation, construction and energy supply.
- Consideration should be given to use of sustainable materials, particularly stone and timber throughout the development.
- The height of the built form should respond to their location on this sloping site and the height of the surrounding built form with an opportunity for higher density at the lower parts of the site grading outwards to the centre and higher parts of the site should be explored.
- The colour pallet for the development site should also respond to the location and be of muted natural tones. It is therefore acceptable to use grey, brown, cream, blue and green coloured materials on the development site.
- Building materials should respond to this transitional setting in type, and it is acceptable to take elements from both the town and the countryside. Finishes in wood, wet harl, traditional stone and flat profile roofing materials such as natural slate are acceptable.
- The building layout must present a frontage to the internal street system and avoid presenting semi private spaces to the proposed or existing routes of the site.
- Public open spaces should be centrally located at the heart of the new community, where users will be able to view and interact with this space from their own semi-private spaces (see also Design Criterion 7).



Design Criteria 4 - BOUNDARIES AND EDGES

New development must create a distinctive sense of place and take reference from the existing, historic characteristics of the site and its locality (Kirkwall UDF Principle 2). Development must therefore respond to the following:

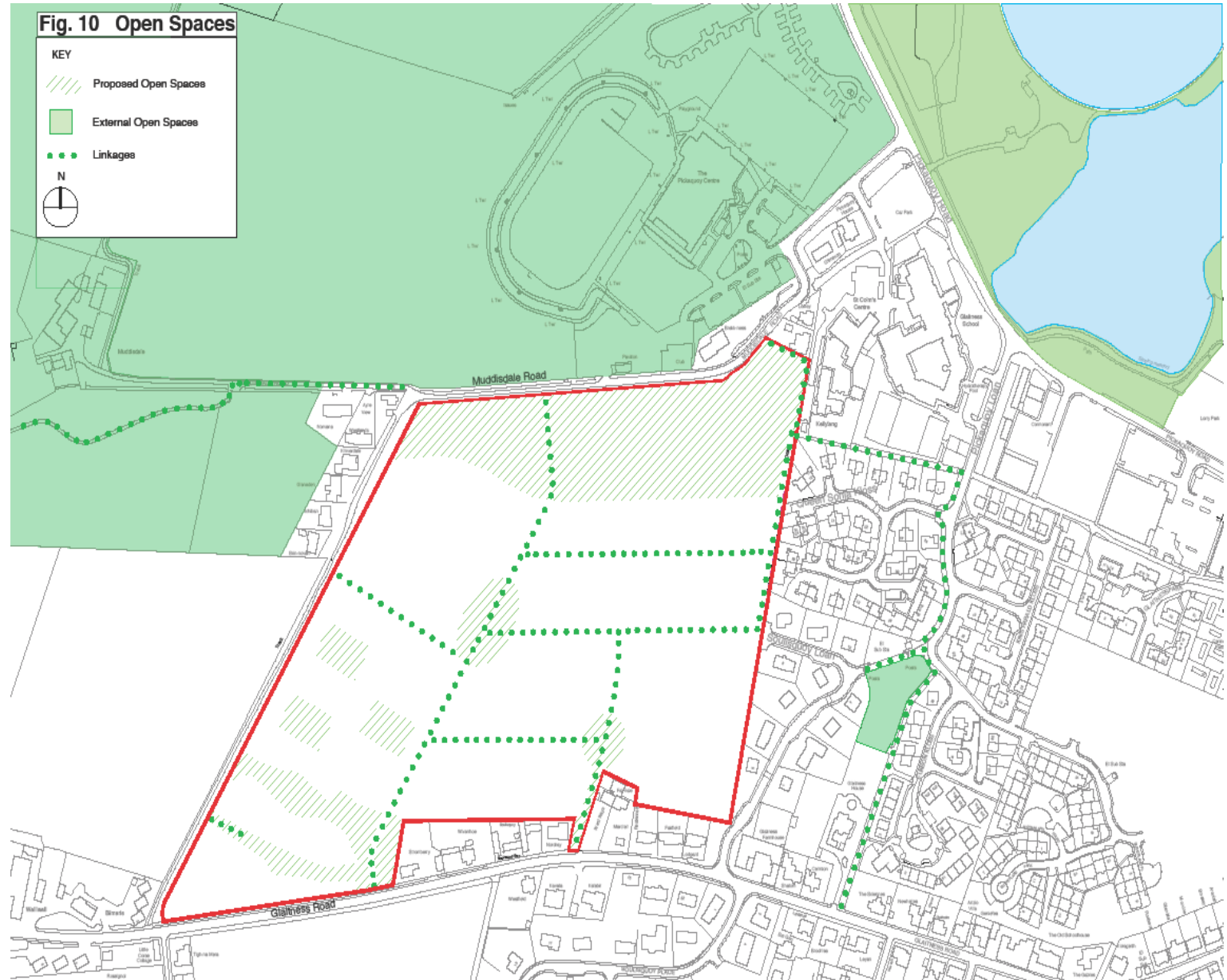
- All phases of development must retain the existing stone
- The colour pallet discussed in Design Criterion 3 should be
- The use of suburban detailing such as brick walls or decorative
- A sense of enclosure should be created throughout the
- Boundary treatments over 2 metres to enclose private garden
- The use of traditional front gardens walls of 1 metre and under



Design Criteria 5 – OPEN SPACES

The masterplan layout and network of routes must link with existing open space and play areas. The masterplan layout must also provide effective, usable open spaces, which will become a natural focus for community activity and the network of routes must provide linkages to existing and proposed open spaces.

To achieve this, the masterplan layout must make provision for a network of linked open spaces that incorporates the open spaces and amenity land on the outskirts of the site. Proposed new open spaces on the site should be at the heart of the community and should provide for 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). Figure 10 shows the location of the proposed and surrounding existing open spaces. A key public space is identified as a focal point in Neighbourhood 3 – Mixed Use that should lie in with the location of the Dental Facility. Other 'local' spaces are identified for each neighbourhood. In all cases buildings must positively address the open spaces, encouraging their uses as a focus of pedestrian and amenity activity. Housing development in particular should be laid out to form a series of local building clusters arranged around open/public space areas.



Design Criterion 6 – HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPING

The Kirkwall UDF requires that new development creates greenspace and woodland planting opportunities (Principles 7 and 8). To achieve this development should respond to the following:

- New development should seek to establish new areas of shrub and tree planting, particularly in the planned open spaces such as the amenity area off the Muddisdale Road. It is important that this amenity area is fully integrated with the existing green areas outwith the site and that habitat creation incorporates SuDS treatment solutions such as reed beds and wetland planting.
- New planting should be used to provide shelter in conjunction with the proposed built form.
- Generic suburban detailing for hard landscaping features should be minimised and where possible, hard landscaping materials should be porous in nature to assist in SuDS for the development site.
- Where possible, hard landscaping should incorporate shared road surfaces.

The environment of Orkney can be quite hostile to many plant species and it would be inappropriate to plant up the development with species taken out of context from the UK Mainland. Trees and shrubs that already grow successfully and are native to Orkney should be used in preference to "alien" species. Planting should also be used to provide the site and its users with shelter from these hostile weather elements. Currently there are no trees or shrubs on the site.



Design Criterion 7 - WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The lower part of the site has been identified as having a flooding risk associated with the Muddisdale Burn in the Kirkwall UDF as well as the recent Kirkwall Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (September 2009). The extent of this area is shown in Figure 5.

The flood risk must be actively incorporated into the development of the site and the planned network of open spaces. This is achieved in the Masterplan Layout, which links the lower part of the site to the rest of the site via a network of routes and open spaces. Opportunities to incorporate this area in Sustainable Urban Drainage schemes associated with the main development phases of the site must also be explored.

The site should be developed in line with the requirements of Planning Advice Note 61 - Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and current Scottish Planning Policy. This will mean that land with a flooding issue should not be developed and an appropriate SuDS scheme will be required as part of the site development. An appropriate SuDS scheme must be designed as part of the overall site and should be visually attractive, safe and accessible for maintenance purposes.

