

Agenda Item	6
Report No	CIA/53/19

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: City of Inverness Area Committee

Date: 21 November 2019

Report Title: Torvean and Inverness Campus Sports Provision – Developer Contributions

Report By: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure and Environment

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report updates Members on the suggested approach to delivering strategic sports facilities for the City at Torvean and the Inverness Campus and the use of developer contributions towards their delivery. These facilities are essential to the growth of the City and the creation of healthy and sustainable communities. They are identified in the adopted Development Briefs for [Torvean and Ness-side](#) and [Inverness East](#) which form part of the Council's Development Plan. Members are asked to approve the recommendations below to allow continued progress towards the delivery of these vital assets for current and future residents and visitors alike.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- i. Note the intended purpose of these strategic sports facilities in supporting future growth in the City and the steps towards delivery;
 - ii. Agree the funding of £25,000 from developer contributions towards the delivery of the Torvean Park project as detailed in paragraph 5.4; and
 - iii. Agree in principle to the funding of £250,000 of developer contributions towards the delivery of the Inverness Campus Sports Pitch as detailed in paragraph 6.3, and subject to confirmation from partners on the arrangements for community use and compatibility with the aspirations of Craig Dunain Rugby Club.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource: Approval of the report will provide greater clarity on the financial position for the delivery of these projects including the use of developer contributions associated with development. The Council will play a lead role in implementing the Torvean Park project,

which will be delivered as an integral part of the West Link Road Project Phase 2, and will also require Council maintenance.

- 3.2 Legal / Risk: The Council's requests for and use of developer contributions needs to comply with Planning Circular 3/2012: Planning obligations and good neighbour agreements which outlines five policy tests for seeking developer contributions.
- 3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): These projects provide new or enhanced facilities that help to ensure that current and future residents and visitors alike have easy access to the facilities to maintain healthy and sustainable communities. The Torvean Park project provides full public access to an area previously accessible only to Golf Club members.
- 3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever: Both of the sports facilities are proposed in locations that are well connected to surrounding communities by walking and cycling and public transport. The Torvean Park proposal would be delivered as part of the West Link Road Project Phase 2 which has been subject to environmental assessment procedures.
- 3.5 Gaelic: None.

4. Background

- 4.1 This report forms part of the Council's new approach to the coordination of developer contributions for the delivery of services, facilities and infrastructure required to support development. Many requirements for infrastructure provision and developer contributions are made clear through the Development Plan and the associated Action Programme / Delivery Programme. In certain cases it may be necessary to inform and seek direction from Committee on how developer contributions will be used to mitigate the impact of development and support the necessary infrastructure. However, it should be noted that any such decision needs to comply with Scottish Government legislation - [Planning Circular 3/2012: Planning obligations and good neighbour agreements](#) - which spells out five policy tests for seeking developer contributions.
- 4.2 Sport facilities are regarded as an essential component in creating vibrant, healthy and sustainable communities and the Council's Development Plan sets out requirements for the delivery of such facilities alongside future development. This can include sports facilities, informal and formal play space and public parks which play a vital role in creating a high quality development and good quality of life for residents. The [Developer Contributions Supplementary Guidance](#) (adopted November 2018) includes financial requirements that can contribute to the provision of sports related facilities such as open space ('green infrastructure') and community facilities, but also schools that can often include shared use community facilities.
- 4.3 In certain locations Development Briefs can help to plan for the provision of more significant services and infrastructure requirements such as strategic sports facilities in. Sections 5 and 6 below describe two such areas the City of Inverness where strategic sports facilities are proposed to be delivered in the next few years to support the delivery of committed and emerging developments, and the benefits that such facilities will provide.
- 4.4 To help plan for their delivery, the planning service is securing financial contributions from recent and emerging developments and is also carefully monitoring the ongoing financial position including forecasting of developer contributions from anticipated developments – based on the latest [Housing Land Audit](#). Recently approved

developments at Ness-side, Torvean and Westercraigs as well as some historical contributions including from the Woodside of Culloden development allow the Council an element of discretion in the use of their contributions towards strategic sports facilities in Inverness. The following sections of the report describe how these contributions would be used to assist in the delivery of the facilities at Torvean and Inverness Campus.

5. Torvean Park

- 5.1 At Torvean, where the Council is currently delivering the West Link Stage 2, the Torvean & Ness-side Development Brief (adopted 2013, and update adopted August 2019) outlines proposals for surrounding land uses, including areas formerly occupied by the Torvean Golf Course. Stage 1 of the West Link included the relocation and enhancement of sport facilities available in this part of the City which is firmly established as one of the main areas for sport. The updated version of the Development Brief sought to build upon that approach by putting sport and recreation facilities at the heart of the Torvean Gateway area adjacent to the Caledonian Canal. This area is proposed as a new leisure, tourism and recreation destination, with a new public park south of the A82 and an informal park on land to the east of the realigned General Booth Road – see **Appendix 1**. Members have been supportive of this vision for the area and public feedback was very positive during the consultation period.
- 5.2 The park and particularly the proposed path network is seen as a significant opportunity to capitalise on the area's role as a hub for sporting events. Through the review of the Torvean & Ness-side Development Brief an opportunity was also identified for an active travel route through the new Torvean Park. As well as providing a fantastic new resource for all city residents and visitors the path network will also allow the relocation of the weekly [Inverness Parkrun](#) event from Bught Park (and on occasion Whin Park). This will provide a dedicated location for this growing event and reduce some of the conflicting demands that arise from time to time when major events coincide, or weather related postponements lead to disruption. Since its inception in 2011 420 Parkrun events have taken place with an average of 121 runners taking part every Saturday morning supported by a team of around a dozen volunteers. Parkrun Directors who oversee the event are very keen to relocate the existing event to the new Torvean park where there would be less risk of conflict with other events. Members may also be aware that local GPs are promoting the health benefits of Parkrun as part of a national campaign, and in January 2019 Cairn Medical Practice were announced as the first Parkrun practice in the City.
- 5.3 A design for the proposed park path network has been drawn up and is attached as **Appendix 2**. Subject to Members agreement the park will be available for public use on completion of the current phase of works on West Link Stage 2 in November 2020. As some Members of the Committee will recognise this is an under-valued asset in Inverness previously only accessible to Members of the Torvean Golf Club. The park and particularly the path network will help to draw people into the area from surrounding communities accessible by walking and cycling on traffic free routes and thereby help to promote healthy lifestyles. As set out in the Development Brief, the development area to the east and associated parking will complement the park facility and create a destination for the canal area and a gateway feature for both the City and the Great Glen. It is anticipated that an element of the agreed funding will be used for maintenance of the park and other green space within the Torvean Development Brief area in the short term and the development of the redundant area of land adjacent to the canal will result in funding to provide for the long term maintenance of the park, in much the same way as was agreed for the implementation of Inshes Park.

5.4 The financial position for the delivery of this facility is that the creation of the public park and path network will cost an estimated £50,000 and a contractor has been identified and price agreed. 50% of this would be funded from Carbon Clever Active Travel Funding to make the link to promoting the use of these routes for health benefits and day to day travel. The remaining 50% will be sourced from developer contributions from local developments and Member agreement on the sum of £25,000 to be used for this purpose is sought.

6. Inverness Campus Sports Facilities

6.1 The Inverness East Development Brief, adopted 2013, includes requirements for a new District Park and High School, and in the shorter term new sports facilities to address a recognised shortfall in facilities in the east of the City – see **Appendix 3**. It also outlines financial requirements for development in the area to contribute to the delivery of these facilities.

6.2 Further to the identification of the Inverness Campus sports facility in the Development Brief, and as the first phase of a long term sports development project, earlier this year UHI Inverness College commissioned a Design Brief for the provision of a sports pitch which was finalised in September. Council officers have been involved through the Steering Group for the sports development project and have advised on the compatibility with the Development Brief and the stated aim to utilise developer contributions towards its delivery.

6.3 The sports pitch is envisaged to fulfil the requirements of the Development Brief by providing a facility that is shared between the College and associated UHI groups but also members of the community and local sport clubs. The indicative cost has been identified as £900,000 and the UHI Board has committed £250,000 towards its delivery. In addition, it is proposed that £250,000 of developer contributions for Strategic Sports Facilities be directed to the project. This is considered to be in line with the Development Brief and a suitable and proportionate means of supporting the cumulative requirements for development across the City. Further opportunities for funding are being investigated by Inverness College / UHI and the project board including SportScotland funding.

6.4 Member agreement is sought for an in-principle contribution of £250,000 from developer contributions already held and which fit the legal position set out in the relevant Section 75s. Of particular note is the intention to use funding allocated towards replacement pitch provision from the Westercraigs development. Discussions have been held through the steering group with Craig Dunain Rugby Club to ensure that their interests and requirements are built into the final operating model at the Inverness Campus. This will provide a long term shared opportunity for the development of rugby pitch provision in the east side of the City as well as the provision for enhancing facilities for others sports, students and local community groups.

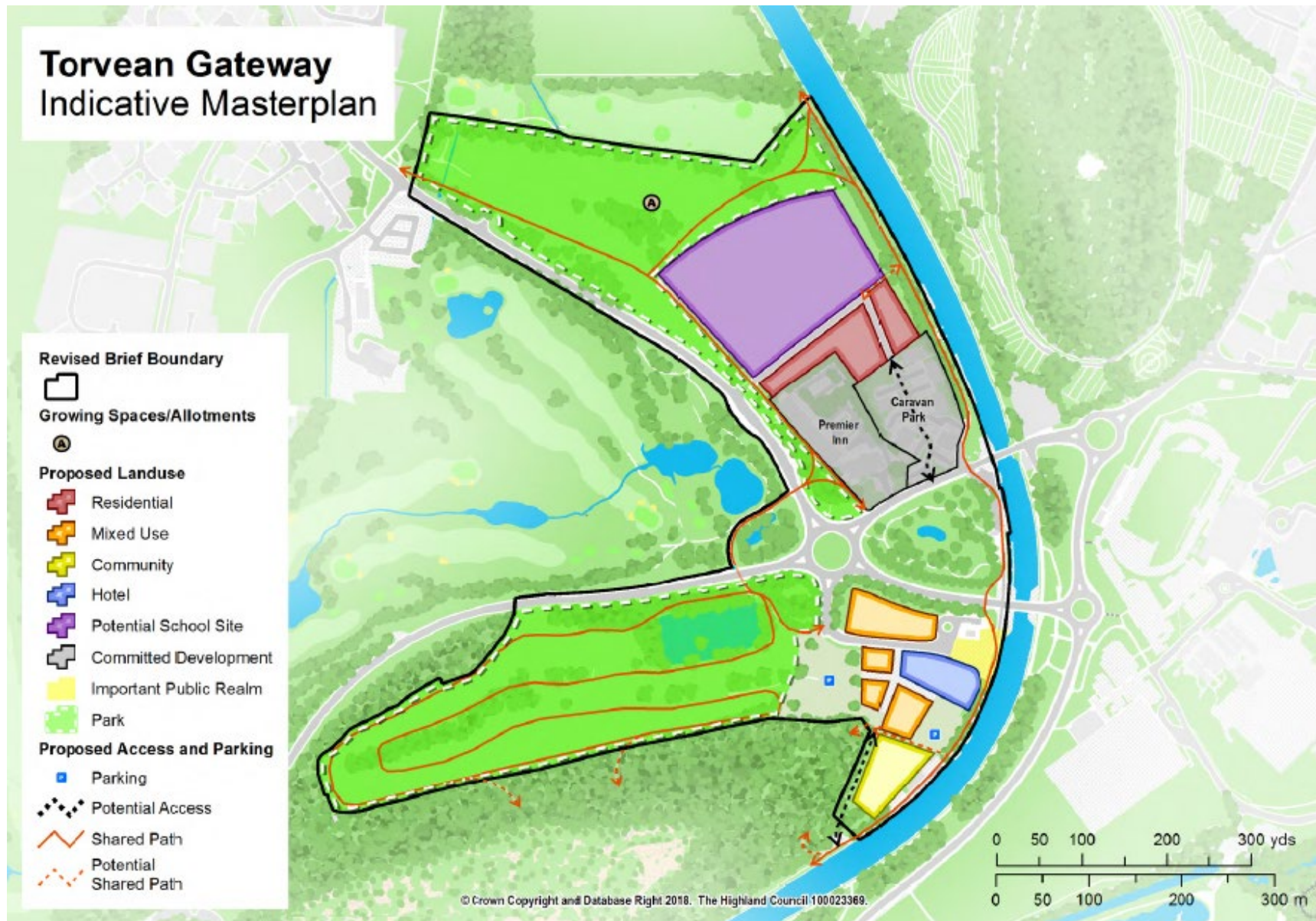
Designation: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure and Environment

Date: 8 November 2019

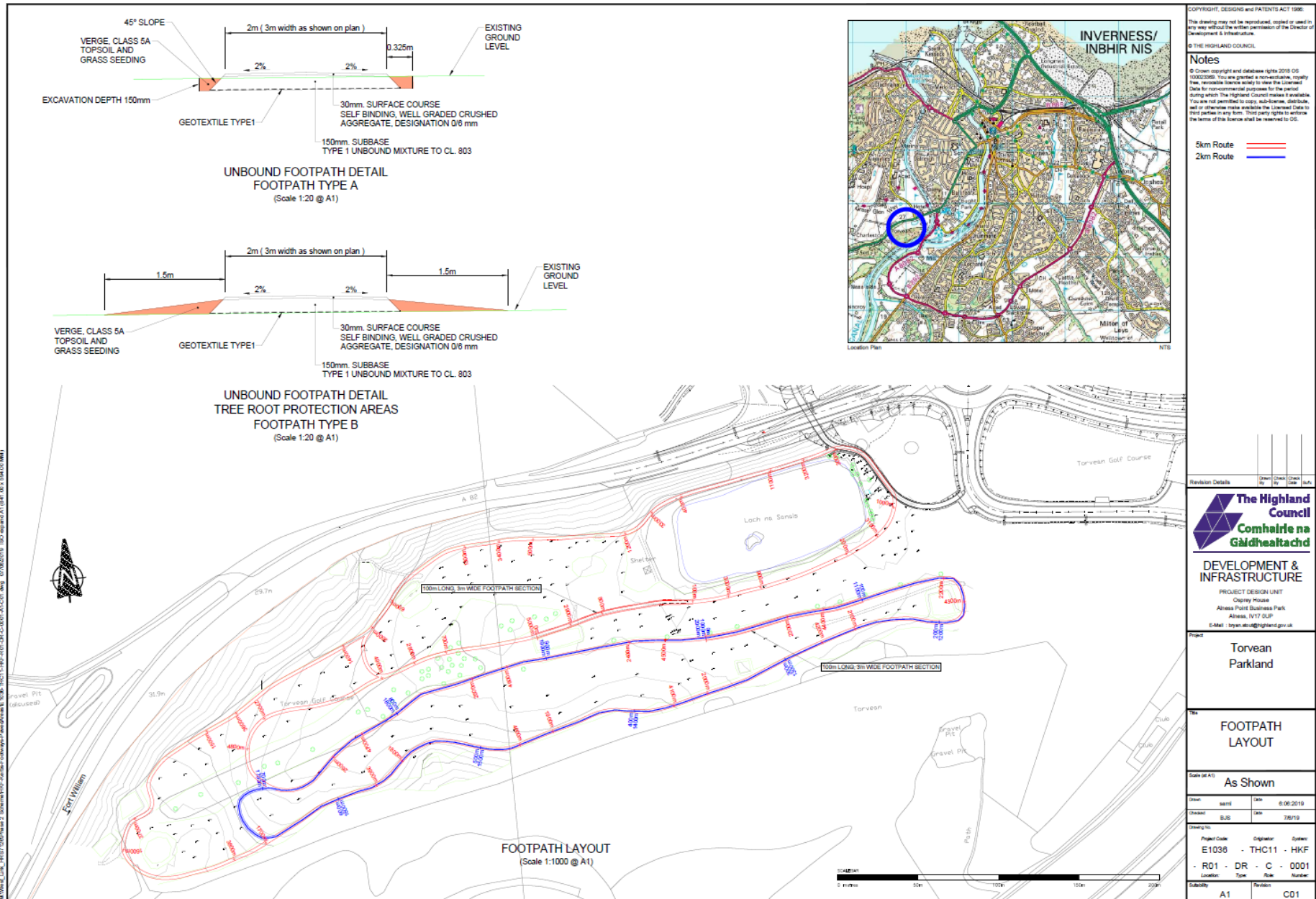
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Background Papers:

Appendix 1 - Extract from Torvean & Ness-side Development Brief

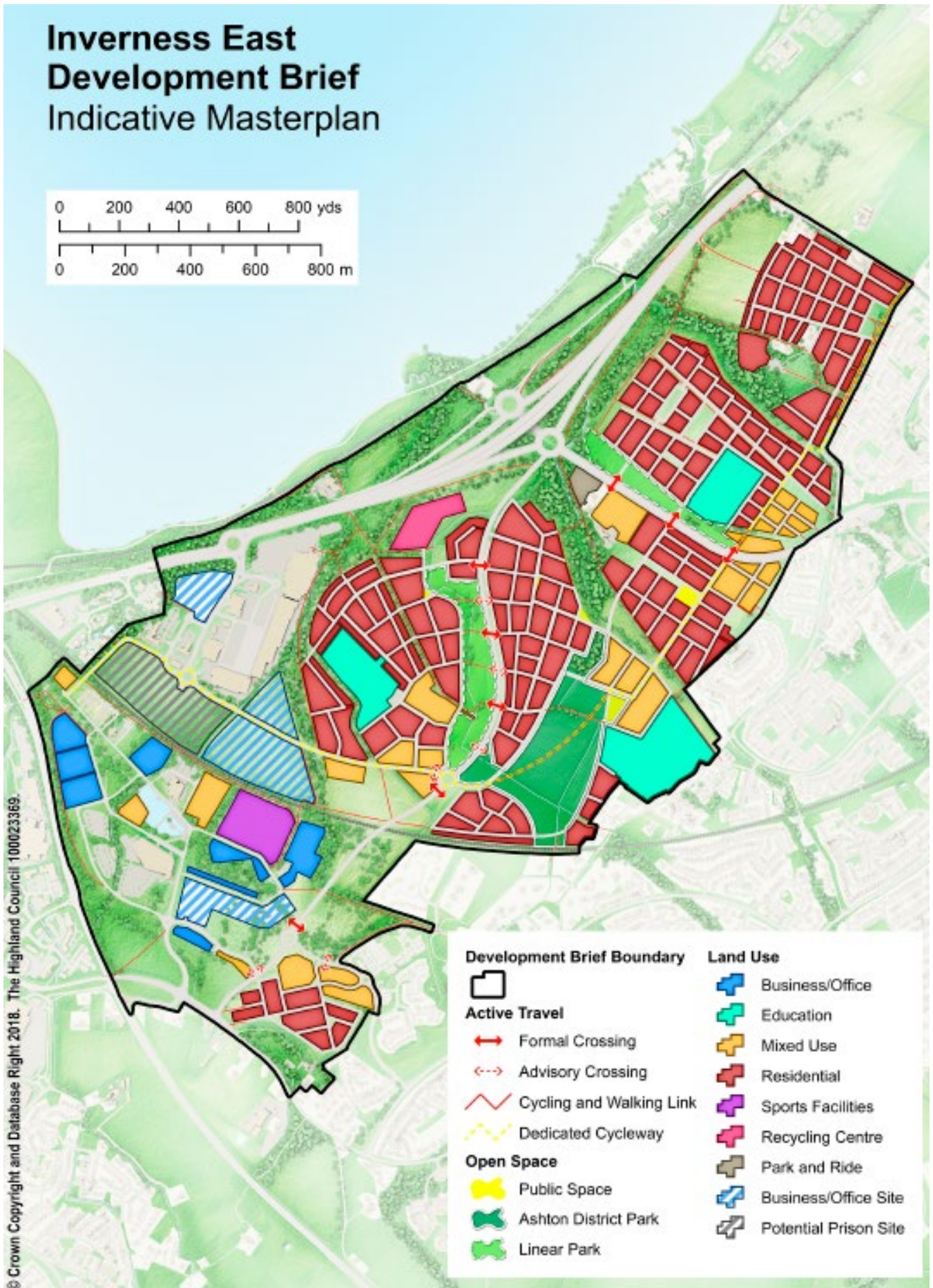
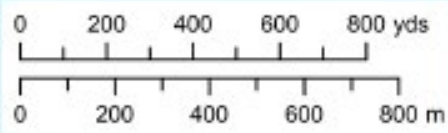


Appendix 2 – Torvean Park Path Network



Appendix 3 - Extract from Inverness East Development Brief

Inverness East Development Brief Indicative Masterplan



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Development Brief Boundary		Land Use	
	Development Brief Boundary		Business/Office
Active Travel			Education
	Formal Crossing		Mixed Use
	Advisory Crossing		Residential
	Cycling and Walking Link		Sports Facilities
	Dedicated Cycleway		Recycling Centre
Open Space			Park and Ride
	Public Space		Business/Office Site
	Ashton District Park		Potential Prison Site
	Linear Park		