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contents

CONTENTS

1. Introduction + background - the subject site	04
2. Appreciating the context	10
3. Towards a masterplan	16
4. PPIP Framework and Indicative Masterplan	44
5. Masterplan Character	54
6. Landscape Framework	56
7. Summary and conclusion	72
Appendices	
A POS Calculations	76
B Masterplan Character Areas 1-5	82

Contact:

Geoff Whitten

Consultant_Design

geoff.whitten@3rdplace.design

Office Address:

Calzeat Studios - Calzeat Farmhouse

Broughton - Borders ML12 6HQ

Telephone:

07557 265696

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01

introduction

The Design and Access Statement has been prepared by 3rdplace design studio on behalf of Pentland Park Marine Ltd ("PPML") with regard to land at New Pentland, Loanhead.

The proposed site comprises an unused area of land at New Pentland next to Straiton commercial centre, of approximately 4ha. It adjoins the junction of the A701 and Pentland Road. Pentland Park Marine Ltd wants to re-purpose the site so that it can make an effective contribution to the local economy and in doing so, bring forward positive benefits for the surrounding community.

This is an opportunity not previously considered by Midlothian Council. It has emerged as a result of sustained and established demand for new food retail development and other mixed-use commercial and residential interest in this particular location.

Moreover, the current economic crisis created by COVID-19 has heightened the need to deliver positive local economic development and job opportunities through development. But New Pentland will offer more than just commercial development. The proposals will also deliver new amenity green space, well-lit footpaths, a children's play park and other community facilities as well as a range of new homes for the elderly.

This is an exciting opportunity, which can be maximised to deliver a quality development that improves local amenity, delivers economic development and jobs and in doing so achieves the aspirations for this strategic growth corridor.

The fragmented nature of the urban form around the Proposals site, with its disparate scale of built form and spaces, will benefit from an additional intermediate scale of development to help consolidate the area's urban character, joining up and rounding off the development areas to the west of the A701.



Figure 1 - The site location in its aerial context

1.1

background

This document will seek to demonstrate how the change to the urban form can be achieved and that land south of Pentland Road, and west of the A701, is a sustainable and deliverable site for development. The site provides a logical location for an innovative mix of uses at the edge of the important Midlothian Gateway, and within regionally significant A701 strategic growth corridor.

Pentland Park Marine Ltd

Pentland Park Marine Limited (PPML) is a small private company, based in Scotland, since 1962 - the family having had interest in the land since the 1940's. The current Directors taking charge of operations from the original owner, John Burrell, in 2014/15.

This area of land has remained as vacant land, with minimal maintenance since the 1960's. PPML wish to redress this situation and have significant aspirations for this part of their land holding. They foresee a vibrant and sustainable future for their site as part of as part of the Midlothian Gateway proposals.

PPML aspires to bring this site into beneficial use and their vision is for a mixed-use development which is innovative and contributes to social and economic prosperity locally. A new development which fits within its eclectic surroundings, responding to the scale and connectivity opportunities that the setting and future context holds for this important new growth corridor.



Figure 2 - MLC LDP current Policy allocations taken from the current Local Plan and redrawn for the purposes of previous public participation exercises

1.2

the site

The subject site is located within New Pentland and lies on the south-side of Edinburgh beyond the A720 City By-Pass between Straiton and Bilston. Located to the west of the A701, and South of Pentland Road/Damhead Road, it comprises semi-improved grassland, scrub hedgerows and some maturing trees.

Site characteristics:

- Overall site area - within PPIp boundary @ 3.78ha (9.34 acres) - See Figure 3 opposite
- North facing /prospect (see Figure 4 - Topographical survey, opposite) slopes gently towards the north/north-east
- The site ranges in height 157.0m AOD in NW; 155.5m in NE; rising to a plateau of 162.0m in South/SW and a localised low point in SE at 159.5m - approximately 5.0m overall change in level (over 350m).
- Slopes and falls across the site are gentle ranging from 1:15/20 in the north, leveling out towards the centre at 1:30/40, and plateauing in the south at 1:50/60.
- Separated into two fields, by a band of maturing trees, 2.57ha of which is unimproved grassland in the north and an area of amenity improved grassland of 1.21ha to the south
- Along the western margin of the site is the Pentland Residential Park, with agricultural land (northern extent) beyond, with a backdrop of the Pentland Hills.
- The site is well defined and well contained to the south, west and east, by its existing boundaries.

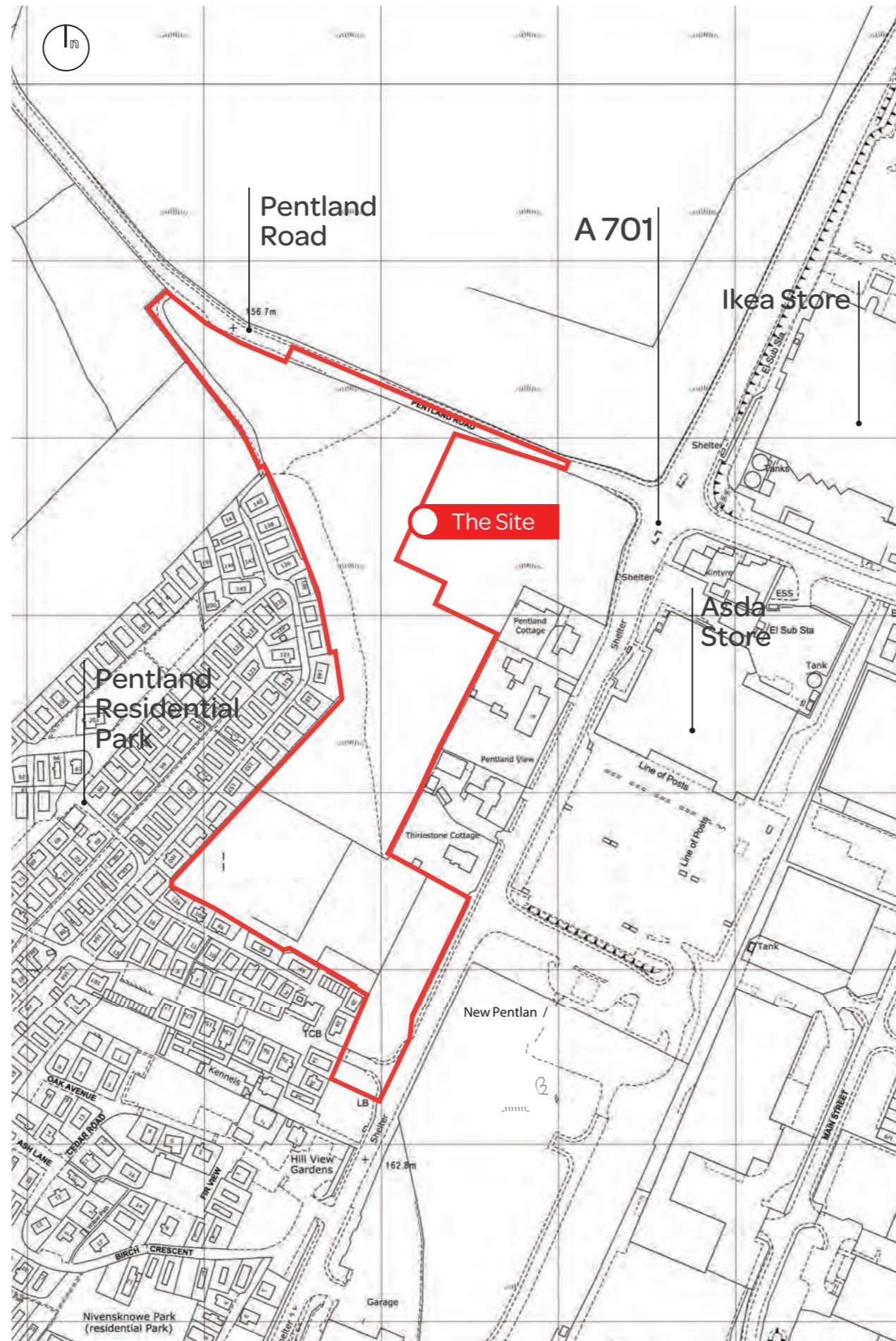


Figure 3 - The PPIp site area on OS base



Figure 4 - The 'masterplan site' topographical survey on local OS base.

02

planning context

A full planning policy context is set out in the associated Planning Statement submitted with the PPIp. We summarise here aspects of strategic an, national and local policy that relate to the design and access considerations, which we have used as the background to the development of our PPIp proposals.

Strategic planning considerations

The overarching planning requirements that effect the proposal site, are set out in SESplan (2013) and Midlothian Council Local Development Plan (LDP - 2017).

The New Pentland Masterplan can support the wider aspirations of SESplan by providing new economic development opportunities, by meeting the provisions of Policy 1A which directs LDP's to promote further strategic development opportunities within the SDA's including the A701 Corridor (refer to Figures 5 (a-c)).

Significantly, there are parts of the growth corridor which fall within designated Green Belt, but the need for carefully planned strategic growth will be prioritised in the longer term and already, areas of policy relaxation have emerged.

Whilst the subject site does not sit within the Green Belt, it is closely associated with it, and is covered by an Open Countryside designation. Nevertheless the longer term aspiration of land release for strategic growth and particularly to the west of Pentland Park and up to the proposed A701 realignment, supports the earlier release of the subject site for development. Indeed, the site has already become an 'island' of land set within a sea of commercial development, and on the basis of future growth within this strategic development area, will become an even more incongruous and underused site.

Creating Places (2013)

Creating Places sets out the Scottish Government's policy position on architecture and place. It sets out an over-arching approach to achieving "good design" which is described as "an innovative and creative process that delivers value". "Good design" is described as having a range of values including;

- Physical value – enhances a setting;
- Functional value – meets and adapts to the long-term needs of all users;

- Viability – provides good value for money;
- Social value – develops a positive sense of identity and community; and
- Environmental value - efficient and responsible use of our resources

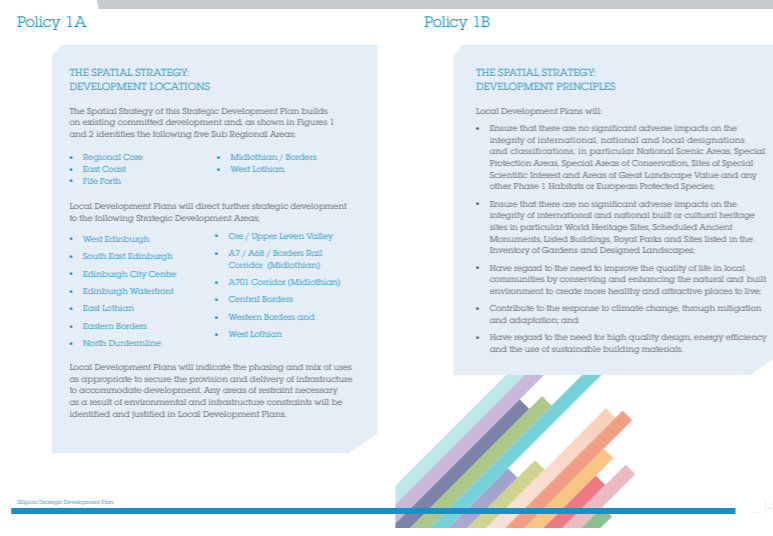
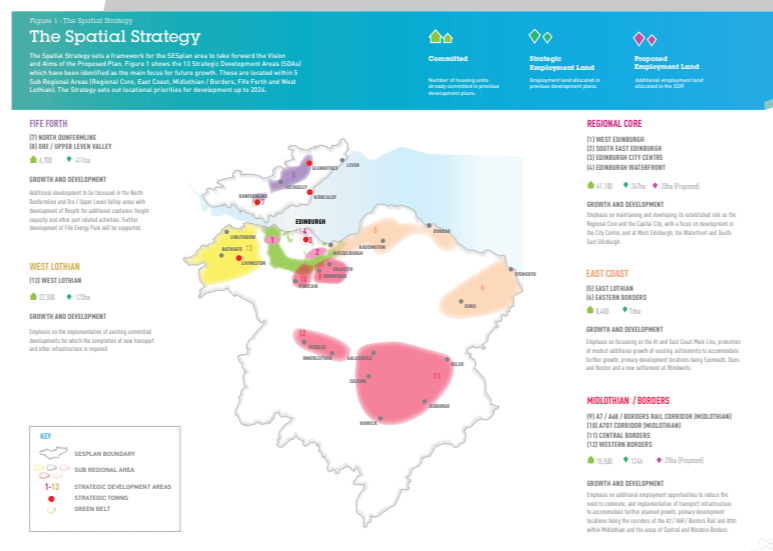


Figure 5a,b and c (above) - SES plan extracts



This document also refers to the contents of Designing Places and Designing Streets as providing the key guiding principles which continue to underpin the Scottish Government's approach to delivering good places

Designing Streets (2010)

- In the creation of new streets, the design should respond intelligently to location rather than follow a rigid application of standards. In both urban and rural context, streets have a strong influence on people's lifestyles and behavior.
- Street design also has a direct influence on a diverse range of significant issues, such as climate change; public health; social justice; inclusivity; and local and district economies. The document states that good street design should;
- Respond to local context to deliver places that are distinctive
- Be designed to be safe and attractive places
- Easy to move around for all users and connect well to existing movement networks
- Encourage positive interaction for all members of the community in the street layout and detail
- Be designed to accommodate future adaptation
- Consider orientation; the integration of sustainable drainage; and use attractive, durable materials that can be easily maintained.

The principle for development

The subject site at Pentland Park occupies an effective and sustainable location within the A701 strategic growth corridor and as such it represents a 'windfall' opportunity to deliver development which complies with the spatial strategy of the approved development plan. This site can already be best described as an island within a sea of commercial and economic development and land use proposals. The longer term growth aspirations of the development plan will further isolate this land in relation to its surroundings. Indeed, its continued retention under protective greenfield land policies

contradicts the growth strategy for this area. The subject site represents an opportunity to deliver growth within an area specifically designated to accommodate strategic scale development.

In this regard, the masterplan proposals brought forward demonstrate how this site can make a meaningful contribution whilst respecting and adopting the core principles of good place-making and sustainable development as laid out within key Government policy and guidance

Meeting Design Standards

The proposals brought forward through the Pentland Park masterplan are founded on the principles laid out in the various government policy and guidance documents referenced above

PPML is committed to meeting these high standards of design and construction over the masterplan area and it has, to date and will continue to, adhere to the requisite best practice in building, landscape and environmental sustainability. See also Section 3.6 - aligning design guidance to the development of ideas, options and the current proposals.

PPML wishes to leave a legacy from its ownership of this land at New Pentland and ensure that a high quality, community focused and sustainable development is delivered through the detailed planning stages, should PPIp be granted permission in principle for the current proposals.

02

landscape character and site conditions

This section will set out summaries of the contextual analyses that the team has undertaken over the last three years. Used to evaluate the site, establish constraints and opportunities and guide design development options and marketability assessments of potential land uses, including:

- Landscape character
- Tree survey
- Other technical surveys and analysis

Historic conditions

The subject site has a long history, where its extents can be traced back into the 19th century, as the historic Ordnance Survey (OS) map shows from 1850 (Figure 6a over page).

The external boundaries of the site have very changed little over the period. The internal boundaries of the subject site area have been subdivided into 2, 3 and 4 distinct fields at one time or another, as shown on the OS maps of 1900, 1950 and 1970 (Figures 6b, 6c and 6d) opposite.

Mining activities are clearly visible to the north at Pentland and Straiton Oil works (Oil shale), in the 1900, 1950 maps, but the 'Colliery' activities have changed by 1970 and the Pre cast works have replaced Mining. The waste tips are however, now large and well defined, and now sit in the field to the north close to and accessed from Pentland Road. this is particularly evident in 1990 map.

The 1970 map shows the proposal site in two parts. Interestingly this is not how the site is currently divided, this occurred post 1990, were the existing line of trees that separates the site was planted - so are about 30 years old. The Pentland Residential Park is visible from 1970.

Surrounding character areas

As shown on Figure 7 opposite, agricultural fields lie to the west of the North West corner of the site, continuing behind Pentland Residential Park, with open aspect/prospect towards the Pentland Hills. These fields are used as pasture/grazing land. The land to the north is semi derelict reclaimed land following previous use as a mining and spoil tipping areas.

The presence of the Ikea and Asda stores along the A701 has given this once visually fragmented transport corridor a dramatic new scale and prominence. Their presence very much sets the scene for the Proposals site, creating a strong new building line in the east, not more than 10.0m from the A701 - echoing the existing residential/light commercial properties to the west.

Building lines are important in the context of the future of the A701, and its eventual re categorisation from a Trunk Road, following the construction of the new by pass. The current road then ostensibly becoming a local High Street. With that in mind and by comparison the current set backs, compared to these new building lines, vary greatly - with Pentland Residential Park sitting further back from the stronger building line of Nivensknowe Park and notably the properties (residential/light commercial) fronting the A701. Consequently, the urban and visual character to the west of the A701 appears disjointed and potentially out of kilter with longer term opportunities, offered by a new High Street character.

Site character zones - landscape and topography

The following section deals with landscape character and general form of the topography using a site appraisal that has divided the subject site into a series of distinct and overlapping zones - as shown on the diagram over page (Figure 8).

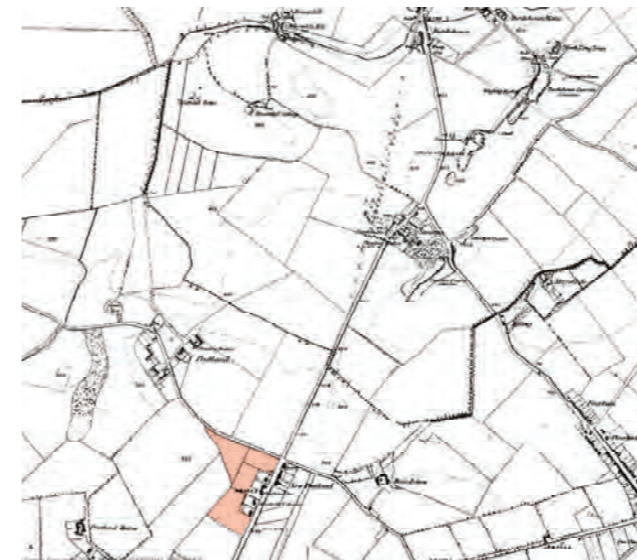


Figure 6a- Historic mapping 1850

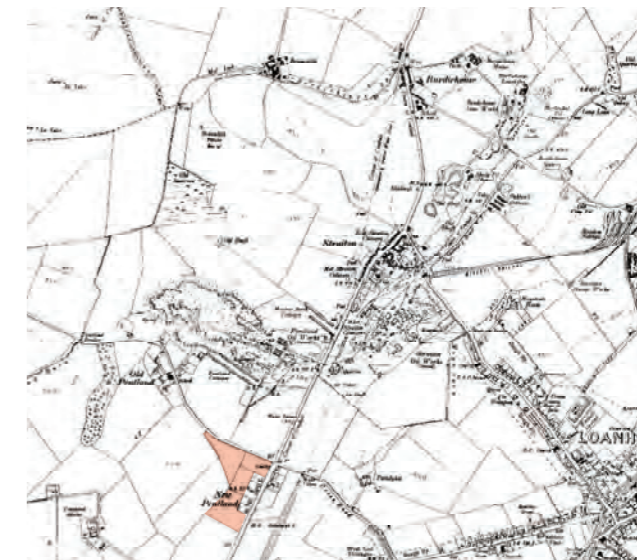


Figure 6b - Historic mapping 1900



Figure 6c - Historic mapping 1950

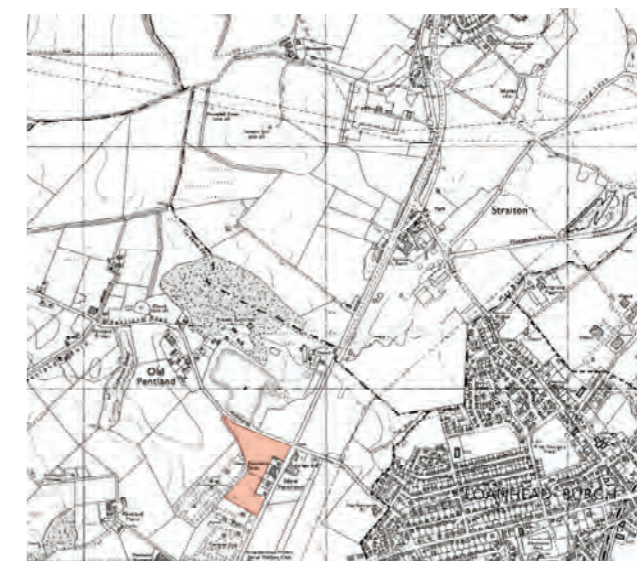


Figure 6d - Historic mapping 1970



Figure 7 - Surrounding land uses

02

landscape character appraisal

Zone A - Fronting A701

Landscape - Managed amenity grassland along side and fronting the A701, bounded by two linear hedge lines - marked on the diagram opposite "1" (mature mixed species hedge 4-5m high) and "2" a smaller, sporadic, hawthorn and elder hedge (1.5m high).

Topography - Sloping gently to the N/NE

Zone B - Amenity Space

Landscape - Managed amenity grassland acting as open space and kickabout area (children's play area, without equipment) and dog walking area, bounded by the mature hedge "1" to the east and to the north by maturing trees (mostly Norway Maple) marked as "3 and 5", a couple of larger beech trees lie to the south marked "4" acting as gateway markers for public access from the Residential Park.

Topography - Generally flat with very gentle slope to E/NE

Zone C - the 'plateaux'

Landscape - Unmanaged semi-improved grassland characterised by rough grasses and some ruderal vegetation, bounded to the west by the boundary of Pentland Park with sporadic maturing deciduous trees (Birch) and occasional conifers.

Topography - Sloping gently to the N, but appears relatively flat (slopes 1:40>1:60)

Zone D - sloping open ground

Landscape - Unmanaged semi-improved grassland, co-joined with zone C, but defined as separate for these purpose as it dips more prominently and is more open in character with its boundaries less constraining.

Topography - Sloping gently to the N- 1:20 > 1:30, generally @ 159.0 > 156.0m.

Zone E - north west low point

Landscape - A long low character zone abutting the Pentland Road edge. Unmanaged semi-improved grassland as "C and D" but defined as a separate area to its low lying character, and bounded by the Pentland/Damhead road and its sporadic hedgerows marked "8" on the diagram, and the other mixed trees groups and hedgerows at "7".

Topography - Sloping gently (1:15>1:20) to the N, and NE, containing the lowest point of the site @155.5 AOD, adjacent the A701/Damhead/Pentland Road junction. This and other areas along the boundary hedge line are subject to minor surface water flooding in severe conditions.

Zone F - north west low point

Landscape - Unmanaged semi-improved grassland, which is in effect a sub set of zone E, but warrants a separate delineation as its has the wider and open views to the west towards the Pentland Hills, which sets it apart from all the other areas. It is also at a relative low point along this western boundary.

Topography - Gently sloping <1:80 - creating a localised low point generally @ 156.0>157.0m. AOD.

Conclusion

It is concluded that the landscape character of the site and its immediate surroundings is capable of absorbing development, with appropriate siting, massing and orientation of new buildings. Areas of new planting can assist with integration of the development proposals into the broader landscape.



Figure 8 - Landscape zones