

City Park- West Winnelstrae

May 2008

**Statement of
Urban Design Principles**

**CITY PARK / WEST WINNELSTRAE
PILTON DRIVE**

STATEMENT OF URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this statement is to present a set of urban design principles to guide the future development of land known as City Park / West Winnelstrae. It has been prepared following a period of public consultation on draft proposals published in February 2007, an assessment of traffic issues in the wider area and measures that will be required to be put in place as part of its development for housing purposes.

1.2 The statement considers the context for the combined development of two sites: City Park (extending to approx.1.5 ha) and West Winnelstrae (0.5 ha), both of which are in Council ownership (see Figure 1). City Park is home to Spartans Football Club. The intention is that the football club will relocate to new facilities presently being built on land to the rear of Ainslie Park Leisure Centre, land formerly part of the Telford College North Campus. A consequence of allowing development to proceed on City Park is that it becomes possible to develop land at West Winnelstrae for social housing purposes.

Edinburgh City Local Plan (ECLP)

1.3 The opportunity to develop both sites is recognised by the finalised Edinburgh City Local Plan (2007) (see Figure 2), which promotes the sites together as housing proposal HSG19. The ECLP Proposals Map also identifies the open space proposals to the rear of Ainslie Park Leisure Centre as OS8: Pilton Drive. The housing and open space proposals are inextricably linked. The ECLP is the most up-to-date statement of the Council's planning policies and proposals for the City as a whole and accordingly is the main source of guidance contained in this statement. Planning applications that come forward for the site will also be considered against the Council's Standards for Urban Design, Streets and Sustainable Building

Background

- 1.4 Planning permission for new sports facilities, to be known as the North Edinburgh Football Academy, was granted in 2005 on land to the rear of Ainslie Park Leisure Centre, formerly part of Telford College North Campus. This land was acquired by the Council from Miller Homes Ltd, who in turn have the opportunity to acquire City Park from the Council for development at open market value. The proposals at Ainslie Park Leisure Centre have been developed in conjunction with Spartans FC, **sportscotland** and Miller Homes and when complete will offer substantially improved sports facilities for use by the communities of North Edinburgh and beyond.
- 1.5 The Council has sought for some time to develop land in its ownership at West Winnelstrae for social housing purposes. Hitherto, it has not been able to do so due to its inability to secure vehicular access to the site. The prospect of development on City Park however will allow the Council to bring the site forward for development in partnership with a social housing provider.

2.0 Objectives of the statement

- 2.1 The objectives of the statement are to achieve a sustainable, high quality residential development, the creation of public and communal spaces that are safe and pleasant and, overall, achieves a development that integrates well with new development that lies to the north and east of the site, whilst not dominating existing residential properties on Ferry Road.
- 2.2 In general, the statement promotes development along the site's northern boundary, the height of which will be determined by a number of factors, including the height of the tree canopy that bounds the site and the need to preserve the amenity of neighbouring properties. Development should then reduce in height as it moves southwards. A principal point for access to the site and a possible pedestrian / cycle route connecting to the wider network of paths is identified.

3.0 Contextual Analysis

The site and its surroundings (see Figure 3)

- 3.1 City Park and land at West Winnelstrae (the site) are located in north-west Edinburgh approximately 3km from the city centre. The site lies to the north of Ferry Road, east of its junction with Pilton Drive. To the north, beyond a footpath / cycleway lies The Strada, a multi-storey residential development built on former industrial land, which is nearing completion. A modern superstore, care home and sports complex lie immediately opposite the site to the west. A row of two storey semi-detached inter-war houses abut City Park to the south and the more recent development of West Winnelstrae to the east.
- 3.2 City Park was developed as a football ground shortly before the Second World War. Substantial grassy embankments were created around the pitch to serve as terracing for spectators. The western embankment rises more significantly than others as Pilton Drive rises to cross the former railway corridor to the north, thus giving the impression that the surrounding topography falls from north to south.
- 3.3 The site itself is bounded, for the most part, by mature trees, shrubs and, in part, timber fences and walls and as a consequence is largely hidden from view, particularly from Ferry Road. A line of mature trees and a stone retaining wall provide a substantial boundary to the north. A pedestrian / cycle path, part of comprehensive network of paths that serves north Edinburgh, lies immediately beyond. Vehicular and pedestrian access to the park is via a single track lane off Ferry Road, immediately to the west of West Winnelstrae.
- 3.4 The land known as West Winnelstrae is situated to the north east of the football ground and is also bounded to the north by the mature trees and the pedestrian / cycle path previously referred to. A stone wall and grass embankment provide boundaries to the remainder of the site. To the south lies the West Winnelstrae estate, a mixture of 3 and 4 storey development, from which the land takes its name. Historical records show that the site, now extensively overgrown, has largely remained undeveloped, although for a short period it was used as allotment gardens.

- 3.5 The area is predominantly residential in character, a character reinforced by the recent residential development of once industrial land, notably on the former Parson Peebles / VA Tech site. These developments have introduced new building forms, heights and densities to those that once prevailed. To some extent, these developments have weakened the area's urban form, although this has partly been offset by the quality of their landscaping. This landscaping has reinforced and enhanced existing tree belts and has helped to define and create a suburban character.
- 3.6 Historical records show that the Wardie Burn once ran along the northern boundary of City Park and the southern and eastern boundaries of West Winnelstrae. The watercourse was culverted beneath the site at the time that City Park was laid out as a football pitch. While there are no records of any flooding events in the park, anecdotal evidence suggests otherwise.

4.0 Urban Design Principles

Site Layout (see Figure 4)

- 4.1 A comprehensive approach to the development of the site should be taken, which does not leave any difficult to manage left-over spaces with no clear purpose, and which minimises the visual impact of car parking provision. The movement needs and the security of pedestrians and cyclists must be fully considered. Overlooking reduces the opportunity for anti-social behaviour and enhances personal security. Development should therefore:
- a) be arranged around a logical structure of streets and spaces. Incorporate perimeter blocks forms to assist in the creation of strong street relationships and to clearly delineate between public and private spaces;
 - b) be developed to 'Home Zone' principles – where streets should be treated as, or turned into public spaces rather than movement corridors that require traffic speeds to be restricted by built-in design and landscape features;
 - c) include sustainable drainage systems for the attenuation and treatment of surface water, unless local conditions prevent such an approach. The appropriate sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS) specification will be dependent upon detailed site conditions and should be determined in

accordance with best practice and in consultation with the Council, SEPA and Scottish Water;

- d) include a focal point in order to give development a degree of individuality and create a sense of place - this could take the form of a public space and / or public art features;
- e) be designed to offer natural surveillance throughout, but particularly along the route of the footpath / cycleway to the north if provided. This requirement will need to be balanced against the desire to preserve and enhance the strong green edge provided by the tree belt in this location. Development should therefore be set back 15-20 metres from the northern boundary to satisfy this requirement;
- f) provide all houses and ground floor flats with private garden space;
- g) retain the northern and western embankments in order to contain and screen new buildings and open spaces;
- h) retain and enhance existing tree belts as part of a robust woodland management plan for the site as a whole. Where mature trees are to be retained development should not encroach within 15-20 metres of tree boles;
- i) provide usable open space in accordance with the Council's current requirements – this requirement relates to the provision of shared open space, not private gardens – and should be attractive, of good quality, functional, safe and overlooked;
- j) ancillary facilities, including those for waste storage / recycling, cycle parking and utilities should be provided within buildings or underground, where practicable. Careful consideration should also be given to car parking provision:
 - surface car parks should not be located in front of buildings where the building would otherwise create an active frontage onto a public space or street;
 - car parking should preferably be provided at basement level within a building and not a ground or street level where this would be at the expense of an active frontage onto a public street, public space or private open space;

- the design of surface car parks should include structure planting to minimise visual impact;
- k) pedestrian and cycle routes should connect to the wider pedestrian network, including, if acceptable, the off-road pedestrian / cycle route to the north;
- l) include refuse and recycling facilities that are sensitively integrated into the overall design of the development;
- m) be designed to minimise opportunities for criminal activity. The development should consider community safety at the early stage of design to ensure that crime prevention measures are a fundamental part of the final development and not added at a later stage in the design process. The development should satisfy the core principles of ‘Secured by Design’. Further information on this aspect of design is available at www.securebydesign.com

Architectural Design

- 4.2 The Council will encourage development on the site to adopt an individual architectural form; one that seeks to create a distinctive urban form while at the same time knit together with the adjacent housing developments in order to create a sense of place. The Council will also encourage the use of sustainable, high quality materials, an innovative contemporary design and architectural treatments.

Height, Massing and Density

- 4.3 The Council will seek an appropriate density of development on the site having regard to:
- the characteristics of the site and its surroundings;
 - the need to create an attractive residential environment and safeguard living conditions for those within the development;
 - the local road network.
- 4.4 In established residential areas, the Council will not permit proposals which would result in unacceptable damage to local character, environmental quality or residential amenity. To this end the Council will ensure that the site is not

overdeveloped or that development is 'crammed' at the expense of open space.

- 4.5 Development proposals should be supported by an appropriate transport assessment i.e. one that considers the impact of new development in a broad context and demonstrates how junction arrangements could be reconfigured and traffic signals altered to deal with the anticipated levels of traffic.
- 4.6 The Council considers that an appropriate design response is to create a gentle sloping downward graduation of development in mass and density from the north-west corner of the site to the south, following the boundary edge defined by Pilton Drive, and along the northern boundary to the east. Development in this form will reflect the general topography of the site and its surroundings and link visually to the recent developments to the north and east.
- 4.7 Development along the northern boundary should generally not exceed that of the tree canopy. For the most part the Council will expect development to sit well below this level and for proposals to incorporate accurate cross-sectional drawings that clearly demonstrate the relationship of the development to the footpath / cyclepath and 'Strada' development to the north, the care home to the west, and housing on Ferry Road and West Winnelstrae to the south and east respectively.
- 4.8 The Council considers that the topography of the site is such that it lends itself to the creation of an underground covered car parking deck. The reduced requirement for surface car parking could create greater visual amenity and a higher quality amenity open spaces.

Housing Mix

- 4.9 The Council considers that it is important in the design of new housing schemes to achieve a good mix of dwelling types and sizes, including housing suitable for growing families. Such an approach helps to avoid the creation of large areas of housing with similar characteristics. It helps create mixed and inclusive communities offering a choice of housing, and can assist good urban design.

Access and Car Parking

- 4.10 Provision for cyclists and people on foot is a priority consideration for the Council when new development is proposed. In this context, improved permeability for cyclists and pedestrians throughout the wider area should be fully explored. The Council recognises that segregated paths in housing areas can be an unwelcoming feature, compromising safety and security in the residential environment. For this reason the merits of extending the footpath / cycle network from the north into and through the site should be discussed with the Lothian & Borders Police Architectural Liaison Officer.
- 4.11 An initial transportation assessment indicates that vehicular access to the site is best achieved via the creation of a junction off Pilton Drive, south of the former railway bridge. The access should take the form of an additional leg to the signalised junction that presently serves the supermarket. This will require the junction as a whole to be reconfigured and the sequence of signals to be altered to regulate traffic movements at the new junction, and Pilton Drive's junction with Ferry Road, efficiently. The Council will require planning applications for the site to be supported by a transport assessment that considers all options for vehicular access to the site, including details of measures required outwith the site to deal with the impacts of car journeys associated with the development. In addition, the assessment should also include details of measures to improve or maximise access by public transport, walking and cycling.

5.0 Developer Contributions

- 5.1 The Council will apply planning conditions and enter into planning agreements to ensure that development will be carried out in an acceptable manner in transport terms. The aim will be to ensure maximum feasible public transport and other sustainable access to the site. This may include the provision of appropriate off-site transport measures in the surrounding area, such as road junction improvements referred to in paragraph 4.11 above. It may also include financial support for bus services that serve the area.
- 5.2 The high level of housing development within the urban area is helping to bring some schools up to and over their design capacity. If additional capacity would have to be created as a result of development on the site the Council will seek a financial contribution to address this matter. This issue is

addressed by supplementary planning guidance prepared by the Council and which forms part of its Development Management Handbook.

Further Information

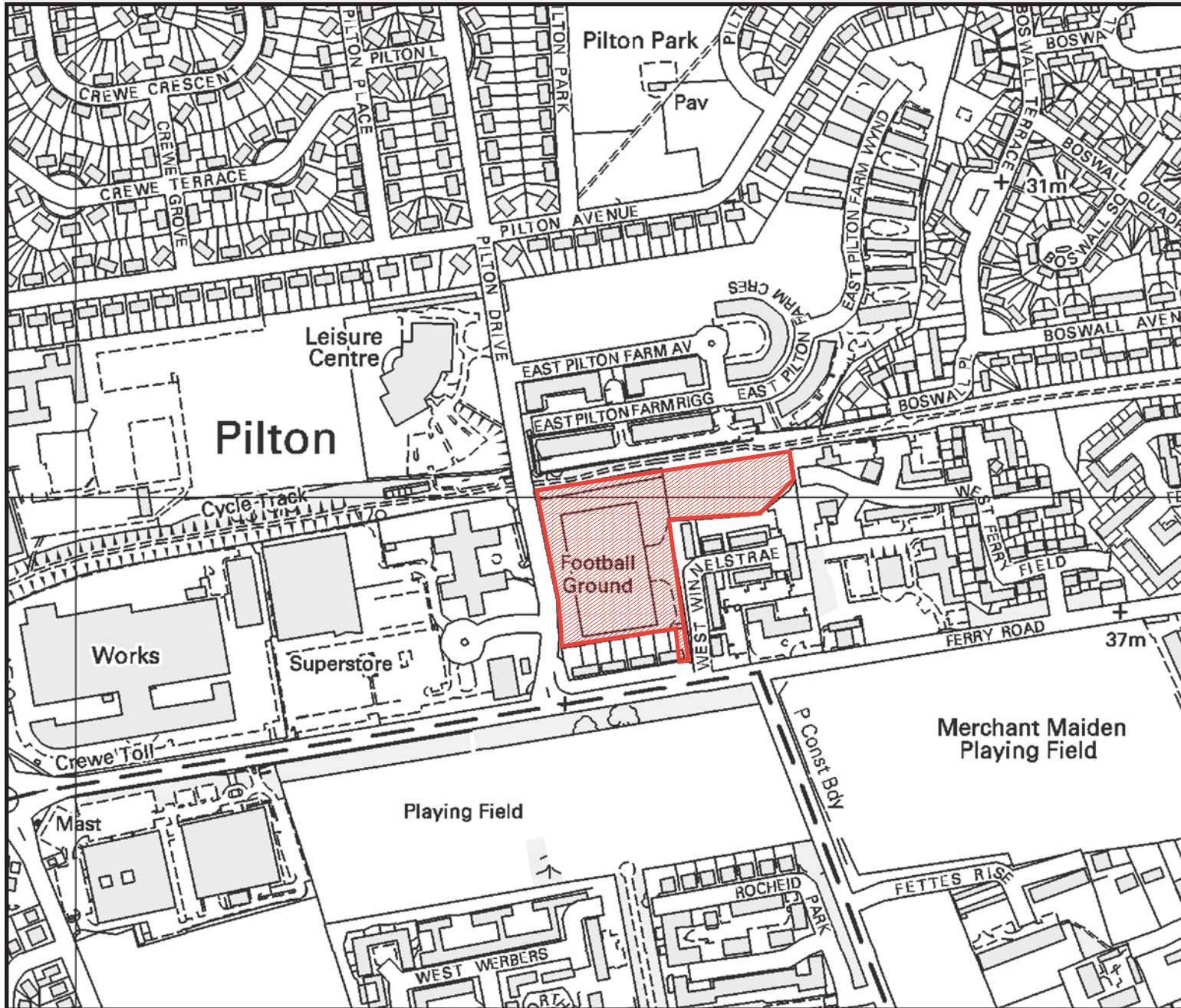
Further information on the Statement of Urban Design Principles for City Park and West Winnelstrae is available by contacting:

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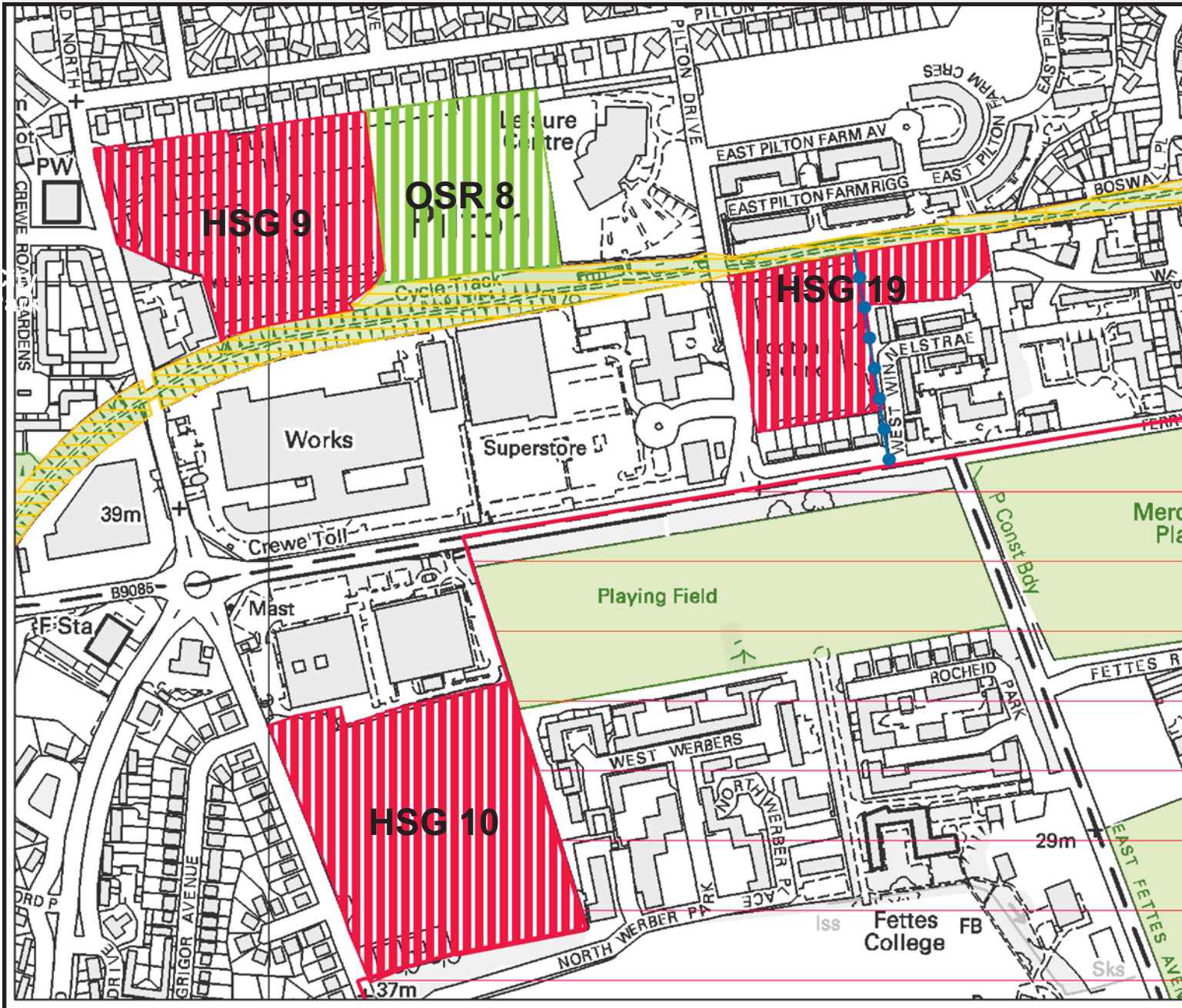
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A copy of this statement is available at www.edinburgh.gov.uk

15.05.08 / AAS



Site Boundary

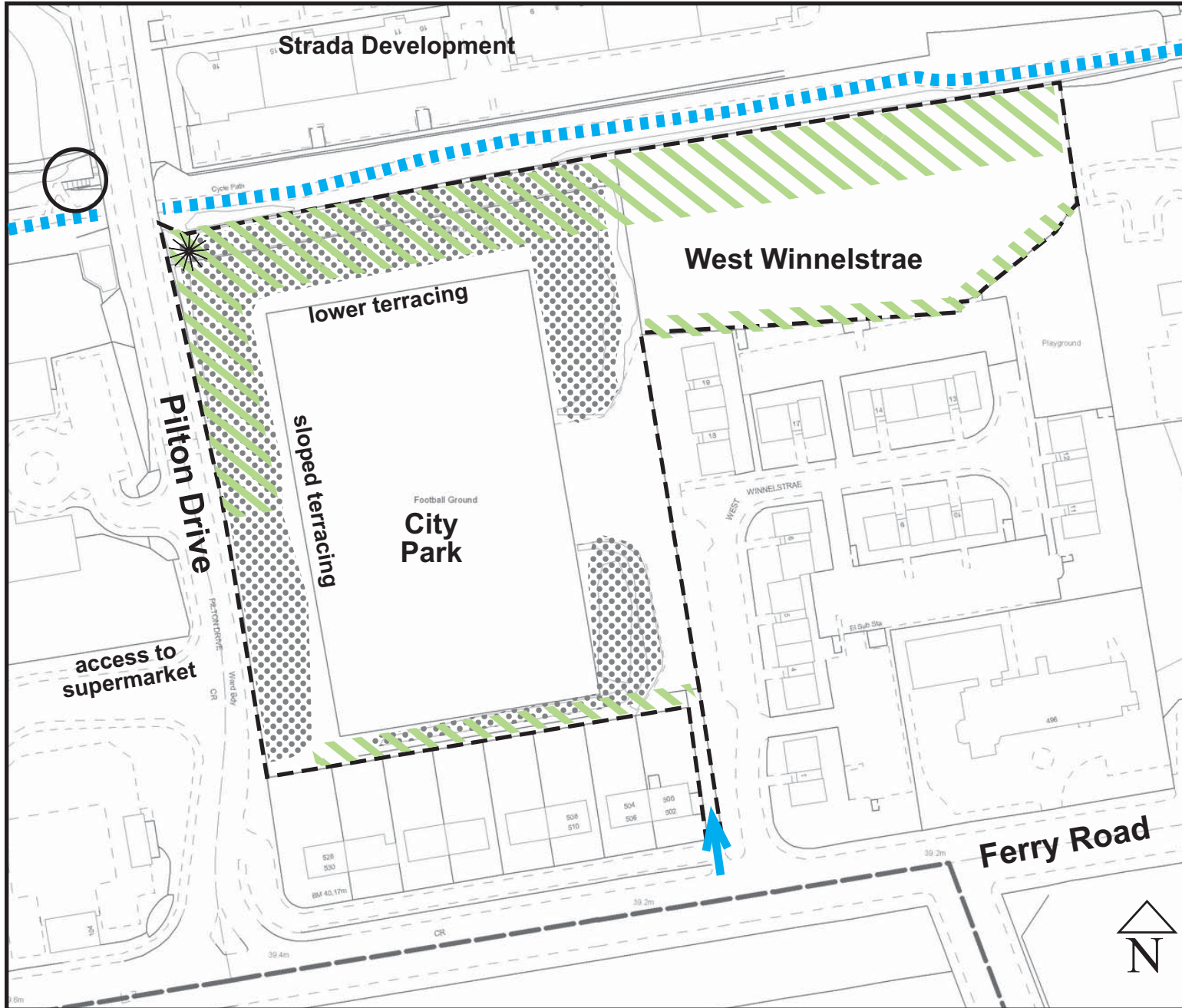









-  Housing Proposal
-  Open Space Proposal
-  Open Space
-  Conservation Area
-  Local Nature Conservation Site
-  Cycleway/Footpath Safeguard

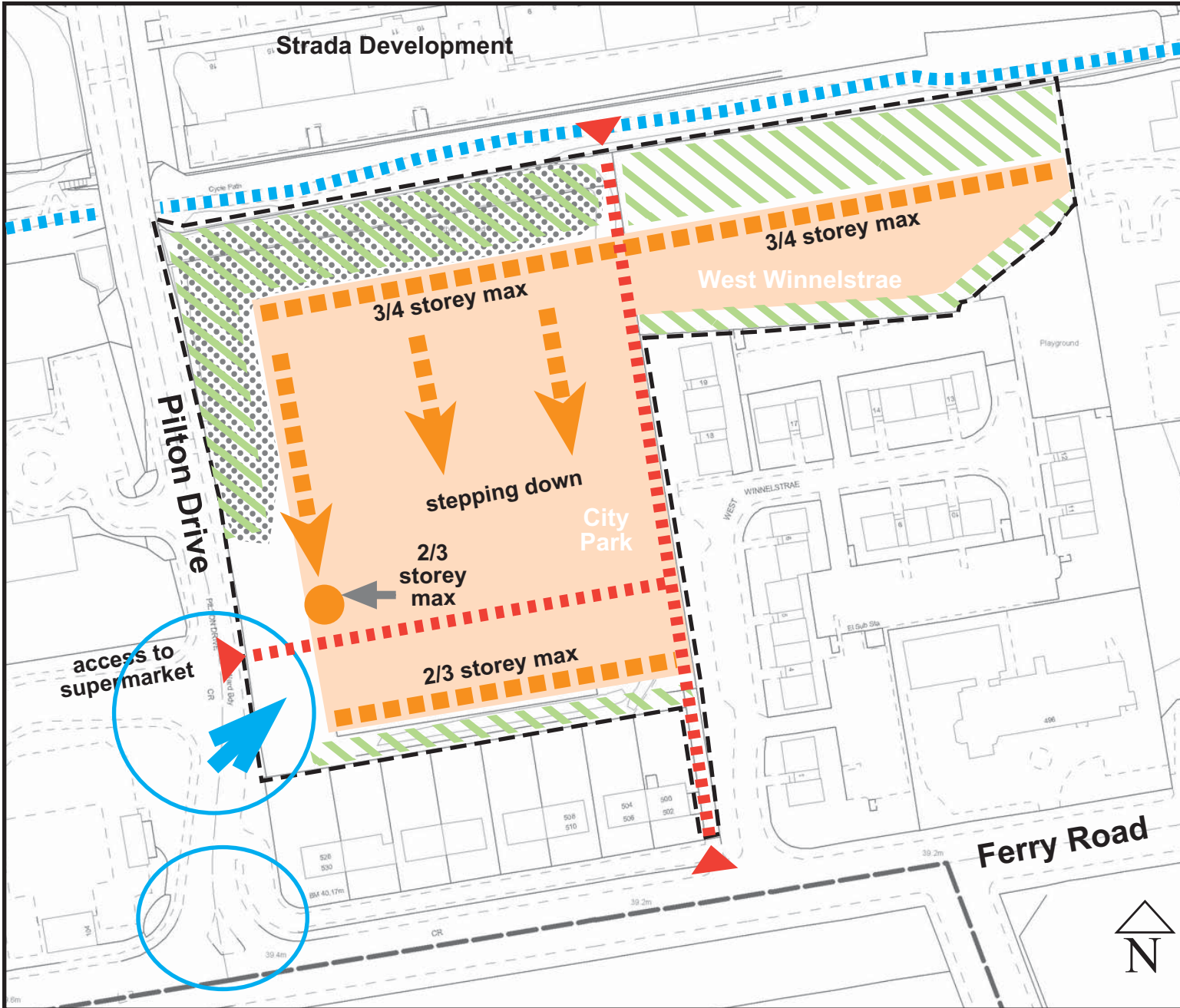
City Park & West Winnelstrae









Existing Situation

Figure 3



-  Existing banking
-  Existing tree cover
-  High point
-  Vehicular /pedestrian access to City Park
-  Existing cycleway/footpath
-  Stepped access to path
-  Site boundary



-  Retained banking
-  Reinforced tree cover
-  Height indications
-  Vehicular access
-  Possible cycleway/footpath extension
-  Existing cycleway/footpath
-  Road junction improvements
-  Site boundary

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Produced by the City Development Department, Planning and Strategy, May 2008

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