

ARGYLL AND BUTE HOSPITAL: MAST 1/8 and PDA 3008 MASTERPLAN REPORT

1. SUMMARY

Within the emerging Argyll and Bute proposed Local Development Plan (Feb 2013) the Council has proposed that the full extent of land associated within the Argyll & Bute Hospital be designated as a Potential Development Area (PDA 3008) for a Mixed Use development incorporating a minimum of 25% affordable housing provision. The proposed PDA designation is underpinned by the requirement for a Strategic Masterplan (designation MAST 1/8) to have been endorsed by the Council in advance of any development proceeding.

Within the adopted Argyll and Bute Local Plan the extent of the masterplan area currently falls within two separate designations, the first is an Area for Action (AFA 12/3) which promotes the Council's aspiration for a re-development study relating to the Argyll and Bute Hospital and its associated grounds. The remainder of the masterplan area forms the northern third of Potential Development Area (PDA 12/1) which promotes medium density housing development, including provision of 25% affordability, on the former Lochgilphead High School site and adjoining land which lies between this and the A&B Hospital. It is advised that it would be appropriate at this time to apportion greater weighting to the uncontested provisions of the pLDP which actively promote development of the masterplan area.

NHS Highland has advised of their immediate requirement to provide a replacement facility for the existing mental health and support services serving Argyll and Bute which are not fit for purpose at this location. A masterplan which seeks to establish that the initial 'Stage 1' release of land, including the rationalisation and re-development of the hospital functions and initial housing development, can be achieved at this location without preventing possible future re-development of the existing built up areas within the hospital estate has been submitted and is considered below. The current submission seeks to provide a framework document for the future development and evolution of the masterplan to address wider development issues but also providing sufficient detail and justification to allow the immediate release of land for the identified 'Stage 1' developments.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Members are advised that the components of the proposed mixed-use scheme are generally considered to be compatible with the proposed PDA 3008; it is however recognised that elements of the masterplan site require to be the subject of a further masterplan submission.

It is recommended that Members endorse the masterplan as follows:

1. Provide full endorsement to the elements of the masterplan as they relate to the release of land for the development of a new mental health unit, relocation of Blarbuie Woodland Trust accommodation, and land identified for housing development (lying adjacent to H3006).

2. That Members endorse in principle the strategic framework set out in the masterplan for Zones 1 – 5 with a caveat that a ‘Stage 2’ masterplan submission be required for further consideration of the Council in advance of these areas being released for development.
3. That Members decline at this time to endorse the masterplan proposals for Zone 6 given the potential for new built development at this location to have an adverse impact upon the wider landscape setting of Lochgilphead. It would however remain open to the landowner to seek to satisfactorily address these concerns in any future ‘Stage 2’ masterplan submission.

3. ASSESSMENT

The Argyll and Bute Hospital lies within the northern extent of the Lochgilphead ‘settlement area’ and consists of a substantial grouping of buildings on a site which has provided the focus for mental health care provision within Argyll and Bute since the mid/late 1800’s.

Archive material confirms that the site was purchased by the Argyll District Board of Lunacy in 1863, with the establishment of a District Lunatic Asylum that by 1900 already incorporated the majority of the built elements which remain evident within the current hospital complex. The Argyll and Bute Hospital was opened in the Victorian era with the term “asylum” being in common usage with the literal meaning of a refuge or place of safety and tranquillity, and it is apparently with this in mind that led to the establishment of woodland setting within the extensive hospital grounds, and which, along with the farm and gardens, provided part of the resource for outdoor work and recreation. Generally, asylum based care was the main model of psychiatric care until in more recent times a combination of advances in psychiatry and drug treatment, a greater emphasis on human rights, and advances in social science and philosophy resulted in a move toward the de-institutionalisation of mental health care, with a greater emphasis to providing care in the community with a more comprehensive range of services. Over time, the role of the Argyll and Bute Hospital has been reviewed in line with changing attitudes and policy toward the provision of mental health care and it now provides a variety of functions including an acute admissions ward, psychiatric ICU, rehabilitations services, adult psychotherapy services, mental health outpatient services. During this process of de-institutionalisation much of the resource associated with the hospital grounds was lost as the use of the hospital changed and the grounds were not maintained and the woodland areas became inaccessible and dangerous. Since 2002 however much of the woodland area has been managed by a partnership group known as the Blarbuie Woodland Trust.

The submitted masterplan identifies that the existing mental health unit and support services accommodation are not fit for purpose, and that a full re-development of both Mental Health and Estates accommodation is required. The new clinical accommodation is to support services within Argyll and Bute, the estate service will also support a number of other NHS Highland services in the locality. On completion, the existing accommodation will be surplus to NHS Highland requirements and in this respect the masterplan seeks to identify potential uses for the disposal of the surplus estate.

PDA’s are areas identified by the Council where they can contribute to economic development and environmental improvement and where a comprehensive approach to prospective development is warranted in order to avoid unplanned piecemeal development. They are defined in the plan as areas of land within which opportunities may emerge during the period of the Local Plan (5 to 10 years) for infill, rounding-off, redevelopment or new development. Such opportunities as were identified were not fully resolved at the time of the adoption of the plan, which requires constraints to be overcome in terms of the ‘mini development brief’ accompanying these PDA’s before development opportunities within the PDA area can be realised and be supported by the Local Plan. It is standard practice to require a masterplan approach when considering development within such designated areas.

Masterplans help the Council assess at an early stage in the development process, the interrelationships of layout, design, access, existing transport infrastructure and sustainable modes of travel, landscape and ecology, open space provision and integration of a proposed development with existing communities.

The Scottish Government most commonly refers to Masterplans being, *'a plan that describes and maps an overall development concept, including present and future land use, urban design and landscaping, built form, infrastructure, circulation and service provision. It is based upon an understanding of place and it is intended to provide a structured approach to creating a clear and consistent framework for development'* (PAN 83). The Scottish Government endorses the use of masterplanning in general, but considers that it is especially useful for large sites and in areas/sites which are going to undergo substantial change, have multiple uses, or are sensitive in environmental or landscape terms.

At the meeting of the PPSL Committee on 23 November 2011, Members considered and agreed a policy paper on masterplans. This stated, *inter alia*, that:

"Proposals for development of PDAs should be accompanied by a Masterplan which demonstrates how the proposed development will relate to the wider area and any parts of the PDA which do not form part of the application site, and that the publicity and consultation arrangements for the masterplan and planning application run concurrently for a minimum period of 21 days."

The masterplan submission by NHS Highland seeks to provide a strategic overview for the future development of proposed PDA 3008 for a Stage 1 development. The masterplan has been the subject of consultation and publicity, and is assessed below.

4. CONSULTATIONS

ABC Core Paths: (9th September 2014) – No objections but note that Core Paths C126 (a), C147 (a & b), C148 (a), C310 (a, b c & d) and Aspirational Path A096 all fall within the boundary of the A&B Hospital Estate.

ABC Biodiversity Officer: (23rd June 2014) – No objections. It is noted that there are no natural heritage designations within or close to the masterplan site. The stated intention to develop a Green Space Initiative is consistent with the emergent pLDP. The proposed extension of the Woodland Zone, which is an area known for a variety of Bat species, woodland birds and Red Squirrel, is welcomed although a design and management plan for this element is requested, as is the opportunity to comment upon future proposals relating to Strategic Landscaping.

ABC Development Policy Unit: No comments.

ABC Public Protection: (8th July 2014) – No objections raised and advice provided in respect of a requirement to mitigate against the potential short term effects of construction activity on adjacent residential properties, and that the developer be made aware of the appropriate process in the event that contaminated land were to be identified when carrying out development.

ABC Roads: (16th June 2014) – No objections to 'Stage 1' MHU proposals. Highlight the likely requirement for future development to require access improvements.

Lochgilhead Community Council: (18th August 2014) – Whilst LCC are supportive of proposals for the development of new hospital facilities they also express that they are unable to support the masterplan in its current format with concern raised that the masterplan submission does not make specific provision to identify the potential future use of the Easthouse and other existing surplus buildings.

Comment: It is noted that the current submission seeks to provide only sufficient detail to allow the re-development of the hospital to proceed; a further 'Stage 2' masterplan submission would be required prior to any grant of planning approval in respect of new uses/redevelopment of either the East or West Houses.

Scottish Water: (28th July 2014) – No objections.

Scottish Natural Heritage: (24th July 2014) – Note that all development within the masterplan area should consider the potential impacts that might arise for protected species. SNH encourage the retention of woodland areas to be incorporated within the masterplan and are in agreement with the proposal to create a woodland zone in the south of the site. Encouragement is also offered for the incorporation of green space, including woodland, into developed areas and extension of footpath networks provided that this can be achieved with minimal disturbance to woodland habitats.

West of Scotland Archaeology Service: (11th September 2014) – Note that the site is within an area of some archaeological potential based on the presence of other recorded sites and monuments of prehistoric and medieval date in the surrounding landscape. Whilst much of the site has been disturbed by previous development there do appear to be a number of greenfield locations. Advise that planning permissions be subject to suspensive conditions requiring archaeological evaluation in advance of development works commencing.

5. PUBLICITY

The Masterplan has been advertised in conjunction with the associated planning application ref. 14/01083/PP (expiry date 25th July 2014).

6. REPRESENTATIONS

No representations have been received to date.

7. ASSESSMENT

List of all Development Plan Policy considerations taken into account in assessment of the masterplan.

'Argyll and Bute Structure Plan' 2002

STRAT DC 1 – Development within the Settlements

STRAT DC 7 – Nature Conservation and Development Control

STRAT DC 8 – Landscape and Development Control

STRAT DC 9 – Historic Environment and Development Control

'Argyll and Bute Local Plan' 2009

LP ENV 1 – Impact on the General Environment

LP ENV 2 – Impact on Biodiversity

LP ENV 6 – Impact on Habitats and Species

LP ENV 7 – Impact on Tree/Woodland

LP ENV 13a – Development Impact on Listed Buildings

LP ENV 17 – Impact on Sites of Archaeological Importance

LP ENV 18 – Protection and Enhancement of Buildings

LP ENV 19 – Development Setting, Layout and Design

LP BUS 1 – Business and Industry Proposals in Existing Settlements

LP TOUR 1 – Tourist Facilities and Accommodation, including Caravans

LP HOU 1 – General Housing Development

LP HOU 2 – Provision of Housing to Meet Local Needs including Affordable Housing Provision

LP HOU 4 – Housing Green-Space

LP SERV 1 – Private Sewage Treatment Plants and Wastewater Systems

LP SERV 2 – Incorporation of Natural Features/Sustainable Drainage Systems

LP SERV 3 – Drainage Impact Assessment (DIA)

LP SERV 4 – Water Supply

LP SERV 5 – Waste Related Development and Waste Management Sites

LP SERV 6 – Safeguarding of Existing Waste Management Sites

LP SERV 7 – Contaminated Land

LP TRAN 1 – Public Access and Rights of Way

LP TRAN 2 – Development and Public Transport Accessibility

LP TRAN 3 – Special Needs Access Provision

LP TRAN 4 – New and Existing Public Roads and Private Access Regimes

LP TRAN 5 – Off-site Highway Improvements

LP TRAN 6 – Vehicle Parking Provision

LP TRAN 7 – Safeguarding of Airports

LP TRAN 8 – Piers and Harbours

LP REC 1 – Sport, Leisure and Recreation

LP REC 2 – Safeguarding of Recreational Land and Important Open Spaces

LP COM 1 – Community Facility Development

LP DEP 1 – Departures to the Development Plan

Appendix A – Sustainable Siting and Design Principles

Appendix C – Access and Parking Standards

Appendix E – Allocations, Potential Development Area Schedules and Areas for Action Schedules

List of all other material planning considerations taken into account in the assessment of the application, having due regard to Annex A of Circular 4/2009.

- Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)
- Argyll and Bute proposed Local Development Plan (Feb 2013) (pLDP)

Note: The emergent pLDP is the most recent expression of Council policy, and following the conclusion of public consultation, those elements which are uncontested may be afforded significant material weight in the determination of planning applications at this time.

- PAN 83 – Master Planning
- ABC Masterplan Process (Nov. 2011)
- Statutory/Non-Statutory Consultee Comments

A. Development Plan Context

The masterplan applies to land within the boundary of the Potential Development Area PDA 3008 and masterplan designated area MAST 1/8 as defined in the 'Argyll and Bute Proposed Local Development Plan' (PLDP) being uncontested aspects of that Plan and now the settled view of the Council. Policy LDP DM1 of the pLDP is also relevant as it guides development within the settlement.

The Potential Development Area schedule in the pLDP simply defines that the area is zoned for a mixed use and identifies that any housing component shall provide for 25% affordability. The Masterplan designation MAST 1/8 is more specific in its requirements and identifies that the mixed use components could include business (Use Class 4), housing (Use Class 9), tourism and community facilities.

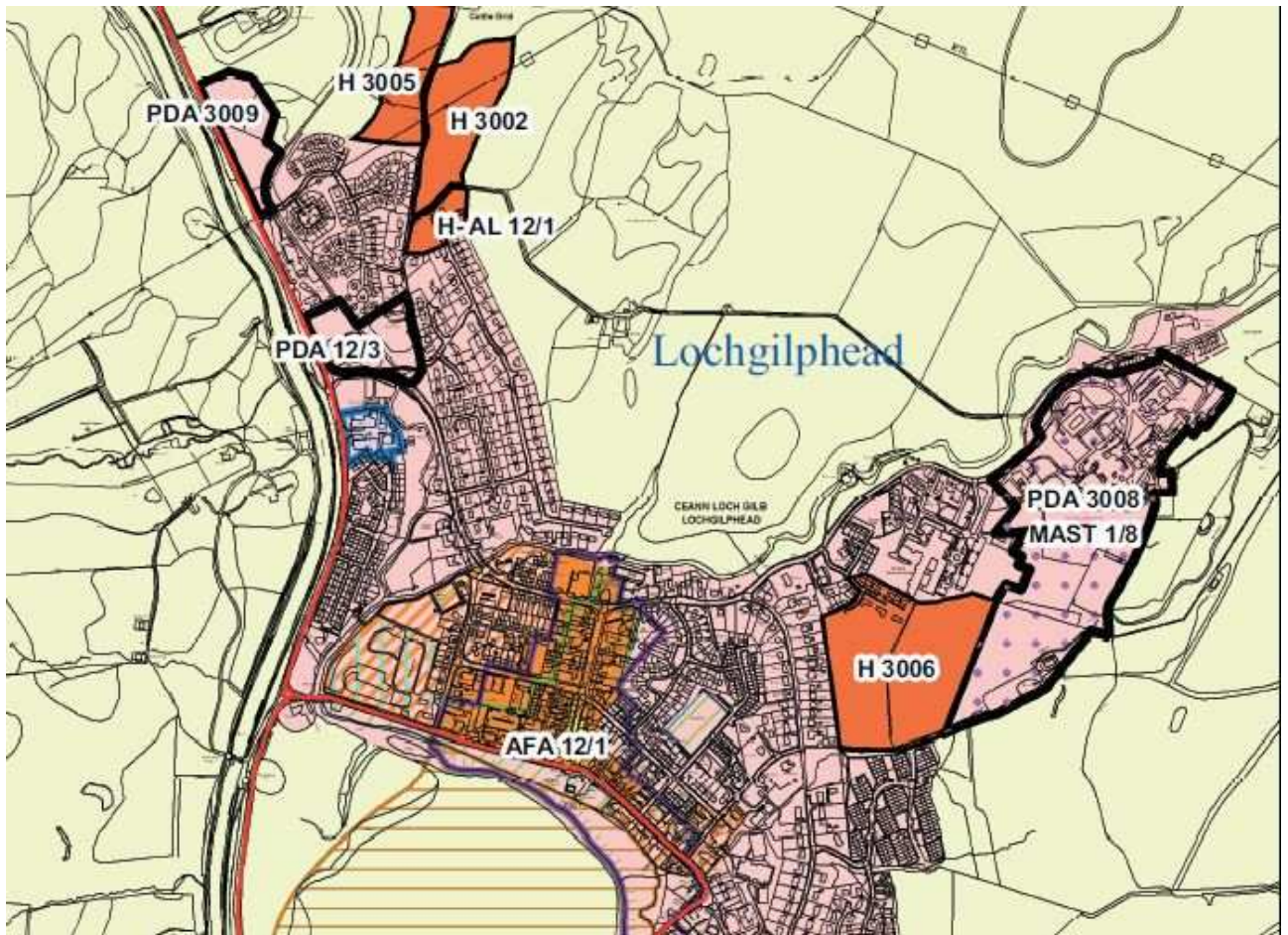
In relation to the housing, no specific density is advocated but there remains a requirement that 25% of housing should be affordable housing having regard to policy LDP 8 (SG LDP HOU 1) in the pLDP and also policy LP HOU 2 in the present statutory Local Plan.

Having regard to the adopted Argyll and Bute Local Plan 2009 the whole of the masterplan area is located within 'Settlement Area' in which policy STRAT DC 1 applies and sets out a general presumption for up to and including large scale development. The main body of the site is also located within AFA12/3 which promotes a study of the re-development potential of the hospital estate; a portion of the masterplan area lies outwith AFA 12/3 but is included within PDA 12/1 which promotes medium density housing development.

Whilst the boundary of the masterplan submission sits at odds with the existing AFA 12/3 and PDA 12/1 boundaries the development intentions expressed are consistent with the aspirations expressed in the adopted Local Plan, it is however considered appropriate to afford greater material weighting to the uncontested elements of the emergent pLDP, including proposed designations PDA 3008 and MAST 1/8 as the most recent expression of Council policy in relation to this location.

B. Settlement Strategy

The masterplan area is entirely contained within the 'settlement area' for Lochgilphead and is identified in the emergent Argyll and Bute proposed Local Development Plan as a mixed use PDA promoting business, housing, tourism and community facilities. The masterplan submitted by NHS Highland covers the full extent of the PDA 3008 & MAST 1/8 designations.



Policies applying to 'Settlement Area as defined in the pLDP':

Lochgilphead is identified as a 'Main Town' in the current Local Plan and retains this status within the pLDP; within the emergent plan the status of the Argyll and Bute Hospital site is also upgraded from an identified Area for Action to a mixed use PDA.

Having regard to the adopted Local Plan, the provisions of STRAT DC 1, LP HOU 1, LP BUS 1, LP TOUR 1 and LP COM 1 would in principle be supportive of 'large scale' housing, business, tourism of community facilities development on appropriate 'infill', rounding-off' or re-development sites.

In the emergent plan the relevant provisions of proposed policies LDP DM1 (development within the settlement zone), LDP 5 (supporting the sustainable growth of our economy), LDP 8 (supporting the strength of our communities, embracing housing) and LDP 11 (improving our connectivity and infrastructure) would set out the provisions for assessment of a mixed use development at this location, again with up to and including 'large scale' development being supported in principle.

C. Location, Nature and Design of Proposed Development

NHS Highland have confirmed that the principle requirement of the current masterplan submission is to allow the release of land for the re-development of the Argyll and Bute Hospital as a first phase of development by demonstrating that such proposal would not preclude or prejudice the ability to realise the aspirations for a mixed use development within the remainder of the PDA. The masterplan conclusions also identify an area of land within the south western corner of the site which is isolated from the main part of the hospital estate and which could be released for housing development.

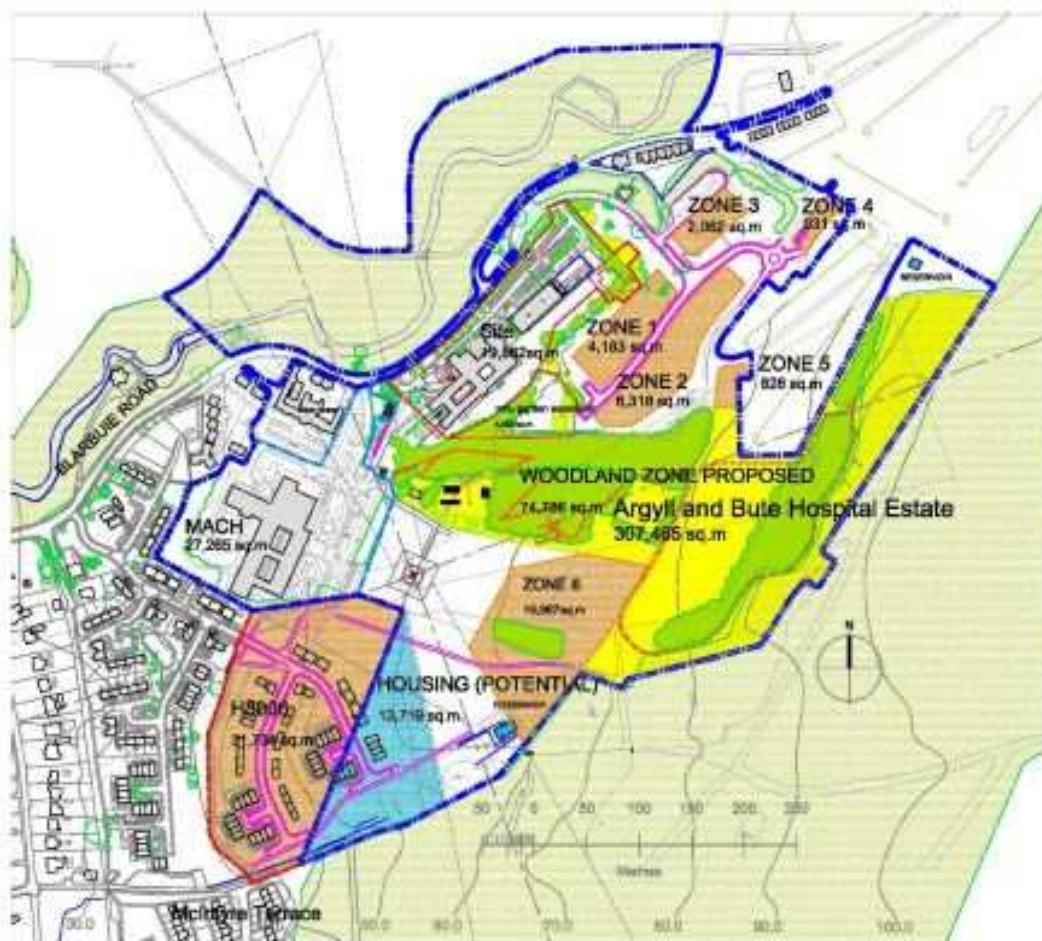


Fig. 10 – Base Development Plan, Argyll and Bute Hospital buildings demolished and new road infrastructure.

The masterplan area extends to almost 15ha and encompasses the entirety of the Argyll and Bute Hospital Buildings, Blarbuie Woodlands and the upper and lower reservoirs which provide the hospital's water supply. The masterplan area is bounded to the north and north east by Lochgilphead Golf Course and the High Woods beyond and Blarbuie Cottages, to the west and south by commercial forestry, and to the east by the Mid Argyll Community Hospital (MACH) and Housing Allocation H3006.

The document submitted by NHS Highland sets out proposals for the Stage 1 site for the redevelopment of the existing hospital, an area identified for housing development, the Blarbuie Woodland zone, and the safeguarding zone for the MACH helicopter landing pad within the masterplan area, in addition to a mixed use development across 6 potential development zones where no definitive solution is offered at this time,.

The new **Mental Health Unit (Site)** would be developed within 1.98ha on the north eastern edge of the masterplan area. The new development would include for the erection of new clinical and facilities management buildings and would require demolition of both Succoth and Tigh na Linne, and substantial felling of the intervening woodland. NHS Highland have submitted a detailed planning application (ref. 14/01083/PP) which sets out their detailed design proposals for the MHU which is considered elsewhere on the Committee agenda. It is however noted that the re-use of the site for provision of a rationalised hospital facility is acceptable in principle as this would not involve any material change in use from the established lawful use of the site.

Within the remainder of the masterplan area the submission gives consideration to potential generic land uses as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997. This general overview concludes that the site has potential for development to

include Class 4 (Offices & Light Industry), Class 7 (Hotels and Hostels), Class 8 (Residential Institutions), and Class 9 (Houses), Class 10 (Non-residential Institutions) and Class 11 (Assembly and Leisure). As a stage 1 masterplan however it is confirmed that NHS Highland have not as yet sought to market the availability of the land or sought to confirm the level or nature of any expected demand for either the existing buildings or land within the masterplan area at this time. Initial discussions to inform the masterplan have been undertaken with local developers and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. The masterplan submission records that these parties have noted the allocation of sufficient business and industry land elsewhere within Lochgilphead to meet foreseeable requirements; concern is also expressed that the proximity of land to an operational mental health facility may suppress property value, similarly doubts are raised as to the challenges that the scale and condition of existing buildings might pose to their redevelopment potential.

Housing (Potential) extends to 1.3ha adjoining the eastern limits of housing allocation H3006 as defined in the emergent Local Development Plan and contained to the north and east by the limits of the safeguarding area for the MACH helicopter pad. The masterplan identifies that this site would be isolated from, and be accessed separately from the remainder of the masterplan site with vehicular access being provided by extension of the existing housing development on the former Lochgilphead High School site to the west. Development of the site offers potential for pedestrian and cycling connectivity through Blarbuie Woodlands/Zone 6 to the main body of the masterplan area. The masterplan sets that this site would be suitable for social housing development although housing mix would ultimately be determined by the applicable policies at the time development is taken forward (currently the Development Plan specifies a minimum of 25% affordability). It is suggested that the density of development within this site would be similar to that of the adjacent housing allocation (medium density 13-20 units per hectare).

Land within control of the **Blarbuie Woodland Trust** currently extends to some 7.47ha with the lower woodland located centrally within the masterplan area and extending to the eastern boundary of the masterplan area; the upper woodland lies further to the west outwith the masterplan boundary. The masterplan proposes that the Trust's storage and mess accommodation be relocated to adjoin Ardmeanoch (a disused dwelling located beside the helipad). The relocation of stores from their current position is necessary to accommodate the new MHU.

Zones 1, 2 & 3 relate to principal buildings within the site, including the East and West Houses. These properties have been subject of a recent listing review by Historic Scotland; whilst Historic Scotland have determined that it would not be appropriate to afford listed status to these structures the buildings are considered to be of considerable local interest and in this respect it is noted that any future proposals involving their demolition would require to be considered against the relevant provisions of the existing/proposed Development Plan (LP ENV 18/SG LDP ENV 21) which set out a preference for reuse and enhancement of existing buildings which make a substantial contribution to the character and appearance of an area.

The submission advises that in terms of scale and complexity of accommodation both the East and West Houses have extensive internal corridors, changes in level and compromised escape routes which might render their conversion both difficult and expensive in terms of compliance with current building regulations.

The submission also notes that, despite planning permission not being required for the demolition of non-domestic, unlisted buildings, NHS Highland through its membership of the Community Planning Partnership has an obligation to fully consult and seek consent for the wholesale demolition of buildings. In this respect the masterplan sets out NHS Highland's intentions to retain and find new uses for those buildings which are most easily converted/upgraded.

Zone 1 amounts to some 0.42ha and contains part of the existing West House buildings and its immediate garden area. Zone 2 amounts to 0.63ha and contains the remainder of the West House and its associated outbuildings to the north east. The proposals simply set out an aspiration to demolish the West House (and associated outbuildings) to create a clear space for potential commercial development.

Zone 3 is 0.2ha in area and relates to the existing East House building; the masterplan sets out an initial intention that the East House building be retained and converted to a new use if possible; no such commercially viable use has been established at this time and it is instead highlighted that a further options appraisal study to this ascertain the redevelopment potential of the East House would be required.

Zone 4 amounts to almost 0.1ha and relates to the site of a former storage building which has already been cleared with only its road base and floorslab remaining. The masterplan acknowledges that any new development within Zone 4 would require improvement of the existing road access, be limited as a result of the small scale of the site and would sit remotely from the redevelopment of the main hospital.

Zone 5 relates to existing boilerhouse and laundry buildings and is some 0.08ha in area. This site is similarly remote from the main hospital development with its potential limited by its small scale of the site and poor road access. The masterplan identifies that this site may have some potential to be utilised for residential development.

Zone 6 extends to some 1.5ha located which was formerly occupied by playing fields and other small scale recreational facilities associated with the A&B Hospital; this part of the masterplan area is separated from the main hospital complex by the intervening lower Blarbuie Woodland and as a consequence is both an elevated and prominent location within the wider landscape setting of Lochgilphead. Zone 6 also contains a small area of Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland. The masterplan acknowledges that the development potential is restricted by its remoteness from existing built development and the requirement for road improvement but nonetheless seeks to highlight that there may be some commercial value for the development of private housing at this location. Officers have raised concern that such development may result in buildings which are not only dislocated from the existing built environment of Lochgilphead, but which would also feature prominently and incongruously upon the local landscape setting. However, the current masterplan submission only seeks to provide sufficient information to allow disposal of land for Stage 1 development; Zones 1-6 are not included within the Stage 1 development and as such would require to be the subject of a further masterplan submission prior to the an application for planning permission being determined.

D. Built Environment / Landscape Impact

The masterplan relates to land contained within the Lochgilphead 'settlement area' as defined within the emergent Local Development Plan, wherein the site is subject to designations PDA 3008 and MAST 1/8.

Existing buildings within the masterplan area are, for the main part, are distinctly separate from the main built development associated with the Lochgilphead 'settlement area' and as such are contained within a mature woodland setting. The proposed MHU development, and any future redevelopment within Zones 1 – 5 would be anticipated to also be relatively inconspicuous within the wider landscape setting with the retention of the Blarbuie Woodlands and provision of compensatory planting likely to screen these areas from view in the wider landscape setting. The western most area identified for medium density housing development adjoining housing allocation H3006 would appear to be a natural extension of the current built form on the upper slopes of Lochgilphead. Officers have however raised concern about the prospect of new built development being introduced to Zone 6 given the anticipated adverse landscape/townscape implications which might arise from development of this prominent and

elevated location – this particular aspect of the masterplan is an indication of NHS Highland’s intentions for the disposal of land and the onus would be on the landowner to try and adequately address these concerns in any future masterplan submissions to secure release of the land for development.

The masterplan notes the potential for new development to adversely impact upon the amenity of existing residential development but advises that an existing intervening woodland buffer would be retained to provide mitigation and screening.

E. Natural Environment

Policy STRAT DC 7 of the Structure Plan states that development which impacts on wildlife sites or other nature conservation interests, including sites, habitats or species at risk will be assessed on its acceptability balanced with social and economic considerations. It also notes that enhancements to nature conservation issues are encouraged. Policies LP ENV 2, LP ENV 6, and LP ENV 7 are also applicable in this respect. Within the context of the proposed LDP the relevant policy provisions would be LDP 3, SG LDP 1, SG LDP 6, and SG LDP 8.

There are no natural heritage designations within, or close to, the masterplan site area.

Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland (SNAW) designations are present within a portion of the masterplan boundary and also adjoin the east and west of the site. Within the site the SNAW designation is restricted to Zone 6 which is identified as a difficult site to develop having regard to its relatively remote location from existing hospital buildings and infrastructure, nonetheless NHS Highland have advised that they would wish to explore whether this portion of the masterplan site has any commercial value for private housing development.

The masterplan acknowledges that substantial tree felling of mature woodland located between Succoth and Tigh na Linne would be required in order to accommodate the proposed new hospital development. The masterplan suggests that replacement planting could be provided on land to the east of Zone 6 (lying outwith the masterplan site) in a manner which could consolidate the currently separate upper and lower areas of the Blarbuie Woodland – it is recommended that, having regard to the requirements of LP ENV 7, any planning permission granted for the redevelopment of the hospital on the proposed phase I site be subject to a conditional requirement for the further approval and implementation of a detailed compensatory planting scheme.

Both SNH and the Council’s Biodiversity Officer have advised of their support for the proposed extension of woodland areas in the south of the site, and to the masterplan in general but note that any future development proposals should include appropriate consideration of the potential impact of such development upon protected species which might be present in the locality, including Red Squirrel and Bats.

F. Historic Environment

One category B listed building, Firgrove, is located within the masterplan boundary. The masterplan recognises that any new development would require to respect the setting of this property which would, in principle, accord with the requirements of policies STRAT DC 9 and LP ENV 13(a), and the proposed SG LDP 16(a).

The Argyll and Bute Hospital has been the subject of a recent listing review in 2012 by Historic Scotland. The outcome of the review reaffirmed that the listed status of Firgrove but provided confirmation that the remaining buildings (specifically the West House, East House, Tigh-na-Linne) were not considered to be of sufficient special architectural interest to merit their listing.

The West of Scotland Archaeology Service have highlighted that the masterplan site is within an area of some archaeological potential based on the presence of other recorded sites and

monuments of prehistoric and medieval date in the surrounding landscape. Whilst much of the site has been disturbed by previous development there do appear to be a number of greenfield locations. It is advised that, if the masterplan were to be approved, that it would be appropriate to address any archaeological sensitivity on a site by site basis in respect of individual applications for detailed planning permission – this approach would be consistent with the relevant provisions of LP ENV 17 and the proposed SG LDP ENV 20.

G. Affordable Housing

Proposed designation PDA 3008 in the emergent Local Development Plan sets out a requirement for 25% affordable housing provision within the masterplan area. The only residential component identified within ‘Stage 1’ is the land which adjoins Housing Allocation H3006, delivery of affordable housing would be secured at such time as a detailed planning application were to be pursued for this location.

H. Road Network, Parking and Associated Transport Matters

The masterplan area is currently accessed from Blarbuie Road, which is an adopted public road. There are currently three accesses which serve the A&B Hospital, a lower access serving Tigh-na-Linne which connects directly to Blarbuie Road, the principle access to the hospital which is a private road extending from the junction to the Golf Course, there is also a secondary, unadopted access adjacent to Blarbuie Cottages. The current submission sets out an expectation that the existing access regime would continue to be utilised to serve the Stage 1 MHU re-development in addition to new development within Zones 1 – 6. Any housing development on the portion of the masterplan adjoining Housing Allocation H3006 would be served by an extension of the adoption standard road serving new residential development at Burns Brae (former LHS site).

The Council’s Roads Officers have advised that the proposed new mental health unit will not require any significant improvement of the existing roads serving the site. It is highlighted however that further development proposals are likely to require the provision of an adoption standard road to serve Zones 1 – 3; further commensurate improvements would be required for development in the remaining areas, the scope of improvement works being dependent on the scale of development proposed.

Lochgilphead is well served by a local bus service to the adjacent MACH, which in turn offers connections with longer distance networks.

The Council’s Core Paths Team have advised that Core Paths C126 (a), C147 (a & b), C148 (a), C310 (a, b c & d) and Aspirational Path A096 all fall within the boundary of the A&B Hospital Estate. Any future development proposals should be developed having regard to the relevant provisions of LP TRAN 1 (and the proposed SG LDP TRAN 1).

I. Infrastructure & Services

The existing A&B Hospital is presently served by a private water supply, the masterplan however acknowledges that in order to facilitate redevelopment of the site it will be necessary to alter and make diversion to the existing private infrastructure. The new MHU is proposed to have an entirely separate connection to the Scottish Water mains supply; it is intended that the remaining private network will also be connected to a public supply. The site is connected to the public sewer. Scottish Water have not raised objection to the proposals set out in the masterplan.

J. Conclusion

PDAs are defined in the adopted Local Plan as areas of land within which opportunities may emerge during the period of the Local Plan (5 to 10 years) for infill, rounding-off,

redevelopment or new development. Such opportunities as were identified were not fully resolved at the time of the adoption of the plan, which requires constraints to be overcome in terms of the 'mini development brief' accompanying these PDAs before development opportunities within the PDA area can be realised and be supported by the Local Plan.

The Council supports developments that contribute to the economic vitality and sustainability of the locality. Both the Scottish Government and the Council places the delivery of sustainable economic growth as its number one objective.

The masterplan sets out NHS Highland's intention for a structured approach to development which is sufficiently flexible to adapt to the changing economic climate. It is intended to deliver development in a phased manner commencing with the MHU re-development; and, with the exception of land identified for housing development and areas required for replacement facilities for the Blarbuie Woodland Trust and compensatory planting, the submission acknowledges that further consideration of the remaining area (Zones 1 – 6) would be required.

The masterplan, whilst indicative, gives all interested parties and statutory consultees sufficient detail to assess the key issues which would be raised by the intended 'Stage 1' development and sufficient comfort that this does not prejudice the potential of the remainder of the masterplan area (Zones 1 – 6). Assessed against Development Plan Policy and other material considerations the components of the mixed-use development are considered to be compatible with the proposed PDA 3008 and MAST 1/8; the proposal is also considered to be a good fit with the intentions of the current Local Plan designations AFA 12/3 and PDA 12/1. As such it is considered fit for purpose. It is recommended that it be approved and endorsed as a material consideration in the assessment of future planning applications located within the masterplan area.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy:	None
Financial:	None
Personnel:	None
Equal opportunities:	None

Author of Report: Peter Bain

Date: 11th September 2014

Angus Gilmour
Head of Planning and Regulatory Services