



# Residential Development

## Site H1 in Stuartfield

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### Masterplan Report

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Colaren Properties Ltd

April 2013

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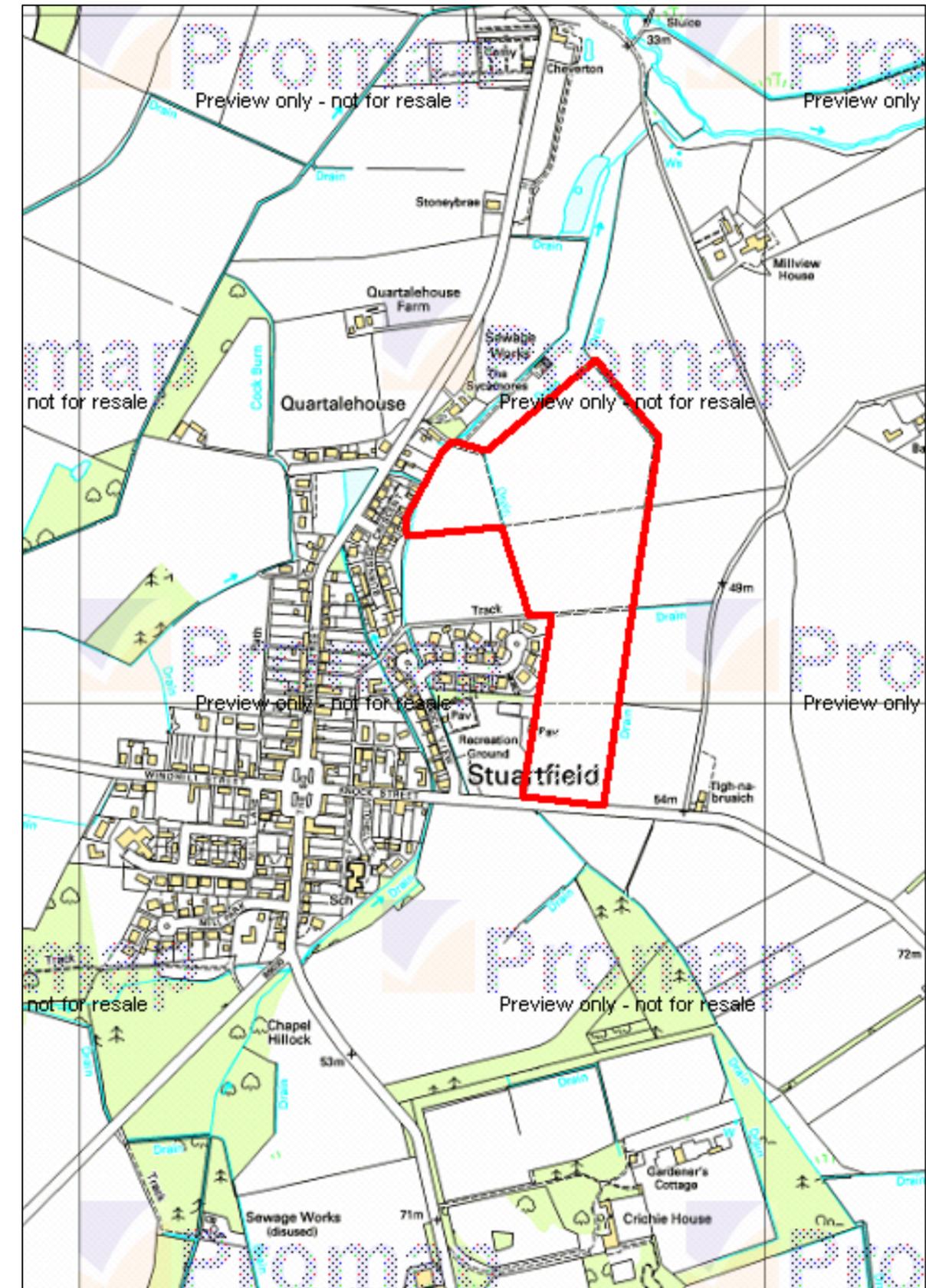
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## 1.0 Introduction and Vision

- 1.1 Colaren Properties Ltd have devised a vision for the masterplan area which is to deliver a high quality residential expansion to the village of Stuartfield (known locally as Crichtie). This vision seeks to maximise the site's potential by taking advantage of the key physical and natural characteristics and create a well-laid out extension to the village which creates a sense of place and shares an identity with the existing settlement.
- 1.2 The settlement of Stuartfield lies to the west of Mintlaw and approximately 1.1 miles south of Old Deer. The site (see Figure 1) is located to the east of the existing village and is situated immediately adjacent to the Crichtie Meadows development.
- 1.3 Stuartfield is primarily a commuter village, largely due to it being an accessible place well located for employment opportunities in Peterhead, Fraserburgh and Aberdeen. It also contains a number of people who have retired to the village.
- 1.4 The land is allocated in the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan (LDP) for up to 75 houses (site H1) along with an area reserved for sport and recreation facilities (site R2).
- 1.5 The vision of the masterplan prepared by Colaren Properties Ltd seeks to provide a sympathetic expansion to Stuartfield, which is contained within the landscape; be designed to a high quality in terms of building design, layout and landscaping; and provide a new distributor road to the east of the settlement as well as land for sport/recreation facilities.
- 1.6 Prior to bringing forward a planning application for individual phases of the development, there is a requirement for a masterplan to be prepared for the whole H1 site. It is anticipated that this masterplan will be approved as the context for future planning applications that come forward for the land to the east of Stuartfield and will provide planning guidance for the assessment and consideration of planning applications.

Figure 1 - Location Plan



## 2.0 Context – Planning Policy Review

### **National Guidance**

2.1 In preparing the masterplan for Stuartfield, regard has been had to Scottish Planning Policy and the need to consider and comply in particular with the guidance set down in:

- Scottish Planning Policy;
- Designing Places and Designing Streets;
- Planning Advice Note 83 – Masterplanning; and
- Planning Advice Note 3/2010 – Community Engagement.

Reference to the guidance in these documents is considered further in other parts of the masterplan.

### **Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan**

2.2 The Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan was approved by Scottish Ministers in August 2009. The Structure Plan advocates that new development needs to focus on communities and should relate to local needs and this is reflected in the LDP housing allocation for the village of Stuartfield.

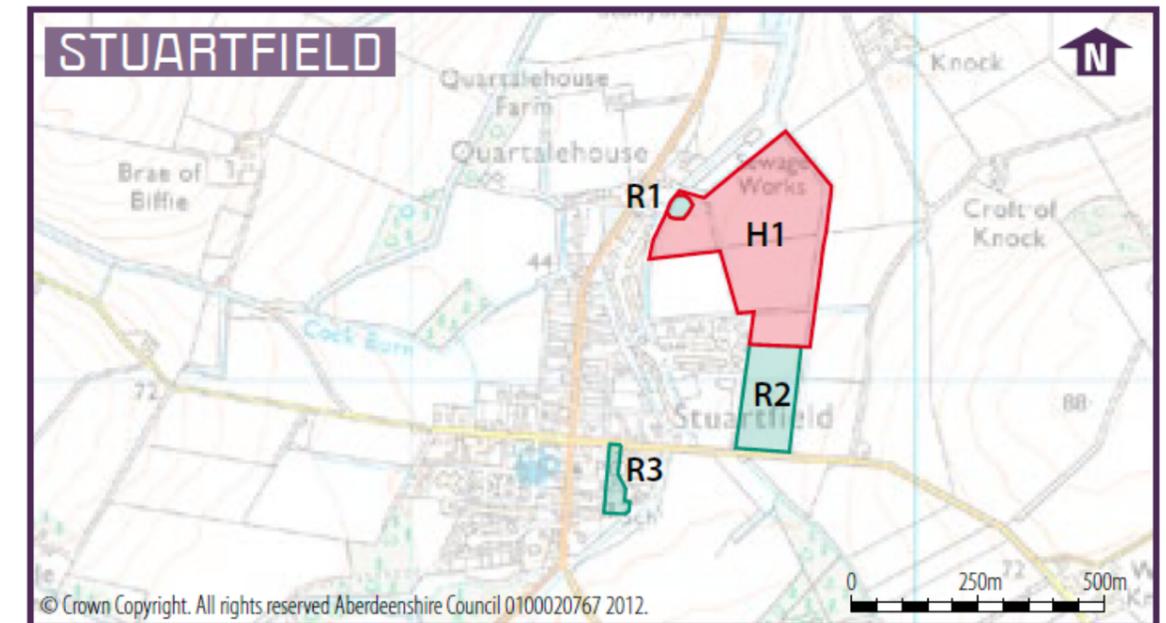
2.3 The Proposed Strategic Development Plan (which will replace the Structure Plan) was published for public consultation in January 2013 and it is expected to be formally approved by Scottish Ministers by August 2013. It is not proposed to change the current Structure Plan vision and spatial strategy with the emphasis remaining on a high growth strategy across the region with a focus on supporting the needs of local communities in local growth areas i.e. those rural/semi-rural settlements like Stuartfield which are outwith the Strategic Growth Areas and require new development to sustain existing services.

### **Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan**

2.4 The current LDP for Aberdeenshire was adopted in June 2012. Site H1 in Stuartfield is identified for up to 50 houses in the first phase of the plan, which runs up to 2016 and a further 25 houses in the second phase of the plan which runs from 2017-2023. (see Figure 2).

2.5 Also of relevance to the site H1 allocation are site R1 which is reserved for a sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS) basin in the form of a water detention basin and site R2 which has been reserved for community use.

Figure 2 – Extract from the Aberdeenshire LDP



### **Supplementary Guidance**

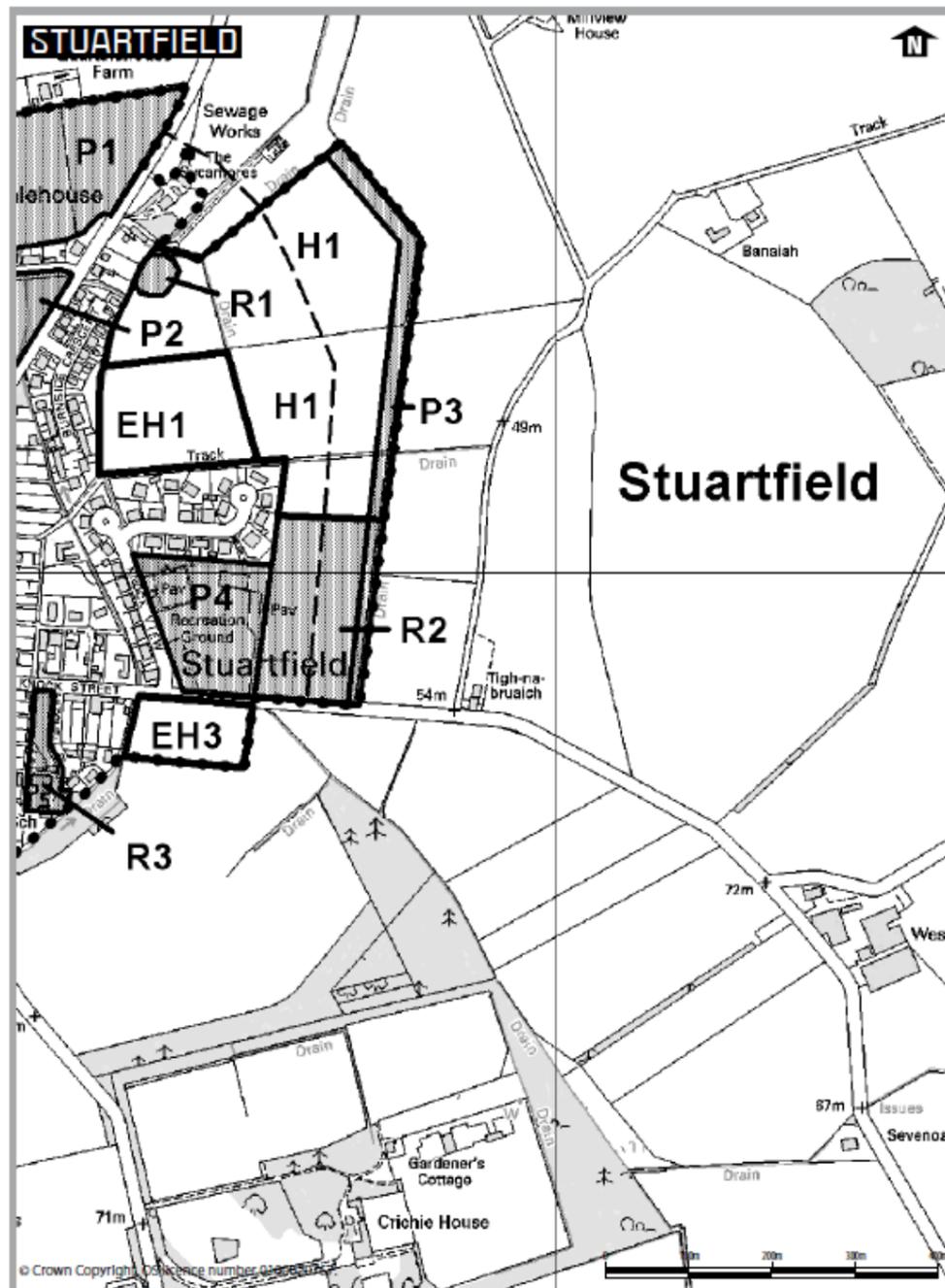
2.6 The supplementary guidance which sits alongside the adopted LDP for Aberdeenshire states that a masterplan must be prepared for Site H1 in Stuartfield.

2.7 Affordable housing requires to be provided at a rate of 10%.

2.8 The supplementary guidance also states that there may be a requirement for one additional classroom at Stuartfield Primary School and possible upgrade to the Waste Water Treatment Works.

- 2.9 A new distributor road is required along the eastern side of the settlement through site H1 as illustrated by the dotted line in the supplementary guidance (see Figure 3).
- 2.10 The supplementary guidance requires land to be reserved for sport and recreation facilities. In addition, the supplementary guidance requires 0.4 acres of land to be reserved for a new NHS health centre.
- 2.11 Site R1 shows land to be reserved for SUDS. P3 shows land proposed for strategic landscaping within the context of the H1 development. P4 shows land protected to conserve the recreation ground.

**Figure 3 - Extract from Aberdeenshire LDP Supplementary Guidance**



2.12 In developing the design and layout for the masterplan regard has been taken of the range of Supplementary Guidance policies and advice available from Aberdeenshire Council. The following documents have been particularly helpful in developing the masterplan:

- Policy SG LSD2: Layout, Siting and Design of New Development; and
- Policy SG LSD1: Masterplanning.
- Planning Advice 7/2012 – Implementation of Policy SG LSD1

**Proposal of Application Notice**

2.13 As the proposed development of the land at Stuartfield is a major development as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009, a Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) required to be submitted for the site. A PoAN was submitted and registered in September 2012 (Reference ENQ/2012/1577) for Site H1 for the proposed residential development and accompanying infrastructure.

**Site EH1 development**

2.14 Colaren Properties Ltd are currently developing the site EH1 which is carried forward from the previous local plan. This development, known locally as Crichie Meadows, currently has planning permission for 39 dwellinghouses (reference APP/2009/1184).

### 3.0 Site Analysis and Appraisal

#### ***Built Heritage of Stuartfield***

- 3.1 Stuartfield was originally built as a planned village with four wide streets radiating outwards from a central square (or village green) to the north, south, east and west. Many of the original buildings still stand. The dwellings were originally built to a design known as a “house and a half”, the half length extension being a workroom to house the loom. Further planned extensions of the settlement did not occur until the 1970s, when new homes were built. There has been a steady increase of small-scale extensions to the settlement since then.
- 3.2 The existing building stock of the village is of a low-rise and traditional variety generally finished in local building stone or dry-dash harl walls with slate or tiled roofs. Development in the historic part of Stuartfield is generally cottages, built in grey or brown granite. Some have been altered with higher walls, a second storey and/or dormer windows. Local authority housing is generally two storeys and constructed in pink granite or finished in dry dash. Recent dwellings are predominantly bungalows and finished in cream or light brown dry dash with pale grey or beige synthetic stone on the corners.
- 3.3 Most of the recent commercial suburban-style development bounds the masterplan site to the west, south-west, and across Knock Street to the south. Open aspects are found to the northern and eastern boundaries of the masterplan site.
- 3.4 It is not believed that the H1 site is important in archaeological terms, however an appropriate planning condition attached to the granting of any planning consent for development of the site will ensure that these matters are considered and investigated during the course of development. Should artefacts of local significance (e.g. standing stones) be discovered during the construction phase of the development then opportunities to incorporate these as artwork features within housing areas will be fully explored.

#### ***Landscape***

- 3.5 Stuartfield lies within a valley formed by four small hills, with several small water courses running through it. The surrounding land is flat agricultural land, interspersed with trees, before it rises upwards on all sides with large areas of woodland to the north (Aden Country Park), west and south (landscaped grounds of Crichtie House).
- 3.6 The masterplan area (comprising sites H1, R1, R2 and P3) is known as Hillview Farm and it measures a total of 9.5ha. The land is currently in partial agricultural use and it sits on the eastern boundary of the planned village of Stuartfield in central Buchan.

- 3.7 The masterplan site itself is fairly flat and is naturally drained to its periphery. The lowest points of the site are to the extreme northern end. Sporadic mature trees and shrubs exist along the northern and north-eastern boundary. An existing path (public right of way) dissects the site in the centre, leading westwards towards the heart of the village and eastwards to connect to an established pedestrian route to Aden Country Park which is just over a mile to the north.

#### ***Ecology***

- 3.8 The H1 site lies near to a burn which runs alongside Knock View and drains to the pond in the centre of the village. To the north, the site is bounded by the waste water treatment works. To the west the H1 site is bounded by the existing Crichtie Meadows development and to the north-west by the properties on Burnside Crescent and to the south-west by the properties on Knock View as well as the recreation grounds. There is a footpath link which runs through the middle of the site and connects the village to the countryside and woodland which bounds the site to the east. To the south the site is bounded by Knock Street. The site itself is largely arable farmland and there are also hedgerows and mature trees.

#### ***Services***

- 3.9 Discussions have been held with Scottish Water which have established that the site can be serviced both in terms of water and foul drainage. The masterplan site is well drained with surface water naturally draining to the nearby burn at Knock View. In due course, a full Drainage Impact Assessment will be required to support a detailed planning application.
- 3.10 The site is already served by mains gas. There are no overhead hydro electricity cables which run through the site. Recycling facilities are particularly accessible being located immediately to the south adjacent to the recreation ground at Knock Street.
- 3.11 The latest school roll forecasts show that there is capacity in Stuartfield Primary School to accommodate the envisaged level of new pupils arising from the development. It is anticipated that financial contributions from the development will go towards providing one new classroom at the primary school to replace the existing temporary accommodation. In terms of secondary schools, children from the village attend Mintlaw Academy which also has sufficient capacity to accommodate new pupils.
- 3.12 Local services and community facilities such as shops, pubs and post offices have struggled to survive in some rural villages. The addition of new housing will help to sustain facilities in Stuartfield. The masterplan also provides the opportunity to provide improvements to the existing amenities by providing land for new sports/recreation facilities as well as reserving land for the potential relocation of the existing health centre in Stuartfield (should NHS wish to relocate) which is heavily utilised at present.

### Constraints

- 3.13 There are not considered to be any constraints on the land which prohibit the development of up to 75 houses over the next 10+ years. The principal consideration is to ensure that the development can integrate with the existing settlement whilst at the same time protecting the amenity of the existing residents.

### Drainage

- 3.14 Natural drainage already exists along the burn which bounds the site and the dwellings on Burnside Crescent. The site can also be drained to the two large SUDS ponds proposed to the north of the site. A waste water treatment plan lies immediately adjacent to the northern boundary of the site, therefore surface and foul water could scarcely be better dealt with on any site.

### Non-Vehicular Connectivity

- 3.15 Central to the masterplan is to ensure high permeability of the development (e.g. using a pathway through the heart of the site, a circular pathway, making the layout attractive to walkers etc.) into the centre of the village and eastwards to Aden Country Park exist to encourage walking and cycling as an alternative to the car.

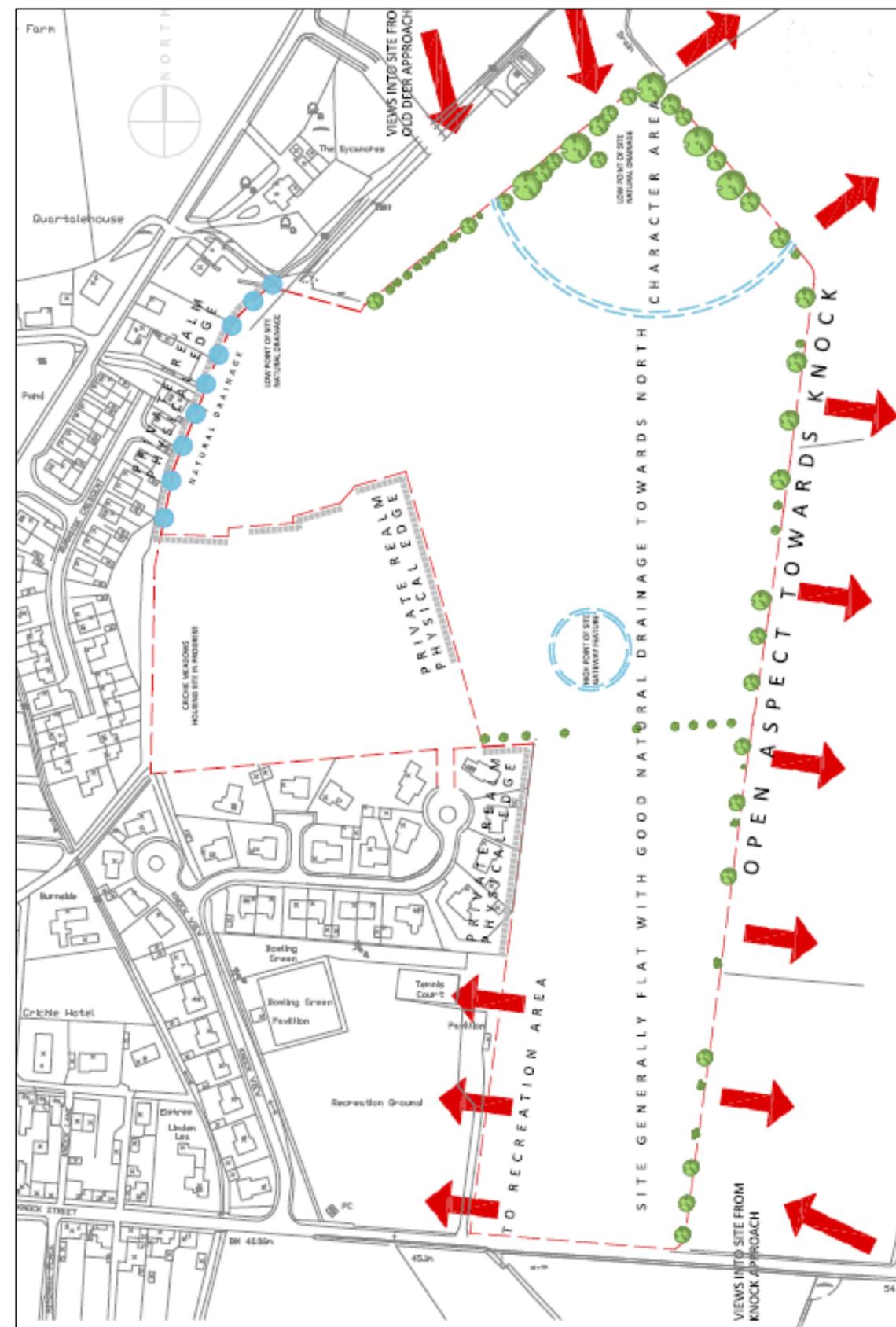
### Vehicular Access

- 3.16 Colaren Properties had reached the maximum number of units that were permitted to be constructed from the existing access (19 units). The increase (to 26 units) is preferential to the closing down the works on site. This will allow the Crichton Meadows development to progress, by which point it is anticipated that this masterplan will be approved to allow for the construction of the new distributor road from Knock Street to the east of the settlement. This new road will provide access for the entire development with an aspiration for it to carry on through the site to the north-west and linking back to Burnett Street. This new road will allow the existing access from Knock View into Crichton Meadows to be closed off to vehicular traffic and retained as a pedestrian and cycle route only (e.g. using bollards to allow access for emergency service vehicles).
- 3.17 The masterplan for the development also seeks to adopt a “home zone” approach whereby there is pedestrian priority and key nodes identified around a hierarchy of streets and spaces.

### Aspect

- 3.18 Views of the wider countryside will be utilised by orientating houses to face east where possible. Landscaping along this boundary will help to provide a soft edge to the village when looking from the east.

Figure 4 – Site Appraisal



## 4.0 Community Engagement

- 4.1 An important part of preparing the masterplan is recognising that public consultation and gaining the support of consultees is essential for the successful delivery of the proposals. The public consultation for both the masterplan and a future planning application has been run in tandem to avoid duplication. Details of the public consultation undertaken are also set down in the Proposal of Application Notices that were submitted for the site.
- 4.2 Consultation has been undertaken following the best practice guidelines as set out in Planning Advice Note 3/2010 - Community Engagement. In this respect the following meetings have been held with stakeholders and the local community.

### ***First Public Exhibition***

- 4.3 The first public exhibition of the masterplan was held in Stuartfield Village Hall on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2012. The open day event ran from 2pm until 7pm. An advert giving notification of the exhibition was placed in the Buchan Observer newspaper. Posters were displayed in key locations within the village such as the local shop. Personal invitations were sent out to key stakeholders and a press release was also issued to the media to help publicise the event.
- 4.5 Representatives of the developer hosted the public meeting to provide information and discuss the emerging ideas for the future development of the site. Around 45 people attended the event and several responses (questionnaire forms, letters or emails) were returned at or after the event to help inform the evolution of the design and layout of the masterplan. The main issues that were brought up at this initial meeting are discussed later in this chapter.

### ***Second Public Exhibition***

- 4.6 The second public exhibition was again held in Stuartfield Village Hall on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2013. The open day event ran from 2pm until 8pm. An advert giving notification of the exhibition was placed in the Buchan Observer newspaper. Posters were again displayed in key locations within the village such as the local shop. Personal invitations were sent out to key stakeholders and a press release was also issued to the media to help publicise the event.
- 4.7 As per the initial public meeting, representatives of the developer hosted the second event to provide information and discuss the emerging ideas for the future development of site H1 in Stuartfield. This time over 50 people attended the event and the main issues that were brought up are discussed later in this chapter.

## ***Deer Community Council and Stuartfield Community Association***

- 4.8 Members of Stuartfield Community Association, as well as members of Deer Community Council, were directly invited to attend both of the open day consultation events. The main issue raised by members of the public was the need to get the new access in place so that the existing Knock View access can be closed off to through traffic.

### ***Meeting with Stuartfield Primary School***

- 4.9 Representatives of the developer attended a meeting with local school children in October 2012 to seek ideas and suggestions as to how the masterplan proposals could be delivered to best meet the future needs of the village. The majority of local schoolchildren were in favour of new housing in Stuartfield in order to provide open space and play areas.

### ***Design Review Panel***

- 4.10 The emerging masterplan proposals were presented to the Design Review Panel (DRP) at a meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2013. The advised that the site could accommodate more than 75 houses and that an increase may create a better layout. Nonetheless, the DRP provides advice on how to improve the 75-house layout and this resulted in changes to the orientation of the houses, the aggregation of the open space across the site, and the realignment of the distributor road to better achieve the “home zone” layout.

### ***Feedback from First Consultation Event***

- 4.11 The comments received at the first public consultation event focused on the following issues:
- Future housing development will help sustain Stuartfield Primary School and other services in the village such as the nursery, the local shop and the pub.
  - The existing access into Crichtie Meadows from Knock View should be closed to vehicular traffic and retained as a pedestrian and cycle route only. The distributor road into the H1 site from Knock Street should be provided immediately to relieve traffic currently using Knock View.
  - The existing 30mph speed restriction along Knock Street should be extended outwards to beyond the H1 site boundary to the east.
  - Existing footpaths should be maintained to preserve the walking routes through the site to the wider countryside. New footpaths links should also be provided to integrate new development with the village centre.
  - The bridge over the burn should be repaired as soon as possible.

- There must be adequate capacity in Stuartfield Primary School to accommodate children from the H1 development.
- What type of sports/recreation facilities will be provided? A skate/BMX park and football pitches were suggested.
- The privacy of existing residents should not be adversely affected by the new housing.

### **Responses to First Consultation Event**

4.12 The developers were encouraged by the level of community interest in the proposals for the site. Following the first public consultation event, changes were made to the masterplan to take account of the following:

- Representatives of the developer made contact with Aberdeenshire Council's planning gain department to emphasise
- The number of houses access off the existing Knock View road could be increased to 26 on the basis that this would be a temporary measure. Once the masterplan is approved, the detailed planning application for the first phase of the masterplan site, as well as the remaining units to be built at Crichtie Meadows, will be accessed from the new distributor road to be built off Knock Street with Knock View's access into the new development being closed off to vehicular traffic.
- The existing 30mph speed limit on Knock Street should be extended outwards to the boundary of the new development and a new zebra crossing should be installed to allow people to walk back into the village safely.
- Additional landscaping and tree planting was included in the masterplan around the edge of the site where new housing sits adjacent to existing houses to ensure that the impact on residents' privacy is minimised.

### **Feedback from Second Consultation Event**

4.13 The comments received at the second public consultation event focused on the following issues:

- Recreation area for teenage kids (e.g. skate park) and also a toddler play area (e.g. swings, slides).
- The new distributor road must be provided as a priority to relieve Knock View residents of the through traffic.
- Drainage of the site is poor; streams/burns overflow and flood. Also ensure that the banks of the burn are stabilised to prevent future erosion from occurring, as well as setting aside land beside the burn to provide access for a footpath so the burn can be cleaned.
- Look at reducing the density of the housing in phase 1b to provide modest, detached dwellings.

- Ensure that title deeds for each property deal with regular maintenance of the communal open space.
- The land reserved for the sports/recreation facilities should be passed on to the Pleasure Park Committee so that it can be treated as an extension to the existing recreation land.

### **Responses to Second Consultation Event**

4.14 Responses to the comments to the second public consultation are given below:

- Upon the granting of consent for the early phases of the new development, Aberdeenshire Council in partnership with the local community and the Stuartfield Pleasure Park Association in particular, work together to agree how the land reserved for sports/recreation facilities can be utilised to best meet the needs of the village.
- The new distributor road will be constructed at the very outset of the development and the existing access to Crichtie Meadows from Knock View will be closed to vehicular traffic (and retained as a pedestrian and cycle route only).
- A full Flood Risk Assessment will accompany the submission of the planning application for the first phase of the development. SEPA will also be contacted to improve the condition of the burn.

4.15 The masterplan layout has been amended as appropriate to take on board the feedback received at the two public consultation events, meetings with Stuartfield Community Association and Stuartfield Primary School, and the meeting with the Design Review Panel.

4.16 All of the comments that have been made will be reported in detail in the public consultation report that will be submitted with the future planning application for the site.



Photograph of 2<sup>nd</sup> consultation event 17/01/13

## 5.0 Developing the Design and Layout

- 5.1 A detailed technical assessment of the masterplan site has been undertaken. In accordance with masterplanning principles, the core aims are to provide a “place” which is not seen as a stand-alone development, isolated and disconnected from its surroundings, but to instead create a development that is connected to the surrounding built form of Stuartfield as well as the surrounding countryside within which the site sits.
- 5.2 As the site lies on the periphery of the planned village of Stuartfield, the design approach is first and foremost about connectivity into the existing settlement and permeability through the proposed development into the outlying rural surrounds.
- 5.3 In addition, the requirement to provide a large amount of public open space (at least 40% of the overall site) allows for the siting of large landscaped sections within the H1 site boundaries allowing the development to merge into the adjacent countryside instead of providing a hard edge to the village. This, it is hoped, will encourage biodiversity and outdoor living thus promoting healthy lifestyles for the inhabitants.
- 5.4 The location of site H1 ensures an element of protection from the prevailing winds. The protection is reinforced by the housing on the western side of the site and the Beech trees to the east. This will be further improved through strategic landscape planting around the boundaries of the site.

### **Site Layout**

- 5.5 The primary rationale underlying the proposal is first and foremost about connectivity into the existing settlement and creating a permeability from the existing village, through the development, and into the outlying rural surroundings.
- 5.6 The vision of the masterplan is to provide distinct “character areas” which each have their own sense of place and compliment the existing built form of Stuartfield. The masterplan also seeks to provide a large central area of open space that future residents can enjoy.
- 5.7 As far as is reasonably practical, housing is to be orientated so that as many houses as possible are configured as part of, or as near as possible to, a defined character area, thus providing visual amenity and added value for residents. The character areas are defined as being phase 1a (the houses seen as a continuation of the Crichton Meadows development in terms of their style and appearance), phase 1b (the houses that will provide a gateway at the entrance into the H1 site and will incorporate unique design features to create a new sense of place/arrival), and phase 2 (the houses to the north of the H1 site to be built post 2017).

- 5.8 It is fundamentally important that at all levels the allocated “character areas” contain a sense of place. Key gateways (entrance points to housing areas and/or strategic junctions) will contain well-considered landscape design elements or contiguous local artwork or sculptures.
- 5.9 Aspects which will contribute to creating a unique “character” in different parts of the overall development include:
- Manipulation of house orientation;
  - Variation to the housing density (e.g. detached, semi-detached, terraced);
  - Short-radius bends and constriction in road layout;
  - Housing looking onto green space and open aspects to the open countryside;
  - High-quality public realm with small-scale artwork (e.g. standing stones) or intelligent landscape design;
  - Mixture of different house types and design features (e.g. bungalows, 1½ storey, integral garages, dormer windows etc); and
  - Intelligent landscape design.
- 5.10 A mixture of 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedroom detached and semi-detached houses are proposed in phases 1a and 1b to provide variety to the development both visually and socially. Phase 1a is likely to mirror the existing Crichton Meadows development in terms of style and appearance whereas phase 1b will incorporate new design features to give a unique sense of place.
- 5.11 The opportunity exists for a higher density core at the heart of the northern (phase 2) portion of the site which may contain slightly higher density housing such as terraced units and/or a number of small commercial or work from home units.

### **Outline Design**

- 5.12 Houses will be primarily single, 1½ and 2 storey in height throughout the site in keeping with the scale of the existing village of Stuartfield. It is expected that, after phase 1a is completed, a higher standard of design will be required which may include unique features which compliment the surrounding vernacular such as varied roof pitches, dormer windows, local stone, and public art features.
- 5.13 It is important that phase 1b gives the development a sense of place and does not simply seek to replicate what has gone before. Houses will be of a design which is sensitive to the nearby surroundings in design which are a contemporary take on the commercial vernacular which exists in this part of central Buchan.
- 5.14 It is also recognised that there may be additional housing within phase 2 and the overall masterplan layout has been designed to accommodate any potential increase beyond 75 houses post 2017 should there be demand for additional housing.

## Street Layout

- 5.15 The street structure has been designed, where possible, to create a layout that is structured around a compact and walkable hierarchy of streets, with houses accessing directly onto it from either side. The street layout subscribes to the philosophy advocated by “Designing Streets” with the provision of shared access surfaces serving the development and the creation of a central open space/parking feature which looks out across the public open space area.
- 5.16 The street layout has also been designed to compliment the traditional and planned pattern within Stuartfield with an emphasis on providing links from site H1 into the centre of the village to integrate the new development with the existing settlement, a “grid-iron” style with a village green as the central focal point.

## Access and Connectivity

- 5.17 Footpaths and cycleways running through the heart of the site will connect the development to the village centre as well as preserving an existing walking route which runs through the heart of the site which is popular with local residents (see Figure 5). A footpath around the periphery of the site is to be provided to link the site with these popular walking routes and back in to the centre of the village at Burnett Street through the H1 site.
- 5.18 The existing Knock View access route into Crichie Meadows will be closed to vehicular traffic (e.g. through bollards which can be lowered to allow emergency services vehicles to access) and will become a pedestrian and cycle link only.
- 5.19 The provision of the distributor road into site H1 from Knock Street will be a pre-requisite for the H1 development. Once the new road is built, it will cater for the entire first phase of the development consisting of up to 50 houses.
- 5.20 The masterplan in Figure 10 shows that there is an aspiration on the part of the Council for the distributor route to join back onto Burnett Street.
- 5.21 The primary spine route through the site is to contain a 6m wide roadway capable of supporting a local bus route, with 2m wide footways either side. House frontages will have a 5-6m defensible space separated from the footway with a mixture of landscaping or fencing. Where housing moves away from the spine route, houses will front on to shared hard surfaces, 5.5m wide, narrowing to 3.5m by physical barriers to psychologically slow down vehicular traffic and encourage on-street activity. These “home-zones” follow the recommendations of “Designing Streets” guidance and positively contribute to the developer's aspiration to make this a truly permeable housing development.

Figure 5 – Access and Connectivity Plan



## **Infrastructure**

- 5.22 The LDP requires a distributor road to be provided. This new distributor road will serve phase 1a and phase 1b of the new development as well as the Crichton Meadows housing once vehicular access from Knock View is closed off. The construction of this new road will relieve traffic from Knock View. As this new development will effectively extend the edge of the settlement boundary eastwards, the 30mph speed restriction as you enter the village from the direction of Longside will be moved eastwards to slow down traffic adjacent to the new junction as you enter site H1 from Knock Street.
- 5.23 The site is conveniently located for access to Stuartfield Primary School and other services in the village such as the Stagecoach bus service between Aberdeen and Peterhead, the local shop, the NHS health centre and the local Crichton Inn pub. It is because of these nearby local services that the layout of the development has been designed with an emphasis on maximising pedestrian connectivity and linking the new housing areas to the village with safe and pleasant walking routes. For other community services, such as secondary education and employment opportunities, it is recognised that there is a requirement to travel further afield.
- 5.24 Stuartfield benefits from a modern recreation ground immediately adjacent to site H1 which contains a tennis court, a recently renovated pavilion, a bowling green, and playing fields. There is also children's play equipment in the park as well as an modern recycling centre. The development of site H1 requires to reserve land for new sports/recreation facilities and the masterplan proposes to co-locate this new recreation land immediately adjacent to the existing facilities to have cohesion and integration between the various sports activities that will take place in the village. The new facilities can be provided early in the overall development to provide amenity space for new residents given that it is situated beside the main entrance to the development off Knock Street.
- 5.25 No formal decision has been taken on what form the sports/recreation facilities will take place, however several ideas have been suggested by the local community through the two consultation meetings such as a skate/BMX park or football pitches.
- 5.26 It is anticipated that the developer will set aside the land for the new facilities and the specific use, whether that be playing fields, a skate park, or some other use, will be delivered by Aberdeenshire Council in conjunction with community groups in Stuartfield such as the Pleasure Park Association. It is anticipated that the developer will provide financial contributions towards these new facilities through planning gain procedures as part of the planning application process.

- 5.27 Land is also to be reserved for the proposed health centre in Stuartfield which is understood to be heavily used at present with little or no options for expanding on their current site in the village. It has been suggested that 0.4 acres of land will be required for the replacement health centre. The developer will reserve the land for this purpose and the facility will be delivered by NHS Grampian in conjunction with the Council. The masterplan proposes to deliver this facility at the entrance to the site from Knock Street. This will enable the health centre to be located conveniently for both existing and new residents alike, and it will also offer an opportunity to provide a signature building at the entrance to the site in order to give a sense of place.
- 5.28 NHS Grampian have recently advised that in reality they will not seek to deliver a new health centre in Stuartfield and instead they will enhance their existing facility in Mintlaw. However, for the purposes of the masterplan, land has been reserved for a potential new facility in Stuartfield because it will be difficult to retrofit it onto the site if the land is earmarked for an alternative use. Until such time as a final decision is taken on whether a health centre is required, the land will be kept as open space to be maintained by a residents' factoring group so that it doesn't become unkempt. If and when the health centre is definitely not required then alternative uses (e.g. potential overspill car parking area for the sports/recreation ground) can be explored by Aberdeenshire Council.
- 5.29 Should the health centre not come to fruition then it has been suggested that this land can be used for car parking associated with the sports and recreation land as it has been suggested that these facilities are heavily utilised with many people parking on the roadway at present.
- 5.30 SUDS will be provided in two locations within the H1 site to act as detention ponds for surface water arising from the development. There is an existing pond to the north of the Crichton Meadows site, and a new pond will be provided to the north of the H1 site near to the waste water treatment works as this is the lowest lying land and the most naturally draining part of the site. It is envisaged that ponds within the H1 site could be included within a landscaped amenity area of open space to encourage biodiversity.

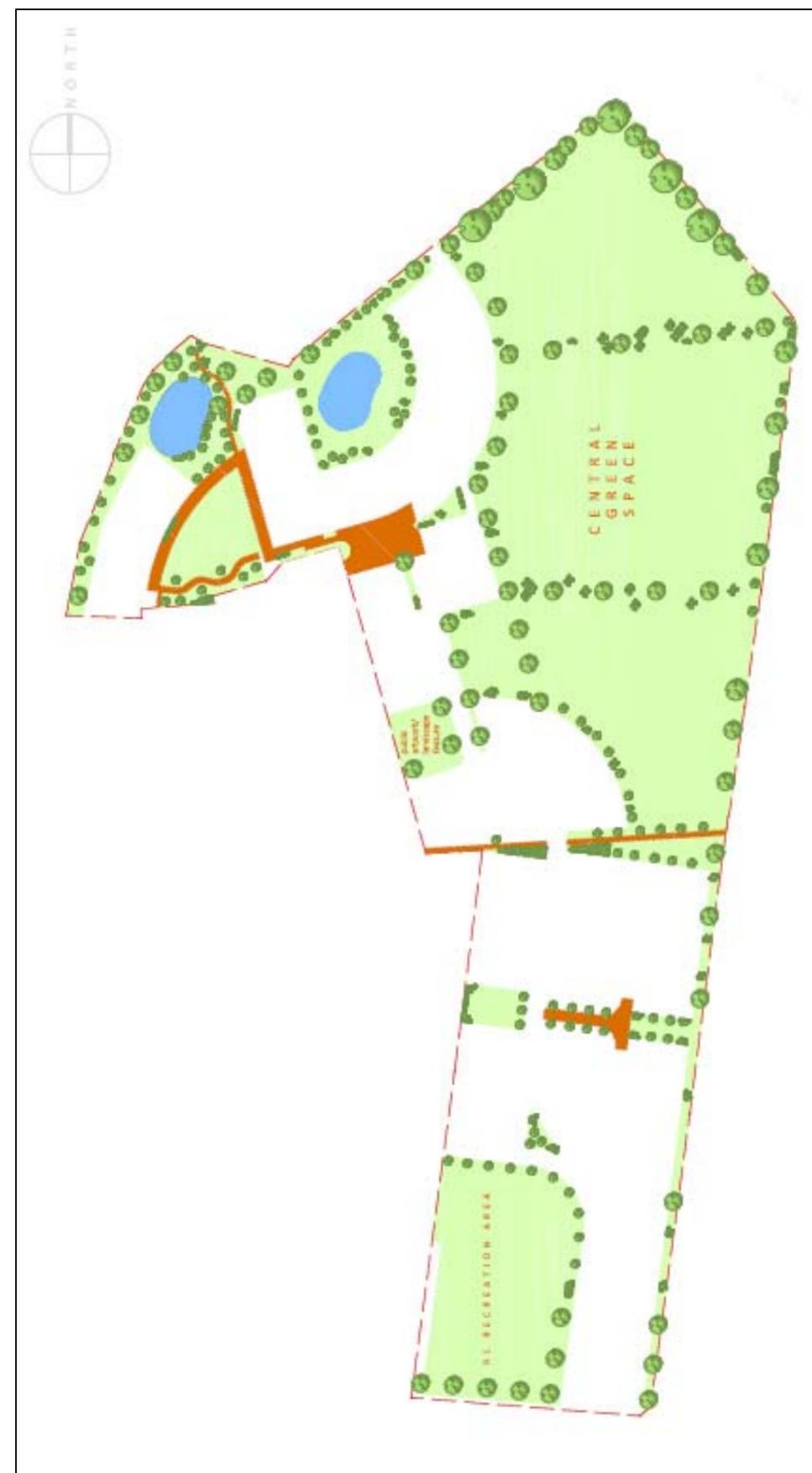
## **Servicing**

- 5.31 The proposed street layout is suitable for service access and complies with the appropriate standards. Street lighting will be designed to be energy efficient in accordance with Aberdeenshire Council standards.

### Landscaping and Open Space

- 5.32 The value of the site's landscape setting on the eastern edge of Stuartfield has been recognised from the outset and this has informed the production of the masterplan. Overall, the masterplan provides more than 40% of the total area as open space which is a generous proportion and includes the recreation area, the village green, and the SUDS areas as shown in Figure 6.
- 5.33 The landscaped open space beside the burn will encourage biodiversity as well as accommodating the SUDS for the development. The green corridor running through the heart of the site will provide a strip of open space that will link into the wider path network around the periphery of the site.
- 5.34 The open space around the edge of the site will act as a landscaped edge to Stuartfield, thus softening the impact of the development and creating a gradual transition from the village to countryside. Within the areas of housing, streets are conceived as taking a "homezone" or shared access approach which is most appropriate for this rural setting. Street tree planting and hedges are proposed to create a green structure throughout, linking into the wider woodland network and also used to reinforce the traffic management by slowing vehicle movement throughout the development.
- 5.35 The masterplan seeks to distribute the open space evenly over the entirety of the site so that residents can have "pocket parks" on their doorstep which they can readily utilise. This was seen as preferential to concentrating the open space within the R2 site as shown in the LDP. In addition, it is essential that the developer is permitted to cross-fund the expensive distributor road that is required to serve the new development from the outset with new housing to sit alongside the new road. Without taking this approach, there could be serious commercial difficulties in terms of getting this development off the ground which would be detrimental to resolving the existing access situation at Knock View as well as providing new housing to support local services in the village generally. For these reasons, part of the southern portion of the site has an area reserved for sports/recreation facilities, and the remainder of the open space has been spread out over the H1 site to provide well in excess of 40% of the total area as open space.
- 5.36 Soft landscaping design will, as far as possible, include the planting of native species which will contribute to bio-diversity.

Figure 6 – Landscape Plan



## **House Types**

- 5.37 In accordance with the policies of the LDP, the development will include a mixture of house types (terraced, semi-detached and detached houses) and sizes (2, 3, 4 and 5 bedrooms) to meet housing need in terms of market demand and to provide variety to the development both visually and socially. It is envisaged that the housing in phases 1a and 1b will be detached and semi-detached and there will be opportunities for higher density housing (e.g. terraced) in phase 2 of the development.
- 5.38 Affordable housing provision will be provided in accordance with Aberdeenshire Council standards which for Stuartfield is set at 10% and equates to 5 units to be provided on site as part of the first phase of 50 houses to be delivered by 2016. Affordable housing will be “pepper-potted” throughout the development so that it is indistinguishable from the mainstream housing; this is considered preferable to concentrating the affordable housing within one particular part of the site.
- 5.39 Aberdeenshire Council’s housing service have confirmed that they will be looking to secure 7 affordable housing units (over the 75 house allocation) for low cost home ownership consisting of a mix of 2 to 3 bedrooms at benchmark prices. Further consultations will be required between the Council and the developer through the planning application process in terms of the delivery mechanism for these units (e.g. whether they will be through a housing association or a discounted sale).

## **Security**

- 5.40 The masterplan layout has been designed following the principles set down in the guidance in Secured by Design with natural surveillance of streets, footpaths and areas of public open space. For example, houses have been orientated to look outwards from the development onto the footpath around the periphery of the site to provide natural surveillance. Similarly, where it is envisaged that there will be higher density housing a central courtyard and village green. Properties will overlook the communal space to create a sense of civic pride and hopefully deter crime and vandalism. The privacy of the existing residents on Crichtie Meadows will be safeguarded through strategic tree planting and by providing sufficient separation distances between common boundaries of the existing and new properties.

## **Density, Orientation and Massing**

- 5.41 Building heights will be one and a half and two storeys which are in keeping with housing elsewhere in the village. It is envisaged that the central part of the masterplan site could accommodate the higher density housing overlooking a central courtyard on traditional village green area. Elsewhere in the site, particularly around the edges, lower density housing will be provided.

- 5.42 Housing is also laid out according to the requirement to provide a through route from Knock Street to Burnett Street and to permanently connect this access to the new Crichtie Meadows development. The formation of a large common public space allows a clear physical (but not divisive) separation between the housing phases as required by the LDP.
- 5.43 The housing will be of a design which is sensitive to the nearby surroundings i.e. contemporary take on the local vernacular which exists in this popular part of central Buchan. Opportunities will be explored for incorporating architectural features which provide a unique sense of place in each character area and which also respect the character of the surrounding village.

## **Materials**

- 5.44 Materials will reflect the character of the existing housing in the village and reflect the scale and contemporary style of the Aberdeenshire rural vernacular, working within the parameters set by commercial viability, modern construction requirements and market demand as shown in Figure 6. Construction materials will be agreed in detail at planning application stage but will be drawn from a palette which respects the context of the village e.g. roughcast finish walls, cast stone detailing, modern roof tiles, high performance PVCU windows, wall, fence and hedge plot boundaries, shared surface roadways and native species planting wherever possible.

## **Phasing**

- 5.45 The phasing strategy for the masterplan site will allow for an initial phase of around 14 houses to be constructed immediately adjacent to the Crichtie Meadows development. This first phase will be served by the new distributor road from Knock Street. The phasing plan (see Figure 7) identifies this as Phase 1a and it is anticipated that construction on this part of the site could commence towards the end of 2013.
- 5.46 Thereafter, development will commence on phase 1b which is shown as being adjacent to the land reserved for sports/recreation facilities and will sit alongside the new distributor road access from Knock Street and form the heart of the new development by physically linking phase 1a and 1b as well as integrating with the existing Crichtie Meadows development. It is anticipated that this phase will contain 36 houses.
- 5.47 The LDP states that a further 25 houses will be built post 2016 to complete the H1 allocation of 75 houses. It is recognised that the physical extent of the site could accommodate in excess of 75 houses (e.g. around 100 in total) which had led to a relatively low density overall and a significant proportion of open space. It is also recognised that the final 25 houses could be increased to 50 units post 2017 through a review of the LDP.

5.48 The final phase of the development will take place to the north of the H1 site from 2017 onwards (once the LDP has been reviewed). This internal layout for this part of the site will be designed to facilitate the linkage between the H1 site and the Burnett Street through the final section of the distributor road (although this requires additional land outwith the control of Colaren Properties Ltd).

5.49 In order to provide a mix of house types, It is envisaged that phase 2 will include an element of higher density housing such as terraced properties centred around a dense court looking onto a public area such as a courtyard or communal green space. It is also envisaged that this area will include shared surfaces giving priority to pedestrians. It is also envisaged that properties here will include commercial space (e.g. live/work units) on the ground floor with flatted accommodation above should there be demand for these types of properties. This will help to create local employment opportunities for local tradesman or office workers who can work from home and reduce the extent of commuting in the village.

Figure 7 – Phasing Plan

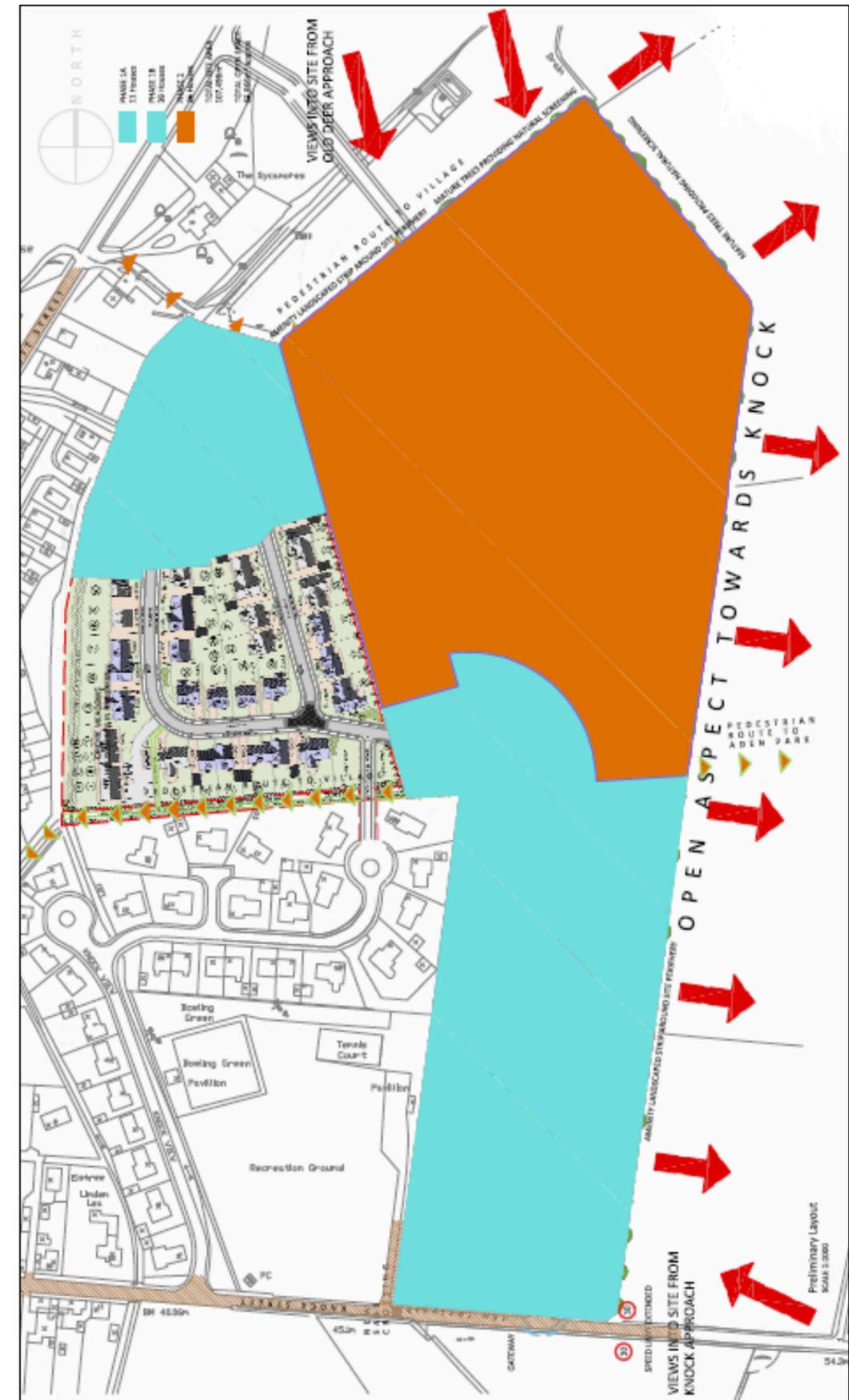


Figure 8 – Evolution of the Masterplan



Initial Sketch Plan (August 2012)



Conceptual Plan (October 2012)



Indicative Masterplan Layout (April 2013)

Figure 9 – 3D images





Figure 10 – Masterplan

Proposed Masterplan, Stuartfield FOR COLAREN PROPERTIES

**McAdam Design** (Incorporated) Ltd  
 ARCHITECTS, STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS  
 PARTNERS: DUBLIN



PHASE 1A  
11 Houses  
 PHASE 1B  
39 Houses  
 PHASE 2  
26 Houses  
 TOTAL SITE AREA  
107,495m<sup>2</sup>  
 TOTAL OPEN SPACE  
66,866m<sup>2</sup> (62%)

VIEWS INTO SITE FROM  
OLD DEER APPROACH

VIEWS INTO SITE FROM  
KNOCK APPROACH

Preliminary Layout  
SCALE 1:1000

C	Planning Issue	25.01.13	609
B	Final Masterplan Revisions	12.03.13	609
A	Addressed comments from DWP	31.01.13	609
Revision	Description	Date	Drawn

**McAdam Design** (Incorporated) Ltd  
 ARCHITECTS, STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS  
 PARTNERS: DUBLIN

Client: Colaren Properties  
 Project: Proposed Housing Masterplan Stuartfield  
 Drawing Title: Masterplan 2D

Stage	For Discussion	Date	Dec 2012
Project No	3881	Drawing No	L(0)01
Revision		Revision	C
Scale	1:1000	Drawn	KOB
		Checked	KOB

RESIDENTIAL MASTERPLAN AT STUARTFIELD  
 FOR COLAREN PROPERTIES

## 6.0 Procedural Requirements

### *Community Engagement*

- 6.1 Details of the community engagement undertaken are considered earlier in Chapter 3 of this report. A more detailed report on the pre-application consultation undertaken will be submitted with the future planning application for the site.

### *Developer Contributions*

- 6.2 A planning gain package for the development of 75 houses at Stuartfield has been provided by Aberdeenshire Council's planning gain officer. This includes contributions towards the following:
- **Sports/Recreation** – Reservation of land within site H1 for new sports/recreation facilities and a financial contribution towards funding the new facility.
  - **Education** – Financial contribution towards one additional classroom at Stuartfield Primary School.
  - **Health** – NHS Grampian no longer believe that a new health centre will be feasible in Stuartfield. Instead, they require financial contributions towards the practice at Mintlaw.
  - **Affordable Housing (10%)** – five affordable houses on site within the first phase of the development up to 2016 with a further two units in the second phase from 2017 onwards plus a financial contribution will be required from the developer.
  - **Open Space** - Financial contribution towards an extension to Old Deer Cemetery and improvements to the existing play facilities in Stuartfield.

### *Management*

- 6.3 Management arrangements will be put in place by the developer for future maintenance of the public open space by a factoring company. SUDS and the landscaped areas will be designed to be low maintenance.



