# North Beach Planning Study

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Introduction

1 The North Beach Study builds on the previously approved South Beach Study (December 2002) to complete the planning framework between the Rivers Dee and Don. It sets out the planning framework for the area, including the opportunity to include a sports development proposal, community stadium and highlights possible infrastructure improvements.

Background

2 A Sports Development Bid is currently being prepared by a partnership, including Aberdeen City Council, The Robert Gordon University, The University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen College and Aberdeen Football Club. The bid, to be submitted to the Scottish Executive the end of January 2004, envisages the phased implementation of a multi-facility programme based on the co-ordination, enhancement and initiation of proposals to provide a range of facilities across the City, including:

- A major sports centre, which would include regional facilities for athletics and hockey, to be developed jointly by Aberdeen City Council and the University of Aberdeen at Linksfield.

- A Football Academy, with indoor and outdoor facilities, to be jointly developed by Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen Football Club at Aulton/Linksfield.

To complement the Sports Development Bid, other facilities considered for the North Beach area are:

- A community stadium on a site near the Beach Leisure Centre, which could be used by, among others, Aberdeen Football Club.

- A 50m swimming pool.

- A range of transport and other infrastructure improvements.

In addition to those above, facilities proposed elsewhere in the City include:

- A multi sports and swimming facility on the RGU Campus at Garthdee.

- Redevelopment of the Rubislaw/ Harlaw Playing Field site to provide improved indoor and outdoor facilities including regional rugby facilities.

- Improvements to a number of golf and football facilities.

The programme, which would be in 5 main phases, could start in 2003 and be completed by 2011.

3 Of the possible facilities detailed above, the Sports Development Bid will concentrate initially on the delivery of the major sports centre and football academy at Linksfield. This Study has been prepared to establish suitable locations for those facilities which can be accommodated at the Beach.

4. The North Beach Study identifies several major opportunities aligning with the aims of aberdeenfutures. The sports and leisure issues discussed in this document have the potential to significantly raise the profile, not just of the North Beach area, but also of the City and its people. The well being of the people and environment of Aberdeen will be significantly improved with greater opportunities for community access to sports and leisure facilities.

5. The North Beach and the Links are key to the success of any bid for creating a centre of sporting excellence for the North East of Scotland. The group of partners has the opportunity to create a sports development centre realising the Links as a focus for the region’s sports and leisure activity. This Study therefore considers options for realising the Links as that focus. The Draft Study also builds on the South Beach Study and the Beach Improvement Project to complete the planning framework between the mouths of the Rivers Dee and Don.
Site Description

6. The North Beach Study area can be broadly defined as King’s Links to the east and Pittodrie, Linksfield and Seaton to the west. The site includes Linksfield Academy, the Chris Anderson Stadium, the East End Football and Social Club, housing amenity land and the Linksfield playing fields. The area also covers the King’s Links golf course, Aulton sports pitches, Broadhill, golf driving range, cricket pitch and Pittodrie Stadium.

Policy Background

7. The area is currently covered by three major designations in the Aberdeen City District Wide Local Plan adopted in 1991. The Seaton area to the north is covered by R1 Residential policy designation, the Linksfield and Pittodrie sites are within an R2 Mixed Residential policy designation; the remainder of the Study area is given an OR1 Recreation policy designation. The District Wide Local Plan is to be replaced by a new Aberdeen City Local Plan which is currently in preparation and is expected to be published within the next few months. The emerging Local Plan will maintain the current mix of policy designations with various parts of the Study area retained within residential, and recreation policy designations. The emerging Local Plan will also acknowledge the current Planning Study for the South Beach area, which is identified as a development opportunity for an Energy Futures Centre. The North Beach Study will also be incorporated within the emerging Local Plan, which is targeted to be placed on deposit in the first quarter of 2004 when the public will have the opportunity to comment on its content.

8. Planning guidance for new stadia is provided in NPPG11(Sport, Physical Recreation and Open Space) which advises that locations within urban areas may offer the best opportunity to achieve good access by public transport and acceptable car parking. It also stresses the importance of the proximity of any new site to the traditional catchment are of the club and suggests that there are opportunities for providing multi-purpose community centres for sport and physical recreation.

Landscape Character Assessment

9. The Aberdeen Landscape Character Assessment (ALCA) published by SNH portrays the coastal landscape character of the beachfront, together with the Dee and Don Valleys, as “probably the most distinctive in the city”. The Aberdeen Links are described as an area of dominant horizontal form broken by the steep seaward slopes of the dunes and promenade. The study makes reference to how the main part of the Kings Links came about through historical dumping of waste, on what was the former ‘Canny Sweet Pots’ of salt and fresh water marsh, to form flat recreational ground. Because of the characteristic openness of the area it has a high visibility, both from the housing areas to the west, and the elevated road running parallel to the sea front. There are also panoramic views of the city itself, and of the sweep of the coast around Aberdeen Bay stretching from Girdleness Lighthouse, Torry Battery and the harbour entrance in the south, towards Peterhead in the north. These provide a strong sense of place. In highlighting the high visibility of the area the ALCA suggests that it would be sensitive to new built developments with any associated car parking. The ALCA also points to the rather abrupt urban edge where the houses meet the expanse of flat recreational links. It suggests that some tree and shrub planting along the inland urban edge could be accommodated to soften it, and to vary the mowing regimes of open grass to introduce visual variety and increase wildlife potential.

10. The Donmouth Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is a linear feature stretching from the River Don estuary in the east, along both sides of the river to the west. It is one of the major sites in Aberdeen, which have been designated as District Wildlife Sites under the Council’s Nature Conservation Strategy. It adjoins a neighbouring District
Wildlife Site of the Balgownie / Blackdog Links which extends from the Donmouth Estuary along the coast to the north. The text of the strategy explains how these sites provide habitats for plant and animal communities within the District, and opportunities for education and amenity for the residents of Aberdeen. Although the major part of the Donmouth LNR is located north of the Esplanade road a rectangular section of grassland occurs south of it and adds to the diversity of habitats within the reserve.

Land and Property

11. The majority of the potential development sites highlighted within the Study are currently in City Council ownership. There are, however, many businesses in the area that could potentially be affected by the proposals. The Study suggests options for various sites. Whilst these may all be appropriate in planning terms, it is stressed that the feasibility and viability of these options must be further explored in terms of funding and delivery. All of this must be tested in full consultation at each stage. It is not the intention to force local employers and clubs out of the area; rather they should be encouraged to explore potential opportunities for improvement.

12. There are possible contamination issues to be addressed in a number of sites within the Draft Study area. A full programme of soil investigation and risk assessment will be required for each possible contaminated area, prior to an agreed programme of decontamination taking place. In addition future ground conditions across the area associated with climate change should be investigated.

13. It should be noted that there are significant financial and other resource implications in relation to land in Council ownership arising from this Draft Study which cannot be quantified at this time.

Proposed Development Principles

14. General

14.1 The aim of the Study is to explore opportunities for development of a sports facilities centre for the North East of Scotland. The Study concentrates on facilitating the opportunity to accommodate this whilst promoting a mix of uses that could enable increased employment opportunities, homes and open spaces within an enhanced environment that respects its Links setting.

14.2 The North Beach area provides a focus for sports and leisure development stretching from Aulton pitches in the North to the Beach Leisure Centre complex in the South, including the Links golf course. The area could house state of the art sports facilities, including sports medicine and science, and also provide incubator units for small business start ups related to sports along with community facilities.

- Improved facilities for sports including athletics, football, hockey, swimming, rugby, judo, squash
- Widens opportunities for access to sports
- Develops potential in sport
- Achieves sporting excellence
- Promotes healthy lifestyle
- Improves the public realm and infrastructure of the area
- Has the opportunity to develop significant green transport links with the City Centre

14.3 Design Quality – Given the relatively sensitive nature of the environment at the Links, it is imperative that any new building suggested for construction in open landscape be of the highest quality in terms of concept, design and finishing. SPP1 The Planning System emphasises the importance of design considerations in reaching planning decisions. It is important that any building seen from the Links presents an imaginative and exciting public image.
14.4 As a general rule, all future development, with the exception of those sites identified in this Study, will be restricted to the west of Golf Road, filling in gaps in the existing built up area, and leaving the links predominantly landscaped.

14.5 Any new development fronting onto the Links should take advantage of its setting, presenting an imaginative and exciting image when seen from the Esplanade. Views of the Links should be opened out and maximised. Opportunities, when they arise, should be taken to remove derelict and unsightly buildings from the Study area. General property rationalisation in the whole Study area must be considered, not only in raising the quality of the environment, but also to allow for greater efficiency in accommodating any new development and its associated landscaping.

14.6 Both the ALCA report and the Local Nature Reserve point to sensitivities within the study area. However, the presence of existing prominent developments such as the Pittodrie football stadium, the Beach Leisure Centre and LINX facility and the Seaton flatted blocks, along with the proximity of the urban edge of the city, create precedence for building. The potential losses to open ground that will undoubtedly occur will be mitigated by ensuring that the reallocation of land uses will optimise public recreational use, and incorporate sensitive earth modelling and associated landscape treatment which will help to reduce the visual impacts and enhance landscape and wildlife diversity. Following consultation and advice from Scottish Natural Heritage it may also prove feasible to relocate the rectangular section of grassland in the Donmouth LNR to another part of the northern links without habitat loss.

14.7 It is recommended that the landscape elements of any new developments be professionally designed to ensure that they adopt a sensitive approach to the local environment and respond properly to an overall landscape masterplan. The use of a single theme along the length of any new access road - say by a ‘Boulevard’ treatment - would be advantageous and help to tie the disparate parts together.

15. King’s Links

15.1 The existing King’s Links course was originally the home to Royal Aberdeen Golf Club (the club was founded in 1780 as the Society of Golfers of Aberdeen). There is evidence to suggest that golf on the Links existed two hundred years prior to that date, and had there been a will to establish an official club then Aberdeen could have been considered older than the “sixth oldest club in the world”.

15.2 Within the proposed planning framework for this area the King’s Links Golf Course will remain largely as it exists. However, changes to golf development facilities will require to be made to bring them up date with future requirements and accommodate the proposal to include a community stadium within the area. In conjunction with the rest of the proposals for the area, the opportunity exists to enhance and improve the golf course in whole or in part.

15.3 The existing golf driving range to the south of the King’s Links currently presents a rather untidy image. However, it is not proposed as part of this Study that this facility be removed. The option to relocate the driving range to the north of the Links, in conjunction with golf development facilities, could be explored. The adjacent cricket pitch, known locally as the “daisy park”, is relatively underused as public open space, although alternative provision should be made for cricket. Although not an established “right of way” it is desirable to maintain access to the Beach, via a path under the road. Other paths supporting pedestrian access across the area must either be maintained or suitable replacement routes established.
16 Community Stadium

16.1 The Sports Infrastructure Bid included reference to a Community Stadium for the City, which could be used by, among others, Aberdeen Football Club. Investigating the reality of providing a Community Stadium is still very much in its infancy and requires much detailed analysis to determine feasibility and possible funding. However it is likely that any facilities to be considered within a new Community Stadium would be complementary to those provided at the Centre for Sports on the Linksfield site.

16.2 The cricket pitch and driving range immediately to the east present a possible opportunity site for a Community Stadium. The cricket pitch is a manicured grassed area, readily accessible to the general public. The potential loss of this area could be compensated for by the current “Imagine Aberdeen: Imagine the Beach” proposals to provide an “Events Plaza” where the Beach Boulevard meets the Esplanade. There will be improved changing and spectator facilities provided as part of that proposal.

16.3 If considered a possibility, a Community Stadium must be of the highest quality design, as it must become a lasting legacy for the citizens of Aberdeen. Any proposal will be, by its very nature a large and dominating structure, but architecturally this provides a tremendous opportunity for a construction that the City can take pride in. Set as the last building in the developed area heading north along the Beach, a possible Community Stadium could become an icon for the City.

16.4 The existing South Beach Planning Study identified the opportunity for an Energy Futures Centre to the south of the Beach Boulevard. The opportunity should be taken to investigate any possible link between this development and a Community Stadium in terms of energy efficiency and the overall running of the Stadium.

16.5 Any possible Community Stadium on this site should address the comfort of its spectators. Stands to the east should be so designed to protect from the elements and afford shelter to the rest of the stadium. It is suggested that the
possibility of a retractable roof should be explored. This not only has the obvious advantage of weather protection, but can also allow an even greater diversity of use than would otherwise be achieved for an arena, providing a feature that may significantly increase the profile of a Community Stadium both nationally and internationally.

16.6 Car parking is likely to be restricted in favour of strengthening public transport links to any new Community Stadium. Coach parking for match days should be readily accessible and should generally be provided in areas otherwise used for the normal daily provision of car parking. Consideration must be given to the development of park and ride facilities. There should be no additional car parking provided for match days. No parking other than for coaches should be provided to the north of the Stadium, as large expanses of hard surfacing would detract from a stadium’s setting as seen from the Links.

16.7 It is essential that Grampian Police are involved in the potential design and masterplanning of a Community Stadium to assess and advise on its operation.

17 Pittodrie

17.1 The current home of Aberdeen Football Club, Pittodrie was first used in 1889 as the home to the original Aberdeen who amalgamated with Orion and Victoria United to form the present club in 1903. Several areas of Pittodrie Stadium require significant upgrading and improvement to bring them into line with UEFA requirements for future competition. The present stadium is constricted by its boundaries, leaving little scope for expansion and continued use as a major sporting venue. It also currently limits the potential number of sports using the stadium as Aberdeen Football Club concentrates primarily on football use. The existing stadium has suffered from piecemeal development, with four stands of differing mass height and design, and does not present a unified cohesive image.

17.2 Should Aberdeen FC vacate the Pittodrie site, the area should be considered for residential use or uses which complement residential development. A planning application for residential development on the gasworks site to the south of the existing stadium was refused and an appeal is currently ongoing. Should the existing Stadium be vacated, the opportunity will present itself to comprehensively redevelop the whole site from the gasworks across to the car park to the north of Pittodrie Street.

17.3 All other recent development around the existing Stadium has been residential and the opportunity should be taken to strengthen the urban grain of the area, whilst providing an urban “edge” to the Links. The opportunity should be taken to create a new pattern of streets containing urban blocks with landscaping and squares building on and enhancing the existing urban grain of the surrounding area. Views across the Links should be maximised where possible. It is vital that protected landscaped areas are included within any new residential layout to provide immediate amenity for residents. Views to the Links should be maximised where possible. Development on this scale will require a site specific Planning Brief.

17.4 Vehicular access to this potential development site will be from the west only. Should the Community Stadium be realised to the east of the Pittodrie site. It is likely that no vehicular access will be permitted to any residential development from Golf Road. Rather the opportunity should be taken to encourage comfortable pedestrian routes to the Links. Development of this area will have implications for access to and from King Street and it should be borne in mind that junction improvements may be required.
18 Aulton/Seaton: Football Academy

18.1 The recently completed Sports Pitch Strategy for Aberdeen identifies an oversupply of poor quality grass football pitches. Among the recommendations of the Strategy are alterations to the Aulton playing fields including demolition and rebuilding of the existing changing pavilion and improving the quality of the pitches, effectively reducing their number. As part of the Sport Infrastructure Development bid it is suggested that these pitches could be upgraded to form the basis of the outdoor facilities of a Football Academy. In order to conform to UEFA standards, it is likely that any new pitches would stretch farther north than those existing do. There are likely to be up to 10 pitches required in operating a successful Football Academy.

18.2 Any area suggested as suitable for a Football Academy must incorporate landscape improvements within its layout. Sensitive earth modelling and associated landscape treatments will not only help to reduce the visual impact and enhance landscape and wildlife diversity, but also provide a degree of shelter from the prevailing winds.

18.3 The cat and dog home currently occupies a site central to the Aulton pitches and King’s Links golf course. If relocation of the existing home could be considered, this site would present an ideal opportunity for a new building housing the changing facilities required for association with a soccer academy together with modernised club-house facilities for the golf course. It is likely that a Football Academy will maintain control over the use of the pitches. Public access across the Links must be maintained as far as practicable.

19 Linksfield: Sports Facilities Bid

19.1 Currently occupied by Linksfield Academy (which includes a community centre, public library, swimming pool and dental clinic), the School for the Deaf, the Chris Anderson Stadium, hockey pitch, East End Football Club and East End Social Club, this site forms the heart of the North Beach Study area. The site has been identified by both the Cities Growth Fund and the Sports Infrastructure Development Bid as suitable base for a Centre of Sporting Excellence for the Northeast.
19.2 The area is currently designated R2 Mixed Residential, a policy designation which would allow the introduction of uses complementary to residential areas. Facilities proposed for this site as part of the Sports Infrastructure Development bid concentrate around major sports centre, which would include regional facilities for athletics and hockey, to be developed jointly by Aberdeen City Council and the University of Aberdeen at Linksfield. It is likely that the proposal could include new-build reception, social and administration accommodation, changing facilities, a games hall complex for a variety of indoor sports, refurbishment of the Chris Anderson Stadium, a new indoor athletics straight, a refurbished hockey pitch, a field house (indoor or covered full sized pitch), and car parking facilities.

19.3 It is not within the remit of this Draft Study to provide a specific layout for the Sports Infrastructure Development. Rather the general aim to provide the above accommodation in a phased programme of delivery is considered acceptable on this site. Any new construction will require to be of the highest architectural quality, with an emphasis on contemporary design fitting for the 21st Century aims of the future of Sports Development in the region.

19.4 It is desirable to make a positive urban design statement in the gap site on King Street. This will have the benefit of both creating a strong building line on a major route to the City Centre and announcing the development. The preferred access points to the Linksfield site are from the King Street transport corridor. Major access to the site from either Linksfield Road or Regent Walk must endeavour to reduce conflict with local residential amenity.

19.5 Given the number of activities proposed, there will be pressure on the footprint of the site in attempting to accommodate all potential uses. It is essential that a multi level car park with the flexibility to serve all the proposed uses be considered. A single facility could provide an economic use of parking which has the opportunity to enhance the shared capacity, with the possible result that parking levels could be downgraded. This should not be considered as merely a means to maximise development across the site. Rather concentration of the parking will allow greater emphasis to be placed on landscaping the surrounding areas where space may be at a premium.

19.6 Increasing the potential for significant landscaping on the site will not only help create the quality of environment expected from such a major facility, but it will also assist in providing a Sustainable Urban Drainage System which must be incorporated within any new development. It therefore follows that minimising the areas of hard surfacing will be advantageous.

19.7 As Aberdeen University would be involved in any proposed development it is desirable to form pedestrian links from the Linksfield site to the King’s College campus. This could be by way of a simple crossing point, or by the construction of an underpass or by a new bridge link. In any case, quality of design will be crucial to the success of the link. A well-designed comfortable pedestrian link will encourage students and staff from the University campus not to take their cars across King Street.

19.8 Should any plans for the Sports Infrastructure Development progress, options for the future of East End FC will have to be considered. These include remaining on the Linksfield site, relocating within the site as part of a new sports development or relocation to the north in association with a new soccer academy.

20 Seaton/Donmouth: Mosque and Community Centre

20.1 The principle of a Mosque and Community Centre on this site was ratified along with a number of changes
to the Local Plan at Council on 1st May 2002. This proposal will be included in the new Local Plan, the content of which has still to be finalised. Further examination of the detailed site boundaries of this community service proposal is required, including a planning brief. This brief should be expanded to cover the north Seaton area, including Seaton Primary School, and explore the possibility of new residential development to the west of any new access road. Informal discussions with the Mosque Committee have indicated that it may possible to initiate a design competition for the Mosque building.

21 Seaton Community

21.1 Due regard must be paid to developer contributions as identified in the Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan 2001-2016, Policy 13.

21.2 Proposals for new community facilities must be in convenient locations, which are readily and safely accessible, particularly to public transport, pedestrians and cyclists. Sites should be identified in consultation with local community groups and appropriate organisations. Sites will be reserved for community facilities within new development areas if a likely need is identified at an early stage.

21.3 The public consultation process undertaken with the Draft of this Study highlighted the community wish for the existing community centre on School Road to be rebuilt on or near its present site. Local residents also expressed their desire to ensure that the existing Linksfield swimming pool is retained until such time as a decision is made regarding the potential for a 50m pool in the North Beach area.

21.4 Seaton Primary School is currently under review as part of the 3Rs project. Aberdeen City Council’s 3Rs Project (Reorganise, Renovate and Rebuild) will see Aberdeen’s schools made fit for the 21st-century. Currently being investigated are proposals for a new-build primary school, incorporating a nursery, new community school and Special Education Needs facilities. It is envisaged that this may be constructed largely within the grounds of the existing primary school, however this may require an extension to the existing school boundary.

21.5 The area surrounding Seaton Primary School currently presents a fragmented image to the Links. The possible introduction of extending Golf Road to form a new link road to Bridge of Don would create a definitive boundary to the area. This could allow the area immediately surrounding the school, to the east and north, to be developed for residential use. By expanding the housing, the resultant effect would be the school forming more a of a “heart” to the Seaton area rather than sitting on the periphery as it currently does.

22 Transport

22.1 The introduction of several major public facilities will inevitably increase the pressures on access to the Draft Study area. A comprehensive transport study based on a micro-simulation modelling exercise, which could be linked to the existing City Centre model, must be prepared. It must address access by car, cycling, walking, public transport etc.

22.2 Initial ideas include the construction of a new access route effectively extending Golf Road to Donmouth. This would have the advantage of relieving pressure on King Street and assist in providing alternative potential access points to the various sites in the Draft Study area. Possible extension of Golf Road could relieve any potential pressure on the roads and have a calming influence on the Seaton community. In addition a new road would provide a definite “edge” to the fragmented built up area at Seaton. To the west of this possible new route, development could occur, including the possible rebuilding of Seaton Primary
School, whilst to the east and across the Links, no new building would be constructed other than those specifically mentioned in this Draft Study.

22.3 It is important the any new road provides access to each of the proposed development sites and does not operate as a continuous link road through the area. There should be a definite “break” in the access road, possibly at the proposed Community Stadium site to prevent a through route being misused. The “break” provided should still allow public transport to filter through in the form of a “bus gate” or similar.

22.4 The possibility of introducing a Light Rail Transit system must be explored as part of the connectivity of this whole proposal. The public transport links between the Joint Station and the King Street area are good at present. However, only one bus service runs along Golf Road. It is suggested that a small LRT system could run on a loop from the central shopping area, possibly linking with the proposed pedestrianised area of Union Street, through the Castlegate and down the Beach Boulevard, linking the City Centre to the Beach. The LRT could then form a circular route along Golf Road up towards Bridge of Don and return along King Street, or the Beach Esplanade, or both. There are currently light tram systems available that are powered by a combination of LPG and a “fly-wheel” that require no external power supply to be associated with the rail network. Rails can be laid on a temporary basis with no damage to existing surfaces and could be relocated or extended to suit the development as it grows. Further feasibility work is required to determine the appropriate design solution for this area.

22.5 In general, the parking provision for each new use in the area should be provided on the site allocated that use. However, the possible concentration of sports facilities on the Linksfield site will add pressure to the available land. The possibility of introducing a multi-level car park should be considered within the site. It will be necessary to ensure such a facility has minimal impact on neighbouring residential properties.

23 Environmental Impact Assessment

23.1 It is essential that an Environmental Impact Assessment, in addition to a comprehensive Transport Study, be carried out at the earliest opportunity. Clearly the scale and form of development proposed will have a major impact on the existing infrastructure of the Draft Study area. An EIA at the earliest stage will inform the development principles of the area and assist greatly in the planning process. Given the number of sites involved and the extent of the area of the Draft Study, it is suggested that an EIA be undertaken as part of a masterplanning exercise for the whole area. This is essential in establishing the development framework for the area.

24 Consultation

24.1 Consultation is vital to the success of implementing planning framework for any area, and in this respect the North Beach is no different. A major consultation exercise has been carried out, the results of which are detailed in a report to the Planning Committee at their meeting on 6 November 2003. Generally, the Study has been well-received and there is widespread support for the proposed initiatives.

25 Joint Approach to Redevelopment

25.1 It is important to recognise and credit the joint approach to redevelopment of the area currently being undertaken by Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeen University, Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen College and Aberdeen Football Club. By endeavouring to work together these partners have created the opportunity for a more comprehensive sports infrastructure for the City.
Conclusion

26 This Planning Study sets out a possible framework for redevelopment that should be considered adaptable in terms of the uses on various sites within the North Beach area. Following on from consultation over the Draft, the next stage in progressing with the Study is to establish feasibility and masterplanning of the whole of the Beach area. The ideas and issues in this document present an exciting opportunity not only for the Beach area, but also for the City as a whole. It must also be recognised, however, that the suggested proposals contained within the Study will have a major impact on both the environment and the economy of the City and it will be necessary to embark on further detailed feasibility work.

27 It is clear from the Study that there are three key areas of potential development. These can be broadly defined as Pittodrie/driving range/cricket pitch to the south, Linksfield in the centre and Seaton/Donmouth to the north. Each of these sites and the uses proposed on them present a number of challenges in layout and design and would warrant site specific Planning Briefs in their own right. However, it would be far more valuable to consider masterplanning the whole of the Beach area to effectively integrate each of the various uses and determine the practicalities of satisfactorily developing within the constraints of the various sites. A masterplan has the advantage of being able to address an Environmental Impact Assessment and incorporate detailed traffic analysis at the earliest stage, both of which greatly help to inform the design process.

28 The issues identified within this Study form the basis of a tremendous opportunity to create a focus of sporting and leisure activity for the whole City. The ideas presented have been received favourably by the public. It is important that the citizens of Aberdeen continue to have the opportunity to offer their own ideas and views on each stage in the delivery of this vision.
North Beach Planning Study

October 2003

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