

100 Acre Hill (Port Dundas)

Urban Design Framework – The Brief: An Invitation to help us deliver something different

“A city is more than a place in space, it is a drama in time”, (Patrick Geddes).

Let’s play our part.

- Introduction

- 100 Acre Hill is one of the key priorities of the Glasgow Canal Regeneration Partnership, a Joint Venture delivery vehicle formed between Glasgow City Council, Scottish Canals, **BIGG Regeneration**, and Isis Waterside Regeneration.
- This Partnership was established to bring forward the regeneration of Glasgow’s Canal, with the main focus of activity so far being the delivery of a residential led Masterplan at Maryhill Locks, and the establishment of a new creative neighbourhood at Speirs Locks.
- Specifically, the development of 100 Acre Hill (including day to day project management of the Urban Design process) will be brought forward by **BIGG Regeneration**, itself a JV between Scottish Canals [www.scottishcanals.co.uk] and the Igloo Regeneration Fund. This fund is a partnership of pension, life and charity funds, fund managed by Aviva Investors, which invests in sustainable urban regeneration across the UK. See <http://www.igloo.uk.net/>. The Urban Design Framework and the subsequent development will be managed by igloo regeneration [www.iglooregeneration.co.uk].
- BIGG Regeneration firmly believes that Urban Design is a collective art, and that true, sustainable place-making can only happen through effective partnership – for this reason, at all stages of delivery, a collaborative approach will be taken, to ensure that everyone can contribute, from the City Council and local communities, to the neighbouring creative industries, artists and urban sports pioneers.
- Bigg is working closely with Diageo from whom they are buying the site. The partners all share the objective of maximising the positive impact of the development on the value of the site, financially, socially and environmentally.

- Location & Context

- 100 Acre Hill sits to the north of the city centre, elevated above Glasgow’s Canal. From this vantage point – one of the highest in the city - the site enjoys almost 360 degree vistas across Glasgow and beyond.
- The ‘red line’ on the Site Plan forms only one piece of the Port Dundas jigsaw. The selected Urban Design team will also need to consider, and illustrate, how proposals for 100 Acre Hill relate to spatial options and ideas for the rest of the Port Dundas neighbourhood. For this purpose, a ‘blue line’ strategic boundary plan is attached. This is best explained by reference to the Planning Charrette that took place in March / April 2014.

- And beyond that, the team will also need to be aware of and understand what else is happening in the wider area – this will be explained on appointment, but includes the emergence of a creative neighbourhood ‘next door’ at Speirs Locks, the first steps being taken towards the regeneration of the Applecross / Firhill area, to include a local nature reserve etc and the regeneration of Sighthill.
- Description & Historical Development
- 100 Acre Hill has a quite unique topography. As one of Glasgow’s 180 drumlins, it has both influenced, and been influenced by, the establishment and growth of distilleries on the site since the 18th century.
 - To cater for this industrial growth and single use, the owners created and carved out a very bespoke landform from the hillside – one defined by a series of ‘platforms’ that allowed different uses, facilities and buildings to be added over time. In turn, this created a quite unique skyline and profile, most particularly with a tall chimney becoming a landmark for the north.
 - In contrast to the hillside, the site also has a southern edge and boundary with North Canal Bank Street and the Glasgow Canal. This lower street level was historically where the owners located the tallest buildings, with the site rising behind.
- Transport, Access & Movement
- Whilst the site is within reasonable walking distance of the city centre, public transport services in the immediate vicinity are almost nil – the location is therefore classed as ‘Below Base Accessibility’ in City Plan 2.
 - This could be a challenge, as Policy TRANS 2 states that residential and leisure proposals should normally be in locations that at least meet Base Level Accessibility. If not, public transport provision may need to be improved.
 - However, in this situation, where the Subway system and city centre are only approximately 1-1.5km from the site, (a reasonable distance to walk or cycle), the key will be to significantly improve cycling and walking links. This will be supported by boosting the Car Club and Bike Hire infrastructure presently being rolled out across Glasgow. NB - this assumption must be tested with Glasgow City Council at the earliest opportunity.
 - In this respect, existing pedestrian and cycling connections are poor, particularly for those wishing to travel north, or go south to the city centre. To the west, the situation improves, with the site relatively close to the Metal Petals underpass that connects the Speirs Locks area to Cowcaddens and the city centre. The attractiveness of this underpass as a route is in direct contrast to the hostile environment of the Dobbies Loan underpass at Port Dundas.
 - In terms of roads, the main access routes to and from the site are Pinkston Road on the east side, Craighall Road to the west, and the M8 on the southern edge. North Canal Bank Street, Payne Street, Townsend Street and Mid Wharf Street provide both more local access within the wider Port Dundas area.
 - Borrone Street is the key access route linking North Canal Bank Street to Craighall Road. However, there is no connection from Borrone Street to Keppochill Road,

which means access from the north is convoluted, coming via Craighall Road direct, or via an awkward junction of Craighall Road into Borron Street. To the south, Craighall Road links under the M8 to Dobbies Loan and the City Centre.

- Potential improvements have already been identified, including a possible new walking and cycling route from Borron Street to Keppochhill Road, and improved connectivity to the regeneration at Sighthill.

- Vision Statement

- Port Dundas is of such a scale and prominence that it offers the Canal Partnership a rare opportunity – an opportunity to help guide, deliver, foster and support the creation of a new part of the city.
- **100 Acre Hill lies at the heart of this opportunity and gives BIGG Regeneration the chance to do what it does best. Deliver a residential led, creative mixed use scheme (targeted at the city centre living creative sector), together with meanwhile and longer term urban adventure sport uses.**
- Given the topography of the site and its mix of challenges and opportunities, it is expected that the urban design framework will be imaginative and progressive, with its very own character and content.
- A landmark within green public realm is anticipated at the top of the hill; the historic street pattern is likely to form the main circulation; and the south facing frontage to North Canal Bank Street and the canal is expected to be the main focus of active uses.
- **Added to that, the delivery process, which will be led by Custom Builders, (co-designing their own homes), and other uses, in a context of wider neighbourhood renewal, will be a new, ground breaking approach for Scotland.**

- Key Challenges – Design & Delivery

- That's the Vision. The easy bit. It's now worth taking a moment to gather the thoughts and reflect on what the key challenges to delivery will be – these seem to be as follows;
- Topography – typically, a process of contextual analysis would help inform the future urban form for the site. However, in this case, this may be of limited use – the biggest driver for the design will be the quite unique topography formed through the single previous industrial use of the site.
- The steep gradients and platforms will have massive implications in terms of where and how spaces and buildings are placed and arranged – in so doing, the Masterplan will need to take advantage of views and vistas; consider the opportunity for landmarks; and deal with the definition between public and private spaces. It's a complex jigsaw that must be solved.
- In some respects, this transformation echoes some building refurbishment projects, where former industrial warehouses have been transformed into characterful places to live and work. See The Whisky Bond.

- The key to this process has often been to carefully reveal the new character, by adopting an approach that has both been honest and true to the original function, and has minimised the scale of intervention and change.
- *Therefore, the biggest challenge to the design team will be to come up with a cost effective way to transform this industrial landform into a residential led, creative mixed use place.*
- Movement – the topography will also present challenges in terms of internal access arrangements and circulation around the site, both on a north-south and an east-west axis.
- Green and Blue Infrastructure – following on from above, an essential part of the design process will be to ensure that water management through SUDS plays a central role in place making, (dubbed ‘water sensitive urban design’ by CIRIA).
- *Put simply, the cost effective integration of built form, topography, landscape and green infrastructure will determine the success of this project.*
- Top of the Hill – during the Charrette, there was a lot of discussion around the potential for the 100 Acre hilltop to be developed both as a citywide destination for recreation and as a landmark, perhaps with the introduction of iconic structures incorporating a viewing structure and/or alternative energy features such as turbines or solar fields.
- Such features, building on recent initiatives promoted by the City Council and the presence of alternative energy companies in the vicinity, symbolise sustainability, technology and innovation; they would not only be attractions in themselves but also become visible and memorable markers at what is a key arrival point to Glasgow.
- *Consideration must be given to the opportunity presented by the Hilltop, for uses such as urban sports, parkland or as a location for world class public art, such as the Land Art Generator Initiative proposal.*
- North Canal Bank Street – whilst the hillside is one challenge, the street side is another. The lower level obviously has the strongest frontage available at the site, and it is therefore a place where commercial uses, creative workspace, cultural activities and independent retail could be located. How these are delivered, most likely with housing (including Custom Build) above, needs to be considered carefully.
- Also, the application of Designing Streets style ideas to North Canal Bank Street should be considered, so the street becomes a place in its own right – allied to this, the opportunity to create a new waterfront definitely exists here, though mitigating noise impact from the motorway will be an important consideration.
- *i.e. the North Canal Bank Street ‘section’ will be a key issue to resolve, including mix of uses, servicing, parking and access issues.*
- Microclimate and Comfort Zone – an important part of the urban design will be to consider in detail how the local climatic conditions can be ameliorated (or enhanced) through the design. There is noise, pollution, rain and prevailing winds to be mitigated; there are also south facing opportunities to create warm sheltered outdoor places.

- The design also needs to consider the impact of climate change and the potential for adapting to future changes in climate.
 - Energy - the development will seek to minimise carbon usage and the production of greenhouse gases. There may be opportunities for area based energy and heat networks.
 - Meanwhile Uses, (And Beyond) – given the scale of change required, and the likely timeframe for delivery over a period of many years, the need to animate the space from the early days will be key. In the first instance, these uses will act as major catalysts for change, before some will hopefully become embedded as long term features of the place.
 - *The implementation of a meanwhile use (and beyond) strategy will be critical to changing the perception and raising awareness of the place.*
 - Transport, Access & Movement – the lack of public transport serving the area could act as a significant ‘Policy’ constraint on the regeneration proposals. However, provided that significant improvements are made to cycling and walking links between the site and the city centre, (such as those planned for Dobbie Loan and Sighthill), this constraint should be overcome.
- Mix of Uses
- As noted above, the Vision is for 100 Acre Hill to be a residential led creative mixed use development.
 - Housing – it is envisaged that the development will contain a range of densities and house types, at different locations across the site. Each development parcel will differ, but collectively, the density must support delivery of other uses, and create enough buzz to animate the spaces in the neighbourhood.
 - *As well as across the site as a whole, a range of housetypes should, where possible, be contained within each parcel, so as to provide a choice of homes to the buying public when the development and sales process starts.*
 - This is a view shared by Savills, who advised that;
 - *“We are of the opinion that the success of Port Dundas cannot be based upon a particular unit type. We think a diversity of product type will appeal to a much wider buying public”.*
 - More specifically, the following was added re buyer profile;
 - *“We believe that the market in Port Dundas will be attractive to young professionals, young couples and young families. We think it has the potential to become a trendy location which is accessible to people getting onto the property ladder but also those looking for something different in City Living. The aim will be to create a new quarter in the City but we think the key will be affordability, initially, and sustainability”.*
 - In terms of a likely mix, Savills proposed;
 - 2 & 3 bed terraced - 65% of mix
 - 3 & 4 bed townhouses, villas – 10% of mix
 - 1 & 2 bed apartments 25% of mix

- This will be tested and considered in more detail during the urban design process, but is a useful 'starter for 10'.
- Custom Build - Plots for Custom Build schemes for terraced housing and apartments will be the main market differentiator for this project. The requirements of the Custom Build process will be explained to the successful design team.
- Again, Savills endorsed this concept, noting that;
- *"Custom built units will also be very warmly received by a buying public keen for something different and we think there is massive untapped potential for such. Creating innovative product will help rebrand the destination and again we think this is an important aspect to set apart this regeneration project from others.*
- *In terms of the buyer profile, Savills added that, "Custom Build product may open up the site to a range of buyers keen to have their own home design but unwilling to endure the chore of building it themselves. This is more likely to be a second buyer, with some equity looking for a contemporary location yet within a stone's throw of all that they need to accommodate their lifestyle. These buyers are likely to be in their 30's with a young family or not yet at that stage".*
- Density – City Plan 2 Policy RES 1 states that for Inner Urban Areas (the site is classed as such), the density in Base Level Accessibility areas should be between 30 – 100 homes per hectare. It is anticipated that the density at 100 Acre Hill will sit somewhere in between, at around 65 homes per ha, (say 26-30 per acre).
- Policy RES 1 also notes that for sites of 5 ha plus, (such as 100 Acre Hill), the density should be determined by the Local Development Strategy and/or Masterplan for the site, taking account of any improvements to public transport that will be delivered, (in our case, this should be active travel options). As with the TRANS 2 Policy, this assumption and strategy must be tested with Glasgow City Council at the earliest opportunity.
- Car Parking – Policy TRANS 4 states that in areas of Base Level Accessibility, the minimum provision should be 1 space per home, plus 25% for visitors. However, given the improvements to walking and cycling links that will be delivered at Port Dundas, as well as the emergence of successful Car Clubs and Bike Hire schemes in Glasgow, this ratio will be tested with Glasgow City Council early in the urban design process to confirm whether a reduction can be justified.
- Commercial – given that delivery of traditional stand-alone commercial development is not viable, (or particularly compatible with the Vision), commercial activity is most likely to be focused on active ground floor uses along North Canal Bank Street, with end users to include creative workspace, cultural, leisure and independent retail uses.
- Meanwhile Uses, and Beyond – these must not be forgotten and considered an after-thought. It will be essential that other meanwhile and longer term urban adventure sport uses are delivered - the latter will add

to the newly delivered Paddle Sports and wakeboarding centres and proposed skate park that will help differentiate the location and raise its profile.

- Green and Blue Infrastructure / Suds – as noted elsewhere, the integration of the SUDS will be key, and this should be done in a way that creates visual interest. This should be part of a Green / Blue Infrastructure Plan that includes growing spaces, children’s play zones, parkland areas and, if feasible, outdoor sports facilities. These will all be assessed with reference to Glasgow City Council ENV2 Policy on Open Space Provision.
- Art / Land Art Generator Initiative – as noted in the Port Dundas vision, the aspiration is to embed art in all that is done in the area. This includes an opportunity to signify and celebrate the regeneration through the delivery of a significant artwork at the top of the hill. Early discussions have taken place with the Land Art Generator Initiative [www.landartgenerator.org] to explore the potential for delivery of a world class public art installation that generates clean energy.
- The opportunistic and incremental must not be forgotten and should be encouraged too. E.g. [Playable City](#).

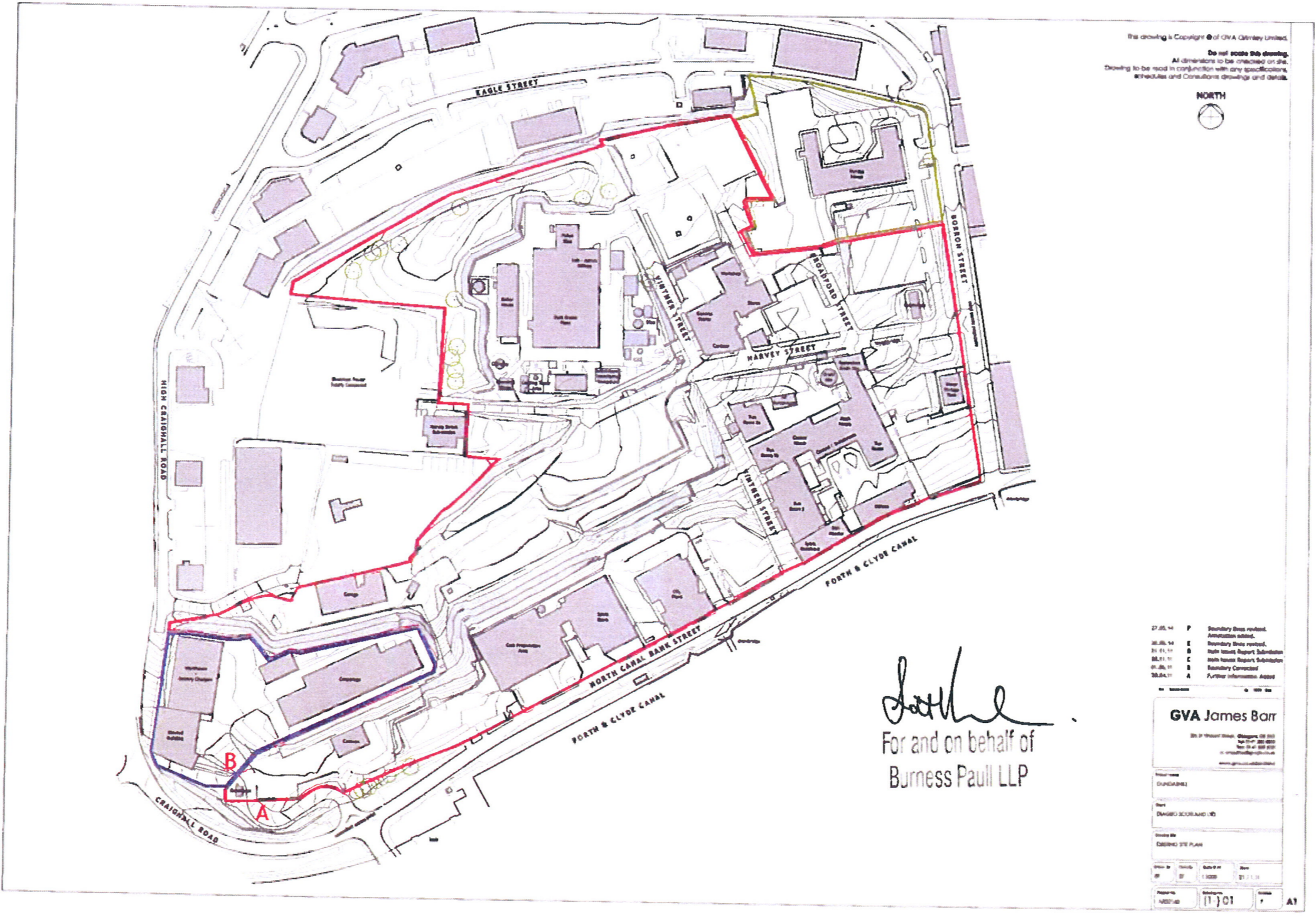
- Delivery Strategy

- The Masterplan for 100 Acre Hill must provide for the site being divided up into a series of development parcels, framed by a hierarchy of streets, and green and blue spaces.
- This design approach will allow for different developers and different designers to take forward delivery of each parcel over time. Guided by a Design Code (which will become individual plot design codes), this will introduce diversity and character into the fabric of the place, whilst ensuring a consistent quality.
- Ideally, the criteria for these parcels will be as follows;
 - They must be cost efficient in terms of remediation, site profiling, drainage and infrastructure delivery.
 - They must provide for;
 - The delivery of a mix of housetypes – the site section and existing arrangement of platforms will allow for different typologies and building heights to be delivered in different locations. *NB – a range of housetype within each parcel should also be considered, so as to provide a choice of homes to the buying public when the sales process starts.*
 - The provision of other uses, including creative workspace, cultural, leisure and independent retail uses – these are likely to be concentrated on North Canal Bank Street.
 - *A first phase, for development by BIGG Regeneration must be identified, capable of accommodating around 100 terraced plots for Custom Build. These plots are likely to be 6m wide.*

- The parcels should range in size, to provide delivery opportunities for a range of partners, from Custom Build Groups looking to self-develop an apartment block together to larger housebuilders.
 - However, whilst not absolute, it is likely that the maximum number of homes in any one phase will be 100.
 - Consideration will also need to be given to;
 - Minimising construction disturbance for the first occupiers from subsequent phases of development and achieving sales kerb appeal.
 - Where, when and how the parcels join together – for example, ‘seams’ along rear boundaries maybe easier to deliver than those in areas of quality public realm.
 - Configuration of the parcels and infrastructure in such a way that allows successive developers to deliver the infrastructure required for the next phase of development.
 - How Meanwhile Uses can be delivered as the development progresses.
 - Ultimately, a Phasing Plan will be a key outcome from the Preliminary Urban Design Framework, (see below).
- Design Aspirations / Standards
 - In coming forward with an Urban Design for a unique site, there will be rules and regulations, policies and procedures to satisfy. However, there may be opportunities to be brave, and to try and break with the orthodoxy – as a minimum, questions should be asked where required.
 - As a starter for 10, here is the list of likely standards to be addressed;
 - Igloo Footprint Policy
 - Creating Places – the Scottish Govt Policy Statement on Design
 - GCC Design Guide for New Residential Areas
 - Designing Streets
 - GCC City Plan – GVA James Barr is preparing a Summary on Key Policy issues
- Brief & Programme
 - To grasp the opportunity to its fullest, and to address the challenges in a creative way, BIGG Regeneration wants high quality design to take centre stage - this will help add value and aid delivery; and help release and capture the true potential of what is a very special place.
 - To do this will require the best designers – that’s where you come in.
 - BIGG Regeneration now wishes to appoint an Urban Designer(s) to lead on the preparation of the Urban Design for 100 Acre Hill. This will be commissioned in stages, (NB – a full Design Team is being assembled for the project);
 - **Stage 1a – March – April 2015** – preparation of illustrated **Design Principles** showing how the rest of Port Dundas will look and feel like when 100 Acre Hill is completed.

- These Design Principles will inform and illustrate the **Supplementary Planning Guidance** for the area – to be prepared by Glasgow City Council - and will of course provide the context for the Urban Design Framework for 100 Acre Hill.
- It is envisaged that the Design Principles will address the key spaces, nodes and connectivity improvements as highlighted on the Plan at Page 30 of the Planning Charrette Report, including;
 - 100 Acre Hill
 - Port Dundas Island Site
 - Dobbie Loan underpass and connection via ex-container site
 - North Canal Bank Street and waterfront, (incl. sports uses)
 - Connections and links to the Sighthill Masterplan
- Ultimately, the Planning Guidance (incorporating the Design Principles) will put in place clear parameters for the place, and will also explain what supporting infrastructure and public realm is expected to be delivered by who, and when.
- **Stage 1b – April – June 2015** - preparation of a **Preliminary Urban Design Framework** for the site. This will be carried out at the same time as an intrusive Site Investigation and will, together, allow for the design quality and financial viability to be tested by assessing the issues listed in the attached Design Team Tasks schedule.
- **Stage 2 – August 2015 – January 2016** - subject to the project demonstrating viability and satisfying design quality benchmarks, the next step will be the preparation, submission and negotiation of an application for **Planning Permission in Principle** for the Project. This will have two functions;
 - Establishing the acceptability of the Urban Design proposal, in principle
 - Putting in place a Design Code for the development, to govern the assembly of the place over time. It is envisaged that this will be a short document, providing a succinct description of what is required from each delivery partner, i.e. what are the key issues that will determine how the place looks, feels and functions.
- Throughout each of the stages above, a process of engagement with key stakeholders will be continued, but in such a way as to not engender a feeling of consultation fatigue among the audience – it is hoped that this will allow for those who participated in the Charrette to be updated as the proposals emerge, in line with what was agreed at the outset. It is also likely that some 'off-site' engagement with the creative community in Glasgow will take place, to ensure that its ideas and ambitions for the place are captured fully.

- Technical Information –
 - The following will be made available, either prior to or during the urban design process;
 - **Port Dundas**
 - o Planning Charrette Report
 - o Sighthill Masterplan and bridge proposals
 - o Transport modelling studies
 - o Cycle route proposed improvements
 - **100 Acre Hill**
 - o Topo and measured survey , including plans showing remaining below ground infrastructure, founds etc
 - o Constraints Plan – incl. utilities, Site Investigation outputs etc
 - o EMF report on adjacent sub-station
 - o Draft Surface Water Management Plan (by AECOM)
 - o Ecological constraints plan
 - o Local climate studies – ideally hourly wind, rain and temperature data
 - o Local pollution studies, incl. noise issues with M8
 - o Advice on road gradients within the site
- Contacts
 - BIGG Regeneration Lead Contacts – Gary Watt & John Sherry
 - Secondary Contact – Chris Brown
 - Scottish Canals - Katie Hughes, Chris Breslin
- Stakeholder Contacts
 - GCC – Fiona Campbell, DRS
 - Diageo – c/o Eric Forgie, GVA James Barr



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- 27.05.14 F Boundary lines revised.
- 28.05.14 E Annotation added.
- 31.01.11 B Boundary lines revised.
- 28.11.11 C Bath House Report Submission
- 01.06.11 B Boundary Corrected
- 28.04.11 A Further Information Added

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Site:
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Project No:
 DUNDEE SITE PLAN

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