

Local Place Plan Group Cover Letter to Findhorn Foundation's Strategic Framework

Collective Architecture (CAL) has created this Strategic Framework on behalf of the Findhorn Foundation (FF) and NFD. The Strategic Framework (that follows) identifies FF's proposed vision for the EcoVillage Findhorn as it relates to future land use and buildings and is largely based on the FF/CAL "Call for Ideas" submitted to the Moray Council in July 2023. FF is providing (as a gift) their Strategic Framework to the Local Place Plan Group for consideration and use in creating a collaborative community-based Local Place Plan.

In addition to the FF/CAL "Call for ideas," there were more than 13 other EcoVillage "Call for ideas" submitted to Moray Council by individuals, groups and through NFA. All of this information, plus other Community input will be used to create a shared Local Place Plan for submission to Moray Council at the end of 2024. The LPP Group intends to use a version of the new Governance Decision Making System in making determinations about the EcoVillage Findhorn Local Place Plan.

The EcoVillage Findhorn Local Place Plan, along with other Moray LPPs will be considered by Moray Council in creating their 2027-2037 Moray Local Development Plan (MDLP), Morays' long term vision.

The EcoVillage Findhorn Local Place Plan is a shared community opportunity to "futureproof," prepare, and optimize our potential future land and buildings opportunities "come what may" and for the next generation!

With appreciation for all who care so deeply for this place,

***JR Fulton and Marilyn Hamilton, Co-Chairs of LPP Group
February 9, 2024***

The Park Ecovillage Findhorn

Strategic Framework

December 2023



COLLECTIVE
ARCHITECTURE

Commissioned by: Findhorn Foundation

Supported by: New Findhorn Directions, Titleholders’ Association,
& Findhorn Innovation Research & Education cic

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COLLECTIVE
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with

NARRO

CONNECTED
TRANSPORT PLANNING

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1.0 Introduction

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1.0 Introduction

This Strategic Framework Report, commissioned by the Findhorn Foundation considers how the Park Ecovillage Findhorn (‘The Park’) might address current and future challenges and seize upon promising potential and opportunities to become an even more sustainable, just and enjoyable place to live, and to continue to be an example and inspiration for people around the world.

This Strategic Framework was led and developed by Collective Architecture from January to October 2023, with support from Narro Engineers, Connected Transport Planning and Reed Ecology. The team worked with the Findhorn Foundation, project working group ‘DevCom’ consisting of residents and organisations from The Park and local residents and stakeholders to develop the study.

It draws upon the Foundation and community’s rich history, values and ethos; the Park’s physical location in a coastal environment in the northeast of Scotland; local and national design guidance and policy documents, and the ambitions and desires of the community and relevant stakeholders.

The work involved an initial context setting exercise to gather information about the Park. A summary of context, policy and engagement are outlined in **Chapters 01 Introduction and Background.**

The existing physical and cultural characteristics of the Park are outlined in **Chapter 02 The Park Ecovillage Findhorn Today.** This includes high level mapping of characteristics such as connections, ecology, building uses and housing.

A number of associated documents, reports and summaries are contained within the **Supporting Documents** Section.

The development of the Strategic Framework is rooted in an intensive consultation process. Throughout the duration of the study the team carried out a range of engagement events, workshops and presentations which were summarised in various feedback flyers, newsletters and articles in community’s local weekly magazine, the Rainbow Bridge.

The level of engagement carried out during the process was extensive and more than anticipated. This meant that a large majority of time was, rightly, spent in this element of the Framework’s development. A summary of the engagement process is outlined in **Chapter 01, Item 1.5.**

Fuller documentation of the engagement process is provided as **Supporting Document A - Listening, Engaging and Responding.**

Chapter 03 Vision and Strategy presents proposals for a strategic plan for the Park Ecovillage. It outlines the overarching Purpose Statement for the Strategy and Vision followed by a series of key frameworks as follows:

- Ecologically diverse & water resilient landscapes
- Characterful, affordable & resilient housing
- Sustainable movement & access strategies
- A welcoming, productive, socially enterprising Ecovillage
- Clear & transparent systems of ownership, engagement & decision-making
- A Just Transition across the whole Park
-

These are presented as a series of maps outlining actions with associated collage ‘visions’.

Chapter 04 Critical Factors and Dependencies sets out a number of issues upon which the development and delivery of the Strategic Framework depends. Several of these are noted as competing factors that are to be addressed before a coherent and actionable plan can be put in motion.



1.1 What is a Strategic Framework?

A Strategic Framework is a high level plan for a specific area or neighbourhood developed with residents and stakeholders. It sets out over-arching principles, identifies key areas of focus and serves as guidance for short, medium and long term opportunities.

The development of a Strategic Framework for the Park Ecovillage sets out a plan for any future proposals to align with a set of over-arching principles and aims.

It sets out key challenges and opportunities and can inform how any future proposals at the Park might evolve, over time, in a coherent and understandable way.

The diagram overleaf is an extract from the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Plan of Work. This sets out the various stages for development for any future proposals. There are seven work stages ranging from Stage 0 Strategic Definition to Stage 7 In use.

This Strategic Framework sits as part of Work Stages 0-1 Strategic Definition and Preparation/Briefing with some very high level elements of Stage 2 Concept Design.

It is important to clarify that this Strategic Framework does not involve any specific planning applications or submissions. Instead, it provides a high level plan to guide future development and decision-making.

It is hoped that the outputs from this Strategic Framework will be used to inform a Local Place Plan for the Park.

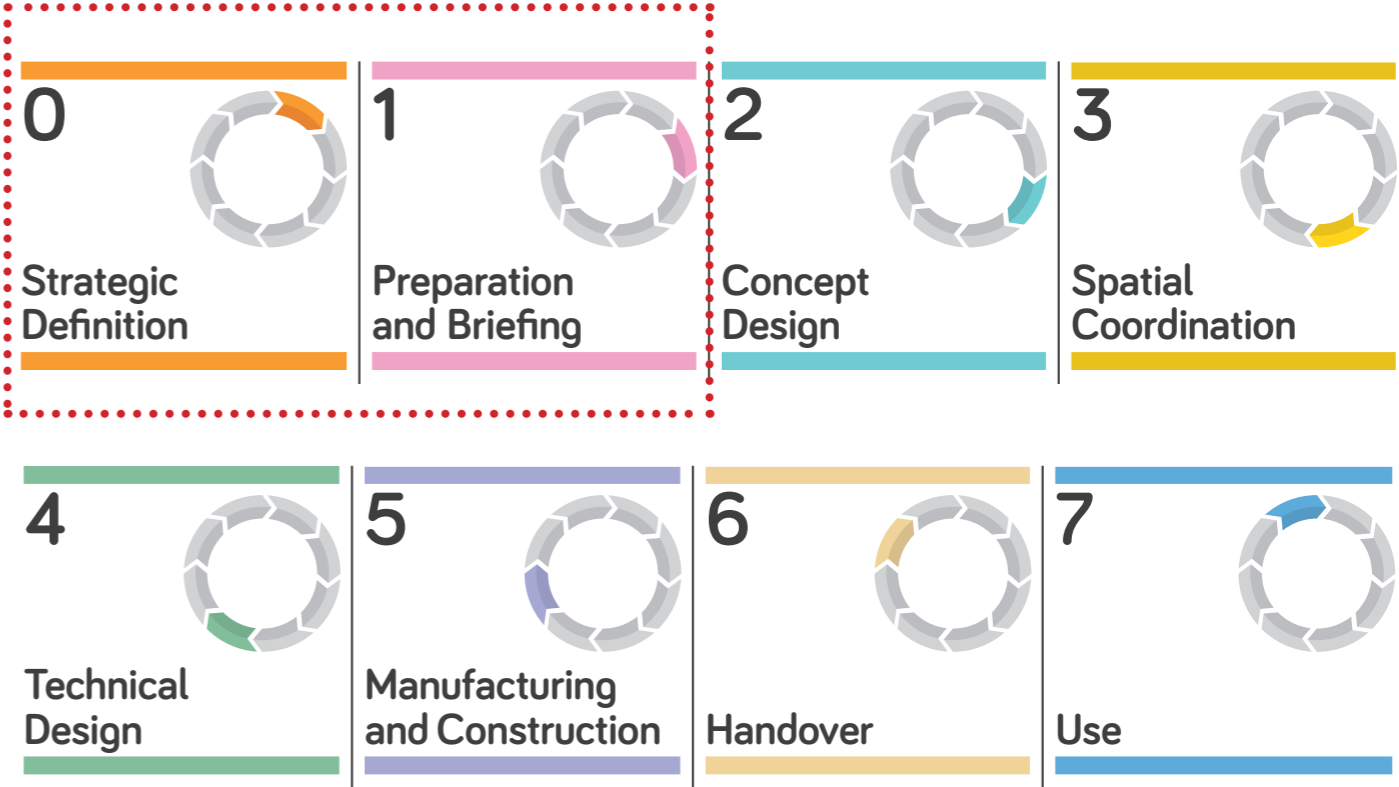


RIBA
Plan of Work
2020

The RIBA Plan of Work organises the process of briefing, designing, delivering, maintaining, operating and using a building into eight stages. It is a framework for all disciplines on construction projects and should be used solely as guidance for the preparation of detailed professional services and building contracts.

This Strategic Framework sits as part of RIBA Work Stages 0-1

RIBA Work Stage 3 is when any Planning Applications would be made.



RIBA Work Stage 4 is when any Building Warrant Applications would be made.

1.2 The Findhorn Foundation

The Findhorn Foundation is an educational charity and commissioner of this Strategic Framework report. Until recently, it was also the moniker used for the physical ecovillage and community, which is now separately termed ‘The Park Ecovillage Findhorn.’ Spirituality, sustainability, collaboration, and learning are at the heart of the community’s ethos and the Foundation’s education.

The Park community was originally founded in 1962 by Peter and Eileen Caddy and their friend, Dorothy MacLean, and has since grown into one of the largest intentional communities in the UK. The founders moved to the Findhorn Bay Holiday Park, living in mobile caravans with their families (later constructing Cedarwood bungalows) and growing their own food in the sandy soils of the land, setting a precedent for self-sustainability and a small-scale, low-rise housing character which is still emulated in throughout the Park today. The self-defined vision of the Findhorn Foundation (legally inaugurated on 9th May, 1972) is ‘a radically transformed world, where humanity embodies the Sacred, we honour each other, and co-create wisely and lovingly with all life.’

The Park has undergone considerable change since these humble beginnings, with a community of approximately 300 residents now living on its grounds. Visitors who have an interest in learning about and practising meditation, sacred dance, spirituality, nature connection and attunement, as well as practical skills such as self-building and gardening, travel from across the world to attend the Foundation’s educational

workshops. Three ‘Guiding Practices’ underpin life at the Park: Inner Listening; Co-Creation with Nature, and Work as Love in Action. Despite a utopian vision of sharing resources and living in harmony with nature, the Park faces problems we all are increasingly forced to confront in the rest of the world: an ageing population, a lack of affordable housing, and the threats and risks associated with climate emergency.

As majority landowner, the Findhorn Foundation seeks now to consider a plan for the estate’s future, which could begin to address some of these challenges and provide a framework for development that is inclusive, ambitious and sustainable. This study for a Strategic Framework for the Park is commissioned directly by the Findhorn Foundation (with financial support from the THA, NFD and FIRE cic), but is created for all of the Park Ecovillage Community, and has been formed in collaboration with the residents, neighbours to the Park and relevant stakeholders. The Park’s Development Committee (DevCom), which represents various organisational bodies and stakeholders at the Park, served as a steering group on the project: FF and DevCom together will be termed the ‘client team.’



Co-founders Eileen and Peter Caddy (left); The original Main Sanctuary, since destroyed in a 2021 arson attack (right)



Early community garden planting at the Park (top left); The Park Ecovillage community today (top right); Early aerial image of the Park (bottom left); Present-day aerial image of the Park (bottom right)

1.3 Project Background & Location

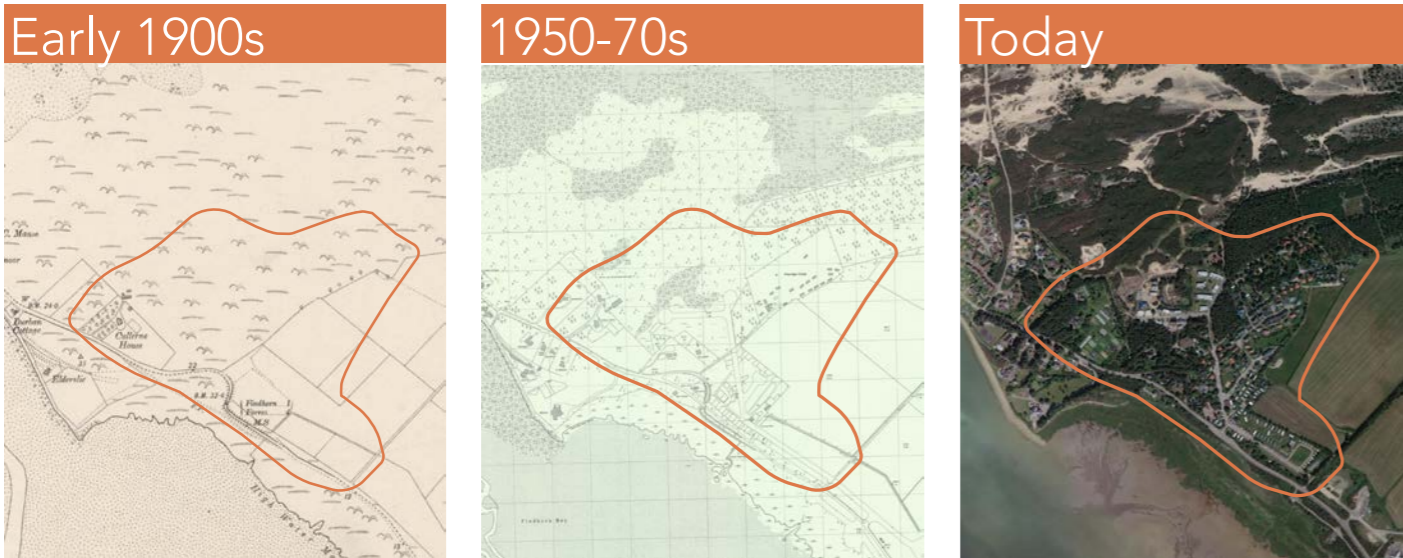
The Findhorn Foundation approached Collective Architecture to develop a Strategic Framework, in consultation with local community and stakeholders, which establishes a vision for the future evolution of The Park Ecovillage Findhorn that can be considered within the context of the upcoming Moray Local Development Plan 2027.

The Park Ecovillage Findhorn location

The Park Ecovillage Findhorn sits to the southeast of Findhorn Village along the B9011, with nearby access to the shoreline in the form of both Moray Firth (to the north) and Findhorn Bay (to the south). Findhorn is situated along the Moray Coastal Trail which connects it to other areas in the region such as Forres, Burghead and Lossiemouth along the length of the Moray coastline, and is also situated in close proximity to the Sustrans National Cycle Network Route with a short trip (less than 10 minutes by bike) down the B9011. Forres train station is roughly a 10 minute drive or 25 minute cycle from the Park.

Archive map records show how the site of the now-thriving eco-village originated and evolved over time, from empty plots of farmland, to the site of the Findhorn Bay Holiday Park, to the settlement of today.

The character of the Park itself as a site is explored further in **Chapter 02** of this report.



Archive map data provided by the National Library of Scotland, showing development of Ecovillage settlement beginning in the 1960s



Aerial image of The Park Ecovillage Findhorn, including design team’s ‘area of influence’ for the Strategic Framework project

1.4 The Project Team

The project team appointed to deliver the strategic framework were selected due to their open and collaborative approach, range of complementary skills and experience to create a transformative vision with residents and stakeholders for the Park Ecovillage Findhorn.

Collective Architecture has undertaken a variety of projects over the past 20 years that have transformed places and their immediate/wider communities through imaginative placemaking strategies and the adaptation of existing sites, buildings and landscapes.

Collective Architecture has extensive experience in delivering strategic plans, housing developments and community buildings at a variety of scales.

For this commission, they have collaborated with an experienced team who have successfully delivered housing and mixed use projects within existing communities in the past, and who have experienced working on strategic frameworks for neighbourhoods. The team have experience of delivering solutions within complex and challenging locations, including within the Moray Council area.

Narro Associates is a team of Consulting Structural & Civil Engineers with offices in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Stirling, Inverness, Aberdeen and Newcastle. The Practice was established in 1986 and aims to provide a high-quality service to our clients and partners, delivered by committed and experienced staff.

Their clients trust them to deliver, which means more than meeting client and partner deadlines; it’s about exceeding expectations and providing innovative solutions to design challenges. Clients can trust that their years of experience on a wide range of project types and scale, coupled with their thorough and dedicated approach, ensures they deliver reliably creative solutions every time.

Architect and Lead Consultant
Civil Engineers
Transport Planners
Ecological Consultant

Collective Architecture
Narro Associates
Connected Transport Planning
Reed Ecology

Connected Transport Planning provide transport and access solutions to connect our future communities. They specialise in achieving the right outcomes, working with the communities they serve to develop proportionate transport and access solutions that promote sustainable travel by walking and cycling modes and connecting people with place.

They are dedicated to excellence, collaboration, and innovation, and are driven by their passion for creating connected, accessible, and future-proof transportation networks that truly make a difference.

Reed Ecology’s Sean Reed is a Moray-based ecologist with over thirty years’ experience in the ecology sector. Sean provides ecological surveys, impact assessments and biodiversity regeneration advice to consultants, land managers, developers, and nature conservation organisations. Projects have ranged from small community initiatives, to large nature recovery and major infrastructure schemes. He has worked on several eco-housing developments in Moray, including at the Findhorn Ecovillage.



1.5 Policy & Planning Context

The Strategic Framework for the Park Ecovillage will be guided by national, regional and local planning policy, as well as the guidelines and documents published by internal bodies at the Park. The Framework will aim to align closely with the shared objectives at all levels of policy making for a ‘place-based’ approach, embedding these collective ambitions into an ambitious strategy

This Strategic Framework for the Park Ecovillage will feed into and inform **Moray’s upcoming 2027 LDP (MLDP)**, and will draw on a number of contemporary policy documents and guidance to shape the ideas explored in the report. The following documents have been referred to in shaping the strategy (with more information on key documents provided opposite);

National Policy

- National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), ScotGov
- National Performance Framework, ScotGov
- Creating Places, ScotGov
- Designing Streets, ScotGov
- Housing to 2040, ScotGov
- A Long Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland to 2030, Transport Scotland
- Active Travel Framework, Transport Scotland
- Update to the Climate Change Plan, ScotGov
- The Place Standard Tool

Local and Regional Policy

- Moray Local Development Plan (MLDP) 2020 (including supplementary guidance/appendices)
- The Moray Local Landscape Designation Review
- Moray’s Climate Change Strategy 2020-2030
- Moray’s Trees and Development SDG
- Moray Council Development Plan Scheme 2022
- Moray 2023: A Plan for the Future
- Moray Council Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2022/23 - 2026/27

The Park Ecovillage Guidance and Statements

- Our Guiding Practices, Findhorn Foundation
- A Whole Community Purpose Statement, NFA
- Common Ground Principles, NFA
- Draft Housing Direction Statement 2018
- Statement of Land Ethic of the Findhorn Community

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)



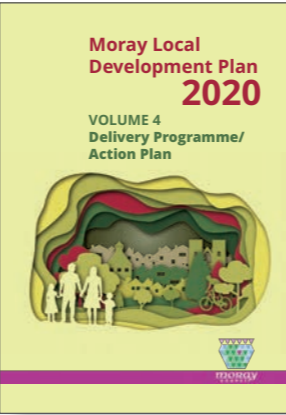
Published in February 2023, NPF4 replaces NPF3 as the national spatial strategy guiding all development in Scotland. It is essential that the Strategic Framework for the Park Ecovillage Findhorn adheres closely to NPF4’s priorities in creating Liveable, Sustainable, and Productive Places, with a particular renewed focus on biodiversity, net zero, and social inequality.

The Place Standard Tool



The Place Standard Tool is a resource promoted by the Scottish Government to structure conversations with communities about the places they live in, prompting discussion around both physical and social aspects of place. We used the 14 criteria for assessment to structure and categorise conversations and feedback with the Park Ecovillage community.

Moray Local Development Plan (MLDP) 2020



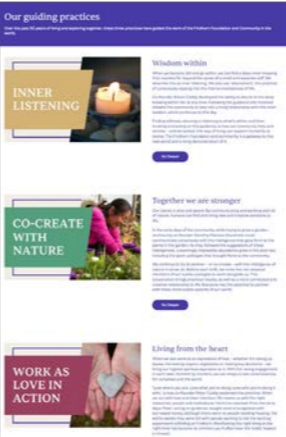
While Moray Council is currently working on their next MLDP (2027), development within the Moray region is required to adhere to MLDP 2020 policy guidance. Guidance on placemaking, affordable & accessible housing, tourism accommodation, natural heritage, biodiversity, open space and flooding were of particular import to the team.

Moray's Climate Change Strategy 2020-2030



Alongside the MLDP 2020, this document 'is designed to provide a co-ordinated and appropriate response' to climate change challenges affecting Moray. This involves guidance on transitioning to carbon neutrality by 2030, principles of retaining, protecting and enhancing biodiversity, and adapting to the increased risk of coastal and surface flooding.

Our Guiding Practices, Findhorn Foundation



Three 'guiding practices' are core to guiding the work and lives of the Park Ecovillage Community and the Findhorn Foundation: Inner listening, Work as love in action, and Co-creation with the intelligence of nature. We worked closely with the client team to ensure these 'softer' qualitative points of guidance were embedded in our strategy alongside and just as much as the statutory policy guidance.

A Whole Community Purpose Statement, NFA



Alongside the Founders' 3 Guiding Practices and NFA's Common Ground Principles, the statement of Whole Community Purpose underpins what living and growing together as an intentional community at the Park Ecovillage is about. Spiritual, ecological and educational principles are held together in the Statement's aim to co-create 'a thriving and loving world.'

1.6 Overview of Engagement Process

The development of this Strategic Framework was rooted in an intensive consultation process. Throughout the duration of the study the team carried out a range of engagement events, workshops and presentations which were summarised in various feedback flyers, newsletters and articles.

The level of engagement carried out during the process was extensive and more than anticipated. This meant that a large majority of time was, rightly, spent in this element of the Framework’s development.

A summary of the events that took place during the course of the study is outlined overleaf. This ranged from public presentations such as ‘Tell us about Findhorn Ecovillage’ in January 2023 through to a ‘Housing and Ecology Workshop in August 2023.

The team also conducted a series of informative and productive Stakeholder Workshops that included local organisations including Moray Council, Community Councils and businesses. This also involved adjacent landowners including Findhorn Village Conservation Company, the Ministry of Defence and the Bichan Family/Cullerne Farm.

Events were very well attended with an overwhelming level of interest, ideas and passion relating to the future of the Park. Feedback was collated into

newsletters and shared in a variety of ways including the Rainbow Bridge.

During the course of the study, Moray Council invited local communities and individuals to submit ideas to inform the forthcoming Local Development Plan 2027 in both July and September 2023. As part of this work, Collective Architecture submitted ideas gathered during the study. The timing of this submission unfortunately caused a degree of confusion amongst Park residents as to the nature of the Strategic Development Framework and its purpose; following this, other Ecovillage groups were encouraged to submit their own Ideas alongside Collective’s, which resulted in thirteen additional submissions. These submissions, alongside Collective Architecture’s Cfl document, are included in the Supporting Documents section of this report.

Fuller documentation of the engagement process is provided as Supporting Document A - Listening, Engaging and Responding.



Second consultation event held at Universal Hall on the Park

Timeline of events

Monday 11th January 2023

Tell us about The Park Ecovillage Findhorn - Universal Hall, The Park - 11am-1pm and 3pm-7pm

The opening event of the engagement programme invited the community to tell us about the Park Ecovillage Findhorn - what they liked about living there, what they thought could be better, their ideas, visions, concerns and stories. Baseline information was displayed on presentation boards, which laid out the historic, physical and cultural contexts of the Park as a means to demonstrate our current understanding of the place and invite dialogue around existing spaces and their potential futures.

Saturday 22nd April 2023

Shape the Strategy for The Park Ecovillage - Universal Hall, The Park - 9.30am-12pm and 1.30pm-3.30pm

This event allowed the design team to test strategic ideas with the community, presenting a series of boards with ‘potential scenarios’ for housing, landscaping, movement & transport strategies and amenities at various locations within the Park. Consultees were invited to share their thoughts on these ‘scenarios,’ which acted as prompts to encourage debate, discussion and the sharing of alternative visions for the future.

Sunday 23 April 2023

Shape the Strategy for The Park Ecovillage - Skylab, The Park - 9am-1pm

A ‘surgery’ for internal stakeholders was held the day following the community consultation, where stakeholders affiliated directly with the Park Ecovillage were invited to sign up for half-hour 1-on-1 meetings with the design team to discuss the same spatial strategies and design principles as the community, giving their unique perspectives and insights into the scenarios as representatives of their respective organisations.

Monday 15th May 2023

Transport and Access Workshop - Universal Hall, The Park - 6.30pm-8.30pm

This event was proposed following the design team’s experience of the 22nd-23rd April community consultation events and the feedback submitted in subsequent weeks; it was felt that, with regards to transport and access in particular, the community had a wide range of diverse opinions which were often in stark conflict with one another, and that a session to ‘mythbust’ and answer questions would be beneficial. The event took the form of an hour-long presentation led by Mark Rinkus of CTP, followed by a Q&A session.

Monday 31st July 2023

Moray Council ‘Call for Ideas’ submission deadline (rescheduled)

As part of their programme for the preparation of a new RSS and LDP for 2027, Moray Council put out a ‘Call for Ideas’ to allow local communities to input their ideas ‘to help shape Moray as a whole...and your place (locally).’ The design and client teams agreed to use this submission date to submit in-progress ideas for future development scenarios, however this caused concern in the community that final proposals were being submitted without proper consultation. The deadline was pushed back to 31st July partially as a result of this.

Saturday 12th August 2023

Housing and Ecology workshop - Universal Hall, the Park - 10.30am-1pm and 2pm-4.30pm

This workshop was added to the schedule of events as a response to the feedback from the community following previous consultation events and the Call for Ideas submission, which revealed some anxiety around proposals for housing and its potential effect on nature and ecology. A series of speakers gave presentations between 10.30am-1pm, including Collective Architecture, and in the afternoon the design team answered questions and listened to the concerns of community members in the Hall.

The Park Ecovillage Findhorn Today

This chapter explores the current physical, organisational and cultural contexts of The Park Ecovillage Findhorn, and identifies the constraints of the site alongside opportunities for the strategy work.

2.0 The Park Ecovillage Findhorn Today

- 2.1 The Park Today
- 2.2 Groups and Governance
- 2.3 Dwelling in the Park
- 2.4 Sharing in the Park
- 2.5 Existing Character Areas
- 2.6 Land Ownership
- 2.7 Existing Routes & Access
- 2.8 Building Uses
- 2.9 Housing Tenure
- 2.10 Ecology & Nature
- 2.11 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

02



2.1 The Park Today

Today, the Park Ecovillage Findhorn describes itself as ‘the largest single intentional community in the UK...a synthesis of some of the very best of current thinking on sustainable human settlements’ — ecological building practices, organic food-growing, production of renewable energies and recycling of waste are at the heart of this.

This identity of sustainable living is intrinsically and inextricably bound to the Park community’s spiritual roots and the beliefs of its founders, who spoke of contacting nature spirits, or ‘devas,’ for guidance on living together in the settlement in harmony. As such, ‘co-creation with nature’ remains a fundamental principle by which community members live, and served as an important cornerstone of the design and client teams’ process throughout the project.

However, it was understood from early conversations with the client team and the community that the Park Ecovillage is, at present, somewhat in a state of cognitive dissonance, where there is a disparity between its identity as a loving, inclusive, pioneering eco-community and its current material reality. The following chapter will examine these conflicts (described opposite) in greater detail, after which the wider report will consider how such challenges might be addressed and opportunities seized upon, aligning with the aims & principles of Moray Council and NPF4 and restoring the Park Ecovillage to its former world-leading, pioneering status in the context of socially and environmentally sustainable settlements.

Conflicts and Challenges at the Park

- A continued reliance on fossil fuels
- Ageing, run-down buildings which are reaching the end of/have passed their reasonable lifespan
- Car-dominance in some areas of development
- Insufficient affordable, diverse housing
- Becoming a Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC).
- A lack of younger and lower income residents living at the Park
- A lack of accurate data or record-keeping on tenure-diversity, carbon footprints, and extents of private and multiple-home ownership at the Park
- Inheritance of a tarmacked runway which facilitates dangerous driving conditions
- The lack of a coherent governance structure for the Park



Existing entrance to The Park Ecovillage Findhorn (left) and the entrance ‘runway’ (right)



The Park Ecovillage Findhorn site and notable sites/buildings

2.2 Groups and Governance

At present, a number of organisations and bodies exist alongside the Findhorn Foundation to oversee and manage various assets and processes at the Park Ecovillage Findhorn. These have been outlined and summarised opposite, and encompass financing, maintenance, development, planning, built assets, environmental protection, spiritual practice, land ownership, education and trade in their scope.

This somewhat amorphous web of governance at the Park was confounding on first inspection to the outsider, and through initial conversations with the community it was revealed that this sentiment was shared even by those who were familiar with or who lived on the Park themselves.

Many are calling for greater clarity, transparency and refinement of the existing organisational structures, such that there could be better understanding within the general community about ‘who owns what, who decides what, and with who decides who decides,’ and rules and agreements could be put in place concerning ‘structures, decision-making processes and communication processes.’ These quotes are taken from the stated Remit for the Governance Working Group, which was set up by members of the NFA (New Findhorn Association - see opposite) in May 2023 to ‘create a set of proposals related to governance systems for the whole community and to take these to the community for consultation, revision and adoption.’

Please note the opposite diagram requires updating to reflect newly formed groups, such as BenCom and the Local Place Plan group.



Organisations, official bodies and groups which operate within the context of the Park Ecovillage Findhorn (above, opposite)



2.3 Dwelling in the Park

Approaches to and solutions for housing have evolved throughout the Park’s history, with a variety of typologies, densities, forms and scales of housing now visible throughout the settlement. The below gives an overview of key stages in the evolution of dwelling at the Park, from the founders’ arrival in the 1960s to the start of the 21st century.

1960s: Caravans and Bungalows

- Low-density, low-rise typologies
- Modes of living which focused on growing, gardening and food production alongside living
- Self-build additions which include greenhouses, Dorothy’s annex etc.
- Off-site, modular construction demonstrated by cedarwood bungalows



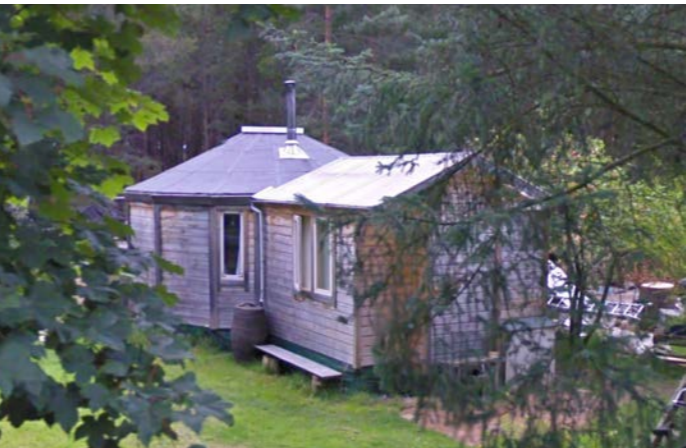
1980s-1990s: Whisky Barrels & Bagend development

- First permanent new dwellings at the Park adjoining Pineridge
- One cluster made from recycled whisky barrels - innovative approach to sustainable construction
- Second cluster building on Swedish/Finnish styles and practices, including ‘breathing walls’
- Bagend part of the earliest ‘build school’ projects at the Park, teaching students building skills
- Cluster formation with natural, winding paths between dwellings, as opposed to grid layout



2000-2010s: Eco-mobiles/mobile homes at Pineridge

- Built to replace static caravans - more robust/energy efficient
- Ecological principles in construction methods and operation including:
- Scottish-grown timber construction;
- Living green roofs ;
- Rainwater harvesting
- Exact degree of energy efficiency debatable due to historic self-build approach and lack of need for planning permission in older dwellings



1999-2000s: Eco-houses and Eco-chalets

- Acceleration of private housebuilding
- Ecologically-ambitious houses - green roofs, clean energy, sustainable materials e.g. timber
- Low density, large in scale, detached or semi-detached family homes in the Field of Dreams
- Eco-chalets erected 2003 in lower caravan park for visitors to stay in – wind-generated electricity and timber construction
- Private gardens used for food growing



2.3 Dwelling in the Park

From the year 2000 onwards, the Park has seen the continued development of the typologies described previously, but has also re-focused its attention on smaller-scale, more compact living options, as well as working to provide more affordable housing models and provision of co-housing and care-prepared accommodation.

2000s-2010s: Centini Terraced Houses

- Higher density on Field of Dreams
- Timber terraces, modest scale in comparison to rest of FoD development
- Compact living
- More affordable than other FoD homes
- Eco-friendly construction, solar heated water, passive solar gain



2013: East Whins co-housing

- 4 of 25 units are affordable rental, comprising 2x care-prepared two bed flats and 2x shared ownership houses
- Re-focus on sharing and communal spaces
- Terraced construction, varied massing which occasionally steps up to 3 storeys
- Innovative sustainable construction: solar panels, wind powered, 'carbon-sequestering' larch cladding, air source heat pump, low running costs
- Designed by John Gilbert Architects



2017-present: West Whins co-housing

- Wider variety in property sizes and scales compared to East Whins
- Terraced construction, varied massing which occasionally steps up to 3 storeys
- 6x small affordable rental flats in a cluster
- High eco-specification, low running costs
- Passivhaus principles (though not full Passivhaus)



2013-present: Other co-housing models

- Two co-housing schemes: Soillse, and North Whins/Woodside affordable rental
- Provision for smaller families/couples/individuals
- Socially & ecologically sustainable modes of living: carbon neutral co-housing, multi-generational living, natural materials such as Scottish-grown timber
- Communal, shared spaces
- Mixed-use and live-work spaces at Soillse
- Rural Housing Fund for affordable housing, also includes recent Silvertrees affordable housing



2.4 Sharing in the Park

A community-wide belief in the importance of cooperation and sharing is reflected in the spread of amenities and facilities that have been created at the Park. The below are some examples of places at the Park that facilitate collaboration and the sharing of space or resources, whether it be growing, dancing, working, eating or meditating together.

Universal Hall

The main events space on the Park, and the primary performing arts venue in Moray. The Hall hosts a wide variety of public concerts, events, performances, workshops and conferences year-round, and is a space for community members and visitors alike to hold discussions, meetings and consultations- the Strategic Framework engagement events were all held here. It was built as a result of the collaboration between residents and visitors to the Foundation in 1974-1984.



Former Community Centre

The Community Centre, which was known as the ‘heart of the community’ alongside the Main Sanctuary, was sadly destroyed in an arson attack in 2021. It was clear from early conversations with the community that the loss has been an enormous one for them-- this was the main place where people could gather together and share meals, a function that has not quite been restored by the much smaller Phoenix Café at the Universal Hall. Understandably, the rebuilding of a new Community Centre was therefore a strongly expressed priority for those consulted.



Future and Nature Sanctuaries

The arson attack of 2021 also saw the destruction of the Main Sanctuary, described by the Foundation as place that ‘helped people...enjoy a deeper connection to self and Spirit.’ The proposal for its replacement now has planning permission and a building warrant in place and construction is expected to begin early in 2024. Its counterpart in Pineridge, the Nature Sanctuary, is an iconic building, described as a ‘magical place for quiet contemplation, meditation and singing in the community at Findhorn.’



Green Amenity spaces

There are a number of green, shared spaces, including the Quiet Garden in Pineridge, the Field of Dreams green, the Village Green in the Central Area, the Dancing Green in the Whins and Diamond Wood. Organic food-growing is also a key feature of life at the Park, with a number of shared and private allotments and ‘permaculture’ gardens to be found throughout the settlement, as well as forest gardens in the Park’s hinterland. Green space is extremely important to the community, both as sites of production and recreation and as sacred space.



‘The Living Machine’ sewage treatment facility

A key piece of Park infrastructure which is held under the Commons is the Living Machine, a sewage treatment plant installed in 1995 that processes waste from a population of up to 500 people living at the Park now and in the future. Its ecologically advanced approach to wastewater treatment is chemical-free, low-energy and cost-effective, and helps to reduce water pollution and aquatic habitat degradation and create plant ecologies within its greenhouse structure.



Local businesses and studios

The Park is home to a number of small artisanal studios, including the Park and Claysongs Pottery and the Weaving Studio, which attract locals and visitors from afar to classes and workshops and contribute to the local Park economy. There are also a number of local businesses run from individuals’ homes at the Park, including bed and breakfasts and therapy services, as well as the Findhorn Hive, a social enterprise hub which offers space for hot-desking and craft activities.



2.5 Existing Character Areas

The Park can be roughly divided into the below neighbourhoods and the dune conservation area known as the Hinterlands, each which have a distinct ‘character’ by which they can be distinguished from one another - see opposite for descriptions of the characteristics, typologies, and approaches to built and green space in each area.



Existing character area mapping at the Park



Central Area
Home to a range of shared amenities and open spaces around the former runway. Forms the main ‘arrival’ area, includes key places e.g. the Universal Hall and Phoenix Café, Visitors Centre and Phoenix Shop, plus residential and visitor accommodation.



Pineridge
Low-rise area set amongst trees consisting of eco-houses, eco-mobiles, caravans and a series of small scale workshops, all centred around the Quiet Garden and Nature Sanctuary. Includes recent co-housing at Soillse and the Whisky Barrel Houses.



The Whins
Recently developed residential area progressing in phases, with some yet to be completed, including some affordable housing units. Also includes a concentrated area of workspaces and workshops.



Field of Dreams
Low Rise housing area consisting of 2-3 storey dwellings of varying size and type. This area also includes the Moray Arts Centre, close to the Central Area.



Cullerne House and Gardens
Cullerne House provides a B&B with workshop spaces for rent. Cullerne Gardens are used for growing and community activity, and has been a core educational site for the Findhorn Foundation.

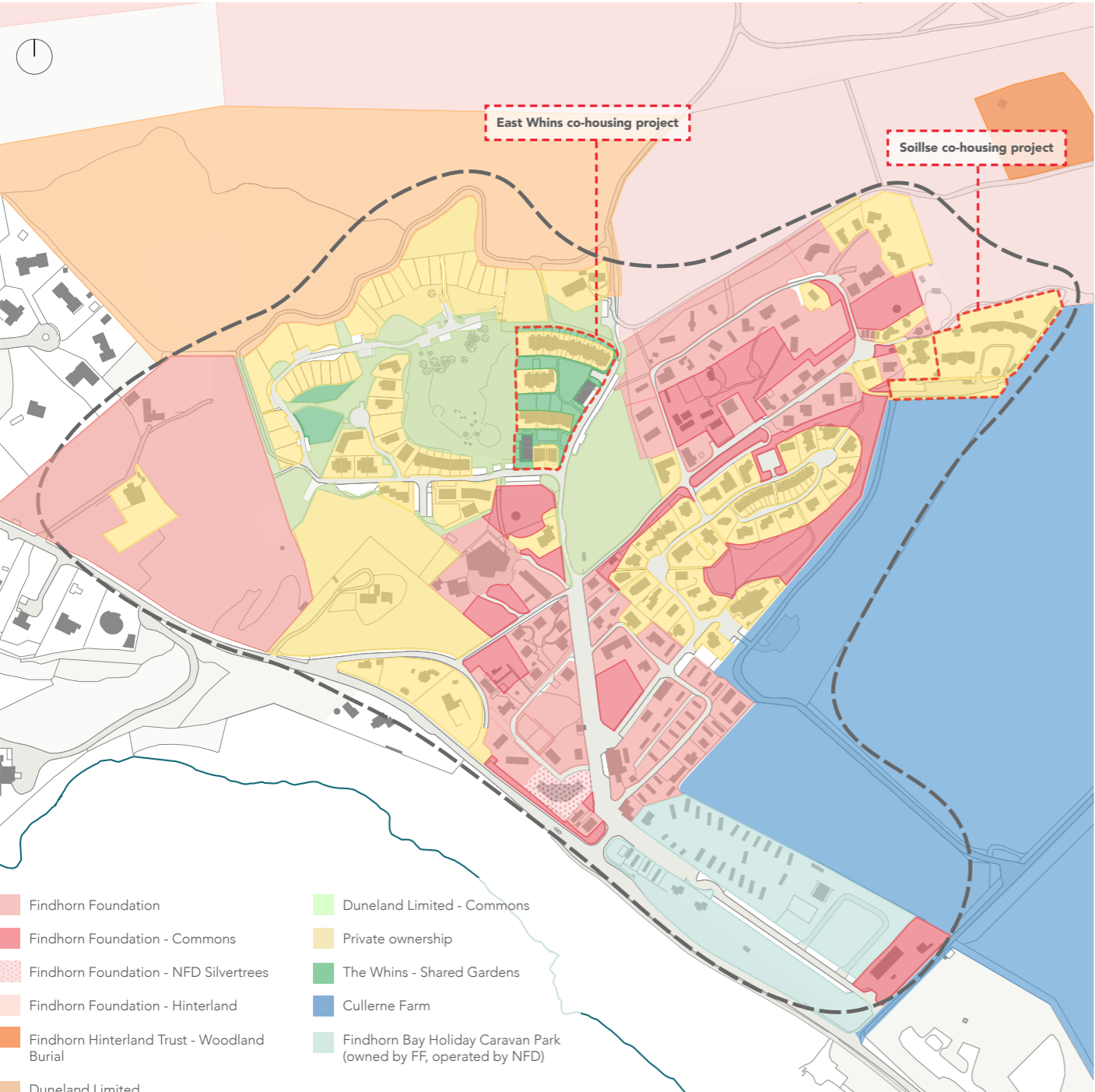


Holiday Park
Range of caravans, camping pitches and low rise timber pods/houses providing holiday lets and short stays for visitors.

2.6 Land Ownership

The map below gives some contextualisation to the patchwork of land ownership which is observable at the Park Ecovillage today. A significant amount of the land is owned at present by the Findhorn Foundation, including significant areas of Commons land representing areas of land which are widely used by the community, and the remainder significantly

under a site license for mobile homes and Holiday Park caravans.. The Findhorn Foundation and the Park community now find themselves at a turning point, with both expressing an increasing willingness and enthusiasm to allow the community to take ownership of many of the Foundation’s built and land assets to steward themselves.



Existing ownership/stewardship mapping at the Park

2.7 Existing Routes and Access

The diagram below demonstrates the hierarchy of routes permeating the Park at present (though more informal walking routes are present than is shown in the indicative mapping). A single, primary vehicular entrance supports shared access by pedestrians and all vehicles that access the settlement. The Park

entrance (including the Runway and Central Area in general) do not present the welcome which might be expected from a pioneering eco-village, instead showing a swathe of tarmac and parked vehicles on arrival. A dominance of cars, an expanse of tarmac and the issues of pedestrian and cyclist safety were



Existing routes and access at the Park (NB: pedestrian routes are indicative and not representative of full extent of pedestrian movement around the site)

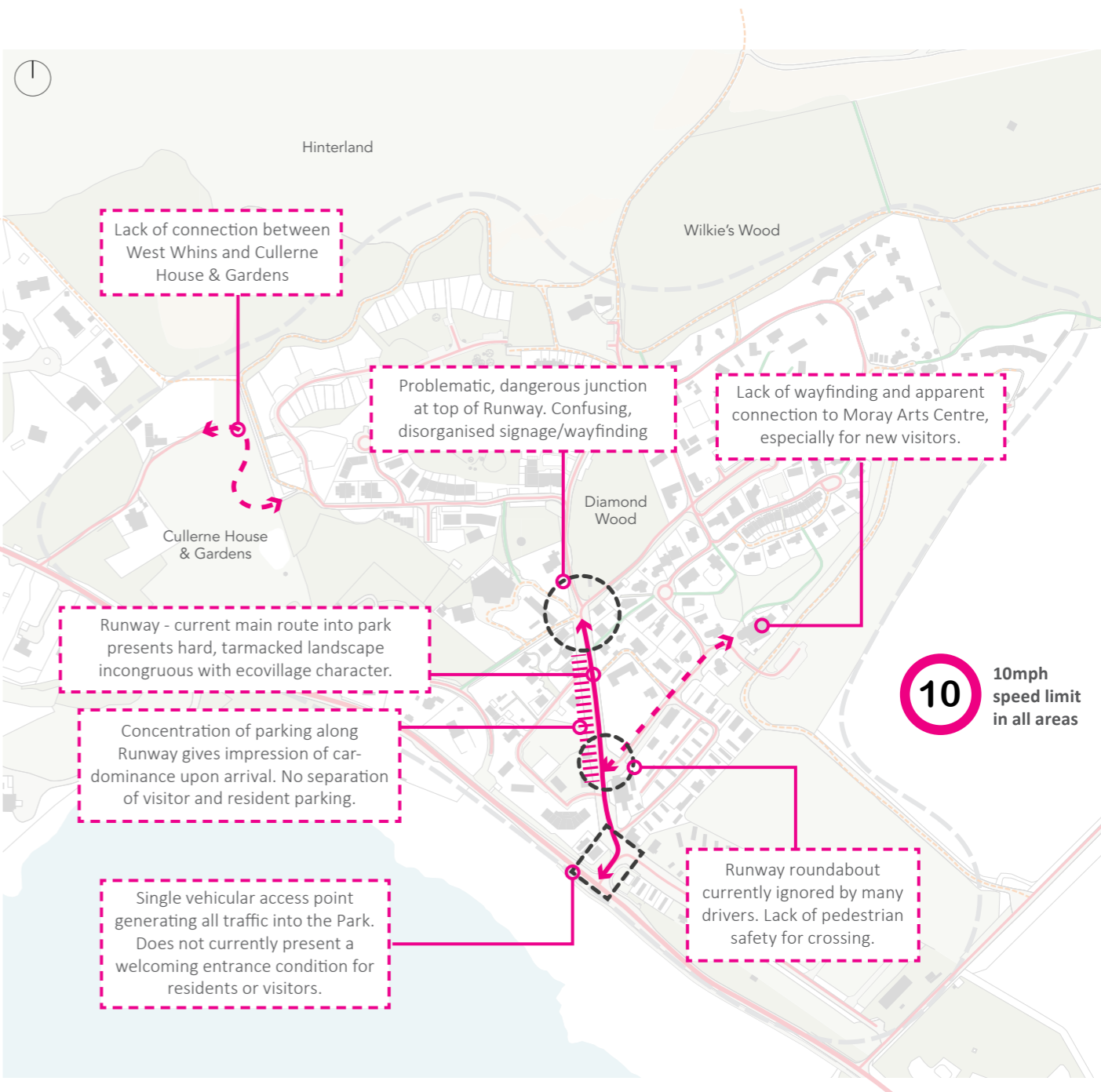
2.7 Existing Routes and Access

highlighted early in the engagement process as sources of concern. Whilst the Park has benefited from the use of the Runway, the Park’s scale and community mobility requirements now means the Runway layout is no longer a benefit but a source of transport conflict. The main strategic considerations, including challenges to movement & access, are highlighted below.

- Balancing the capital cost affordability of changes to the Park’s road assets with future development aspirations and ongoing maintenance costs.
- To maintain a world-leading ecovillage stature in relation to the management of vehicular access into the Park.
- Developing the Park’s road and access layout ‘away’ from the Runway layout and developing a layout that is built around the needs of the community.
- Reliance on a single vehicular access for all motorised movements focuses all traffic entering the park into one area and adds to the challenge of how to access those areas of the Park furthest from the entrance.
- Maintaining planning policy compliance for any future Park expansion by considering a secondary vehicular access to support emergency access.
- Balancing the principles of eco credential ‘no traffic’ design including best practice guidance with the practical considerations of maintaining essential access for those with protected characteristics or those less able.

- A historic lack of a coherent Park access strategy and masterplan has resulted in a road layout consisting of a variety of road construction methods, long cul-de-sacs and ‘fragmented’ developed areas.
- Establishing an effective road maintenance regime. Park roads and verge maintenance is managed by multiple working groups and a complex decision-making structure. The lack of annual maintenance contributes to some of the observed concerns.
- Minimise all but essential drivers from circulating within the Park to reduce overall vehicle numbers and restrict number of vehicles on the Runway area.
- The short-term challenges of construction access creates additional vehicle pressure on the primary vehicular entrance and road layout.
- Community perceptions of excessive traffic speed and traffic volume within the Park, particularly travelling along the Runway.
- General degradation of environmental amenity through creating a ‘car park’ on the Runway as part of the Park’s main entrance.

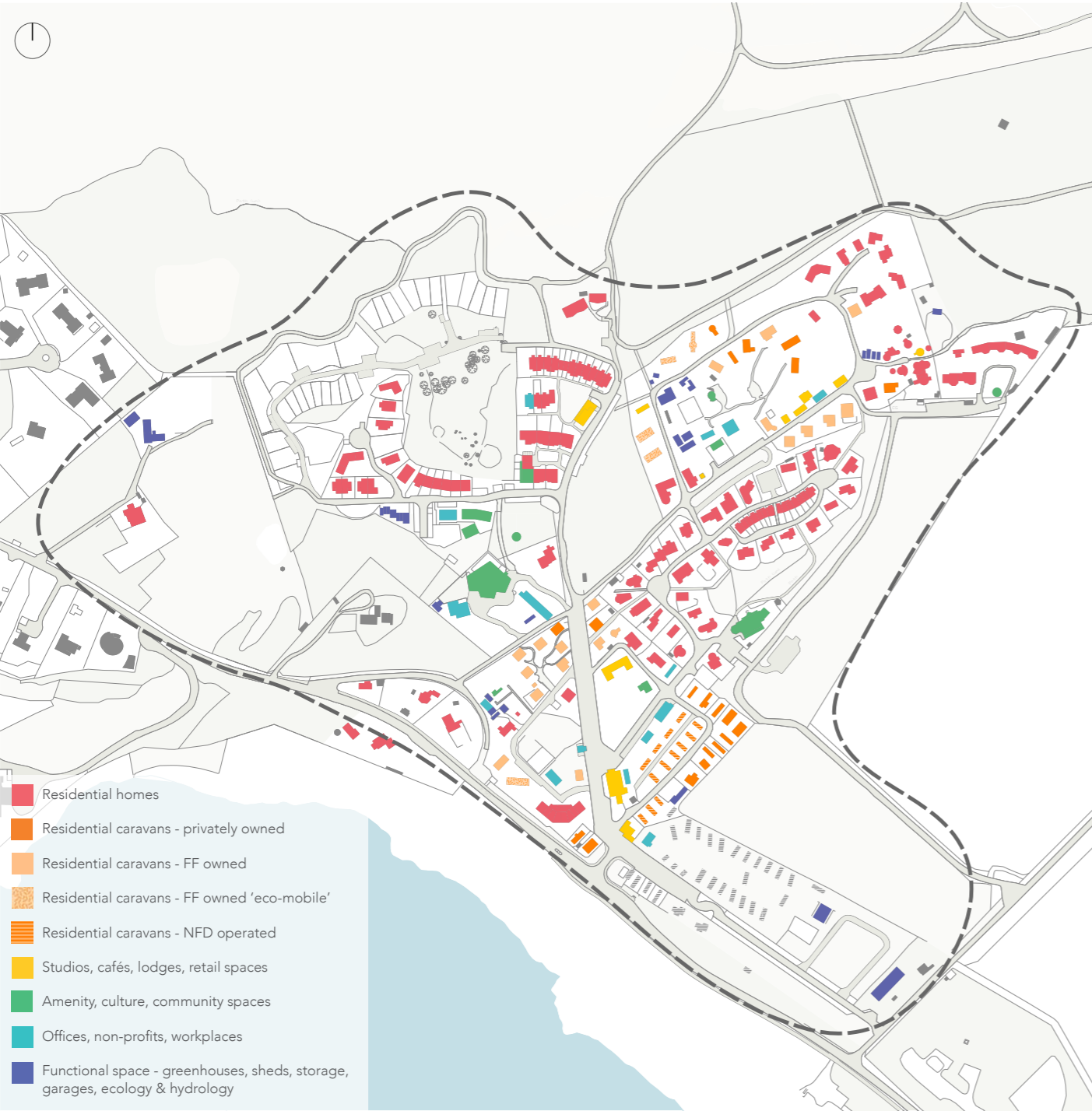
A traffic study of traffic volumes and vehicle speeds within the Park by CTP is included in the Appendices for further detailed information.



Existing strategic considerations and challenges to movement & access at the Park

2.8 Building uses

The map below demonstrates the variety of building uses and programmes across the Park, with a prevalence of residential buildings (including mobile homes). Community-focused amenities and facilities are largely concentrated around the entrance and Runway alongside the Foundation’s administrative buildings. Some key buildings and facilities which are used frequently by the community and visitors are shown opposite.



Existing building use mapping at the Park



Universal Hall and Cafe



Moray Art Centre



Findhorn Hive



Phoenix Shop



La Boheme



East Whins' common/Sunshine Room



The Nature Sanctuary



The Boutique



Art Studio & Park Pottery



Park Visitor Centre



The Living Machine



Weaving Studio

2.9 Housing tenure

As mentioned previously, the extent of private ownership and lack of affordable housing at the Park has been identified by both the client team and the wider community, with the latter group strongly expressing the desire for more affordable housing to be built in our first engagement event. This is seen

as an essential step in attracting younger people and families to live in the Park, alongside greater employment opportunities. Below is an estimate of the existing distribution of tenure across the Park, which can be compared with the densities of housing (dwellings per hectare) shown opposite.

It is worth noting that despite current low housing density in this area, the density of caravans/mobile homes in Pineridge was historically much greater. Density was reduced around 15 or so years ago when the Findhorn Foundation decided to remove poor-quality caravans at the end of their life without

replacing them, with the aim of helping to move things in the direction of better quality and more permanent housing; the success of this endeavour has been somewhat limited in scope until now.



Existing tenure mapping at the Park



Existing density mapping at the Park

2.10 Ecology & Nature

The map below shows the National Forest Inventory’s designations of the areas of woodland in and around the Park Ecovillage, as well as the designation of Findhorn Bay (alongside Culbin Sands and Culbin Forest) as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Popular woodland areas and outdoor spots in the Park are shown opposite.



Existing ecological designations at the Park



Field of Dreams green



Fire Pit and Dancing Green



Diamond Wood



Cullerne Gardens



The Singing Chamber



The Original Garden



The Quiet Garden



Wilkie's Wood/Green Burial Ground



Findhorn Beach



Past Community Centre contemplation garden



Heavenly hot tub



The Village Green

2.10 Ecology & Nature - Surveys

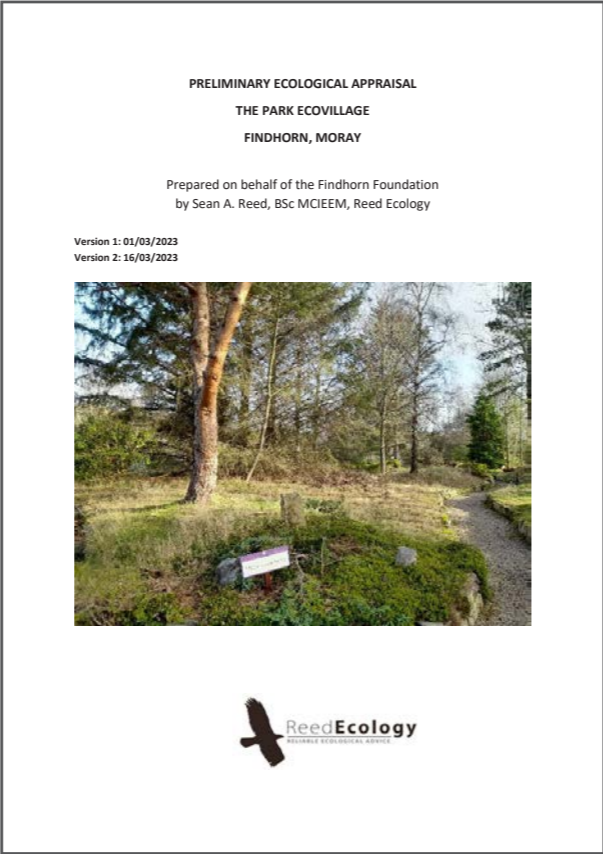
Habitat Mapping, Ecological Assessment, & Pineridge Tree Constraints

In order to understand the existing size, location and condition of the trees at Pineridge specifically, a tree survey was carried out by Urban-Arb Arboricultural Consultants in March 2023 (see opposite below).

Trees were defined by a series of British Standard categories denoting their condition, with the range covering trees of high quality (A) (of which there were found to be none in Pineridge), moderate quality (B), low quality (C) and untenable (U). This gave an indication of each trees’ remaining safe life expectancy (and which could no longer be safely retained as living trees). A significant number of trees were denoted as low-quality and a few as untenable, with some moderate quality throughout.

National Forestry Inventory designations overlaid with this study indicate the areas of Pineridge officially designated as Broadleaved and Conifer Woodland, and the Scots Pine woodland edges are also denoted.

Locally-based ecologist Sean Reed at Reed Ecology carried out a Phase 1 Habitat Survey (opposite above) and Preliminary Ecological appraisal (adjacent) of the entire Park Ecovillage: these can be viewed in full detail as supporting documents alongside this report.



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by Reed Ecology

- Site Information
- Findhorn Strategic Framework
- Management
- Broadleaved woodland
- Coniferous plantation woodland
- Improved grassland
- Pond
- Sand dune - dune heath
- Sand dune - dense scrub
- Amenity grassland
- Bare ground
- Arable
- Developed land, including caravan park
- Hedgerow
- Scattered trees
- Target note



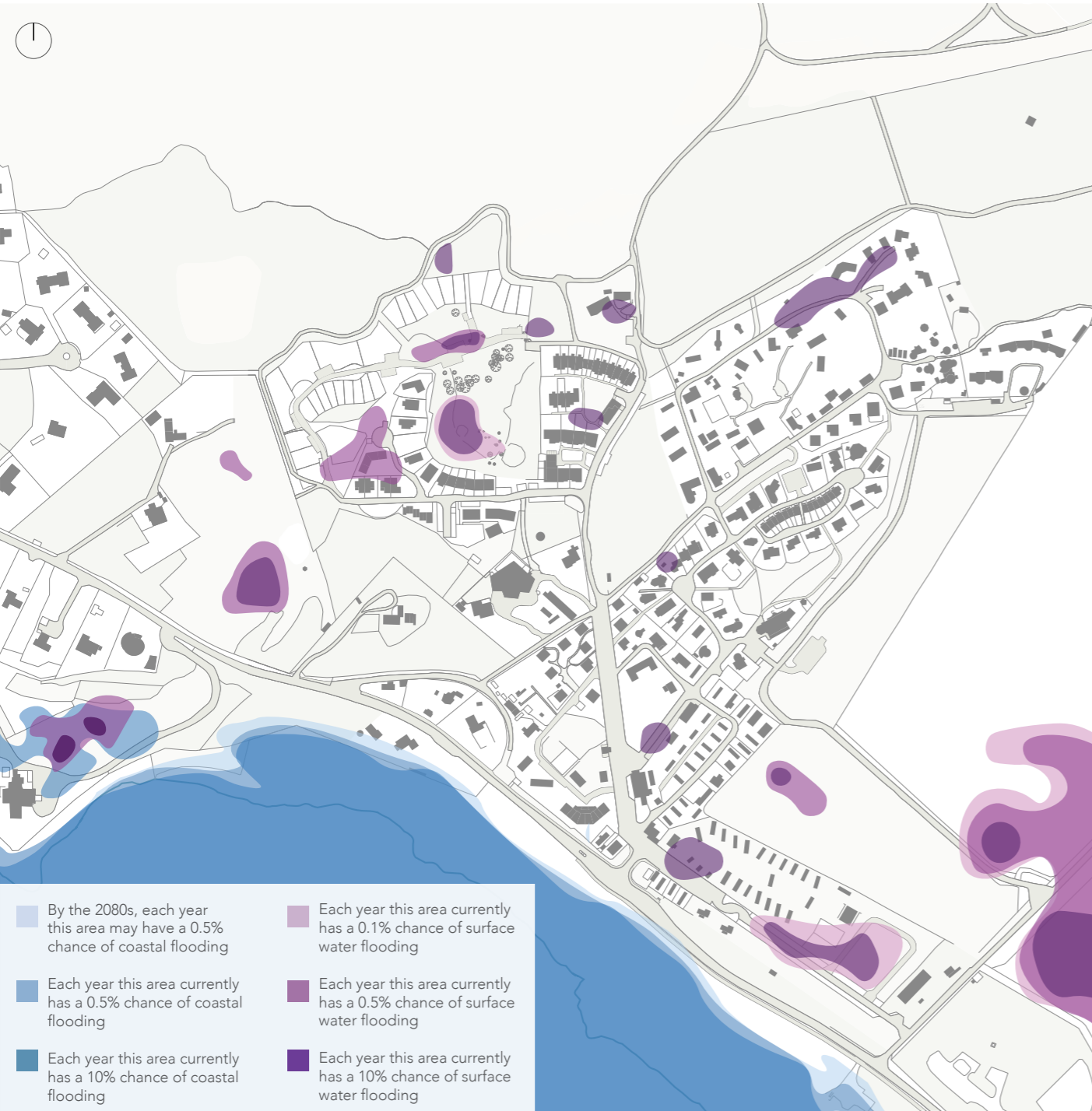
Phase 1 Habitat Survey by Reed Ecology



Tree survey and National Forest inventory designations (adapted from Urban-Arb Arboricultural Consultants study)

2.10 Ecology & Nature - Flooding

The below is a representation of the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)'s flood mapping for the surroundings of the Park Ecovillage Findhorn. As shown, coastal flooding is a major constraint for current and future consideration within this Framework, as a significant portion of the Park's land to the southeast is at risk, as well as neighbouring settlements and the B9011 access road along the Bay.



Flood risk mapping at the Park (source: SEPA)

2.10 Ecology & Nature - Attuning to nature

Attunement is an important ritualistic practice at the Park Ecovillage which is a manifestation of the guiding practices of 'Inner Listening' and 'Co-creating with Nature.' For many within the community, nature and ecology is about much more than desktop studies, classifications and maps. The wisdom of the nature beings and 'devas,' a term Dorothy MacLean coined for the plant beings which are said to dwell at the Park, is something which the community taps into using attunement, communicating through meditation with the land and 'unseen beings' to guide their practices of gardening and the cultivation of food. Brief attunements may also be held prior to and at the conclusion of collective practices such as eating, meeting or holding events, and the team for the Strategic Framework were often involved in this practice throughout the project's duration.

Deeper meditative attunements have also been held in the course of this project, led by Ann McEllin and Janice Findlay of the Findhorn Foundation, who have been regularly attuning to the land at the Nature Sanctuary on the Park to ask for guidance on the Strategic Framework and the ideas contained therein. This is standard for development work at the Park -

John Talbott, who sits on DevCom as part of the client team, explains:

“When a design is brought to the planning group, we discuss the plan and look at its siting, layout and technical merits, the architectural style and so on. But we also always go out to the actual site and meditate. We find the exact place it will be and see how it feels, try to get a sense of what the natural energies would like, and then share our impressions, and include these in our decision-making.”

In her post about The Findhorn Garden, blogger Linda Dayem Kealey describes the purpose of collaboration with devas and nature spirits as a means to 'shift from controlling nature to collaborating with nature, co-creating a balance that benefits all beings.' This has been a focus for the regular attunements taking place and for the project as a whole, as the team strives to consider how best to collaborate with and incorporate nature rather than dominating it with future development, alongside the technical challenges posed by the climate and nature emergencies we are facing, which the Park community believes can be addressed in part by listening to the land in this way.



Attunements taking place at the Park Ecovillage



2.11 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

The prior chapter outlines a baseline analysis of the physical, cultural and logistical contexts of the Park conducted by the design team; the below analyses some of the key findings and observations on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats which the Strategic Framework should address and build upon.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong sense of community who are keen to work with one another and with the Foundation to imagine a future scenario together• Unique character and identity• Rooted in, and committed to, principles of ecological sustainability and spirituality; a desire to be ‘cutting-edge’ in future development• Highly impressive engagement turnout and responses, highlighting local passion for placemaking• Lots of ongoing/pipeline projects and initiatives at the Park to feed into• Relatively low levels of car ownership and usage, high take up of cycling, walking and car-sharing• Relatively safe, low traffic roads• Plentiful green spaces, trees and productive gardening (allotments)• Existing well-loved community facilities to reinforce/link into• Proximity to nearby amenities e.g. the beach, Wilkie’s Wood	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of coherent governance and decision-making processes in place• Fragmentation and ‘lack of trust’ between community members, Findhorn Foundation, and other organisations at the Park• Wealth inequality and prevalence of unaffordable and/or private housing• Ageing population with lack of young people/families living at the Park• Lack of traffic and parking controls, especially around the Park entrance• Unwelcoming, ‘hard’ entrance condition presented by the tarmacked inherited Runway• Loss of Community Centre in 2021 and lack of a replacement, creating frustration amongst community• ‘Non-eco’ practices conflicting with Park’s identity, e.g. use of fossil fuels and unsustainable materials• Friction between visitors/volunteers/ the ‘outside world’ and the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using the Framework process to discuss priorities and align visions between community members, the FF and relevant Park organisations• Implementing a parking strategy that pulls cars away from the Runway/ entrance and creates a safer area• Modernising accommodation and moving away from fossil fuels• Providing denser, smaller affordable accommodation to encourage younger people to live on the Park, as well as (live-)work opportunities• Addressing and adapting to flood risk• Rebuilding the Community Centre• ‘Greening’ the Runway, breaking up the tarmac and the ‘hard’ character• Improving pedestrian access and wayfinding throughout the Park• New public-facing amenities and facilities to secure financial viability• Rethinking ownership structures and redistributing wealth fairly• Generating a Park-wide economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future flood risk as identified by SEPA, especially to south/Holiday Park• Limited capacity of community members to upkeep and maintain assets, as ownership of these are passed from FF to the community• Cessation of Findhorn Foundation educational programme• Lack of community consensus on the Park’s direction, particularly in terms of growing numbers of residents• Increasing strain placed on voluntary programmes such as Caring Community Circle to keep up with challenges of ageing population• New local and national policy guidelines and building and energy performance requirements which existing buildings may fall short of

Vision and Strategy

This chapter sets out a vision and a series of guiding principles for the strategic framework, under an overarching aim to promote and facilitate socially and environmentally sustainable modes of living.

3.0 Vision and Principles

3.1 A Purpose Statement

3.2 Establishing Aims

3.3 Key Strategic Moves

3.4 Framework Strategies

Ecologically diverse & water resilient landscapes

Characterful, affordable & resilient housing

Sustainable movement & access strategies

A welcoming & productive Ecovillage

Clear & transparent systems of ownership, engagement & decision-making

A Just Transition across the whole Park

3.5 A Future Vision for the Park



3.1 Purpose Statement

This Purpose Statement was written in collaboration with the client team to help guide the Strategic Framework process, with the aim of clearly communicating to the Ecovillage community what the principles and priorities underscoring the process were. Five guiding ambitions were formulated as follows:

- 1. Evolving, developing and co-creating in harmony with each other and with nature, including all beings both seen and unseen;**
- 2. Honouring our purpose in the world: fostering a caring community and living in spirit with each other;**
- 3. Accessibility to all through affordable housing, prioritising people over vehicles, inclusive design, and space to make a living;**
- 4. Living in harmony with the planet: carbon neutrality, growing our own food, planting and caring for nature, and nurturing wildlife;**
- 5. Reaching out to the world: being an example of how to live, educating, welcoming visitors to live and learn with us, and going out into the world as advocates.**

3.2 Establishing Aims

Drawing upon the feedback gathered from community members and stakeholders, input from the client team, the ambitions of the Purpose Statement, the Spatial Principles and intended National Outcomes of NPF4 and our own studies, the design team formulated a cohesive Strategic Vision for the Park Ecovillage Findhorn Strategic Framework.

This Strategic Vision lays out some substantial ideas for the Park's future, which goes beyond the guidance laid out in the Purpose Statement opposite to transform ambition into action. These concrete aims form the basis and rationale for the suggestions made in the following chapter, Shaping Ideas and the Strategic Framework; ideas which are for the Park Ecovillage community and stakeholders to take forward for inclusion in Moray's 2027 Local Development Plan, potentially in the form of their own Local Place Plan report, or to disregard as they see fit.



3.3 Key Strategic Moves

The adjacent diagram provides an overview of strategic spatial priorities for identified character area at the Park. This includes high level strategies for movement & access, green space, and key green connections.

Key strategic moves

A

Strengthen the Central Area to provide a welcome entrance point, reinforce the Ecovillage character, provide new housing and mixed-use/community development.

B

Protect and connect existing green spaces & soften hard landscaping with new greenery

C

Enhance existing Park entrance with renewed focus on walking & wheeling

D

Identify areas of Pineridge to provide new affordable homes and retain green connections.

E

Reimagine Holiday Park as a biodiverse wetland area with new and enhanced visitor accommodation

F

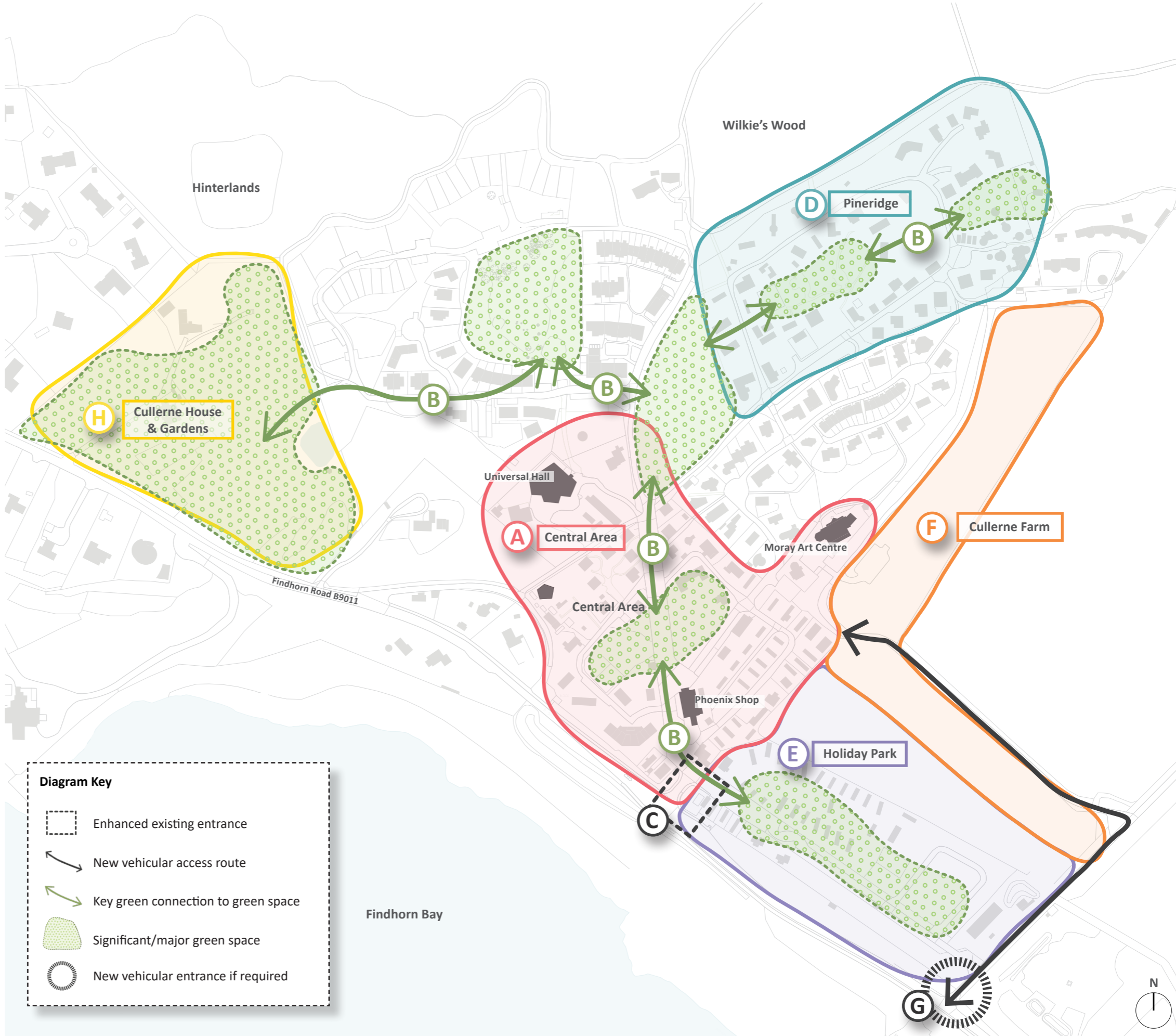
Provide potential areas of new housing on Cullerne Farm land with associated green landscape buffers

G

Potential second Park entrance & route for visitor access, if required

H

Reinforce & develop Cullerne Gardens as a productive landscape



Overview of strategic moves that comprise the Framework

3.4 Framework Strategies

To support the overarching vision, a series of spatial framework strategies have been identified and developed which are structured around the following aims:

- **Ecologically diverse & water resilient landscapes**
- **Characterful, affordable & resilient housing**
- **Sustainable movement & access strategies**
- **A welcoming & productive Ecovillage**

During the course of the strategic work, it became evident that mechanisms and strategies around decision-making, governance and ownership were also critical to delivering the vision, and as such the following aim is included:

- **Clear & transparent systems of ownership, engagement & decision-making**

Additionally, members of the Park Ecovillage had secured funding from the Scottish Government’s Just Transition Fund to progress four feasibility studies around carbon reduction. This work has informed areas of this study and therefore sits as another key aim for inclusion:

- **A Just Transition across the whole Park**

Each of the six framework strategies are illustrated and expanded upon in the following pages of this chapter.

A. Ecologically diverse & water resilient landscapes
NPF4 ‘Sustainable Places’



B. Characterful, affordable & resilient housing
NPF4 ‘Liveable Places’



C. Sustainable movement & access strategies
NPF4 ‘Sustainable Places’



D. A welcoming & productive Ecovillage
NPF4 ‘Productive Places’



E. Clear & transparent systems of ownership, engagement & decision-making
NPF4 ‘Productive Places’

F. A Just Transition across the whole Park
NPF4 ‘Sustainable Places’

Ecologically diverse & water resilient landscapes

NPF4 ‘Sustainable Places’

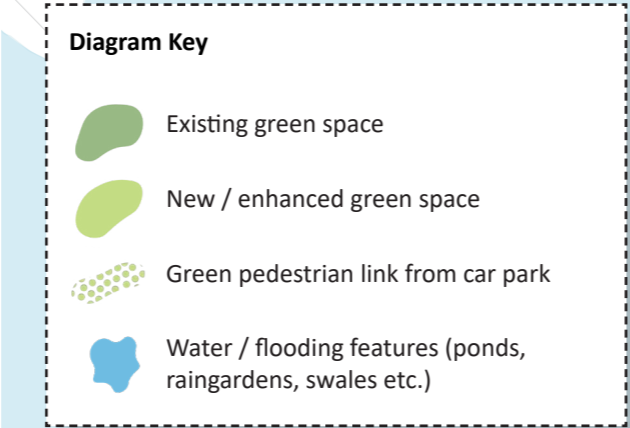
This aim is centred around the protection and enhancement of biodiverse landscapes across the Park, committing to a strategy which links together existing and proposed green spaces and habitats and addresses the need for water resilience and adaptation on areas of the Park at risk of flooding, now and in the future.

Short to Medium Term Actions

- Priority level
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- Green the runway and create an expanded community park that spans across it
- Understand and develop strategies for areas of flood risk across the Park Ecovillage, and communicate and discuss these
- Remove Skylab and improve amenity and landscaping in this area
- Maintain and enhance wildlife corridors and green spaces throughout Pineridge and beyond

Medium to Long Term Actions

- Priority level
- 5
- 6
- 5
- 6
- Transform and expand the Holiday Park into a wetland landscape with planted, biodiverse flood mitigation buffers
- Create landscaped amenity space and green buffers associated with new parking and potential housing area



Overview of green/blue strategy across the Park Ecovillage

Ecologically diverse & water resilient landscapes

The strategy for ecologically diverse and water resilient landscapes can be summarised under the following action headings:

Mitigating flood risk to the rest of the Park

Creating ‘floodable’ ponds in high flood risk zones at the entrance of the Park, which form wetland water features during flooding; creating planted, biodiverse landscape ‘buffers’ which direct and contain flood waters to these designated wetland areas

Adapting to current & future flood risk

Working with, not against, the increasing challenges of flooding caused by the climate emergency by adapting the Holiday Park into a wetland landscape; utilising flood-resilient building design for eco-chalets and holiday accommodation such as stilts and ‘floating’ foundations; creating accessible boardwalks that sit alongside water features and planting to allow navigation between buildings during flood events

Incorporating biodiverse landscapes & habitats

Capitalising on the opportunities (as well as addressing the challenges) of increased flood risk, by introducing and encouraging new ‘wetland’ habitats and planting at the entrance of the Park; encouraging biodiversity net gain in line with NPF4 policy guidance; linking existing with new and enhanced green spaces, strengthening habitat corridors throughout the Park; creating more useable, open green spaces for the community and visitors to enjoy; softening hard landscaping with planting and replacing unsustainable materials such as tarmac where possible

Working in partnership with neighbours

Taking a ‘whole-peninsula’ approach to tackling the challenges presented by the climate emergency, especially with regards to flooding, by considering emergency routes that may span across settlement boundaries and strategising on flood mitigation and adaptation measures together



Schoonship floating homes, the Netherlands



Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) in Soest, the Netherlands

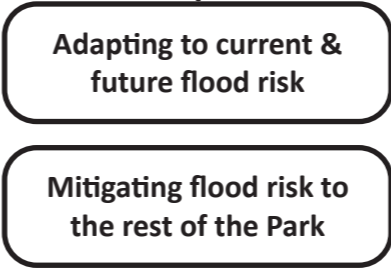


Illustration indicating ecologically diverse & water-resilient landscapes at the Holiday Park, incorporating a network of accessible boardwalks, new eco-pods and chalets.

Characterful, affordable & resilient housing

NPF4 ‘Liveable Places’

This aim acknowledges the unique character and prioritisation of sustainability in housing design at the Park at present and promises to build upon and enhance this, while also making clear the fundamental need for more accessible, affordable and flexible homes for the elderly, younger people and those on lower incomes to dwell comfortably.

Short to medium term actions

- 1 Pineridge; sensitively designed affordable housing and live-work nestled in a quiet, woodland setting

Medium to long term actions

- Priority level
-
- 2 Holiday Park; Develop enhanced Holiday Park accommodation based around water resilience and ecology .
- 3 Holiday Park Expansion & Cullerne Farm; extended holiday accommodation and new housing with flood-adaptive design principles to respond to future flood risk in this area.
- 4a Central Area; develop community-focused, dense and vibrant housing in an animated mixed-use central area
- 4b Central Area; Evolve core Findhorn Foundation operations, accommodation for short-term visitors and students alongside educational facilities
- 5 Cullerne Gardens; low-carbon accommodation for visitors, students & workers in a productive landscape
- ↓

No actions

- 6 The Whins, no change; ongoing construction of higher-density housing with some affordable housing provision
- 7 Soillse, no change; existing co-housing community of six homes
- 8 Field of Dreams, no change; larger, detached housing with small-scale terraced units in the centre



Overview of housing strategy across the Park Ecovillage

Characterful, affordable & resilient housing

The strategy for characterful, affordable and resilient housing throughout the Park can be summarised under the following action headings:

Ageing in Place

Considering the needs of the Park’s elderly population in the siting of accessible homes in proximity to amenities; providing flexible homes which can be adapted to suit changing needs as residents age, allowing them to age in place; providing specialist care housing/flats for elderly residents where needed; considering the need for a dedicated retirement home within the Park, if deemed necessary by community.

Creating affordable homes

Addressing the current lack of affordable housing options at the Park by providing a greater range of tenure options in new housing; densifying and concentrating development to make affordable rent in new development more financially viable; providing more modest-size homes to attract younger single residents and couples to live at The Park

Connecting to the landscape

Acknowledging and respecting the sacred and sensitive nature of biodiversity and ecology (at Pineridge in particular) in the design of new housing; densifying and building up where possible to reduce need for tree removal (in line with NPF4 guidance and the community’s wishes), but keeping build height modest to retain the low-rise character of the surroundings; incorporating green roofs onto building design to enhance biodiversity and provide corridors for treetop animals to move across; designing flood-adapted housing at the Park’s entrance (see ‘Ecologically diverse & water resilient landscapes’)

Incorporating innovative ecological design

‘Touching the earth lightly’ by continuing the tradition of the Park Ecovillage’s approach to sustainable, ecological construction in the design of housing; aligning with Moray Council’s climate target for carbon neutrality by 2030; keeping apace with up-to-date thinking on best practice for sustainable building, include Passivhaus design principles



Tiny ‘Woodnest’ in the trees, Norway



‘Wooden House at the Forest Park,’ Berlin



Sustainable movement & access strategies

NPF4 ‘Liveable Places’

This aim takes the extensive feedback from The Park Ecovillage Findhorn Community on the issues of safety, parking provision, car-dominance and unsustainable surfacing materials, and promises to embed more ecologically sustainable, intuitive, and pedestrian/cycling-focused movement and access strategies throughout the Park.

Short to medium term actions

- Priority level
- 1

‘Green’ the Runway and improve conditions and safety for walking and wheeling
- 2

Improve junction at top of Runway and Universal Hall for wayfinding & safety
- 3

Potential to create new visitor parking to adjacent site
- 4

Retain wildlife corridor + green walking routes through Pineridge & Diamond Wood
- 5

Retain limited vehicular route & access for burial site and wind turbines
- 6

Improve pedestrian access (shared with resident-only vehicles) and Park entrance

Medium to long term actions

- Priority level
- 7

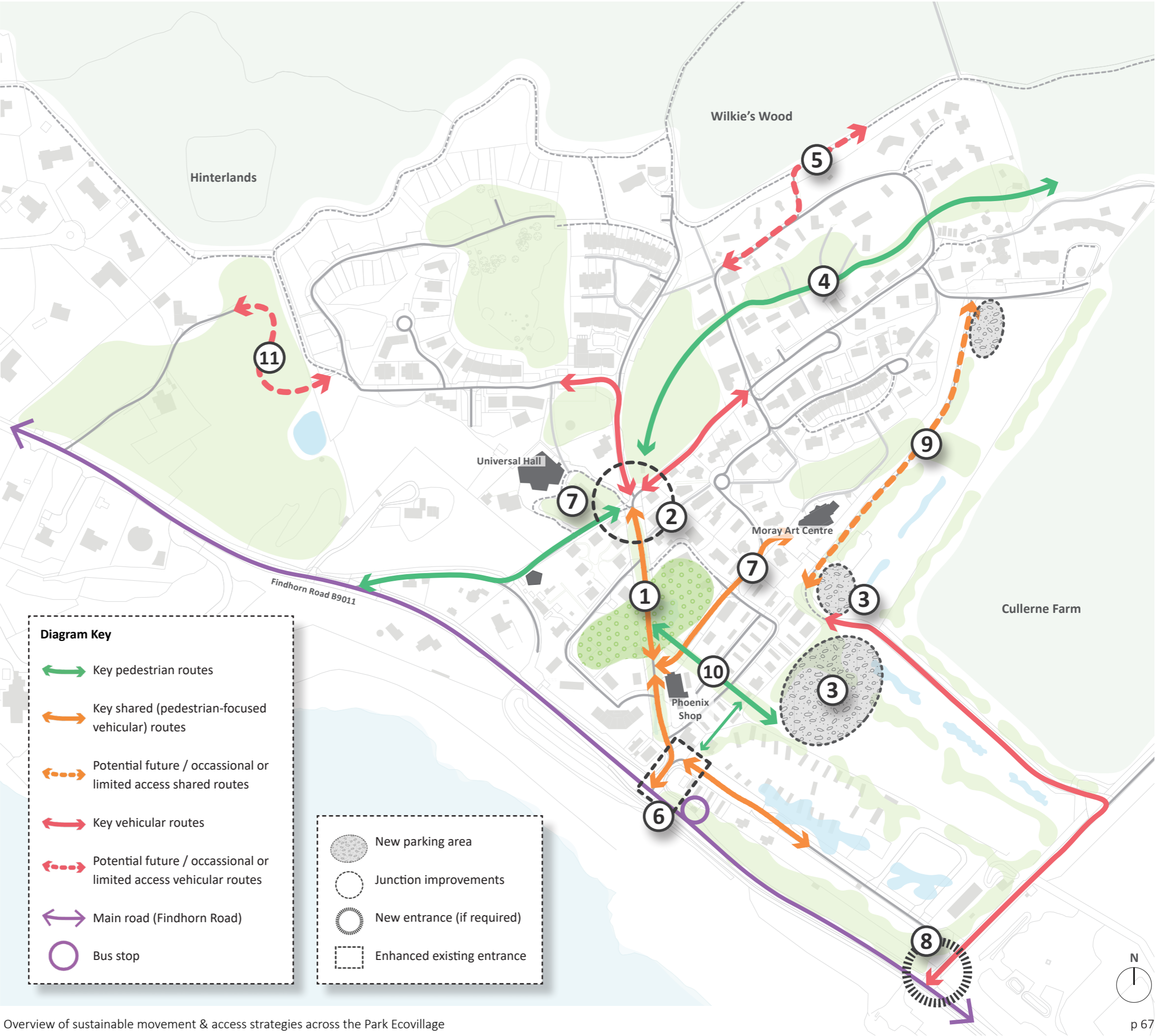
Improve wayfinding and pedestrian access to Moray Art Centre and Universal Hall for visitors
- 8

Potential to create second Park entrance & route for visitor access, if required
- 9

Potential to create road extension / limited access route to Pineridge & Soillse
- 10

Long-term ambition to create pedestrian route linking visitor arrival to amenities
- 11

Potential to create ‘occasional’ vehicular access route connecting The Whins & Cullerne Gardens



Sustainable movement & access strategies

The strategy for sustainable movement and access consists of a ‘kit of parts,’ which can be summarised under the headings as follows:

Greening the Runway

Addressing the ‘hard’ character of the Runway by introducing permeable block paving; increasing tree/shrub/flower planting along its edges; joining the Village Green and original Community Garden to create a cohesive community park with play areas which further ‘breaks up’ the expanse of the Runway.

Promoting sustainable modes of transport

Superseding the car by creating more pedestrian and cycle-only routes; limiting vehicular access in certain areas while maintaining essential vehicle access; considering future enhanced rollout of Moray Car Share within the Park, and issues with external transport links to and from the Park.

Considering siting of shared parking areas

Consolidating and rationalising parking by moving all visitor parking to extended Holiday Park site, accessed by new entrance point (if required) at Cullerne Farm; limiting existing parking spaces along the Runway to provide for residents only; creating ‘pods’ for parking to support future EV charging point provision.

Foregrounding pedestrian safety

Creating a safer environment for residents and visitors that could include a range of traffic calming measures, such as the winding the existing Runway route; prohibiting and/or restricting access to certain areas by all non-essential vehicles; re-routing visitor parking and access to a secondary entrance (if required); reducing vehicular traffic; surface material changes, or home zones for resident vehicle use only.

Safeguarding new routes in and out of the Park

Potentially creating a new vehicular entrance, if required, to direct visitor traffic to the designated new parking area, reducing pressure/car dominance on the Runway; maintaining the existing entrance for resident-only vehicles to make more green, pedestrian and wildlife-friendly; considering a future ‘occasional’ connection between The Whins and Cullerne Gardens.

Maintaining pace with transport technology

Supporting the provision of Electric Vehicle charge points to enable residents and visitors to access this essential infrastructure; setting out a strategy for the location and ongoing management of centrally accessible charge points; prioritising the role of the Moray Car Share, the number of accessible hire vehicles, and the support of alternative transport.



The High Line, New York



Grey to Green, Sheffield



A welcoming & productive Ecovillage

NPF4 ‘Productive Places’

This aim recognises the importance of non-residential amenities and facilities at the Park to visitors, residents, and the Findhorn Foundation, and promises to incorporate improved access and wayfinding to existing and much-loved buildings into a strategy for new educational and Holiday Park facilities, live-work studios and workshops, a new ‘gateway’ building at the Park entrance, and a new Community Centre.

Short to medium term actions

- Priority level
- 1

Rebuild the Community Centre - possible locations indicated, with further community engagement required to establish the precise function of the new CC and its location
- 2

Improve pedestrian connections and wayfinding to existing Park facilities and amenities
- 3

Improve facilities and landscape provided at the Holiday Park to increase visitor ‘offer’ and revenue whilst also providing flood-adaptation and resilience

Medium to Long term actions

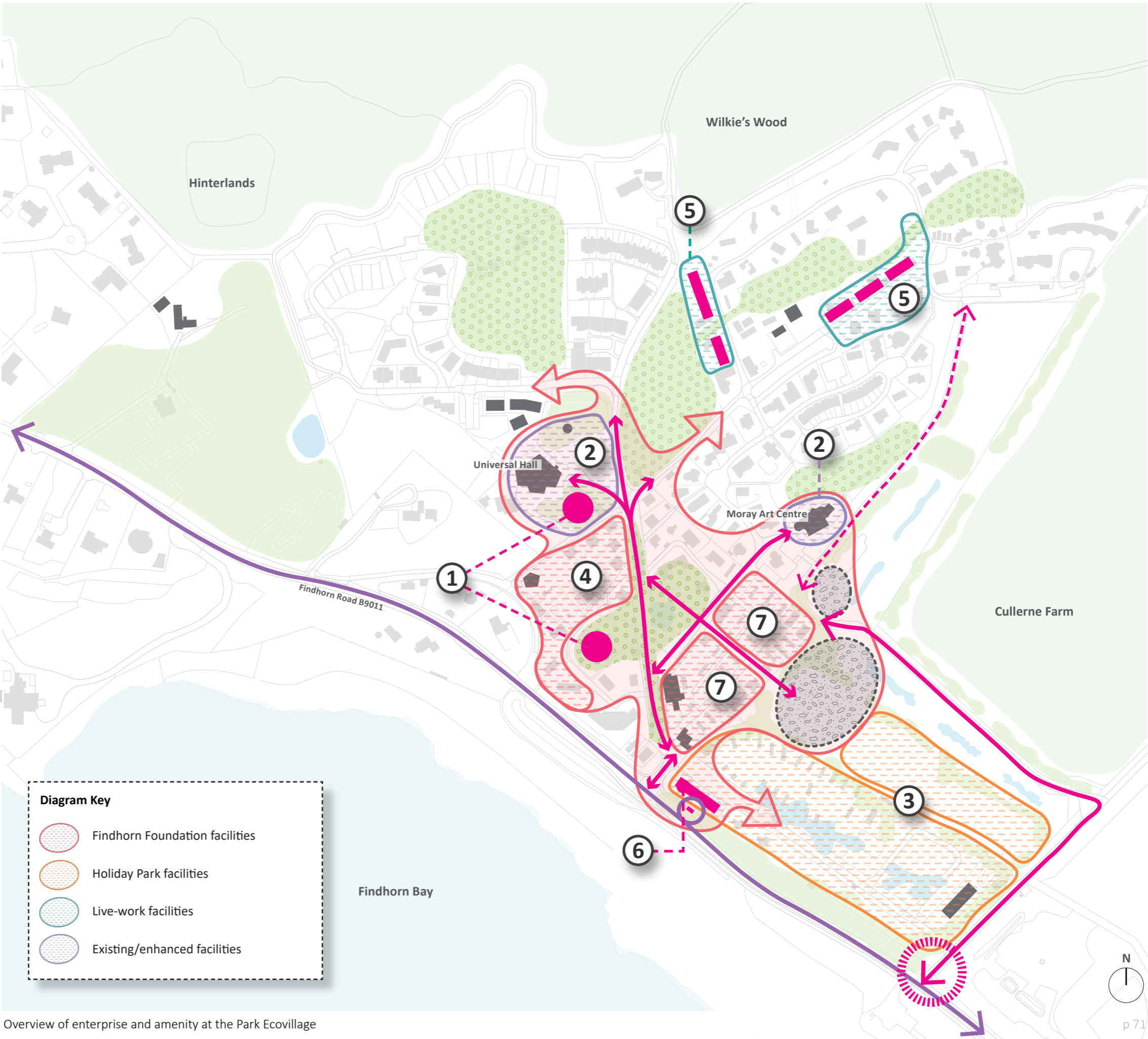
- Priority level
- 4

Develop core Findhorn Foundation educational facilities and accommodation to this centrally located area
- 5

Opportunity to create live-work units comprising workshop/studio space on ground floor with living space above
- 6

‘Gateway’ building at entrance which comprises a mix of amenities - potentially shop or active travel hub below and restaurant/cafe above
- 7

Develop new mixed use area combining a range of facilities at ground floor with smaller scale, accessible housing above. Opportunity to provide enhanced connection and wayfinding as part of this development



A welcoming & productive Ecovillage

The strategy for a welcoming, productive, socially enterprising Ecovillage can be summarised under the following action headings:

Sharing facilities between residents & visitors

Considering which areas are for the community, for visitors, and where/how these overlap; considering the siting of the new Community Centre, perhaps within newly expanded community park, or closer to Universal Hall, and considering visitor access to both these possible sites; transforming the existing entrance to resident-only access, allowing visitors access to new entrance, if required, with dedicated parking areas tucked behind green landscape buffers, to minimise current dominance of cars on the Runway.

Creating a public-facing entrance

Addressing the current lack of an entrance which clearly signifies arrival at the Park to visitors; creating a 'gateway' building to fulfil this function, placing public-facing amenities along the main road (e.g. restaurant and shop) to advertise to visitors; ensuring the existing entrance is greener and less hard/tarmac-dominated, as befitting a world-class Ecovillage; creating a separate visitor car-park behind the Holiday Park to reduce number of cars along Runway, making existing entrance more attractive to pedestrians.

Reinforcing existing assets/facilities

Address wayfinding challenges along the runway to key 'event' facilities (such as the Universal Hall and Moray Art Centre) by adopting a coherent visual strategy for signage in future; consider also the small businesses and offices on the Park (BnBs, therapists etc) and how to best support these; improve pedestrian access to these facilities, including links from visitor arrival car park to event spaces; situate visitor car parking close to Moray Art Centre to improve visibility and awareness of this facility (also see section on 'Sustainable movement & access strategies' for information on these points); remove the tired 'Skylab' building to improve amenity and landscaping in this area; extend the Holiday Park north and provide flood-adapted buildings, including accommodation and tourist facilities (see section 'Ecologically diverse and water-resilient landscapes' for more information).

Creating live-work opportunities

Working with the existing context of Pineridge, where artisanal workshops sit alongside small scale homes, to provide 'live-work' units - mixed-use small-scale buildings with workshops or studios below and living space above; densifying development of workspaces and homes in this way to reduce the amount of built footprint and maximise green space in Pineridge.



Live-work cabins by Makoto Suzuki, Hokkaido



Mount Stuart Visitor Centre, Isle of Bute



Illustration indicating a possible upgrade to the existing entrance at the Park Ecovillage

Clear & transparent systems of ownership, engagement & decision-making

NPF4 ‘Productive Places’

This aim acknowledges the considerable amount of feedback received from the community on the ‘fragmented’ and ‘dysfunctional’ nature of governance and ownership generally at the Park at present, as well as uncertainty around engagement and community input to decision-making, and suggests a radical rethink of these systems in the future.

The points below summarise key recommendations from the Park’s own Governance Working Group’s ‘Discussion Paper,’ (September 2023) which outlines ideas for governance and decision-making:

Issues: The community has no agreed decision making process; the community needs a governance system to manage ‘commons’ resources; tensions are arising about who is making decisions, how and why

Ideas: The formation of an integrative Community Parliament as a decision-making body for the whole community, which comprises representation from community members and organisations; an improved community-wide communication system; genuine and effective consultation through neighbourhood representatives, whole community gatherings and polls; the principle of ‘alignment’ (those who use/benefit from the existence of a resource should also be the ones who have influence on how it is “operated”), and the refinement of systems to ensure transparency, accountability and appropriate consequences when rules or agreements are breached.

The Strategic Framework design team believes the main actions that should be prioritised include:

- **Establishing legible governance models:** Developing a more coherent, transparent and intelligible structure for governance at the Park, which is ‘human scale’ and streamlined.
- **Establishing effective communication methods:** Considering the best methods for communicating news and holding forums to give the community chances to engage in Park decision-making, which are inclusive and as wide-spreading as possible.
- **Empowering all voices:** Ensuring a range of opinions and insights are included and considered in governance and decision-making, and that more than the ‘loudest’ voices are listened to.
- **Developing models for the generation and sharing of wealth:** Addressing the problematic nature of wealth inequality and dominance of private ownership, considering how wealth can be ethically generated and shared fairly throughout the community via collective ownership.



Engagement at Universal Hall

“ The governance structure at the park is too fragmented and for an intentional community, it does not have clear engagement process. ”

“ Taking responsibility for collective ownership - how to reach a group consciousness as a gang of individuals. ”

“ Is there a final vote for the residents on all this or is it just done by FF/committee? ”

Excerpts of feedback from the Park community

A Just Transition across the whole Park

NPF4 ‘Sustainable Places’

This aim acknowledges the unique character and prioritisation of sustainability in housing design at the Park at present and promises to build upon and enhance this, while also making clear the fundamental need for more accessible, affordable and flexible homes for the elderly, younger people and those on lower incomes to dwell comfortably.

The points below summarise four recently-concluded feasibility studies carried out at the Park Ecovillage Findhorn, which were funded by the Scottish Government’s Just Transition Fund and aim to both reduce carbon dependencies and create green livelihood opportunities at the Park:

Replacing fossil fuels with an Ambient Loop

This study ‘investigated designing and installing a communal district heating system in houses currently using fossil fuel-based heating (mainly LPG).’ The conclusion of the study recommended ‘a two-loop system with boosted temperature loop heat for the Field of Dreams area of 44 houses and single closed loop wells for 21 houses in the Bagend/Barrels/Soillse area’ (within/adjacent to Pineridge).

Creating a renewable energy Microgrid

This Strategic Framework ‘was designed to produce a new development plan to transition from temporary mobile homes with low energy efficiency to highly energy efficient permanent housing.’ This involved

reviewing existing networks at the Park ‘to determine the existing capability and future upgrades required’ to achieve the carbon neutral ‘Net Zero 2030’ target.

Advancing the Naturhaus/Nature House concept

This study ‘had the Park Ecovillage Trust re-imagine and advance the Nature House concept developing a sustainable, closed-loop and energy efficient housing design as a community project, with the object of providing a model solution to affordable housing needs in many Scottish rural communities,’ including within the Park Ecovillage itself.

Increasing and scaling organic horticultural food production, regenerative agriculture and composting

This study ‘focused on the building of a resilient local food economy around the Findhorn Ecovillage including identifying key capital investments to boost horticultural and livestock production. These investments are large-scale composting machinery and protected crop greenhouse within a regenerative agricultural mixed farming system.’



Visualisation of Nature House concept by Arboreal Architecture



Visualisation of Nature House concept by Arboreal Architecture

3.5 A Future Vision for the Park

As outlined in this Chapter, the Strategic Framework consists of a range of aims and corresponding actions that make up the Future Vision for the Park Ecovillage Findhorn, which have been created in response to input from the client team, desktop and site analysis and the feedback of the Park Ecovillage Findhorn community themselves.

These align with local and national policy ambitions including the recently adopted National Planning Framework 4 and seek to inform the forthcoming and developing Moray Council Local Development Plan 2027.

The concluding Chapter 4 outlines Dependencies and Next Steps towards delivering the Strategic Framework.

1. Evolving, developing and co-creating in harmony with each other and with nature, including all beings both seen and unseen;

2. Honouring our purpose in the world: fostering a caring community and living in spirit with each other;

3. Accessibility to all through affordable housing, prioritising people over vehicles, inclusive design, and space to make a living;

4. Living in harmony with the planet: carbon neutrality, growing our own food, planting and caring for nature, and nurturing wildlife;

5. Reaching out to the world: being an example of how to live, educating, welcoming visitors to live and learn with us, and going out into the world as advocates.

A. Ecologically diverse & water resilient landscapes
NPF4 ‘Sustainable Places’



B. Characterful, affordable & resilient housing
NPF4 ‘Liveable Places’



C. A welcoming & productive Ecovillage
NPF4 ‘Productive Places’



D. Sustainable movement & access strategies
NPF4 ‘Sustainable Places’



E. Clear & transparent systems of ownership, engagement & decision-making
NPF4 ‘Productive Places’

F. A Just Transition across the whole Park
NPF4 ‘Sustainable Places’

Priorities and Next Steps

This chapter outlines the key issues upon which delivering the strategy depends. It also identifies some key priorities and next steps.

4.0 Priorities and next steps

- 4.1 Critical Factors and Dependencies
- 4.2 Timeline
- 4.3 Next steps



Critical Factors

**'Greening'
of the
Runway**

**Access
and
Parking**

**Mitigating
Flood
Risk**

**Meeting
Moray Council
Policy**

**Development
of Holiday
Park**

**Collaborative
Decision-
making**

**Sale of
Findhorn
Foundation
Land**

**Respect
for
Nature**

**Affordable
and Diverse
Housing**

4.1 Critical Factors and Dependencies

Delivering the Vision and Strategy for Findhorn Park Ecovillage is dependent on a number of critical factors. These are dependent on a number of issues that must be considered and addressed to allow the spatial plan and associated activities to progress coherently.

The critical factors identified within the Strategic Framework are:

- Access and Parking
- Mitigating Flood Risk
- Respect for Nature
- Affordable and Diverse Housing
- Meeting Moray Council Policy
- Collaborative Decision-making
- Future of the Holiday Park
- 'Greening' of the Runway
- Sale of Findhorn Foundation Land

It is clear from the ongoing consultation and unique nature of the Park Ecovillage that there are competing interests and areas of contention related to the critical factors listed above. These need to be reviewed and addressed by those taking forward the Strategic Framework and forthcoming Local Place Plan.

The spatial strategy cannot be fully and coherently delivered without addressing these critical factors 'head on' and taking the necessary steps towards resolution. If considered and addressed, a cohesive, Strategic Vision can be realised and the Strategic Framework and sustainable future meaningfully progressed for the Park.

Dependencies - Overview

Critical Factors	Key issues	Dependent on	Competing factors	Potential next steps
Access and parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Park Central Area is dominated by car parking.The entire Park struggles to cope with visitor parking during events and tourist seasons.Car numbers will increase with new development currently under construction at North Whins.The consultation process highlighted the need for greater pedestrian priority and wheeling within the Park.There is currently only one vehicular access in and out of the Park.If it is required, a second entrance would relieve pressure on the existing access to provide a safer, overarching pedestrian and wheeling experience with better emergency access. A secondary vehicular access would also support the Park for any new/ongoing development that may be required in The Park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consensus across the Park that parking and access are constraints that need to be addressed.A clear requirement for additional visitor parking and viability of the Holiday Park enhancements or extensionFurther review of the requirement for a secondary entrance via enhanced movement and transport analysis.Positive ongoing discussions with adjacent landowner Ed Bichan and Moray Council Transport Engineers to establish the technical viability of a second entrance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">If over-arching Park decision-making mechanisms are not in place it will be a challenge to address this critical factor.Concern that loss of parking or changes to access may compromise residents’ individual car use.Resistance from residents towards any discussions with adjacent landowners for any additional land transfer (for parking) or additional access.Reducing and relocating Runway parking may be problematic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Meeting with Moray Council Transportation.Continue discussions with adjacent landowner.Further consultation with residents.Commissioning of additional transportation analysis of existing and potential secondary access requirements- potentially linked to work investigating Holiday Park enhancements.
Managing and Mitigating Flood Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Parts of The Park experience surface water flooding from time to time. This poses a medium to long term risk to residents and businesses.This high level study has highlighted and mapped this risk. However, more detailed work and discussion is required to identify how flood risk could be managed and mitigated in the short, medium and long term.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A surface water management plan for the Park. This should include integration of water-based landscaping elements and other surface water adaptive measures, which serve as blue-green infrastructure and provide flood resilience.Partnership working with Moray Council and neighbouring landowners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Blue-green measures will likely affect parking and access.Any flood mitigation or adaptation measures must meet Moray Council Requirements.There may be resistance locally to any changes generally and in particular Holiday Park proposals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Further discussions required with Moray Council Flood Teams to consider mitigation and adaptation measures.Take a ‘Whole Peninsula’ approach to addressing flood risk in discussion with Moray Council and neighbouring landowners (FVCC, MoD and Ed Bichan) to build Climate Resilience and flood mitigation / adaptive measures.
Meeting Moray Council LDP Timeline and NPF4 Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Moray Council is in the process of developing its Local Development Plan (LDP) 2027.In September 2023 Moray Council invited ‘Calls for Ideas’ to inform this. Collective Architecture and Park Residents made submissions based on the developing Strategic Framework at the time.Moray Council has advised that Local Place Plans can be developed and submitted to inform the emerging Local Development Plan (LDP). A group has formed at the Park to develop and submit proposals by the September 2024 deadline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Acceptance of the Strategic Framework by Moray Council to inform the emerging LDP.Delivery of a Local Place Plan for the Park by September 2024.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Strategic Framework and the Local Place Plan don’t align.Deadlines for submission not met.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Meet Moray Council to present the Strategic Framework and discuss timelines and the LDP process.

Dependencies Overview (Continued 1)

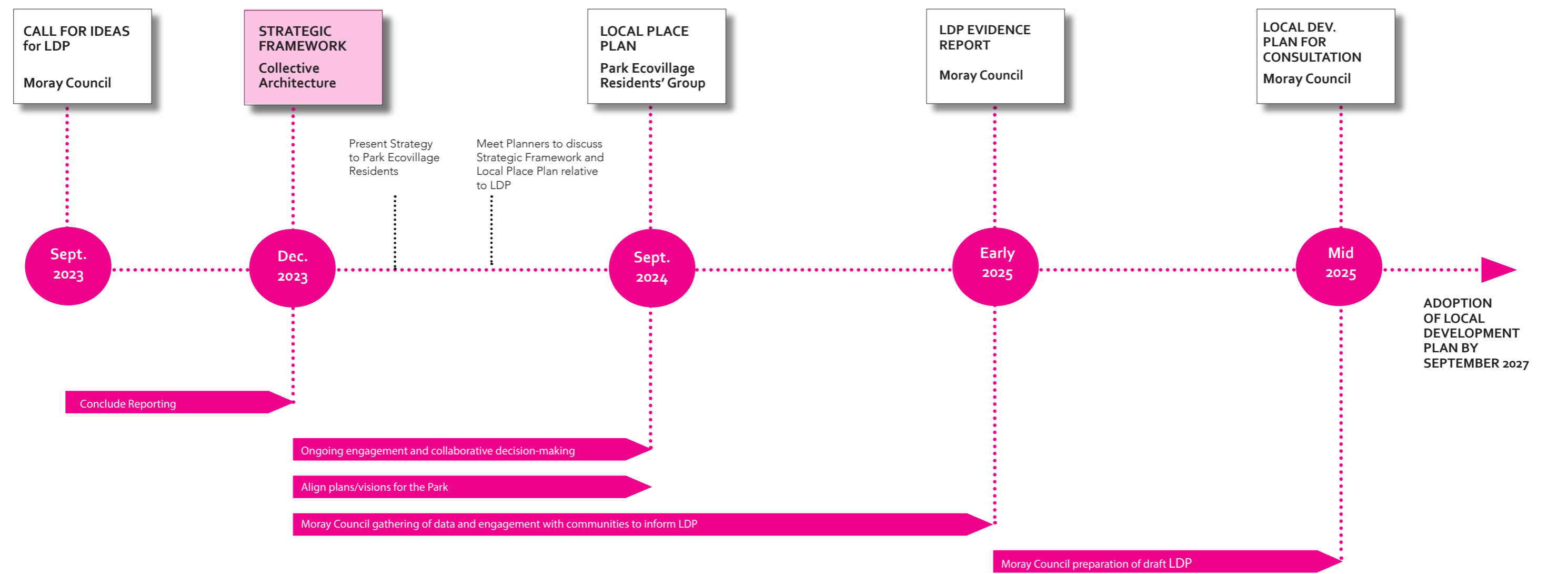
Critical Factors	Key issues	Dependent on	Competing factors	Potential next steps
Affordable and diverse housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">It is currently unaffordable for many people to live and stay in the ParkAdditional, low cost, flexible accommodation is required to meet the needs of a diverse, inclusive and sustainable community.Much of the existing lower cost accommodation in areas of the Park does not meet current standards for low carbon power and overall building performance.Whilst there have been some recent affordable housing developments constructed on the Park eg. Woodside and Silvertrees, there is the urgent need for more low cost and varied housing types across the Park.There is no supported or sheltered housing on the Park to allow residents to age in place.At present, there is the risk that the Park will lose its status as a place for innovation, communal living and mutual support unless affordability and inclusion are addressed through new and adapted housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Replacement of existing accommodation or opening up of sites for new development.Increasing density and alternative house types to attract and sustain a more diverse community.Respecting nature and ecology.Creation of accommodation aligned to the values and principles of the Park to meet residents’ desires to remain an Ecovillage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">If over-arching Park decision-making mechanisms are not in place it will be a challenge to coherently address this critical factor.Resistance locally to the development of any existing or new sites.Concerns that any new development would compromise ecology and existing nature within the Park.Dominance of private home ownership across the Park with NIMBY-ism that is at odds with founding Ecovillage principles + values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Carry out a Needs and Demands Assessment for housing at the Park.Review the potential sites for housing identified within this framework to establish appropriate housing types and capacity over time.
Collaborative decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none">There is currently no over-arching and democratically elected body that represents all residents of the Park.The Findhorn Foundation commissioned this study and worked with a steering group of residents and organisations within the Park called ‘DevCom’.A highly intensive consultation process took place to develop this study.A lack of coherent communication across the Park highlighted challenges associated with there being no over-arching body or collaborative decision-making mechanisms in place to effectively enact change in the Park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establishment of an over-arching, democratically elected group or alternative governance structure for collaborative decision-making.Formulation of a clear set of values and principles that will guide governance and decision-making.Note: There are ongoing discussions taking place to establish an overarching governing body for the Park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">None identified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A timeline outlining timescales for collaborative decision-making systems should be set out and put in place.
Future of the Holiday Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The existing Holiday Park, operated by New Findhorn Directions (NFD), is an important revenue generator for FF and associated businesses, while also providing employment and business opportunities for the wider CommunityIt is popular and fully booked during peak tourist seasons.The Holiday Park experiences flooding issues during heavy rainfall.The existing 2 No. chalets are popular with a growing demand for pods.There is the opportunity to provide more ‘glamping’ type chalets or pods across the site and to improve the landscape to align with the Ecovillage and landscape character of the area.The area of the north of the Holiday Park is owned by Cullerne Farm. It offers the potential to be a Holiday Park expansion area if combined with other uses/housing and flood adaptation measures.If it is required, a second vehicular entrance would help re-direct Holiday Park traffic from the rest of the Park site	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Alignment with Moray Council policy and flood risk management along with the forthcoming Local Development Plan ambitions.Positive ongoing discussions with adjacent landowner Ed Bichan and Moray Council Transport Engineers to establish the technical viability of a secondary entrance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Moray Council Flooding Policy does not support development with flood risk areas. An innovative flood adaptive approach and design required for areas with surface flood risk.Resistance locally to the expansion of the Park into neighbouring sites.The viability of a secondary entrance and parking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Meeting with Moray Council Flood Risk TeamPotential focused design of the Holiday Park and expansion linked to Flood Adaptive and Mitigation Measures.

Dependencies Overview (Continued 2)

Critical Factors	Key issues	Dependent on	Competing factors	Potential next steps
'Greening' of the Runway	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The existing Runway is a legacy of the previous airfield site.It sits centrally to the Park and dominates the character of the Park. It is a well used thoroughfare for cars, bikes and pedestrians alike. It is fully tarmacked and fully lined with car parking either side.The runway acts as the main vehicular route connecting the various housing settlements and facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The provision of sufficient parking elsewhere for overall Park needs.Consensus across the Park that parking and access are constraints that need to be addressed.Agreement on extent of Runway to be landscaped.Location of facilities and character of Central Area.The limiting and enforcing of visitor parking in separate parking areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Parking provision will be reduced and access to the Runway and Entrance Area will be affected. This will therefore require wider review and provision of parking across the Ecovillage Park in other areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop RIBA Concept Stage 2 landscape design for the Runway taking parking and access into consideration.
Respect for nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community was founded on principles of co-creation with the intelligence of nature, and respect for nature is intrinsically tied to spiritual beliefs for many in the Park.The Park is bounded by Findhorn Bay, woodlands and dunelands.There are areas of woodland designated by the National Forest Inventory within the Park.Equally there are areas that are not specifically biodiverse and others dominated by tarmac and hard landscaping eg. the entrance, Holiday Park and Runway.A tree survey and Phase 1 Habitat Survey were carried out as part of the study.Held a Housing and Ecology Workshop as part of the development of the study.Attunements to the land were carried out in the Park during the course of the study to inform the direction of the strategy around Co-Creation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consensus across the Park on treatment of habitat corridors, areas of biodiversity and areas for future development and retention.Further involvement of landscape architect and ecologist going forward.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lack of consensus across the Park around treatment of woodland/biodiverse areas.Need for new, dense, affordable housing on potential development of sites in woodland areas such as Pineridge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Additional surveys and studies across the Park to inform specific areas of work as requiredEstablishment of a working group to formulate a clear set of values, guidance and principles around ecology and respect for nature at the Park.

4.2 Timeline

The timeline below charts the key dates and activities leading up to the adoption of Moray Council’s 2027 Local Development Plan.



4.3 Next Steps

This Strategic Framework has set out some key priorities and actions to help create a sustainable future for the Park. This work forms the beginning of a journey of many steps over time. The previous Critical Factors Table identified some initial key actions towards realising this. These are summarised below.

- Establish a working group to formulate an overarching and clear set of **values, guidance and principles around ecology** and respect for nature at the Park.
- Provide ongoing community engagement to ensure that the developing Local Place Plan and Strategic Framework align with one another.
- Develop RIBA Concept Stage 2 landscape design taking parking and access into consideration.
- Set out a **timeline** outlining target dates for collaborative decision-making systems, and put this in place.
- Hold a series of future **meetings with Moray Council** to present the Strategic Framework, discuss timelines/LDP process and specific issues arising from this study.
- Commission **additional surveys, designs and investigations** around some key areas including transportation/potential secondary access requirements, flood adaptation, Housing Needs and Demands and potential sites for development over time.
- Progress focused **design and technical study of the Holiday Park** and potential expansion linked to Flood Adaptive and Mitigation Measures.
- Continue discussions with adjacent landowners.



Engaging, Listening & Responding

at the Park Ecovillage Findhorn
Findhorn Foundation

December 2023

COLLECTIVE
ARCHITECTURE

This supporting document explores the engagement process undertaken throughout the Strategic Framework project, including information on the approaches and aims for consultation, presentation content, and methods of recording and feeding back the input of consultees.

A ENGAGING, LISTENING AND RESPONDING

- A1 Background to engagement process
- A2 Timeline of Events
- A3 Strategy for Engagement
- A4 Place Standard Tool- Themes for discussion
- A5 Event 1- Tell us About The Park Ecovillage
- A6 Event 2- Shape the Strategy for The Park Ecovillage
- A7 Event 3- Stakeholder surgeries
- A8 Event 4- Transport & Access workshop
- A9 Call for Ideas and change from Local Place Plan
- A10 Event 5- Housing & Ecology workshop

A1 Background to Engagement Process

The Park Ecovillage Findhorn community is an engaged group of residents, who care deeply about their living environment and are enthusiastic to discuss, debate, and put forward ideas for its future. The strategy for engagement, which evolved throughout the course of the project, in association with the Park Working Group called DevCom, sought to understand the needs and wishes of the Park community and client team.

It was felt essential to the success of the project that the work harnessed the energy and expertise of the local population of the Park, which was demonstrated from the outset of the first event. It was understood that in such a unique and specific cultural and historic context as a spiritual eco-community, the people who had lived within it-- perhaps for multiple generations -- could provide a valuable source of insight and a unique perspective on the challenges they faced, as well as the things that were important to them that required protection and enhancement in the strategy.

A series of engagement events comprising a variety of formats (workshops, presentations, Q&A sessions and one-to-one meetings) provided opportunities for the community to share their experiences, listen to ideas, and feed into the strategy in a collaborative, open environment. Relevant internal and external stakeholders were also consulted with and engaged, including neighbouring landowners and Moray Council, to ensure a holistic approach to strategising and formulating ideas that would benefit not only the Park and its inhabitants, but the whole peninsula.

The process of engagement itself was a intense and insightful one. It revealed a number of existing logistical issues facing the Park, namely a lack of coherence and clarity surrounding decision-making processes and governance structures, which are now beginning to be addressed through the creation of a 20-member Governance Working Group within the Park. This had initially led to some confusion and concerns surrounding the design team's remit, scope, and brief for the work, but this situation was improved somewhat by consistent and considerable two-way dialogue with community members at in-person events and via feedback forms and newsletters. The content of the events included:



Community consultations held at Universal Hall on the Park

A2 Timeline of events

Monday 11th January 2023: Public event

Tell us about The Park Ecovillage Findhorn - Universal Hall, The Park - 11am-1pm and 3pm-7pm

The opening event of the engagement programme invited the community to tell us about the Park Ecovillage Findhorn - what they liked about living there, what they thought could be better, their ideas, visions, concerns and stories. Baseline information was displayed on presentation boards, which laid out the historic, physical and cultural contexts of the Park as a means to demonstrate our current understanding of the place and invite dialogue around existing spaces and their potential futures.

Saturday 22nd April 2023: Public event

Shape the Strategy for The Park Ecovillage - Universal Hall, The Park - 9.30am-12pm and 1.30pm-3.30pm

This event allowed the design team to test strategic ideas with the community, presenting a series of boards with 'potential scenarios' for housing, landscaping, movement & transport strategies and amenities at various locations within the Park. Consultees were invited to share their thoughts on these 'scenarios,' which acted as prompts to encourage debate, discussion and the sharing of alternative visions for the future.

Sunday 23 April 2023: Stakeholder surgeries

Shape the Strategy for The Park Ecovillage - Skylab, The Park - 9am-1pm

A 'surgery' for internal stakeholders was held the day following the community consultation, where stakeholders affiliated directly with the Park Ecovillage were invited to sign up for half-hour 1-on-1 meetings with the design team to discuss the same spatial strategies and design principles as the community, giving their unique perspectives and insights into the scenarios as representatives of their respective organisations.

Monday 15th May 2023: Workshop

Transport and Access Workshop - Universal Hall, The Park - 6.30pm-8.30pm

This event was proposed following the design team's experience of the 22nd-23rd April community consultation events and the feedback submitted in subsequent weeks; it was felt that, with regards to transport and access in particular, the community had a wide range of diverse opinions which were often in stark conflict with one another, and that a session to 'mythbust' and answer questions would be beneficial. The event took the form of an hour-long presentation led by Mark Rinkus of CTP, followed by a Q&A session.

Monday 31st July 2023: Milestone

Moray Council 'Call for Ideas' submission deadline (rescheduled from 30th June)

As part of their programme for the preparation of a new Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and Local Development Plan (LDP) for 2027, Moray Council put out a 'Call for Ideas' to allow local communities to input their ideas 'to help shape Moray as a whole...and your place (locally)'. The design and client teams agreed to use this submission date to submit in-progress ideas for future development scenarios, however this caused concern in the community that final proposals were being submitted without proper consultation. The deadline was pushed back to 31st July partially as a result of this.

Saturday 12th August 2023: Workshop

Housing and Ecology workshop - Universal Hall, the Park - 10.30am-1pm and 2pm-4.30pm

This workshop was added to the schedule of events as a response to the feedback from the community following previous consultation events and the Call for Ideas submission, which revealed concerns around proposals for housing and its potential effect on nature and ecology. A series of speakers gave presentations between 10.30am-1pm, including Collective Architecture, and in the afternoon the design team answered questions and listened to the concerns of community members in the Hall.

A3 Strategy for Engagement

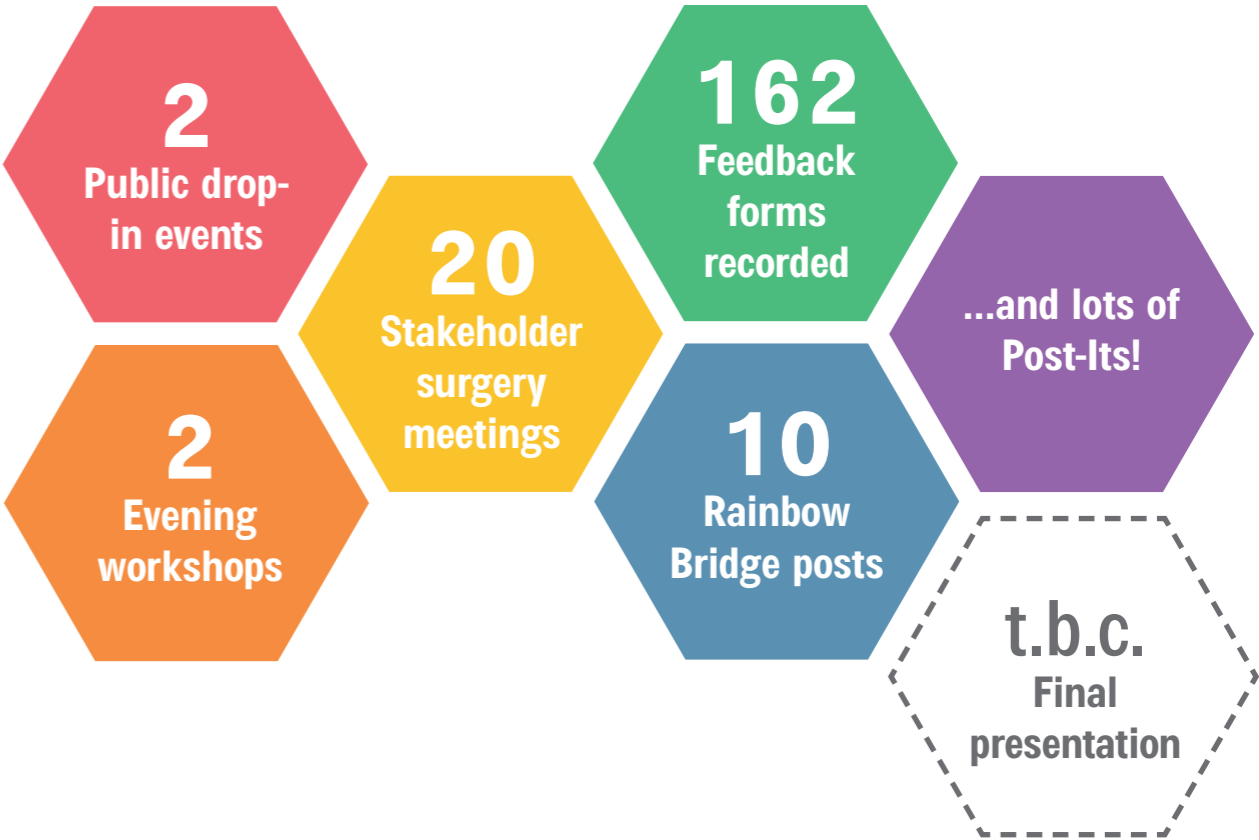
The community engagement events were very well attended. Feedback was invited at each stage and via a number of channels, be that on the day on physical feedback forms or post-its, or after the event via Google Forms submissions. Adverts for events and feedback forms were sent out via the local newsletter Rainbow Bridge

The content of the events included:

- Contextualisation for the Strategic Framework project with regards to the Findhorn Foundation’s aims and ambitions, the timeline for the upcoming Moray Local Development Plan 2027, and the wider issues of climate emergency and housing affordability etc as outlined in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)
- Presentation of the site’s historic, geographical, ecological, organisational, planning and policy contexts, with invitations to the community to provide additional detail or correct any misunderstandings in the findings
- Invitations and prompts to the community and internal stakeholders to identify challenges/ constraints and opportunities/potential for the future of the Park Ecovillage
- Presentation of the strategic vision and principles (formulated by the design and client teams) which would guide the strategy work, and the relevant policy documents they drew from and adhered to
- Presentation of early stage, high-level strategic ideas in the form of ‘Potential Scenarios,’ which aimed to ‘test’ ideas with stakeholders and community members before more in-depth proposals were shaped
- Presentation of ‘precedents for potential future housing’ which aimed to ‘test’ housing typologies with residents and tease out both conscious and sub-conscious attitudes to heights, densities, materials, ecology, amenity and form.
- Presentations on specific points of contention and dispute which were revealed in community and stakeholder feedback, including transport/ movement strategies and housing vs. ecology, which aimed to ‘myth-bust,’ further explain consultants’ thinking, and answer concerns and questions from the audience via live Q&A sessions.

Throughout the engagement process:

- The design team worked with Findhorn Foundation and the Development Committee (DevCom) to ensure events were widely advertised in advance, using local channels to spread the word including the local newsletter Rainbow Bridge and posters and flyers with QR codes posted around the Park
- Relevant stakeholders were identified and invited to 1-to-1 meetings with the consultant team to discuss ideas and provide expertise and insight
- Extensive written feedback received after each event was collated and summarised to create ‘Feedback Newsletters,’ which were distributed out to the community via the same channels and to stakeholders via email
- The Celebrating One Incredible Family (COIF) website, already established within the community, was used to upload the information presented at each event and the Feedback Newsletters for viewers to read through at their own leisure
- All events took place over the afternoon and evening for weekdays or at the weekend to ensure maximum chances for engagement, at an accessible venue within the Park known to the community (Universal Hall)
- Physical feedback forms were made available alongside QR codes and URLs for online feedback forms, to ensure less tech-savvy attendees could still contribute their thoughts and feedback
- Members of Collective Architecture, the Findhorn Foundation, various members of Devcom and, when necessary, Narro and Connected Transport Planning were on hand to answer questions and provide explanations at the events
- Additional events were added at later dates in response to the feedback received in order to answer particular queries and address concerns.



Second consultation event held at Universal Hall on the Park

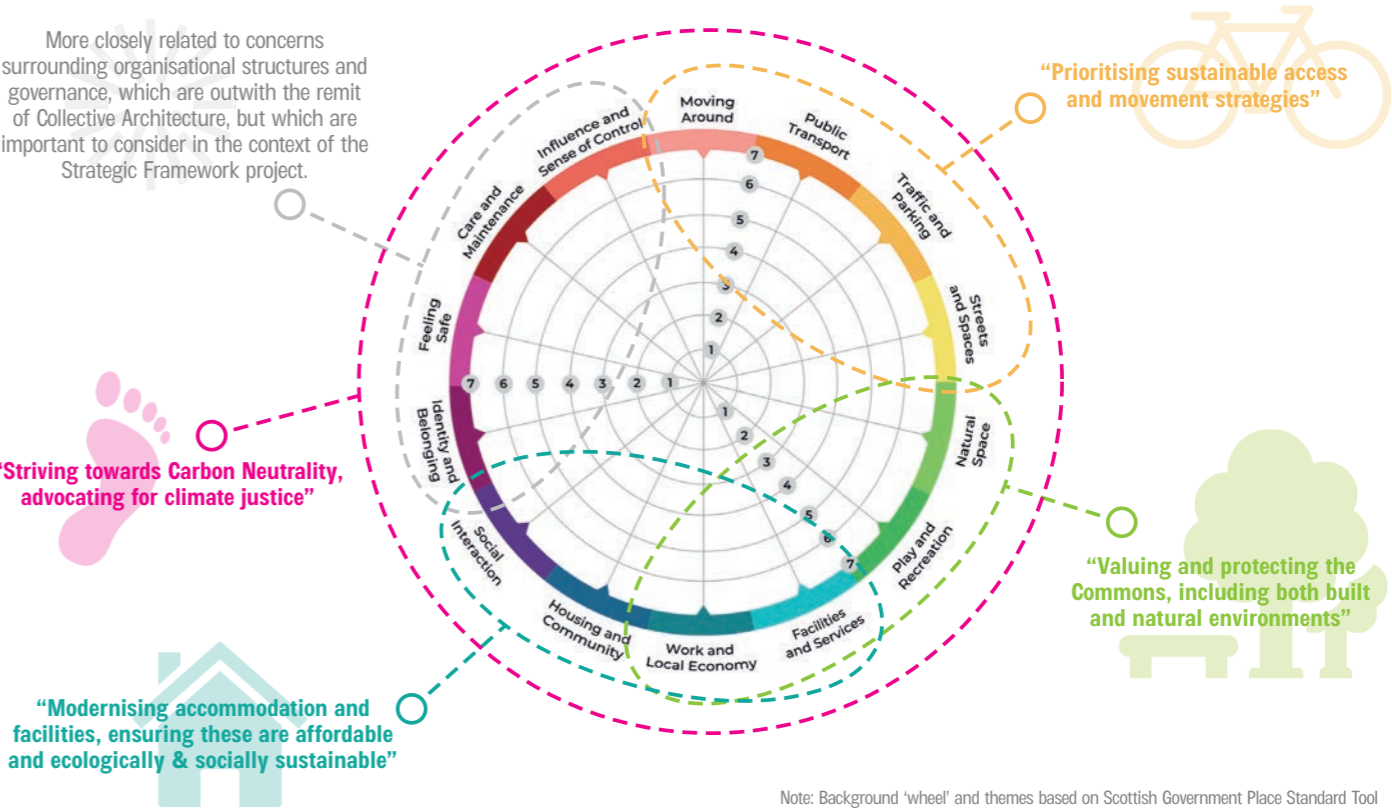
A4 Place Standard Tool - Themes for discussion

The Place Standard Tool -- developed by Architecture & Design Scotland, NHS Health Scotland and the Scottish Government -- provides a framework to structure conversations with communities and stakeholders about the places they live in, presenting both physical and social aspects of place grouped in themes for discussion.

Following our baseline information gathering at the project outset and after harvesting local knowledge and insight from community members at the first consultation event, we utilised the 14 themes of the Place Standard Tool, condensing and categorising them into four ‘Overarching Design Principles’ for the Strategic Framework project. These were described as ‘actionable principles to guide the Strategic Framework and achieve the vision set out in the Purpose Statement’ [see Chapter 4 of the Main Report], and were presented as a series of criteria to ‘test’ the success of the ideas put forward by the design team.

The principles were: ‘Prioritising sustainable access and movement strategies;’ ‘Valuing and protecting the Commons, including both built and natural environments;’ ‘Modernising accommodation and facilities, ensuring these are affordable and ecologically and socially sustainable,’ and ‘Striving towards Carbon Neutrality, advocating for climate justice.’

A fifth category of concern was identified as below (in grey) which would speak to the governance and organisational structures existing within the Park; these were identified as issues which were somewhat outwith the remit of the design team to solve, but which required our consideration and reflection throughout the Strategic Framework process.



‘Overarching Design Principles’ graphic demonstrating to consultees how the Strategic Framework aligns with the Place Standard Tool

A5 Event 1 - Tell us About the Park Ecovillage Findhorn

This event was held at Universal Hall on Monday 11th January 2023 between 11am-1pm and 3pm-7pm. The event was attended by Collective Architecture, Narro Associates, the Findhorn Foundation and members of the Development Committee at the Park (DevCom)

The opening event focused on what makes the Park Ecovillage special in the eyes of its community, and asked residents to reflect on the current challenges faced as well as opportunities for any future development. This helped to deepen the consultant team’s knowledge of the Park by drawing on the lived experiences of those who call it home, and guided the principles for taking forward the Strategic Framework through the establishment of common goals and principles.

Very little was presented in the way of detail of future proposals; the focus was primarily on understanding how the local community felt about the Park Ecovillage and to gather insight (and potential corrections) on the ‘baseline’ information the team were displaying. This allowed the design and client teams to test and build an understanding of issues affecting the Park at present from a local perspective, and focused on a contextual analysis of the site, its history, site constraints and opportunities.

The design team provided a series of display boards outlining the initial findings during ‘baselining’ work, inviting consultees to use post-its to share information about their favourite spaces, recent ‘goings-on’ at the Park, and any potential for ‘change, connection and adaptation’ that they thought valuable to share. This first event focused on listening and understanding, eventually leading to the production of a ‘Purpose Statement,’ which outlined the vision and principles which should underpin the development of the strategy.

On feedback forms, the team asked all respondents some demographic questions (age, where they live, how long they’ve lived at the Park) and the below enquiries - forms could be filled out by hand or online via a link to a Google Form:

“ What are 3 things you like about the Park? ”

“ What are 3 things you don’t like/think could be improved at the Park? ”

“ If you could change one thing about the Park, what would it be? ”

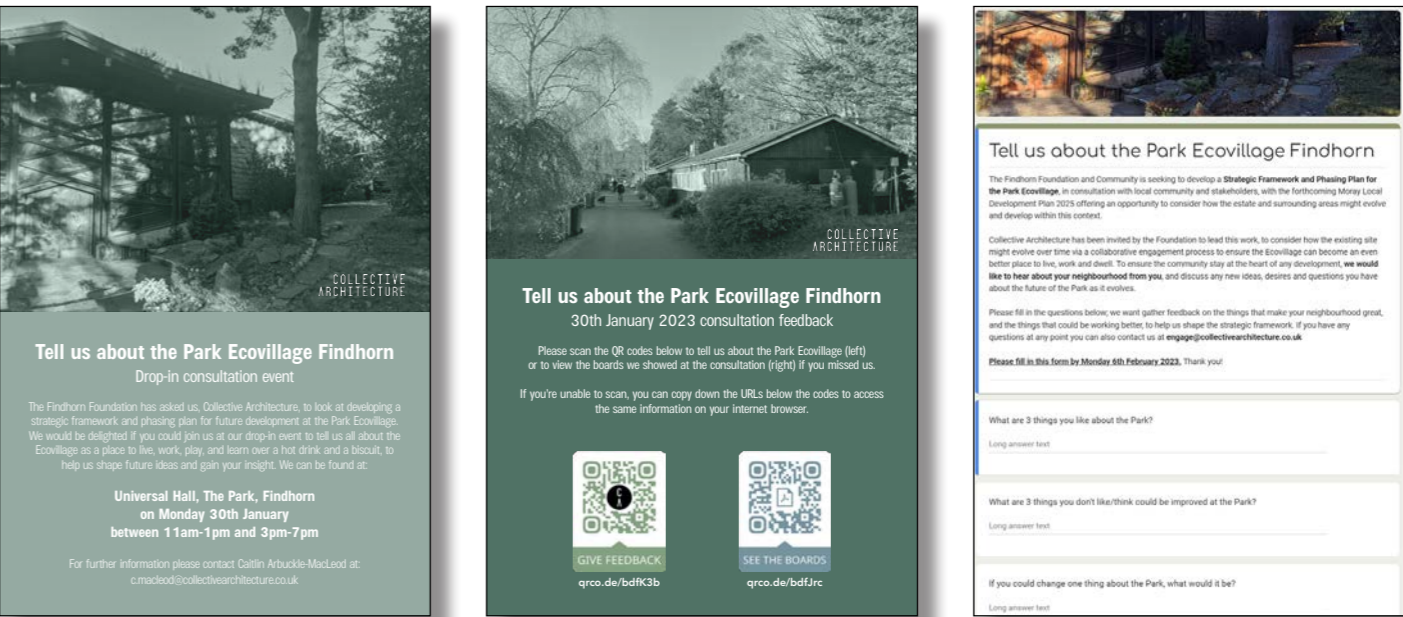
“ On the scale [1-10], can you tell us how close you think the Park is to being the best it can be? ”

64 feedback forms were received from an even higher number of attendees on the day. Key observations from the event included the following:

- 74% of respondents were over 55 years old, with 22.9% of these being over 75 years old
- Most respondents lived within the Park
- Most respondents moved around and outwith the Park by bike or on foot, rather than by car
- Respondents highlighted the plentiful green spaces/variety of nature, the sense of ‘community’, and the spiritual focus/ethos of the Park as the key things they liked about the area
- Respondents highlighted current management of traffic/parking, the lack of a new community centre, and the lack of affordable housing as the key things they disliked or thought could be improved at the Park
- A general dissatisfaction towards the current Park governance structure was expressed.

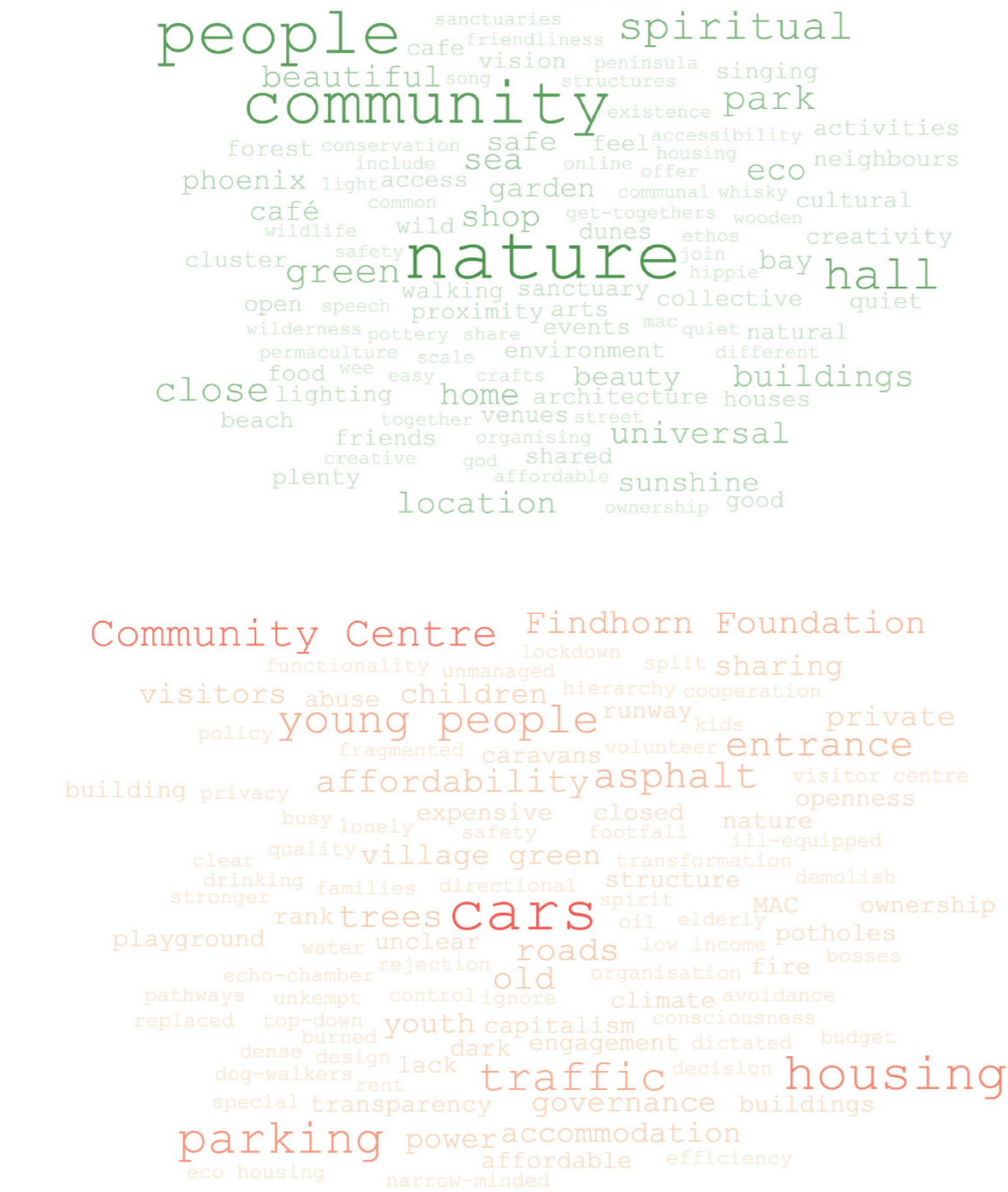
Verbal feedback received by the design team on the day aligned closely with the written responses. It was noted that many residents, especially in older age groups, preferred to fill out physical rather than digital feedback forms, or to respond verbally - more design team members attended subsequent events to provide attendees with more opportunities to speak directly with someone on the team.

Feedback was collated, organised into a series of themes and summarised in a ‘Feedback newsletter,’ a link to which was included in the Park community’s own newsletter, Rainbow Bridge, along with the boards which were presented on the day. Extracts from promotional materials/adverts, presentation boards and newsletters can be viewed below and overleaf. All boards and the entire feedback newsletter can be viewed in the remaining Appendix.

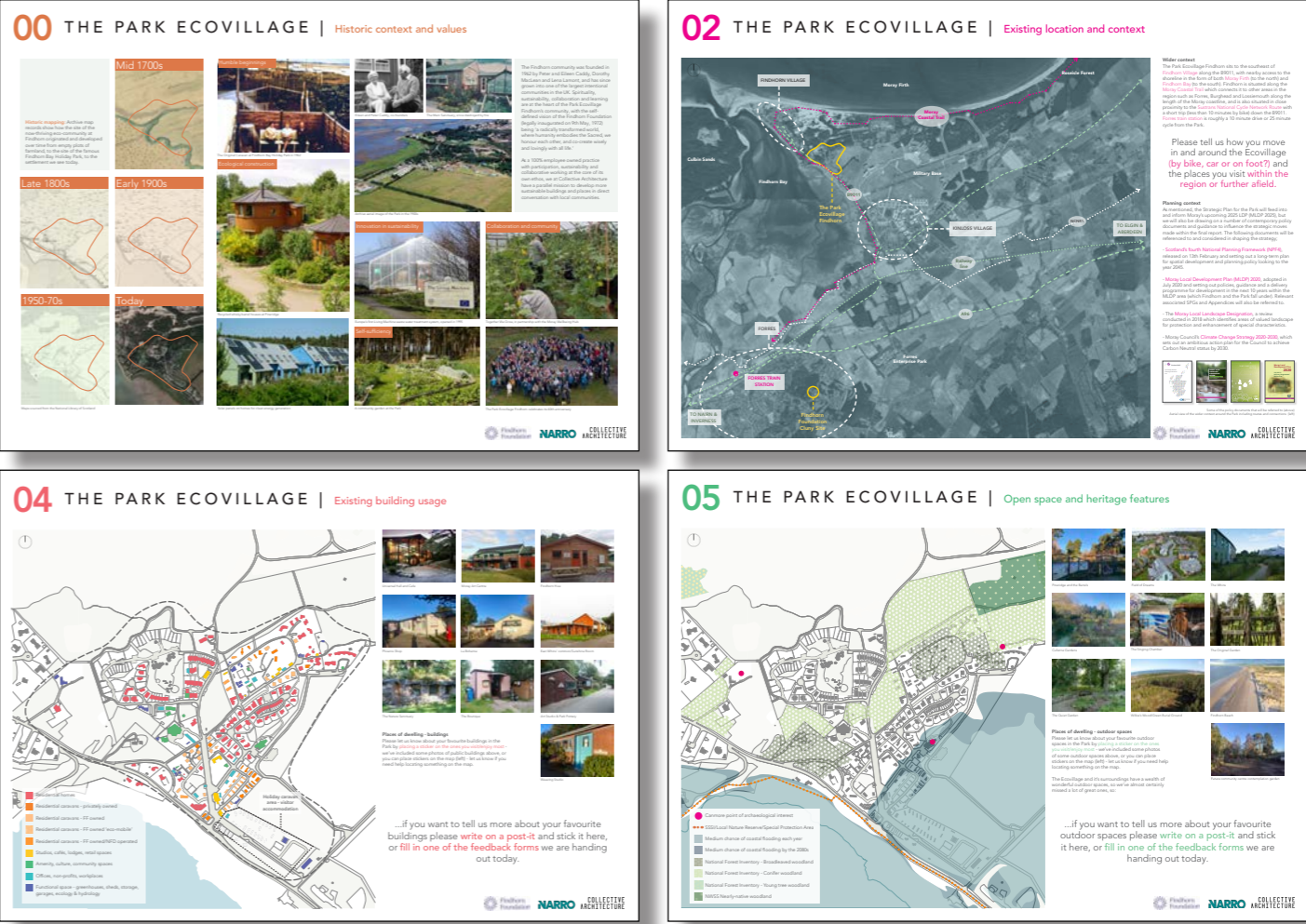


From left to right: event poster, feedback submission poster and extract of Google feedback form

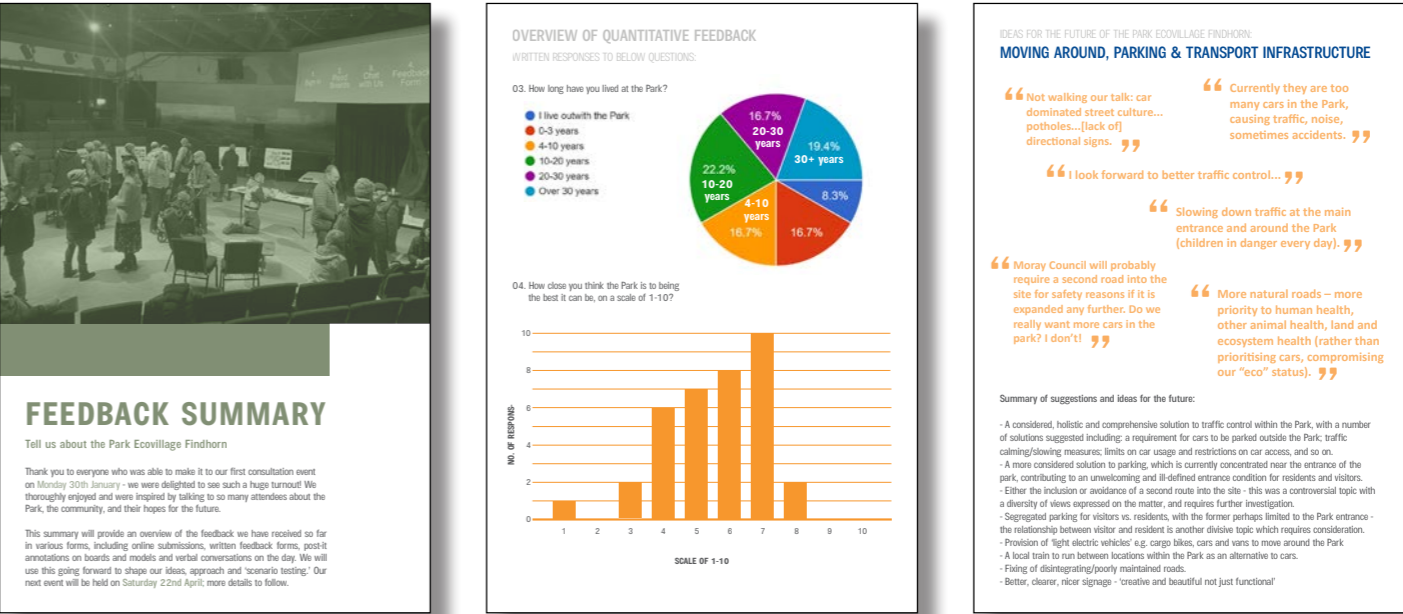
A5 Event 1 - Tell us About the Park Ecovillage Findhorn



Word clouds revealing what respondents liked (green) and disliked/thought could be better (red) at the Park



Sample of boards shown at the first event, ‘Tell us About the Park Ecovillage Findhorn’



Extract of pages from the first event’s Feedback Summary newsletter

A6 Event 2 - Shape the Strategy for the Park Ecovillage Findhorn

This community event was held at Universal Hall on Monday 22nd April 2023 between 9.30am-12pm and 1.30pm-3.30pm and attended by Collective Architecture, Connected Transport Planning, the Findhorn Foundation and members of DevCom.

The second event in the engagement programme was set sometime after the first, to allow a thorough digestion of feedback comments following the initial event (which were substantial in volume) and time to respond to these through design propositions. The architects were conscious that this would mark the first time the community would be shown anything ‘propositional’ from the design team, and as such kept the ideas very broad, high-level and open to dialogue.

This involved putting forward a ‘Purpose Statement’, developed with DevCom, and a series of ‘Overarching Design Principles’ in the first board. The latter was based on the themes included within the Place Standard Tool and included four categories to guide discussions with consultees on the day (shown overleaf). The team used this first board of ‘Purpose & Principles’ to establish a visionary foundation on which to build the subsequent boards’ more place-based, spatial content, which was presented in the form of ‘strategic spatial priorities’ and ‘potential scenarios’ for development. Any ideas put forward were very strategic and ‘high level’ to communicate to both community and stakeholders that these were initial responses to the studies and the feedback received which were open to further shaping, rather than concrete ‘proposals.’

The presentation boards demonstrated the following:

- A ‘Purpose Statement,’ created in collaboration with the client team, as an ‘ethos to guide and to be expressed through’ the work
- ‘Overarching Design Principles’ which were actionable aims for the project in line with the Purpose Statement
- ‘Strategic Spatial Priorities’ which presented some broad approaches to strategic interventions at

- various locations across the Park, to be refined and elaborated upon in future work as necessary
- Further site analysis of the existing conditions at the Park, developed upon and worked into following knowledge gathered from consultees and the client team after the last event
 - ‘Potentials for Change’ at key locations across the Park, namely the Central Area and Pineridge, which suggested a number of ‘Potential Scenarios’ for future safeguarding, development or siting of buildings and spaces, intended to spark discussion and invite feedback from the attendees
 - Precedents for the above scenarios and for future potential housing alongside a green and red sticker system for voting (‘I like this’ or ‘I don’t like this’ respectively), which was intended to measure gut reactions and, to some extent, subconscious feelings towards certain images within the community, which allowed us to gather some interesting insights into priorities and concerns

Ninety-eight feedback forms were received from the community following the event. A number of key observations were pulled from this feedback included the following:

- A clear concern was expressed regarding the potential costs of the ideas put forward, who would make decisions on them, and who would maintain new development spaces in the future.
- A number of respondents were also concerned about the process by which the Strategic Framework project was brought about, with calls for greater transparency around Collective and the design team’s brief.
- Some respondents questioned whether there was great enough community consensus or clarity on what the Park Ecovillage ‘is’ (i.e. its identity, visions

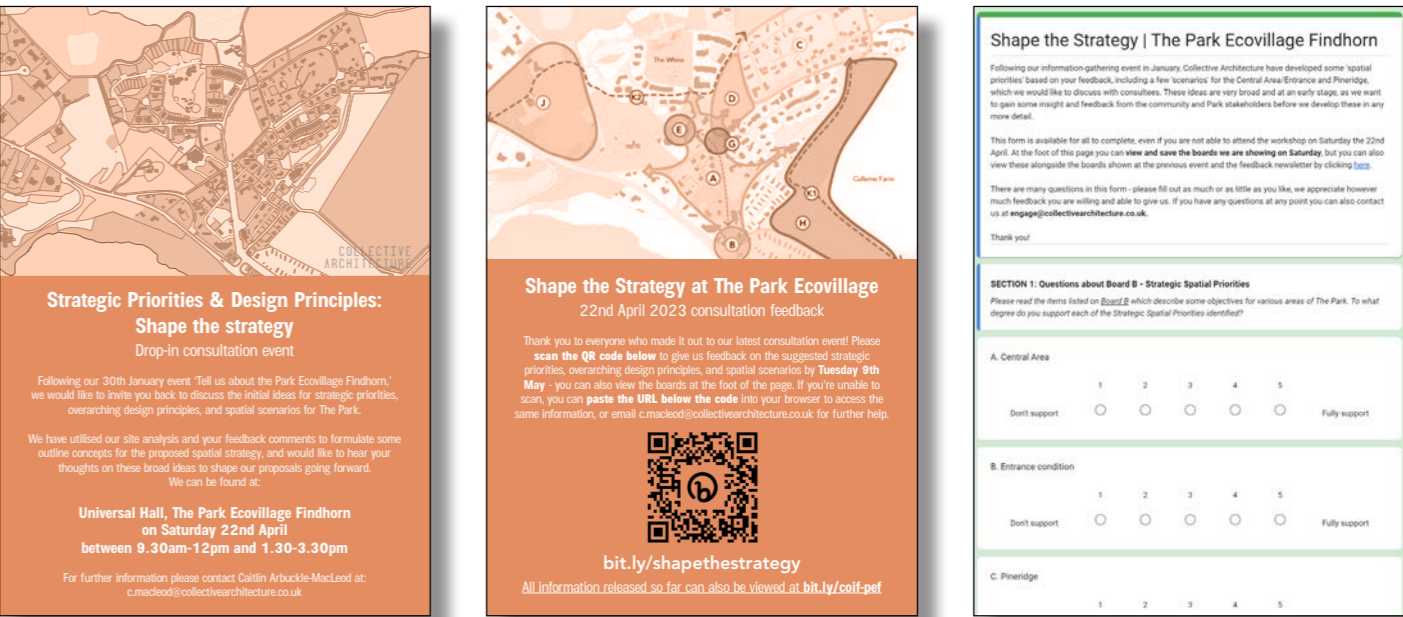
“ I’m very pleased with this second information round of the Park Plan. It has incorporated the input of our community. It presents well-considered, realistic and inspiring options ”

“ This is a mix of good and sensitive ideas with others that feel very disconnected from the soul of our place ”

“ How will decisions about resulting plans be made? Complexity of ownership and responsibility for land and buildings ”

- and ambitions for the future) for there to be talks of expansion and increased capacity at this time.
- Many respondents expressed concern that potential future expansion of the Park would result in a significant change in character, particularly around quiet wooded areas such as Pineridge.
 - There was general support for or suggestions to utilise self-build models, starter homes, shared equity schemes, low cost land for purchase etc. to attract young people and families to the Park.
 - Scenarios for the Central Area and Entrance (greening the Runway, re-building the Community Centre, creating a more welcoming entrance condition) were generally supported.
 - Scenarios put forward for Diamond Wood and Pineridge, raised alarm for many community members who expressed serious concerns regarding development in these areas and potential resulting loss of biodiversity and character.
 - Residents were rather divided on proposals for

- a second entrance into the Park, with a number of people expressing their belief that a second entrance was not needed at all. It seemed that, if necessary, the more popular choice would be an entrance through Cullerne Farm rather than Cullerne Gardens.
- There was general support for ‘superseding the car’ and providing networks of green, pedestrianised routes throughout the Park, but with several caveats from respondents that Pineridge in particular is already low in traffic and has several informal walking routes already, with little need for further intervention in this area
 - The option to have the Community Centre rebuilt on its original site seemed to be most popular, but a suggestion to build it next to the Universal Hall (replacing the current Skylab building) also received a considerable number of votes. The option of Diamond Wood received fewest votes.



From left to right: event poster, feedback submission poster and online feedback form for the second event

A7 Event 3 - Stakeholder surgeries

The stakeholder events held at Skylab took place the day following the community event (for people and organisations within the Park) and on the 15th & 16th May (for external bodies), and offered intensive 1-on-1 meeting slots for each consultee on particular relevant issues.

The same content was shown to the stakeholders as to the community, but discussions were focused on each stakeholder’s particular area of knowledge, expertise, future plans and/or concerns.

From this feedback we gained insight into the detail of specific issues, which is reflected in the feedback summary newsletter (comprising both community and stakeholder feedback together).

Consulted stakeholders are detailed opposite.

SHAPE THE STRATEGY | The Park Ecovillage Findhorn Strategic Framework: Park Stakeholders

To be filled out by Collective Architecture representative during one-to-one meeting

Consultee name:	
Organisation:	
Contact Details:	

Issues Raised:

A: (E.g. EV charging points)	(Specific comments here e.g. 'more housing means we need to consider greater provision of EV charging at the Park')
B:	
C:	
D:	
E:	
F:	
G:	

Park-based stakeholders

Just Transitions team

Findhorn Wind Park

East Whins co-housing

Park Emergency Resilience Plan

Soillse co-housing

Ekopia Social Investments Limited

Mobile Homeowners Group

Phoenix Community Stores

Moray Art Centre

Nature’s Voice

Titleholders Association

Caring Community Circle

Renters’ Group

External stakeholders

Tom Rayment (Arboreal Architecture)

Findhorn Innovation Research & Education

Park Planning Group

Bichan Family (Cullerne Farm)

New Findhorn Directions (Holiday Park)

Cllr Draeyk van der Horn

Scottish Fire & Rescue Service

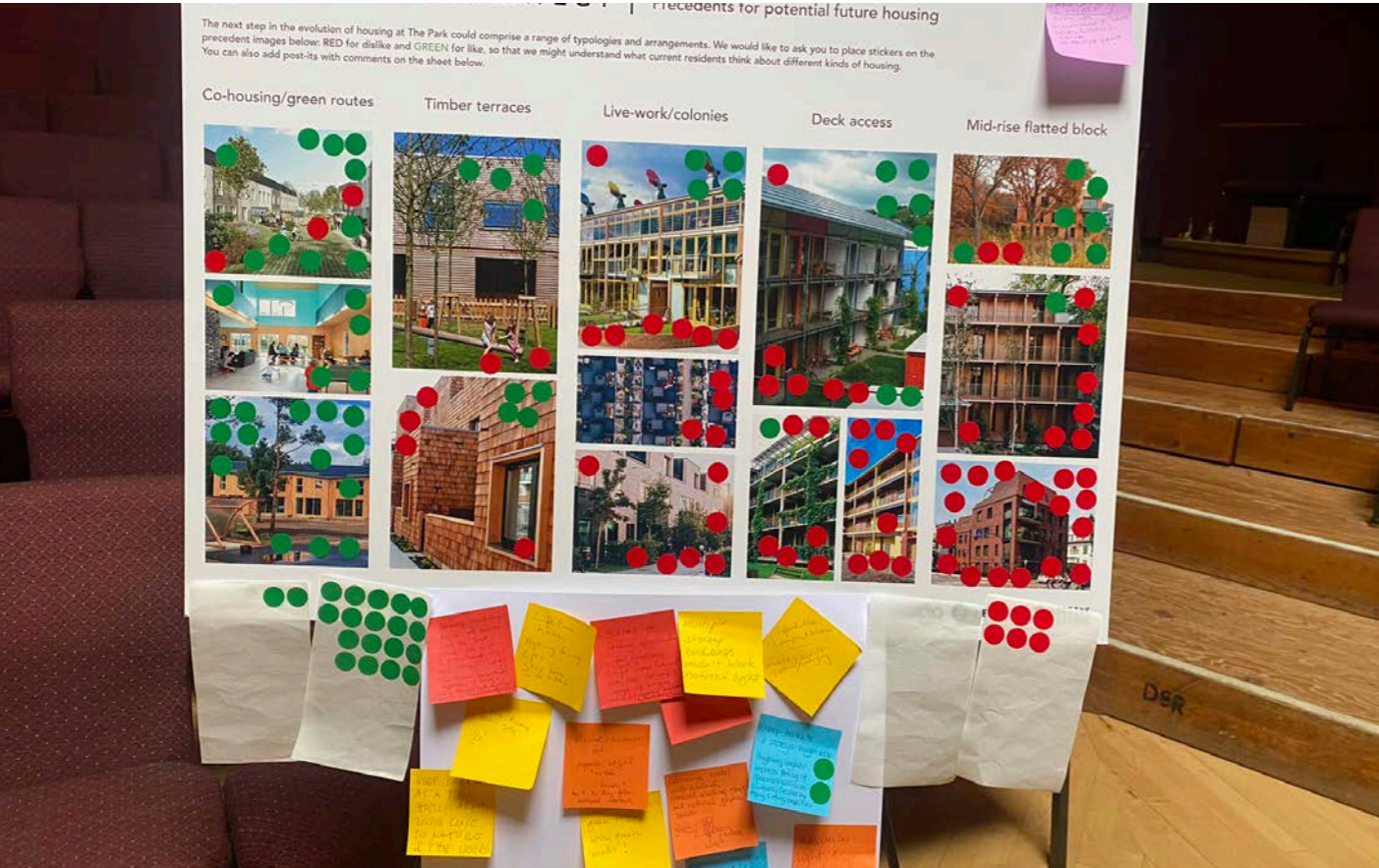
Moray Council (Strategic Planning & Transport)

The Findhorn Village Conservation Company

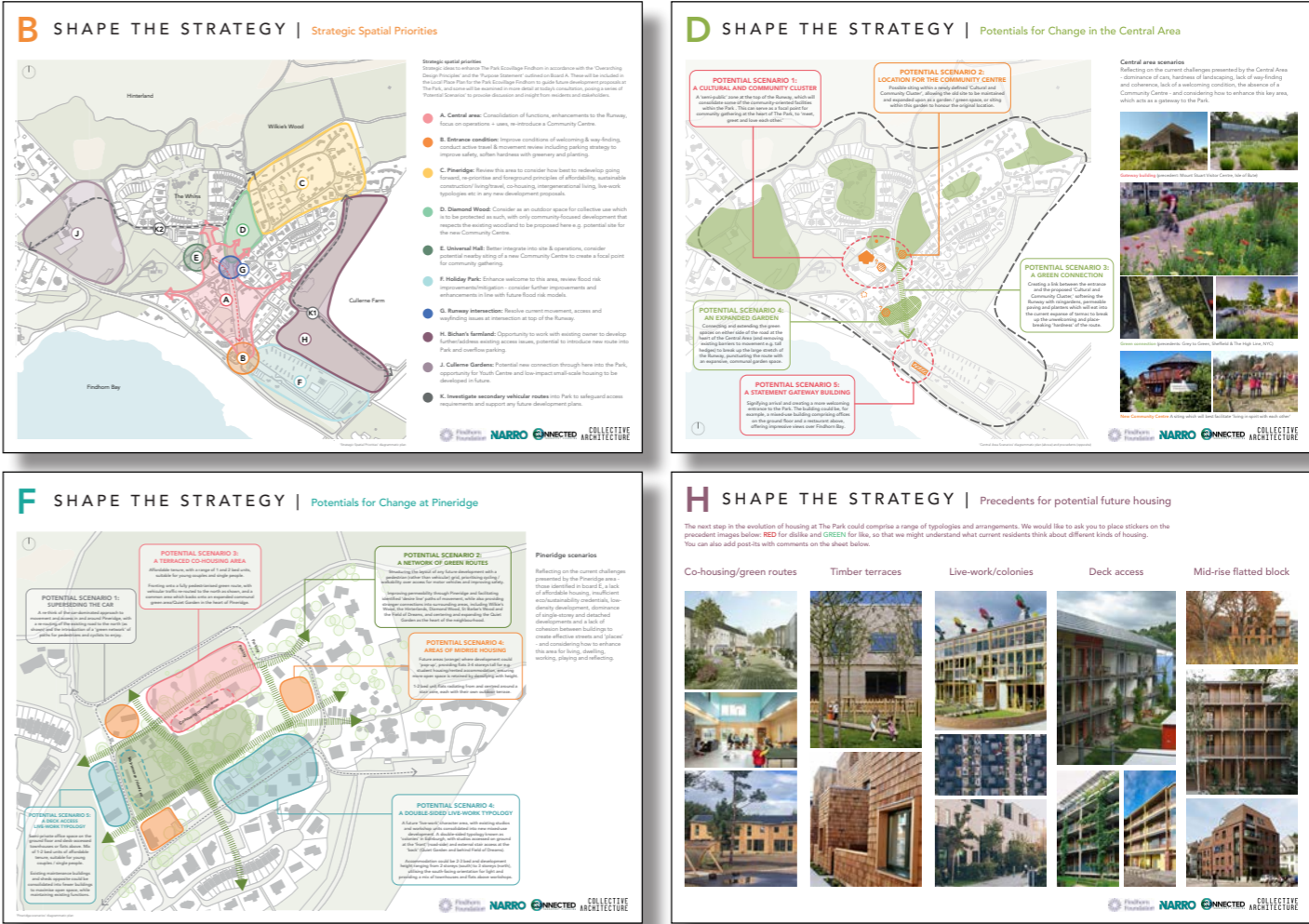
Findhorn & Kinloss Community Council

Kinloss Barracks (Ministry of Defence)

A7 - Boards and newsletters from community & stakeholder events



Responses to ‘typology-testing’ exercise, testing immediate reactions to images of different housing styles, densities and settings



Sample of boards shown at Event 1- Tell us About the Park Ecovillage Findhorn

Lets talk about...

Striving towards Carbon Neutrality, advocating for climate justice

Lets talk about...

Prioritising sustainable access and movement strategies

Lets talk about...

Valuing and protecting the Commons
including both built and natural environments

Lets talk about...

Modernising accommodation and facilities
ensuring these are affordable and ecologically & socially sustainable

Themes derived from the Place Standard tool (see section 2.3) which helped to structure and categorise round-table discussions

FEEDBACK SUMMARY
‘Shape the Strategy for the Park Ecovillage Findhorn’ events

Thank you to everyone who was able to make it to our second consultation event on Saturday 22nd April and the Transport and Access workshop on Monday 15th May. Both events were crucial in shaping our understanding of the Park community’s wants, needs, priorities and concerns in relation to the ‘scenarios’ we presented for the potential future of the Park Ecovillage. We received an enormous volume of feedback during and after the event, and want to sincerely thank everyone for giving their time to contributing to this process.

As with the previous Feedback Summary, this document provides an overview of the feedback we have received, in various forms including via email, written and online forms and verbal conversation. We have attempted to capture a range of views and give insight into the themes and concerns that were most commonly raised, which we will take into account in our work going forward. For clarity on the project scopes, timescales and outcomes, please visit: bit.ly/Findhorn_LP

RESPONSES, IDEAS AND CONCERNS SURROUNDING: DEMOGRAPHICS, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

There seems to be an assumption that we will expand, but not why and to what end? What sort of community do we want? What demographic are we aiming for? That is the debate we need to have first.

Family/kids hang out and meet space – more playgrounds?

I prefer affordable housing being completely integrated in all housing clusters – rather than a separate development, is everywhere.

The best thing would be to offer the land up for some sort of free/low cost. We need young people here.

Not enough care flats here for the current population... need provision for care and independence, not just affordability.

Prioritising disabled access and mobility. We are not a very diverse community when it comes to disability and by extension we risk missing out on those points of view and needs.

Summary of our findings:

- A clear concern around the aging population at the Park, and the lack of affordability or resources available to younger people. Some common and/or important refrains include:
 - The need for ‘elder care housing’ / a care home / assisted living accommodation;
 - The need for affordable housing for ‘young people and people with low means’;
 - Suggestions to utilise self-build models, starter homes, shared equity schemes, low cost land for purchase etc. to attract young people and families;
 - The need to not only consider housing but also work opportunities for young people, and
 - Suggestions for more play areas and provision for children.
- Calls to improve access/facilities for disabled residents and visitors to the Park in general
- Concerns surrounding the expansion of the Park population following reviews of the presented scenarios, with objections raised to a large increase in population (due to the potential effect this would have on the character of the Park) and the lack of a community-wide conversation on this issue to date.

RESPONSES, IDEAS AND CONCERNS SURROUNDING: PHASING, MAINTENANCE AND FORWARD-PLANNING

Must be very low maintenance – likely to totally depend on volunteers in an ageing community.

Leave some other areas for the future, you can’t do all at the same time!

As I look at all the plans I am concerned about E!

If all these developments happen it could double the population of the Park. How can the community be a community of that size?

Is there a final vote for the residents on all this or is it just done by FF/committee?

The community now maintain Pineridge and most of the grounds. Will the lease for this land be transferred to them? What is the governance for all this?

How do any of these developments reflect in Hoco costs and general increase in charges around the Park? How can the Park remain an affordable place to live in?

Summary of our findings:

- A clear concern surrounding the potential costs of the scenarios put forward, with many questions on who was going to fund the work and how
- Questions on how decisions around the proposals would be made and who would make them, asking which ‘group’ would take responsibility for this.
- Concerns over the who and how of maintenance of new development and spaces in the future - ‘the community, Findhorn Foundation, or another body?’
- Questions raised on whether there was a clear understanding or consensus on what the Park Ecovillage is, what it stands for and what it is trying to achieve, with questions of capacity and potential expansion leading into this (see ‘Demographics, diversity and social justice’ section)
- A range of differing views on appropriate phasing priorities for potential future projects, but with many prioritising a new Community Centre and ‘affordable housing’ (though the ‘why, where and what’ of this was a less clear consensus)

Extract of pages from Event 2’s Feedback Summary newsletter

A8 Event 4 - Transport & Access workshop

This workshop was proposed as an additional engagement event after Collective Architecture and Connected Transport Planning consultants observed a particular lack of consensus within the community surrounding issues of transport, movement and access, with differing viewpoints being held and discussed at earlier consultation events. The workshop took place on Monday 15th May from 18.30 to 20.30 at Universal Hall.

The event aimed to address issues of a lack of consensus, clarity and understanding surrounding issues of transport, access and movement at the Park, which was thought to be a potential point of contention and a barrier to alignment with future proposed ideas on how the Park should evolve over the next decade or so. It offered the opportunity to build on the earlier 22nd April community event, recognising that more time to converse on these issues specifically would be beneficial for all, as both a consensus-building and myth-busting exercise.

The workshop, carried out by Connected Transport Planning’s Mark Rinkus with support from Collective Architecture, was given in a presentation format followed by an open Q&A and ‘live draw’ exercise, which gave community members the chance to ask the design team more detailed questions and to learn and discuss with one another in a group setting. The presentation was structured as follows:

An overview of the ‘Strategic Challenges’ including the potential need for a secondary vehicular access point into the Park; the logistics of how the Park is accessed by vehicles in future; the desire for improved safety; the mitigation of future flood risk; catering to an ageing population’s needs for transport; meeting the submission requirements of Moray Council’s upcoming 2025 LDP programme; working with the interests of other stakeholders; affordability, deliverability and maintenance; and addressing solutions to localised transport issues.

The Strategy’s ‘Kit of Parts,’ which suggested potential actions and aims to improve transport and access at the Park for the community to consider, such as prohibiting and restricting vehicular access to non-

essential vehicles; parking consolidation; agreement of driveable routes through the Park; the creation of a separate visitor car park; the minimisation of construction impacts; the enhanced roll-out of Moray Car Share; the addressing of issues relating to external transport links to and from the Park; the replacement of current tarmac with more durable and ecologically sustainable surface options; the maintenance of assets; and the use of bunding/earth movement to create flood resilient areas.

A ‘Concept Access Strategy,’ which reiterated the very early, ‘high-level’ transport and access ideas presented on the 22nd April consultation boards, including the choice between two potential new access points for vehicles into the Park.

A new ‘Emerging Access Strategy,’ which had not yet been presented to the community, which built on feedback from consultation events to suggest an enhanced, ‘greened’ runway serving as an existing and retained vehicular access point, and a new vehicular access to the Southeast of this at Cullerne Farm, linked to a new parking area.

This slide was used as a ‘live sketch’ event (see opposite, bottom left), where the audience of community members could feed-back their thoughts on these suggestions in real-time, which could then be discussed in the room with the design team consultants and other community members in the hopes of coming to a general consensus on some key ideas. These comments and ideas were then collated, alongside feedback from the April 22nd event, into a feedback newsletter that was circulated in the Rainbow Bridge, ensuring that there was a record of this discussion for those who missed the event.



Transport and Access workshop advert (left) and Mark Rinkus presenting at the workshop (right)

TRANSPORT AND ACCESS STRATEGY WORKSHOP
15TH MAY UNIVERSAL HALL // LIVE DRAW OUTCOMES AND COMMENTS

Emerging Access Strategy
Live Sketch

Live draw outcome screenshot

Comments at the event (extracted from screenshot above):

1. Ensure space for Hall and Visitors – ensure priority for wheelchair users/those with disabilities.
2. Consider nature and biodiversity as part of movement and access issues i.e., designing with nature and habitats.
3. Be mindful of constraints at the Cullerne Farm Road entrance/junction (item B on map)
4. Could a secondary access be considered from the existing curved pedestrian/cycle access by Cullerne Gardens (item C on map)?
5. K2 route over Bichan farmland would require agreement to be put in place.
6. Routes and Surfacing at Pineridge should allow for strengthening habitats and put wildlife corridors in place.

Comments at the event (continued):

7. Could there be one way access (relating to item 4)?
8. The impact to existing homes adjacent to the proposed new secondary access at Cullerne Farm should be considered.
9. The access route into the Park (at C on map) is a well-used cycle and pedestrian path.
10. Explore retaining as much existing parking rather than create new where we can and behind the holiday park.
11. Speed of vehicular movement is a key challenge.
12. Why do we need 2 access routes? Is this a policy requirement or a partnership opportunity?
13. If there are 2 entrances, how do we differentiate between them both? Eg. visitors and residents
14. A resident has noted that access point C on the map was not used by the Fire Brigade during the recent fire.
15. The Caravan Park had flooding issues 20 years ago.
16. Construction Traffic Management will be required during development – of Pineridge in particular.
17. Could there be access into the site at the south of Cullerne?
18. Would the redesign of the existing main access (A on the map) be sufficient going forward?
19. Is a 1 in 200-year event accurate? Or should this be closer to 1 in 20 years?
20. The existing road between Findhorn and Kinloss (the B9011) needs broader consideration – could an alternative route to Findhorn and the wider Peninsula be considered as part of wider citizen action?
21. The path network should be shown on any drawings and layouts for Pineridge.
22. There should be a route between Cullerne House and East Whins.
23. There was a noise contour established on the former airfield runway – now that the runway has been decommissioned does it no longer apply?
24. Would Moray Council adopt the existing roads? This is not considered viable.
25. Pedestrian priority needs to be a key consideration for any plans and future strategy.

A9 Moray Council’s ‘Call for Ideas’ (to inform the Local Development Plan)

During the strategy development process, Moray Council issued a ‘Call for Ideas’ to inform their developing Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and forthcoming Local Development Plan (LDP) for 2027. At the time, design team and working group (DevCom) considered this an opportunity to collate ‘in-progress’ ideas for future development scenarios at the Park Ecovillage gathered during the strategy work to meet Moray Council’s deadline. This however caused confusion and concern within the Park community that future proposals were being submitted without due consultation or the necessary time to review.

The intended submission of emerging ideas (comprising broad strategies for each area of the Park relating to its future development and strategic priorities; see Appendix for full submission) from the design team, in collaboration with and in response to comments and ideas from the local Park community, aimed to make Moray Council aware of the progress of the strategic project thus far, and to register a high-level intention for future development at the Park. However, there was deep concern from residents that this might represent solid plans for development and that insufficient time had been allowed for review by the community ; as such, Moray Council amended their original deadline of June 30th to July 31st to allow more time for review and contributions.

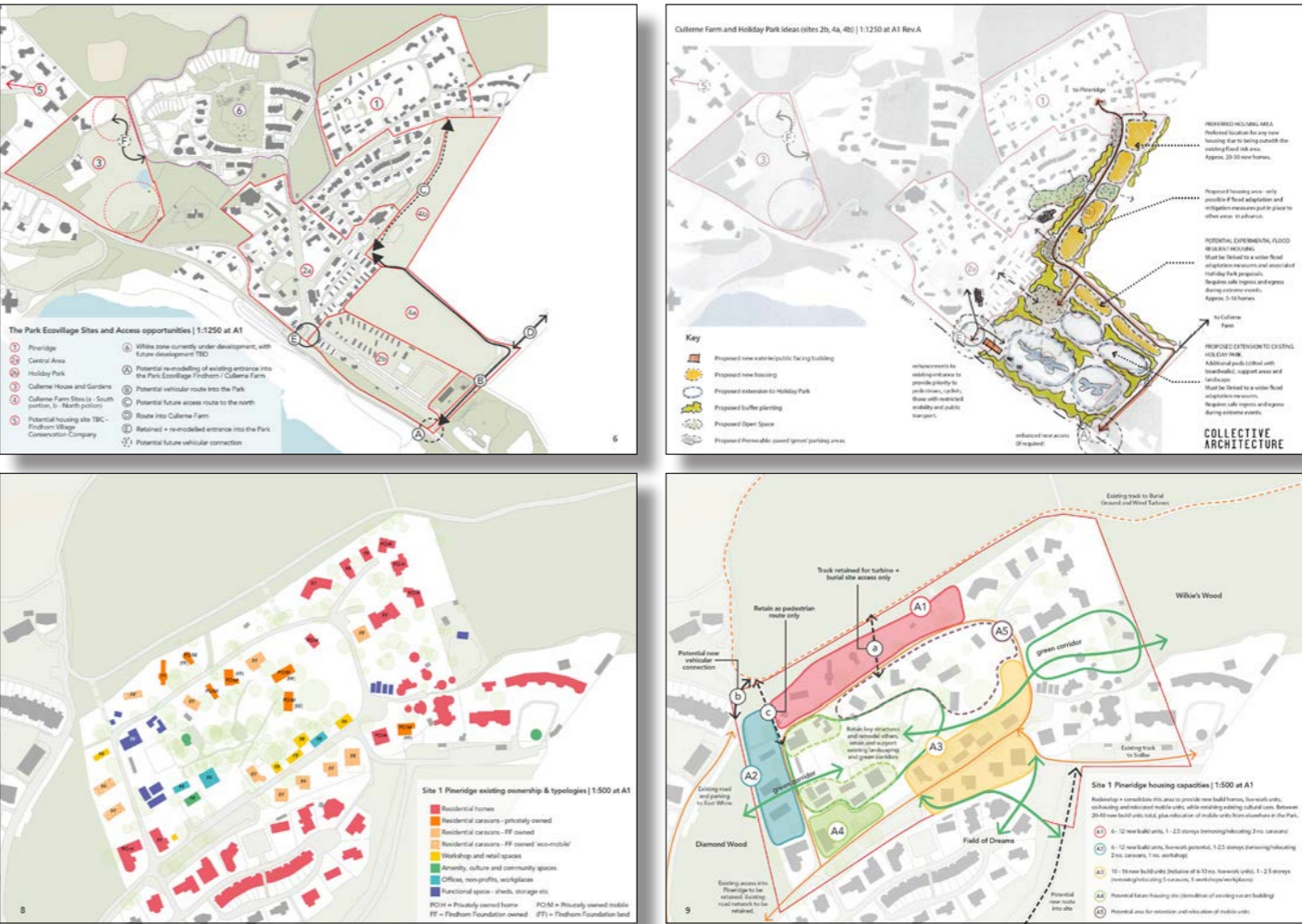
During this month-long period, it was decided a pamphlet/information leaflet should be produced and posted in the Rainbow Bridge newsletter to address any misconceptions and concerns surrounding the process; this was titled ‘Call for Ideas, Local Place Plan & Strategy Consultations: Get the Facts & Learn More.’ The pamphlet laid out a project timeline, demonstrating that the Call for Ideas was only a stepping stone in a much longer process (one which would contain more community consultation), information on the purpose and intended outcomes of the strategy project as a whole, information on the purpose and contents of a Local Place Plan and their statutory role in placemaking, the scope and purpose of the Call for Ideas by Moray Council, and explanations on how these elements worked together and the community’s role in contributing to each part. This leaflet can be read in full in the Appendix.

Other individuals and groups within the Park were

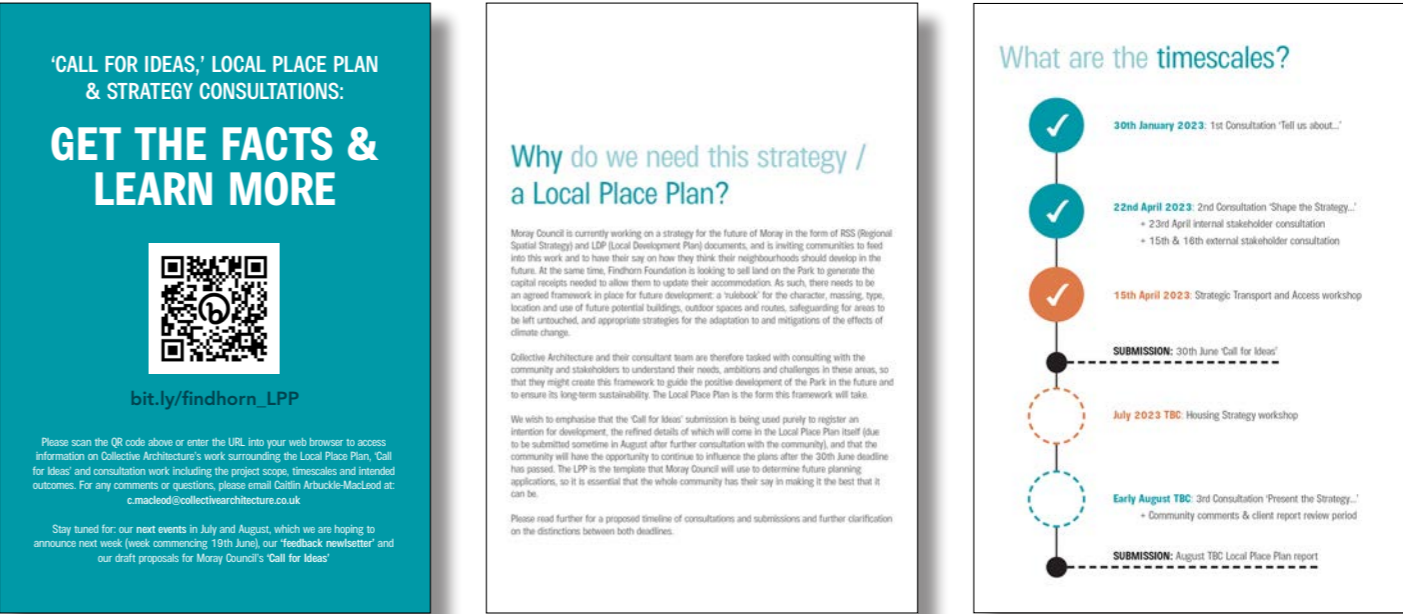
encouraged to submit their own Call for Ideas submissions (entirely in line with Moray Council’s process), demonstrating that this was an open call and in no way closed off to non-design team community members at the Park. Thirteen additional Call for Ideas submissions were thus produced and submitted by Park residents alongside the amended submission collated via the strategy design team, each of which can be viewed in full in the Appendix of the Main Report.

Following Moray Council’s Call for Ideas process, it was decided that, due to the specific requirements of a Local Place Plan the work of the design team would take the form of a ‘Strategic Framework’ rather than a Local Place Plan. Any future Local Place Plan was to be developed and led by a constituted community body. The Strategic Framework would then be presented back to the Park community’s Local Place Plan group, who could then choose to adopt, adapt or evolve this into a Local Place Plan for submission to Moray Council. Equally, Park residents could develop and submit their own Local Place Plan through a defined group, incorporating elements of the Strategic Framework as they saw fit. Highlighting this at the final consultation (see overleaf) aimed to stress the idea that the strategy work belonged to the community, not Collective Architecture or the Findhorn Foundation, and that this was a collaborative effort in the ownership of the Park as a whole.

Towards the end of 2023, whilst the Strategic Framework was under development, the Park Residents formed a Local Place Plan Group and liaised with the Findhorn Foundation and Collective Architecture regarding how this might progress in 2024.



Sample of Call for Ideas submission pages from the strategy design team



A10 Event 5 - Housing & Ecology workshop

This workshop was proposed as an additional engagement event following the Transport Workshop, which resulted in feedback from the Park community and stakeholders that indicated an appetite for a similar format of engagement themed around Housing and Ecology at the Park Ecovillage. The presentation took place on Saturday 12th August from 11am-1pm at Universal Hall, followed by a Q&A session.

The event saw a number of presenters discuss issues of housing and/or ecology at the Park Ecovillage related to the potential future of the Park itself, which allowed for a number of insights and viewpoints to be expressed, listened to and discussed. Speakers and topics included:

- **Jonathan Caddy, Findhorn Hinterland Trust:** the Development of The Park over the last 60 years
- **JR Fulton,** architect: Affordable housing & density
- **Ross Jenkins, Park Ecovillage Trust:** Housing ownership and tenure
- **Sean Reed, Reed Ecology:** Ecology at The Park
- **Saille Mawson, Nature’s Voice:** Nature in The Park
- **Janice Findlay:** Pineridge attunements
- **Caitlin Arbuckle-MacLeod & Jude Barber, Collective Architecture:** Living together in The Park

Following this, and after a lunch break, community members could stay to ask the Collective Architecture and Narro team any questions, express concerns or ideas, or generally have discussions around the topics of housing and ecology in the Universal Hall together, which was felt to be an effective way of gathering feedback in a live, conversational setting. A short document which summarised some of these discussions was written up and circulated to the wider Park community, for the benefit of those who couldn’t attend and as a record of the issues raised. Lots of discussion was had around flood mitigation and ideas the design team presented for a wetland near the entrance of the Park, especially with regard to potential approval from the Council, alongside other issues regarding the massing and height of new buildings, extent of development, space for gardens and nature, and lack of jobs to support new housing. This document can be read in full in the Appendix.



Presentations during the Housing and Ecology workshop by Jonathan Caddy and Collective Architecture



Saturday 12th August 2023: Housing and Ecology workshop

Q&A SUMMARY

Thank you to everyone who was able to make it along to the housing and ecology-focused workshop and presentation on Saturday 12th August at Universal Hall - we hope you found the session illuminating and got the opportunity to have your questions answered or concerns addressed.

This is a short document which summarises some questions/concerns and our responses from this session, which should be useful for anyone who was unable to make it along to the event or the afternoon's Q&A. We will use the feedback we have received at this session (and all previous consultations, presentations, workshops and feedback gathering exercises) to feed into our upcoming Strategic Framework report, which will be shared with the community in the near future.

The recording can be viewed at the following link: bit.ly/housingecoworkshop
When prompted, please enter the passcode: 93cNTJ&U

Summary of questions and answers from the latter half of the Housing and Ecology workshop, distributed as a newsletter

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SUMMARY

The following is a broad summarisation (not verbatim) of the types of questions asked and concerns raised during the workshop, both following the presentations and in the afternoon's Q&A session, and our responses to these.

Q: I'm interested in the changes you are proposing down at the entrance, and love the idea of adapting rather than just mitigating the effects of future flooding. If we re-landscape and re-model this area, how wide an area do we consider? If the road gets flooded, what use is making those changes to that particular area?

A: In the context of a strategic framework, we are highlighting the opportunity this kind of approach would offer, as well as the potential challenges - there's a number of technical surveys and studies that would need to happen above and beyond the remit of this work (by hydrologists, engineers and so on) to interrogate the viability and also the extents, scope and scale of this kind of flood adaptation work.

Q: I was heartened to hear from Sean Reed that Moray Council has quite progressive policies on ecology and nature - is there any indication yet that they could approve or would be in favour of the type of wetland development/rewilding exercise you're suggesting?

A: As it stands, there would be resistance to that, because national policy suggests that we're not supposed to be building in flood risk areas. We would say that the most extreme response to flood risk is abandonment, and that there's an opportunity to challenge and go further than the abandonment and mitigation proposed by policy, towards adaptation. There's also an opportunity for this community to be pioneering and lead the way in this kind of approach to climate adaptation and resilience, and use a Local Place Plan or Strategic Framework to raise challenges and suggest more groundbreaking solutions.

Q: One of the issues I can see with this is that our road in from Kinloss is a flood risk, so I wonder how we might mitigate that as a bigger, wider question?

A: There's a difficulty of scale when you're dealing with strategy and development, there's regional, local, national, the very hyper local specific issues and balancing these. I will say that whatever we do must be considered in partnership; there needs to be a whole-peninsula approach to this in partnership with the council and your neighbours, to consider not just physical adaptations but also cultural and access-focused adaptations, so for example sharing and using neighbouring pieces of land for access, perhaps not every day but in the context of an event. We should recognise this as a challenge that faces everyone and consider how we alter our current ways of operating and thinking to build resilience together.

Q: How are we going to create jobs here at The Park and consider livelihood alongside housing?

A: A good starting point would be a Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) and considering work and livelihood alongside this, because the two (housing and work) go hand in hand. This is a problem we see in other areas too, questions around the creation of a thriving economy and liveable places which relates to having things to do to earn. We can't necessarily answer this question in the scope of this