



N.B. Since production of this aerial photo, housing development has been completed in the field to the immediate south west of the site.

Development Brief – Kinraig KC/HI

Consultation May 2010

Planning in the Cairngorms National Park

The Cairngorms National Park is the largest National Park in the UK, encompassing areas of Highland, Aberdeenshire, Moray and Angus. A Scottish Government consultation is taking place for extending the boundary into Perthshire, towards the end of 2010.

Planning in the Cairngorms National Park is unique. It involves the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) working alongside the Local Authorities, who continue to deal with many of the planning applications within their respective areas. All planning applications submitted must comply with all the policies in the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan (once adopted) and any relevant Supplementary Guidance.

Any planning application should be submitted to the relevant Local Authority in the normal manner. The Local Authority checks to ensure all the necessary information is supplied and registers receipt of the application. The CNPA is informed by the Local Authority and then has 21 days to decide whether to call-in the application. Only applications which are of general significance to the aims of the Park are called-in. Thereafter the CNPA determines the application. In instances when planning applications are not called-in, the Local Authority continues to act as the planning authority.

This supplementary guidance sets out detailed advice to help you meet the requirements of the policies in the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan. It is recommended that it is read in conjunction with other relevant guidance, such as the Sustainable Design Guide.

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I. Introduction

- 1.1 This site is allocated in the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan as being suitable for residential development of around 40 dwellings. It is designated as site KC/H1.
- 1.2 The site is located within the settlement of Kincaig and is outlined in red in the location plan below (Figure 1).



Figure 1 – Kincaig location plan

2. Purpose and status

- 2.1 The purpose of this development brief is to provide guidance on the main planning and design principles which development of the site should be based upon:
 - The proposed development should consolidate the housing around the school, offering the opportunity to provide an enhanced, sensitive and well-defined settlement edge to Kincaig. The site provides opportunity to screen the adjacent modern housing with a more appropriate and cohesive form of development, including new trees;
 - As supplementary planning guidance, this brief will be a material planning consideration in determining planning applications. It is intended to provide a clear indication of the requirements and expectations that the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA), as the planning authority, will take into account;
 - Developers should recognise the significant opportunity to provide high quality, well-designed development with a considered approach to densities, form and layout, alongside significant areas of public green spaces;

- Proposals should aim to achieve attractive, distinctive residential environments that contribute to, and enhance the sense of place and befits that of the communities of the Cairngorms National Park.

3. Site description

3.1 The site has a number of features, constraints and opportunities to take account of when considering potential development (see Figure 2, Constraints and opportunities plan, p00):

- The allocated site area extends to approximately 5.7 ha (14.08 acres). It is bounded to the north-east by a dense coniferous plantation and to the south-east by the main railway line from Perth to Inverness, which runs along the site boundary on a high embankment;
- The north-western boundary runs adjacent to the B9152, which forms the main road through the village. A modified burn flows along the south-western boundary, beyond which lies a recently completed housing development;
- The village primary school and some scattered housing of mixed age and architecture lie on the other side of the B9152 on rising land, together with the Baldow Smithy;
- The land, currently used for grazing and cropping, slopes downwards from the highest level at the north-eastern part of the site, towards a shallow 'bowl' near the centre, beyond which it gently undulates. Although level with the site at the northern corner, the B9152 road does not follow the same contours. As the site dips to the south west, the road rises above it on a small embankment;
- Both the railway embankment along the opposite boundary and the coniferous plantation to the north-east, give the impression that much of the site is low lying and somewhat inward looking;
- A particular feature of the site is the presence of a grassy uncultivated knoll with informal groups of birch trees, which occupies the eastern corner. This prominent feature adds considerable character to the site, providing a visual focus as well as reducing the impact of the railway embankment;
- The trees growing on the knoll are the only trees on the site. Within the wider landscape, a woodland consisting mainly of birch lies beyond the railway line;
- A spring rises in the shallow depression towards the centre of the site, which combined with natural drainage, causes this area to become waterlogged. It is understood that the field drainage of this area to the modified burn may have failed, resulting in the current extent of waterlogged ground.



4. Site constraints and opportunities

4.1 The site highlights a number of constraints but also potential opportunities. These are further illustrated on Figure 2, Constraints and opportunities plan, see p00.

4.1.1 Physical conditions

- Ground conditions, topography, surrounding planting and services are all significant factors. The existing birch woodland should be safeguarded. Extensive tree planting along the south-western boundary should provide visual screening of the adjacent housing area;
- Other areas of tree planting and landscaping coupled with amenity grassland should allow for informal recreation space enhancing habitat and biodiversity of the site;
- The adjacent housing development provides a number of through routes to the rest of the village, a small bridge across the burn could link the site to the rest of Kincaig;
- The area of waterlogged ground with associated spring presents an opportunity for creation of a feature pond/wetland, developed as part of a Sustainable Urban Drainage scheme, linked to a restored and naturalised burn;
- The pond should be set in an area of amenity grassland, again providing further informal recreation space and enhancing habitat and biodiversity. This space should also be linked to the grassy knoll, retained as informal amenity space, by a green corridor along the south eastern boundary, which may also provide distance between the railway and housing and could provide for a circular walkway;
- There are very good long views from the whole site to the hills to the north-west and from higher areas of the site over the railway embankment to distant mountains. Low views are restricted on all boundaries apart from along the north-western boundary, which presents a mainly pleasant

foreground with buildings of mixed architecture on rising land. This important boundary will form the new village edge;

- The majority of the site has good solar orientation, maximum use of which should be employed in building design and site layout to assist in achieving low energy housing. The site is also reasonably well sheltered from north easterly to south easterly winds;

4.1.2 Development opportunities

- The development of the site presents an excellent opportunity for large and small scale developers to work together to bring forward the proposals, this would give the opportunity for a variety of house types and styles, while the provision of serviced plots is encouraged;
- The provision of a Priority Purchase Scheme for local people should be given careful consideration; this has met with some considerable success elsewhere in the Park.

4.1.3 Natural heritage

- Developers should make themselves aware of any natural heritage conservation and/or other interests within the site. Appropriate surveys and mitigation will be required (see Biodiversity section, p00)
- There are no statutory natural heritage designations (such as SSSI) on the site.



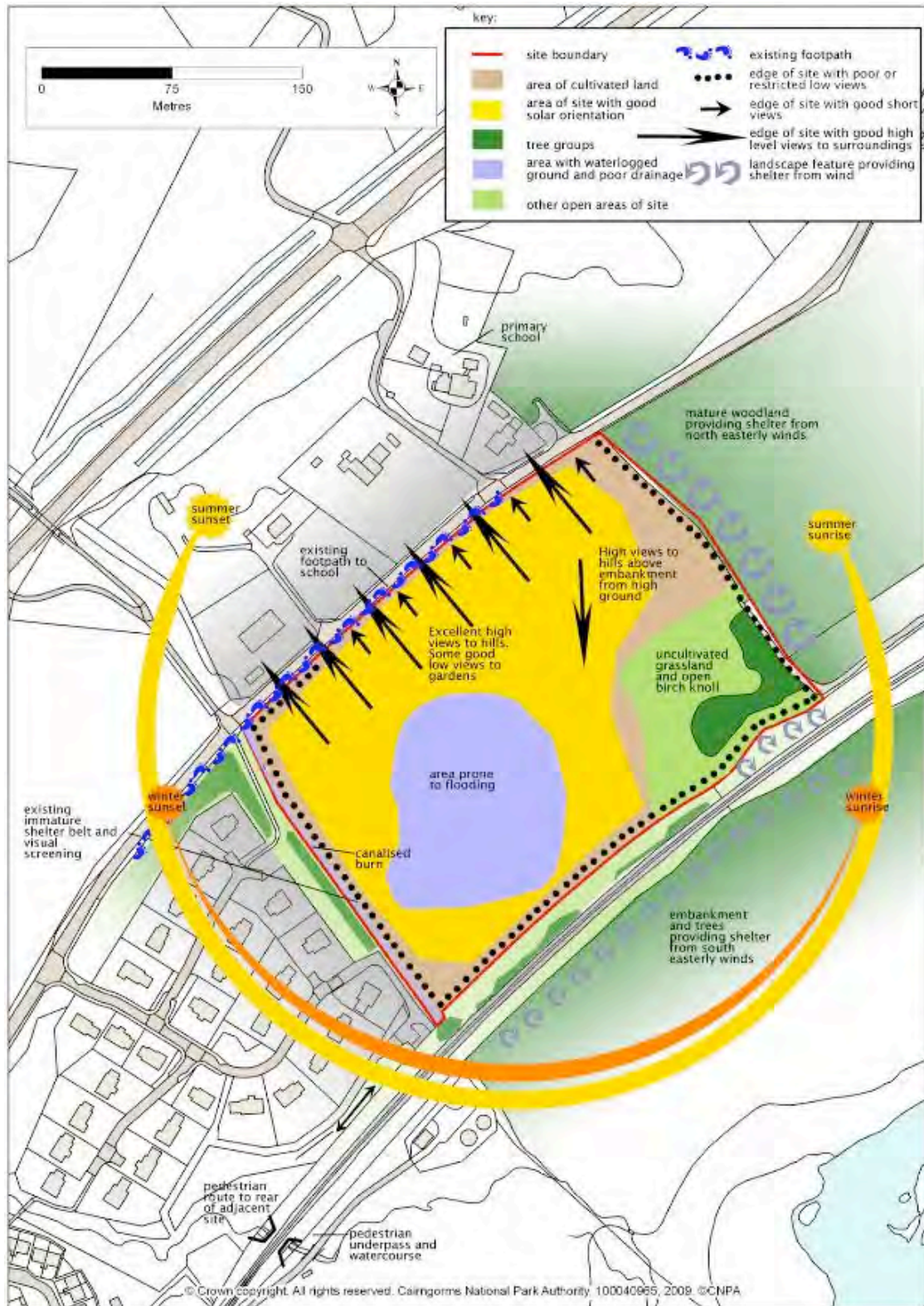


Figure 2 Constraints and opportunities plan



View from B9152 along south-western boundary



South-eastern site boundary and grassy knoll

5. Development requirements

5.1 Requirements for development of the site are set out in this section and partially illustrated on the Requirements plan (p00). These requirements emerge from the planning policy framework and the specific constraints and opportunities afforded by the site itself.

5.1.1 Developer contributions

- Developers should make themselves aware of likely development contributions required within each community, where the need arises to increase or improve public services, facilities or infrastructure arising from the development. The final level of contribution sought should be based on an assessment of the impacts on the community undertaken jointly with the developer and planning authority.

5.1.2 Affordable housing

- A proportion of the total number of units on the site should be provided as affordable housing. The proportion sought will be to a target of between 25 per cent and 40 per cent depending on the type of affordable housing required and the economic viability of the development. Discussions should take place in the first

instance with the CNPA and The Highland Council's Housing and Property Services to determine the current requirements for this site.

5.1.3 Phasing

- A scheme of phasing shall require to be agreed between the CNPA and the developer, reflecting the capacity of the site, the Local Plan housing land supply requirement and market, community and other arising circumstances.

5.1.4 Density and diversity

- A variety of housing sizes and the ability of houses to adapt to the changing needs of inhabitants over time can provide long term housing solutions, contributing to stable communities;
- A number of different types of buildings should be present, with a mixture of scales of housing including detached, semi-detached and terraced units, of various densities and unit sizes;
- Due to the topography, ground conditions and varying housing typologies, density will vary over the site. A new streetscape is to be formed along the B9152 and associated pedestrian pathway, with highest density housing towards the western end and medium density towards the east;
- Medium density housing should be clustered around and face the central wetland and amenity space in an 'introspective' style. Low density housing should be sited on the higher ground at the north-eastern end of the site, creating a new village edge. Housing density and location is illustrated in the Requirements plan (Figure 3, p00).

5.1.5 Community identity

- A complex set of human need forms community identity. Part of this is a sense of place and belonging. Good design of the places we inhabit contributes strongly towards this;
- A high standard of development is expected - the existing character of Kincaig is to be enhanced and complemented by the new development. Proposals should aim to achieve attractive, distinctive residential environments contributing to, and enhancing sense of place.

5.1.6 Exemplary Development

- New development should be good quality design which befits that expected of a National Park, it should not be of a bland 'suburban' type with no reference to locality. Innovative, modern design is encouraged;
- Developers should recognise the significant opportunity to provide high quality, well-designed development with a considered approach to densities, form and layout, alongside significant areas of public green spaces;

- Prominent views, from outside the boundaries of the development and within, should be identified and used to delineate public and private space.

5.1.7 Informed design

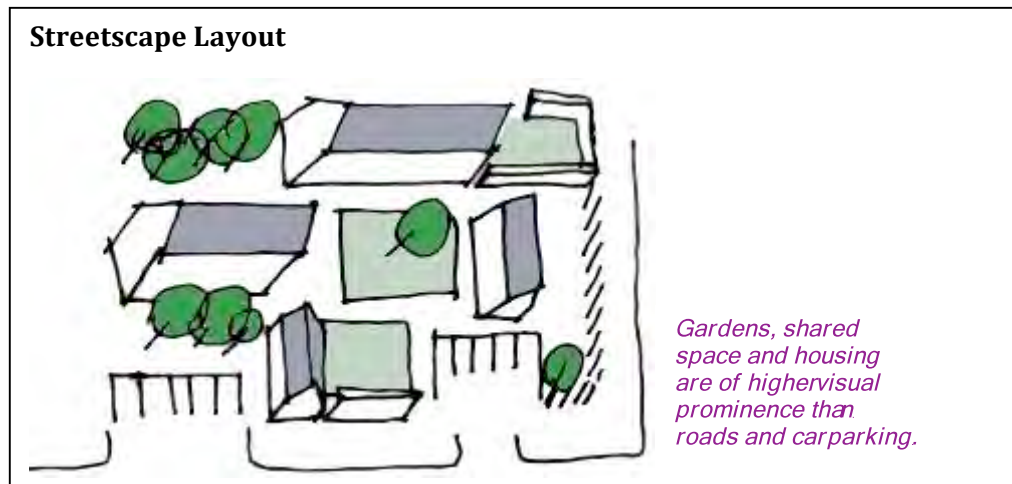
- A comprehensive site analysis should be undertaken, including existing microclimatic conditions, relationship to neighbouring buildings and countryside, use patterns of the site and transport analysis including opportunities to enhance pedestrian and non-vehicular experience. An explanation of the proposed developments relationship to the existing village should be included in a design statement;



Shared external spaces or other landmarks act as markers in the development, providing orientation, social space and enhanced relationships to adjacent housing

- Variety and richness of size and shape of houses and ensuring that building shape reflects the principles and housing in the area. Alternating building heights are acceptable from 1 to 2 storey;
- New development should not simply copy older buildings in the area, existing form, building lines and massing should be considered and influence the proposed design;
- Building clusters are to be formed, focused on external amenity space. Amenity space should be designed to be useable;
- Natural materials such as stone, lime render and timber, with slate or metal roofing finishes are preferred, but are not exclusive and should not preclude innovative design. Material choices should be clearly explained in a design statement;
- Boundaries of the proposed development are particularly important; any of which form the edge of a village are important to the identity of the settlement and should be treated as key design elements. Good boundary treatments consisting predominately of stone walling, with hedge planting or limited timber fencing should be used on the site edges and for internal boundaries;
- The boundary along the B9152 will form a new streetscape and act as a frontage. Buildings should be sited on the street edge or with a landscaped area between them and the street. Windows to public rooms must be provided in the street facing wall

to create an active street frontage. Creation of a blank façade presenting a solid unbroken wall to the street should be avoided. Houses may be in line with each other or otherwise form a cohesive frontage;



5.1.8 Access and Links

- The rural nature of many of the settlements within the Cairngorms National Park should be recognised. The levels of public transport to access shops and services, often means that using a car is necessary;
- It should be noted that no car access to individual properties will be allowed directly onto the B9152 from this frontage. Vehicular access to the site will be from the B9152 in the form of a simple priority junction located between 50 and 100 metres from the Baldow Smithy on the opposite side of the road;
- Well considered layouts and landscaping should avoid cars and roads dominating the frontages of buildings, or the layouts of development generally but should be screened or at the back of building clusters;
- The new development should be accessible, well connected and linked to the existing village. The footpath and cycle way network should be part of the planting infrastructure with through routes and connections to the wider road and path network encouraged, including core paths and 'safer routes to schools.' A bridge for pedestrian and cycle use should be erected across the improved burn in the southern corner of the site. This will link via non-vehicular routes, through the adjacent development to the footpath network in the village.

5.1.9 Sustainable build and energy requirements

- The design of all development should seek to minimise the reduce requirements for energy, demonstrate sustainable use of resources and use non-toxic, low-embodied energy materials. Please see the Cairngorms National Park Sustainable Design Guide (www.cairngorms.co.uk) for further information.

- Appropriate on-site renewable technologies should be used to achieve zero and low carbon developments.



5.1.10 Open space and landscaping

- The site must include a comprehensive series of open spaces, all linked by the footpath and cycle network to peripheral green space and areas outwith the site boundary;
- Developers should refer to the Cairngorms National Park Supplementary Planning Guidance on Open Space (www.cairngorms.co.uk) for the specific requirements for open space provision. Open spaces should provide for a variety of activities including:
 - equipped play areas
 - ball games and other informal play space
 - structural tree planning
 - supporting shrub and herbaceous planting
 - high quality social spaces, such as areas of public art, allotment space or other public place;
- The site should allow for peripheral planting to screen and frame views into and out of the site as well as a comprehensive tree structure across the whole area including street and garden trees, integrated into the structure of trees in the open spaces;
- The peripheral planting areas should be a minimum of 15m wide and where shelter is required from prevailing winds they should be planted with a high proportion of trees supported with shrub planting. Internal areas should be an appropriate width to allow them to be sustainable and robust. In general a minimum of 10m around open spaces and 5m in others should be suitable. Planting should be largely native species;

- Further natural green space should be retained in particular, designed to conserve and enhance existing biodiversity;

5.1.11 Biodiversity

- Tree species suitable for the Cairngorms National Park include; birch (silver and downy), Scots pine, aspen, alder (*glutinosa*), rowan, and bird cherry. Shrub species include; juniper, blaeberry, heather, broom gorse, hazel, holly, wild honeysuckle and willow (goat and grey). Each species should be planted according to its normal ground conditions;
- A survey of the biodiversity on site will be required (please refer to the Cairngorms National Park Supplementary Planning Guidance on Natural Heritage www.cairngorms.co.uk). This must also include the ecological role of the site in the area such as foraging area and route ways as well as other habitat networks;
- The development must allow for the enhancement of biodiversity in its layout and in particular the open space and footpath/cycle network. The design of individual dwellings should also allow for opportunities for biodiversity through the integration of bird and bat nesting boxes and spaces;
- The 'green' network should be integrated with the shelter belts around the site, the retained grassy knoll and the area surrounding the feature pond/wetland;
- In association with drainage improvements, moves to restore the modified burn to a more natural form would have significant biodiversity, landscape and hydrological benefits.

5.1.12 Service and drainage

- The developer should satisfy themselves that sufficient capacity exists in all services required to support development on the site.
- Permeable surfaces are to be used throughout the site to reduce the impact of rainwater runoff. Additional rainwater runoff mitigation measures such as green roofing or rainwater harvesting are encouraged.
- As previously described, in consultation with SEPA and SNH, a Sustainable Urban Drainage scheme should be provided for the site in the form of a feature pond/wetland, linked by a swale to the burn. Sight lines to the pond should be kept clear and the side slopes be gentle, not exceeding 1 in 8. A few specimens of native willow or alder should be planted, with other planting limited to the low reeds, rushes and possibly water lilies.

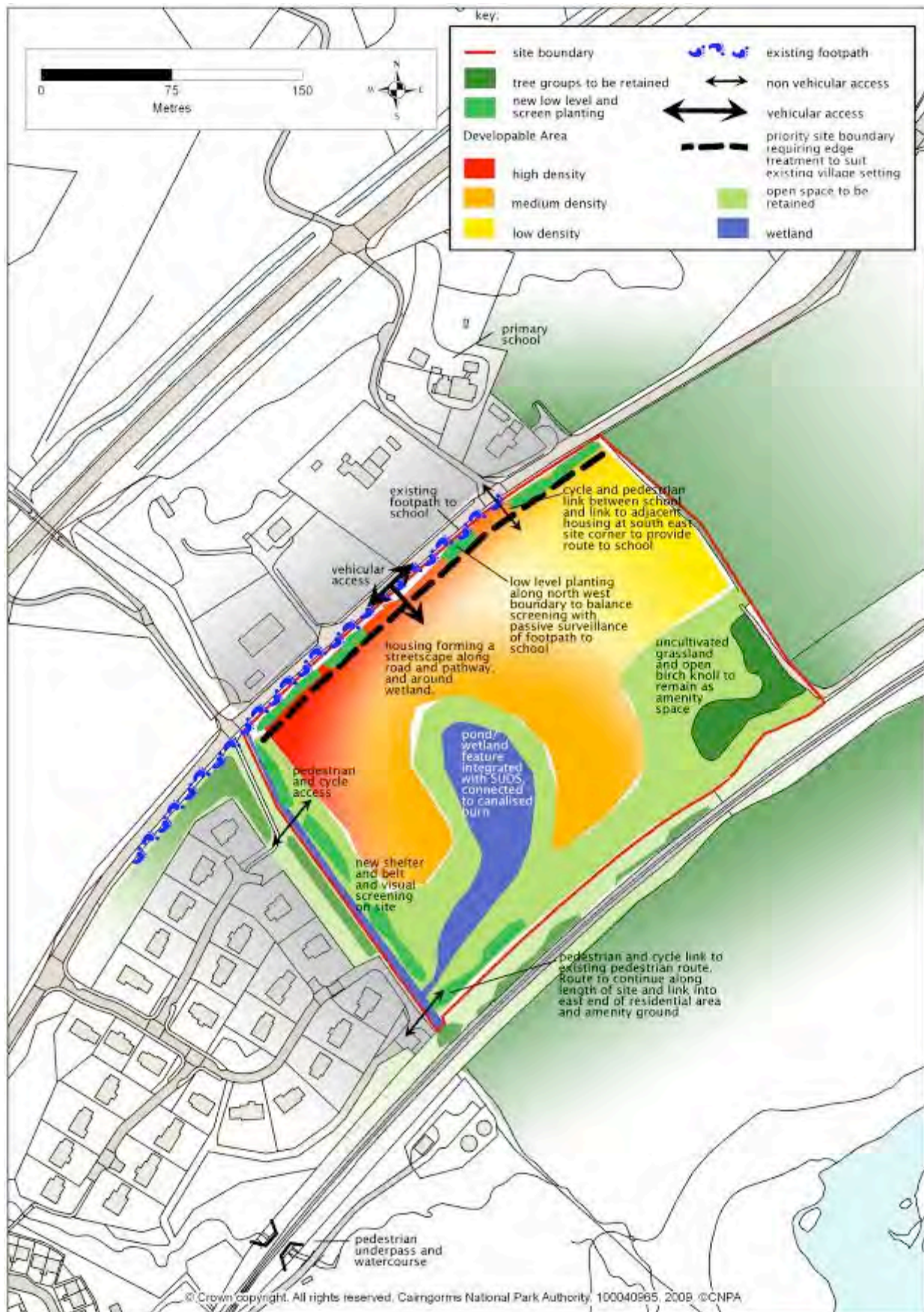


Figure 3 Requirements plan (for indicative purposes)

6.0 Submitting a planning application

6.1 In preparing a proposal for the site, the developer is advised to hold pre-application discussions with the planning authority. Compliance with this brief should not be interpreted as ensuring automatic approval of a proposal. Any application will be judged on its merits.

6.2 Planning applications must be submitted in the first instance to The Highland Council. It is likely that the CNPA will call in the application to deal with once notified of its registration.

6.3 Public consultation

During the preparation of development proposals for the site and prior to submission of a planning application, public consultation should be undertaken with the local community, recognising the requirements of the Planning Etc (Scotland) Act 2006. The issues raised and responses should be documented and incorporated with the planning application.

6.4 Surveys to support planning applications

In order to inform appropriate development of the site, the following surveys should be submitted:

- Stage I ground conditions survey
- Drainage and flood risk assessment
- Ecological and biodiversity survey

7.0 Policy context

7.1 A series of national, strategic and local policies and guidance are in place, these provide the core documents against which any planning application will be assessed. These include:

7.1.1 National Planning Guidance

- The consolidated Scottish Planning Policy 2010 and its thematic sections;
- Best practice is set out in Planning Advice Notes. PAN44, PAN 60, PAN 61, PAN 65, PAN 67, PAN 68, PAN69, PAN 72, PAN74, PAN 75, PAN 76, PAN 77, PAN 79, PAN 81 and PAN 84;
- ‘Designing Places, A Policy Statement for Scotland’.
- ‘Designing Streets: A Policy Statement for Scotland’

7.1.2 The Cairngorms National Park Plan

- The Cairngorms National Park Plan provides an overarching context for development planning and management within the National Park and is a material consideration in determining planning applications.
- The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 sets out the four aims for the National Park and the CNPA has a statutory function to achieve these in a collective and co-ordinated way:

- a) To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area;
- b) To promote sustainable use of natural resources of the area;
- c) To promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public;
- d) To promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities

- The Cairngorms National Park Plan sets out a vision, a number of guiding principles and strategic objectives to secure delivery of its aims. These provide a framework for delivery in the Local Plan.

7.1.3 The Cairngorms National Park Local Plan

- The site is identified for housing development within the Settlement Proposals section of the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan. Development proposals must comply with the requirements stated in this section and with all relevant Local Plan Policies.

7.1.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance

- In addition to this brief, the CNPA has developed other supplementary planning guidance, which should be complied with in any development proposals.
 - Sustainable Design Guide
 - Carbon emissions
 - Energy generation
 - Developer contributions
 - Natural heritage
 - Open space
 - Affordable housing
 - Core Paths Plan

- **Water Resources**