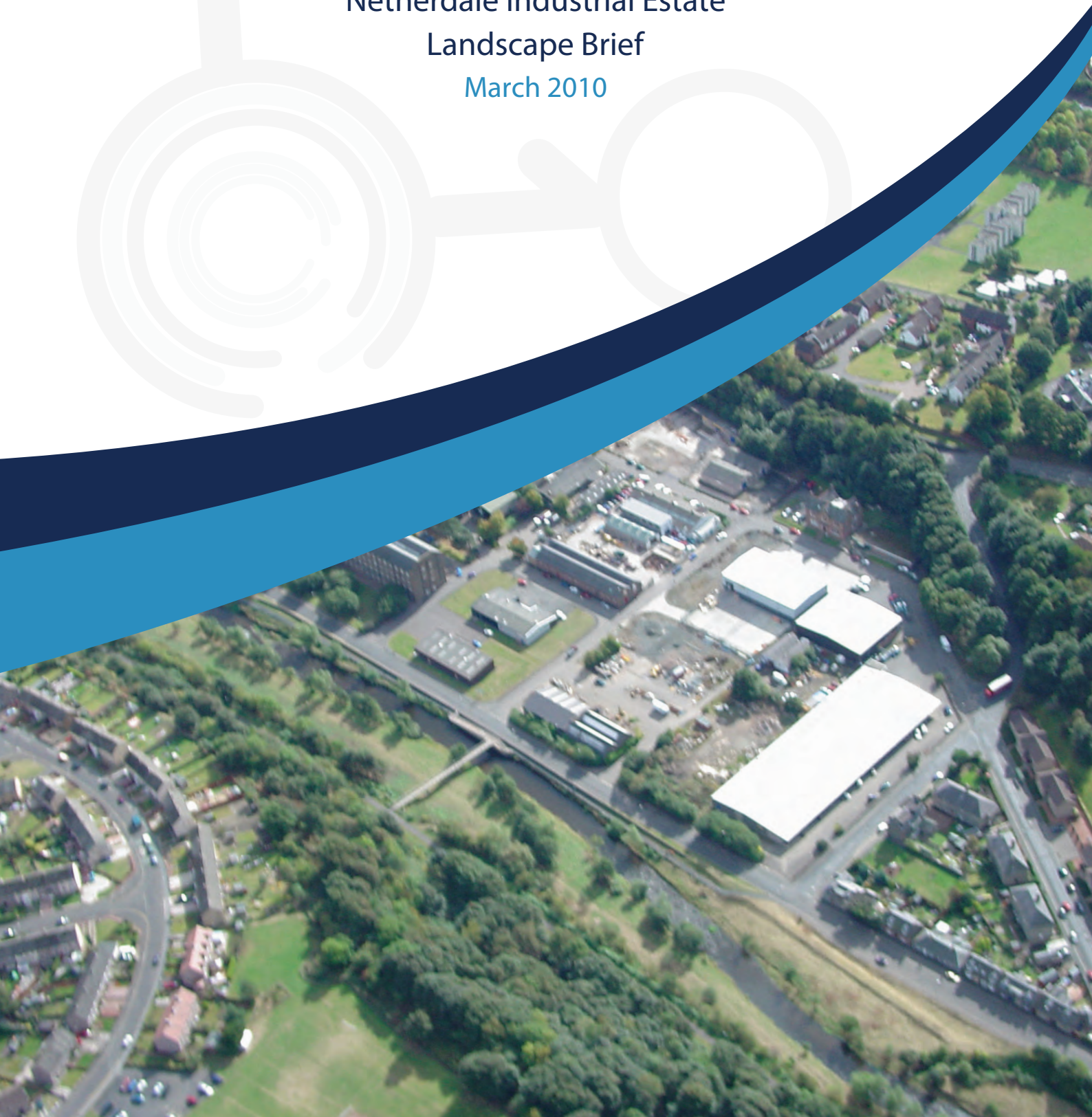


# Scottish Borders Local Plan

Supplementary Planning Guidance on

## Netherdale Industrial Estate Landscape Brief March 2010





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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This planning guidance provides specific advice on the way in which the existing Netherdale Industrial Estate should be visually enhanced. It outlines what the Council will expect, primarily in terms of urban and landscape design, including building materials, boundary treatment and signage. There is also a proposal to significantly improve the northern half of the area and to change it over a period of time to achieve a higher amenity more appropriate to the neighbouring Heriot-Watt / Borders College Netherdale Campus.
- 1.2 The South of Scotland Competitiveness Strategy includes priorities 2, 5 and 6 which are relevant to the enhancement of the Estate. Under Priority 6 the need to develop a portfolio of high quality industrial and business sites is stated. The need to produce a competitive place offering is also stressed. Additionally, the co-located campus within Netherdale, is being expanded and refurbished, which provides an economic development opportunity, needing an enhanced landscape setting.
- 1.3 This guidance provides an overall concept, with clear illustrations of how the business area would be implemented. Through demonstrating how to visually improve the whole Estate, its value and attractiveness shall be enhanced. The brief will be used to influence decisions on planning matters relating to the Estate. In the context provided by this guidance incremental public sector improvements can be co-ordinated along the edge of privately owned land.

## **2 VISION**

- 2.1 The guidance set out a framework in which individual planning applications and public sector works can be considered and co-ordinated over time. It seeks to achieve a consistent, if gradual, improvement to the appearance and efficiency of the estates.
- 2.2 Business land in Galashiels is scarce and the existing land uses often comprise of low value/ extensive open storage. Such uses have their place, but the investment now being made in the Heriot Watt/ Borders College campus suggests that higher land values can be achieved, particularly along the attractive outlook to the north of the site which overlooks the Gala Water. Moreover, there are a few narrow rear access roads across the estate. These provide opportunities for closure and site expansion, subject to landowner objectives. Above all, better use of scarce land is essential.
- 2.3 There are a range of approaches taken to fencing and to building materials used across the estate. Buildings comprise of stone, concrete block, brick, metal fabrication, with a similarly wide array of roofing materials and colours. Boundaries vary from chain link to walls, metal and wooden screening and more modern metal mesh effects. Within the site there is little evidence of any planting.
- 2.4 In such a context it is unlikely that priority will be given to upgrading the site or to realising its potential. This guidance therefore needs to raise awareness of the potential and to provide the policy backing for negotiations with developers to gradually achieve such improvements over time which should support further investment activity.

### 3 POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 The Netherdale Industrial Estate, is designated within the Adopted Local Plan 2008 as Employment Land Safeguarding (ED1), site code zEL40 (see Figure 1).

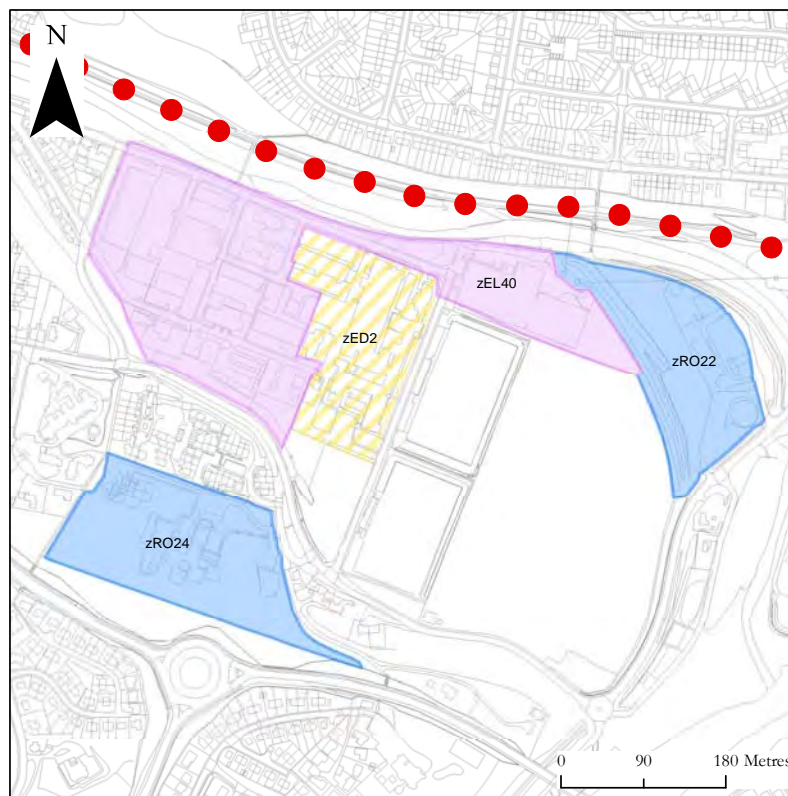
### 4 SITE DESCRIPTION

4.1 The Estate is located to the west of the Heriot-Watt University / Borders College Netherdale campus. The area is bounded by Dale Street along its north side, by Waverley Place along its west side and Tweed Road along its south side. The estate has an area of 6.7Ha excluding the southern linear woodland.

4.2 Netherdale Industrial Estate is located on relatively flat ground to the south of the Gala Water with a southern boundary formed by the steeper slopes that separate it from the housing areas of Netherdale Brae that lie to the south and west. The Estate is therefore part of the physical 'flood plain' of the Gala Water (see Figure 2) Because they are difficult to develop, many of the steeper slopes support a woodland cover of predominantly self sown broadleaved trees (ash, sycamore etc) and these enhance the visual sense of containment provided by the slopes. The northern boundary of the Estate is the Gala Water and its banks also have some mixed broadleaved tree cover including alder and willow.

**Figure 1 - Finalised Local Plan Extract**

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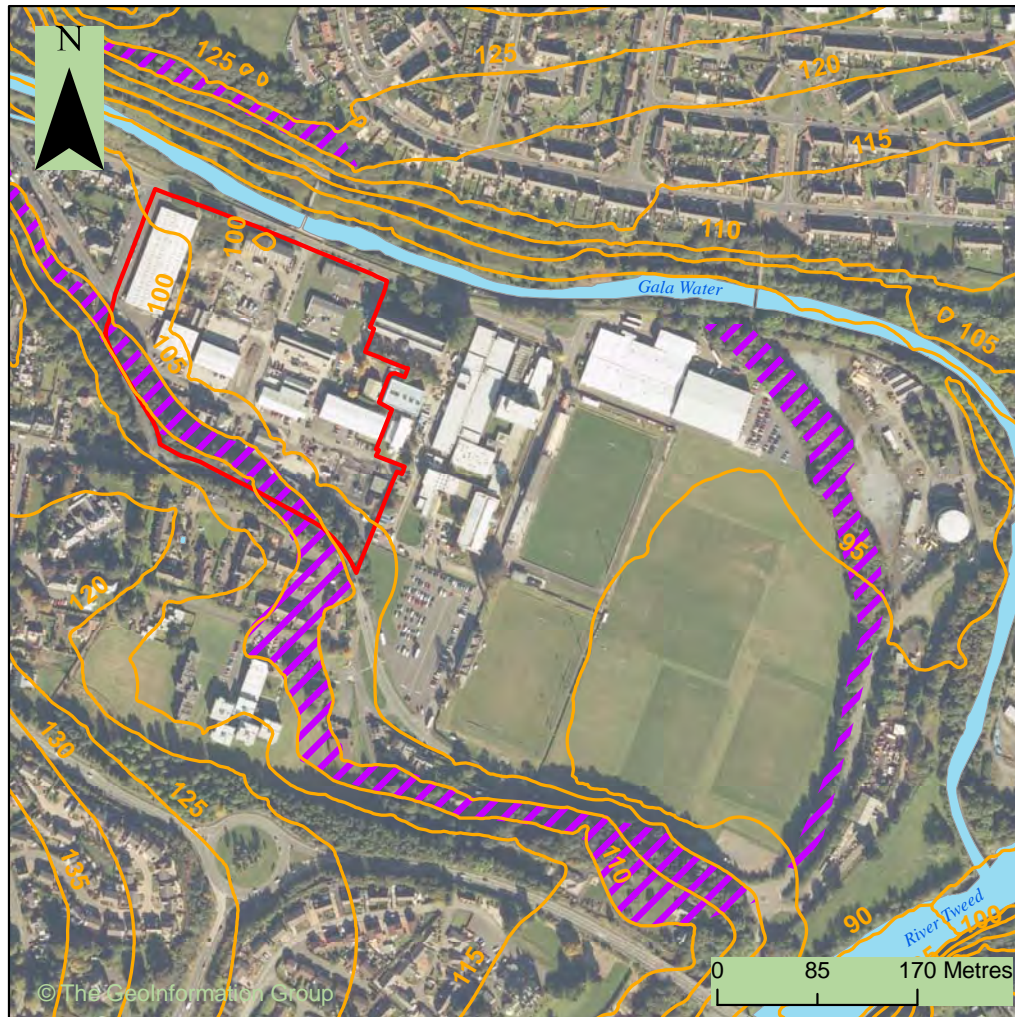
#### Key

- Redevelopment
- Employment Land Safeguarding (ED1)
- Education Safeguarding (BE9)
- Transport Safeguarding (Inf1) - Indicative route of railway only







## Figure 2 - Physical Characteristics

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### Key

-  Estate Boundary
-  Visual Containment
-  Rivers
-  Contours (Height in Metres)

- 4.3 The river, its banks, the sloping ground and its supporting tree cover together provide the physical and visual limits to the Estate.
- 4.4 Within the flood plain (north of Gala Water), opposite to the estate, there is currently a three year cycle of tree thinning and clearance to aid flood control. A flood prevention scheme for the wider Galashiels area is under consideration.



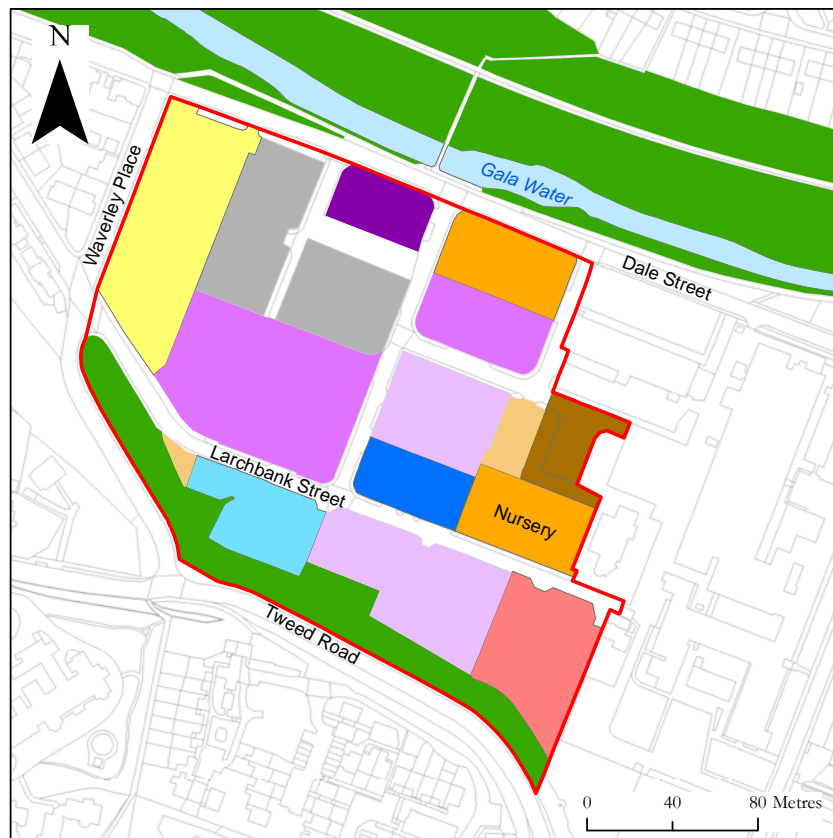
## 5 EXISTING USES, OWNERSHIP & LAYOUT

5.1 The existing uses are shown in Figure 3: Existing Use Plan. There is a predominance of wholesale use including cash and carry, builder's merchants and car sales. Two education related functions are located at the eastern end of the Estate. Figure 4 shows existing ownership and Figure 5 shows the existing layout plan.

## 6 EXISTING CONDITIONS











**Figure 3 - Existing Use Plan**

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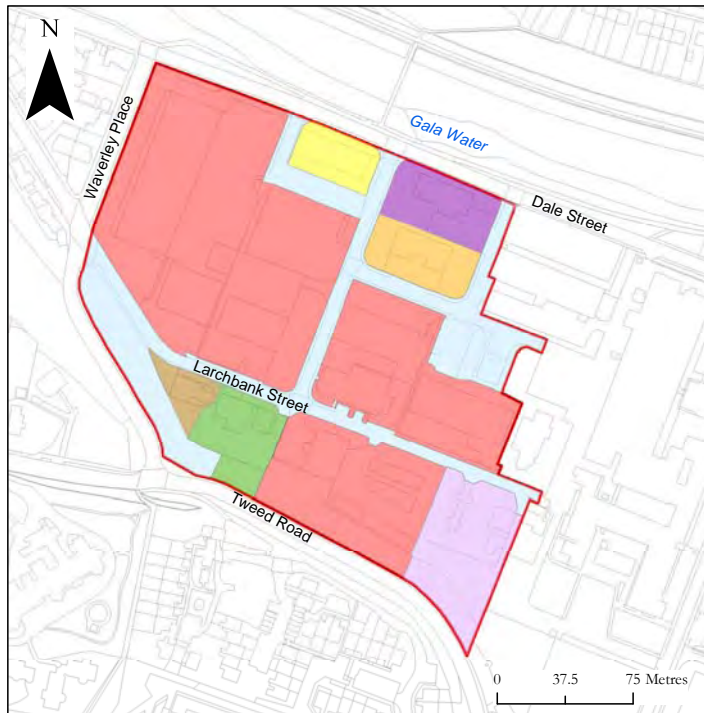
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### Key

	Estate Boundary		Engineering Workshop
	Cash and Carry		Education
	Builders Supplier		Office
	Builders Yard		Electrical T. Station
	Car Park		Vacant
	Haulage		Landscape Containment
	Car Sales		










**Figure 4 - Existing Ownership**

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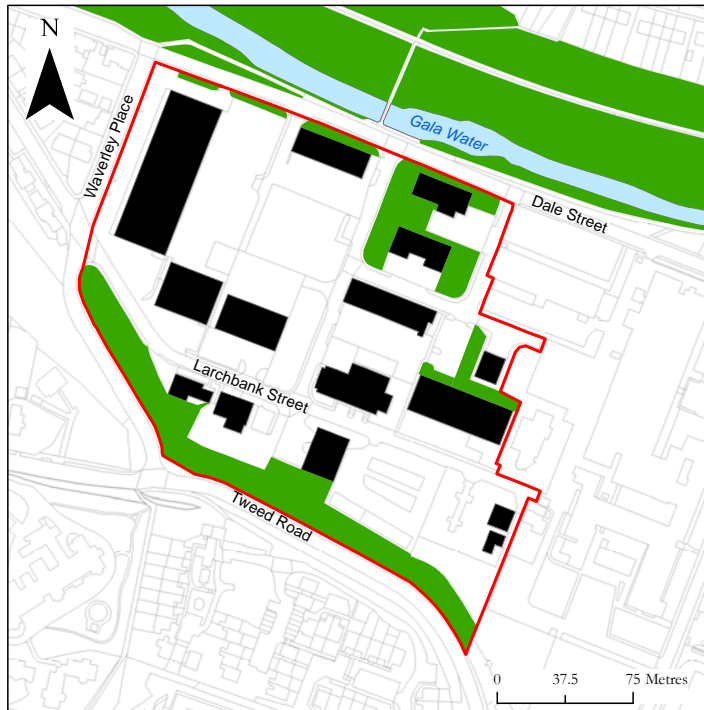
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**Key**

- |   |                          |  |                   |
|---|--------------------------|--|-------------------|
|    | Estate Boundary          |   | G.B Telecom       |
|    | Scottish Borders Council |   | Scottish Power    |
|    | Murray & Burrell         |   | Lothian Breakways |
|   | J.S Crawford             |  | Capital Solutions |
|  | Anderson & Wilson        |  |                   |




**Figure 5 - Existing Layout Plan**

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**Key**

- |   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
|  | Estate Boundary    |
|  | Estate Buildings   |
|  | Existing Landscape |

6.1 Generally the existing Estate has a poor visual image and includes a wide range of external materials used on buildings, the ground and on site boundaries, with very few trees. There is a wide range of low value land uses, including open storage which together create an unattractive and bleak impression (see Figure 6).

6.2 Collectively the following existing visual elements contribute to the poor visual impact:

**- Boundary Treatment**

A variety of fencing types exists: galvanised steel, timber posts and wire, low timber fencing and concrete post with mesh. Galvanised steel, with pointed finials may be functionally satisfactory, but are visually poor. Much of the remaining fencing looks temporary and crude.

**- Footpaths**

These vary from 2.5m –5m wide and in places are in a bad state of repair.

**- Planting**

Existing planting is aged, sparse, unimpressive and poorly maintained.

**- Lighting**

Existing lamp standards are poorly spaced, dated and give poor illumination levels.

**- Ground Surface Materials**

A variety of types exist with a predominance of tar-macadam / asphalt finishes.

**- External Building Materials and Colour**

A variety of materials and colours are evident. The use of profiled sheet metal is common on the more recent buildings, but includes concrete block, brick, stone, asbestos and slate.

**- Signage**

Signage is of mixed design, age, quality and legibility.

**- Parking**

Roadside parking is extensive in the north-east corner of the estate.

**Figure 6 - Existing Conditions**



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## 7 REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

- 7.1 The physical and visual characteristics identified at 4.1 and 4.2 above have consequences for the development potential (see Figure 7).
- 7.2 The river and its associated riparian zone have an existing high amenity value and relatively good pedestrian access and can provide a significant enhancement to any development which requires attractive surroundings.
- 7.3 The steeper slopes and thicker woodland cover along the southern boundary provide relatively high levels of screening and low external visibility to the Estate.
- 7.4 Landscape factors indicate a preference for lower amenity uses towards the southern part of the site with potential for higher value business uses towards the river frontage. It is proposed to gradually change the northern half of the estate, adjacent to the high amenity Gala Water, to an enhanced zone of high quality development usually associated with class 4 use.
- 7.5 This brief provides the framework by which to guide investment upgrade the site and realise a more efficient and attractive site layout. Its realisation will inevitably take time to implement through individual land use transactions and applications for planning consent.






**Figure 7 - Landscape Analysis**

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### Key

-  Estate Boundary
-  High Amenity Value areas along Gala Water
-  Location for Uses Benefiting from Attractive Location
-  Location for Uses Requiring Screening
-  Educational and Recreational Use



## 8 CONCEPT PLAN

### 8.1 Objectives

The principal objective is to achieve a “fit for purpose” layout for employment land at Netherdale in order to release further development and investment potential. This will be done by upgrading the overall appearance of the site through a series of measures including:

1. Creation of a future planting concept for the whole area (see Figure 8);
2. Changing the emphasis of the northern half of the Estate to have an enhanced zone of high quality development usually associated with class 4 use (see Figure 9);
3. Making the northern half of the site the highest priority for enhancement, due to its location next to Gala Water;
4. Producing comprehensive guidelines covering visual improvements;
5. Future branding the Estate, for example, as the Netherdale Business Park.

8.2 The planting concept illustrated in Figure 8 is only to provide a general impression. In order to achieve the desired outcome, change will be implemented on a site by site basis as individual areas are redeveloped over time. Each site will be developed according to the principles set out in this guidance.

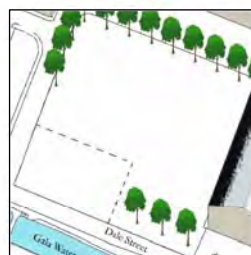
**Figure 8 - Future Planting Concept**

Existing layout is shown but would not necessarily be retained.



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- Main Entrance
- Future Enhanced Zone
- Existing tree framework
- Generalised impression of future trees
- Future shrubs



8a Larger Site Alternative

## 9 POTENTIAL TREATMENT

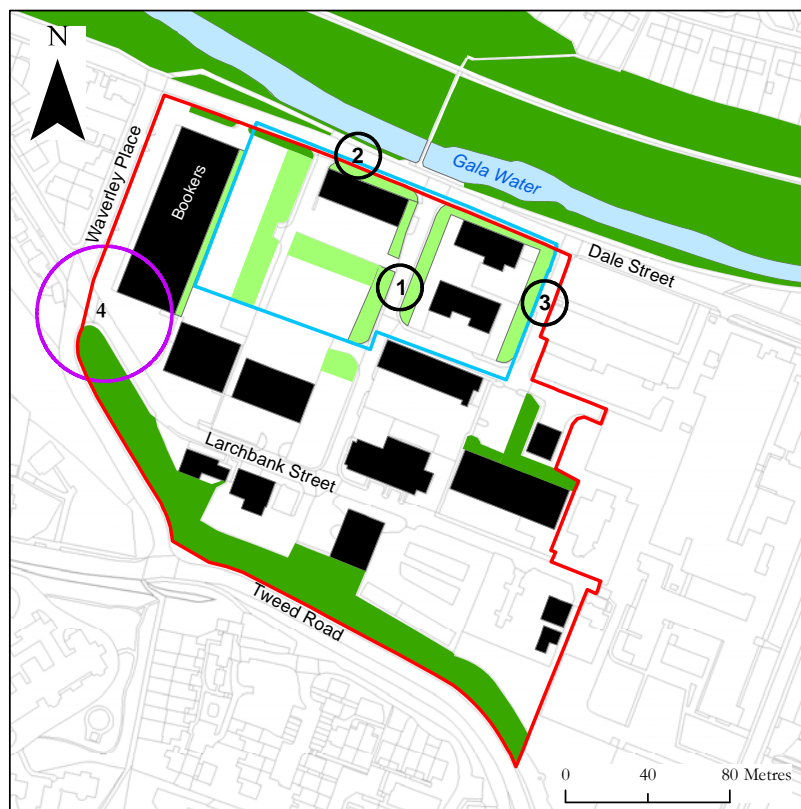
### 9.1 Planting

There will be four priority areas for the planting proposals (see Figure 9):

1. The main North-East / South-West road to be tree lined along both sides of its northern end;
2. The northern end of the estate along the Dale Street frontage, where planting will be intensified;
3. Opposite the High Mill Building, where planting will be intensified on the western side of the road;
4. The Main Entrance, at the southern end of Waverley Place which needs to be distinguished by planting, a gateway feature with comprehensive signage and integrated lighting.

**Figure 9 - Planting Plan Priorities**

Possible Planting Opportunities



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#### Key

- |                      |                            |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Estate Boundary      | Existing Landscape         |
| Estate Buildings     | Priority Planting Zone - ○ |
| Future Enhanced Zone | Main Entrance Planting     |



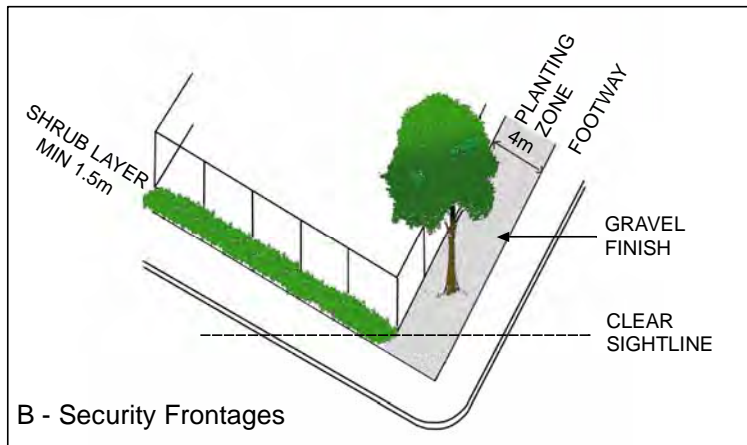
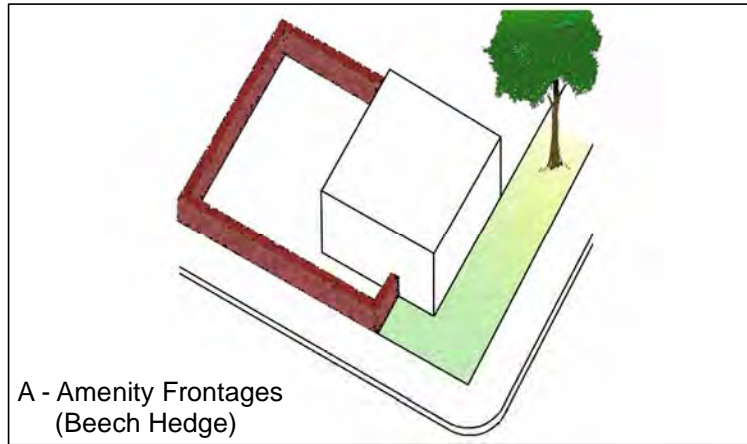
- 9.2 Generally within the whole estate there will be frontage tree planting of individual sites, mainly adjoining open frontages such as car parks and open storage. The preferred species will be selected from: *Alnus cordata* (Italian Alder), *Carpinus betulus fastigiata* (Hornbeam), *Pyrus calleryana* "Chanticleer" (Callery Pear upright). Where necessary a proprietary root protection barrier will be installed to prevent unwanted disturbance by tree roots.
- 9.3 Perimeter boundary treatment will be a combination of screen fences and *Fagus sylvatica* (beech hedges).
- 9.4 Opportunities to implement planting will primarily arise when planning applications are submitted for site redevelopment, when firm proposals are worked up. It is anticipated that landscape proposals on particular sites, will be negotiated with the site applicant / owner. Emphasis will be given to increasing tree cover on road and plot edges where abutting car parking or open storage space.
- 9.5 The existing belt of woodland along the southern edge of the estate will be protected and a scheme prepared for its regeneration.
- 9.6 **Maintenance**  
To achieve a long term improvement in the appearance of the area, it is necessary both to establish and maintain appropriate planting. This requires consistent, cost effective management to set standards. It is therefore proposed that an integral part of the implementation plan will be a contract for maintenance to be let on a renewable basis. This would be implemented by the various landowners, in accord with the planning consent. A maintenance specification will be agreed with the landowners.

## 10 BOUNDARY OPTIONS

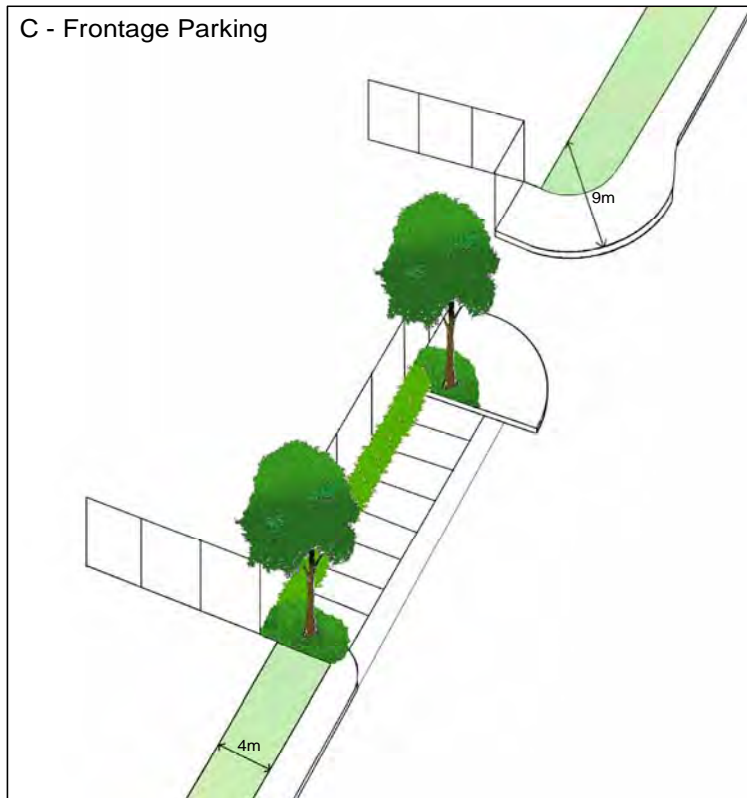
- 10.1 Normally along a building frontage a fence will not be needed. A fence or hedge will normally surround the rear and sides of each plot, (see Figure 10A). In places where security is not a critical issue beech hedges will provide the appropriate boundary treatment. The hedge will be protected by a 1.2m fence, erected on the private side of the hedge. However, where security is important, there may need for fencing around an individual site (see figure 10B). Frontage car parking can be integrated with planting proposals (see Figure 10C).
- 10.2 In the northern office zone hedges will normally be used. Where for security reasons beech hedges are not suitable, high quality mesh fencing and matching gate systems will be used, such as those manufactured by Heras and the Betta Group.
- 10.3 High quality coloured wire mesh fencing such as that produced by Heres and Betta Group should be used together with the gates included in the system. Where open storage areas need screening louvred fencing such as that manufactured by Orsogrill UK should be used.

### Figure 10 - Boundary Options

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## **11 EXTERNAL BUILDING MATERIALS**

- 11.1 In the proposed Class 4 zone to the north, high quality external materials are required. Building façades need to be of a higher quality than those used in the rest of the Estate. Preferred materials are composite cladding systems. High quality finished blockwork or brickwork may also be included.
- 11.2 In the southern half of the Estate the emphasis will be on the use of corrugated coated metal sheeting for walls, with roofs and doors to match. Textured concrete blocks will be the sensible option for lower external walls, where vehicular impact is possible.
- 11.3 With regard to the use of colour externally, for the most part subdued colours are to be used. However, features such as doorways may be painted in brighter colours.
- 11.4 With regard to flood risk, there may be a requirement from SEPA to use “water resilient materials” at the lower levels (ground floor construction and bottom of ground floor level).

## **12 GROUND TREATMENT**

- 12.1 Interlocking concrete blocks e.g. Marshall's Tegula type are a good choice for on-site use.

## **13 ROAD SURFACING**

- 13.1 The access roads which are not part of the main loop road i.e. cul de sacs may be finished with a different surface colour from the main loop. The existing public footways are mostly bitmac which should be extended throughout the estate roads.

## **14 STREET LIGHTING**

- 14.1 The proposal is to replace existing lighting columns with new fittings of appropriate modern design. At this time these have yet to be selected.

## **15 SIGNAGE**

- 15.1 The Council has produced a standard directory board on which to display company names. There are currently two of these at Netherdale, one close to the main entrance and the other along Dale Road at its junction with the main estate road.
- 15.2 In the near future consideration should be given to designing and locating new directory boards.

## 16 IMPLEMENTATION

- 16.1 The implementation of this guidance will be achieved over time through individual planning applications. Where public sector works are undertaken in the public realm, the guidance will provide the framework by which these may be co-ordinated to support the overall enhancement of the site's appearance, values and activity levels.
- 16.2 The guidance does not set out a rigid 'design' or 'master' plan for all sites to adopt. Rather by setting out the principles for the approach to developments including consideration of a palette of attractive, affordable and effective materials for buildings, signage, boundaries and landscape, the guidance seeks to achieve the long term upgrading of the site.

## 17 ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

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