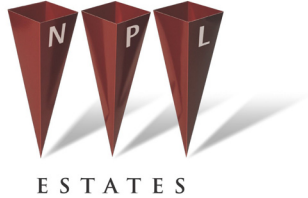


Ardeer Peninsula Masterplan

Executive Summary



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Introduction

The adopted North Ayrshire Local Plan (Excluding the Isle of Arran) 2005 requires that a comprehensive masterplan be produced setting out a framework, programme and justification for the regeneration of the Ardeer Peninsula. Ardeer has been identified at the highest level in the Draft National Planning Framework 2 and in the Scottish Government's Regeneration Strategy as a site of national regeneration importance. This site is the largest brownfield regeneration site in Scotland and one of the largest in the UK.

The proposed development framework detailed in the Ardeer Peninsula Masterplan promotes development that provides a catalyst for economic growth and regeneration, retaining just under 1000 existing jobs and attracting new employment, helping to create an additional 1600 direct jobs. It is also anticipated that the masterplan will result in the creation of many indirect jobs for example in construction, transport, facilities management, as well as new employment arising from the extension of the local community such as shops and other services. The masterplan proposals also seeks to attract visitors and further investment adding to the local economy over the longer term. The masterplan proposals will protect and enhance the site's significant ecological value through a committed programme of stewardship. Inward investment into the site will be in excess of £500m.

This executive summary document provides a summary of work undertaken to date by the main landowner NPL Estates, and their consultants in partnership with North Ayrshire Council (NAC).

NPL Estates have been working and investing in the Ardeer Peninsula since 2002. NPL Estates is one of the UK's leading privately-owned brownfield regeneration, remediation and land development companies with a solid track record across the UK and mainland Europe. NPL Estates have in depth knowledge and experience of large difficult sites and have delivered value in place of dereliction. NPL Estates approaches regeneration as a team effort, drawing on its own in-house expertise and partnering with central and local government and the local

communities in which it operates. This approach has been extremely successful on the Hillhouse site in Lancashire. Quoted by many as the sister site to Ardeer, this 324 hectare (800 acre) site once owned by ICI experienced similar problems to Ardeer such as disinvestment and lack of opportunity and interest. Working with the local authority, planning consents were granted to allow enabling elements of development such as housing to prime pump re-investment in infrastructure, roads, services and industrial uses and at the same time where required remediate land and allow public access to areas locked away for years by the industrial process. In 2003 there were 400 employees remaining on site operating through a handful of businesses. The site now has 45 businesses, employing more than 1400 people.

It is expected that the Ardeer Peninsula Masterplan will form a material consideration in the context of future development management decisions for proposals within the masterplan boundary. Further to discussions with NAC, it is intended that the masterplan be approved as supplementary planning guidance (SPG) and used to inform the future local development plan. It is anticipated that Ardeer Peninsula Masterplan will be formally recognised as SPG by the end of 2008.

Until the masterplan is approved development on the site is effectively sterilised. A number of key employers who have approached NPL Estates with a view to moving into the site have been unable to pursue their interest as a result of the effective halt on the planning process until the masterplan has been approved.

Objectives of the Masterplan

A series of objectives has been established, developed in consultation with NAC. These will ensure the site is developed in a responsible and sustainable manner, without prejudicing local communities and existing users of the site.

The core objectives of the masterplan as a regeneration strategy are:

- Remediation
- Employment Creation, Protection and Enhancement
- Protection and Environmental Enhancement
- Promotion of a Sustainable Community

Remediation

The masterplan area comprises an extensively modified landscape, used for over a century for a variety of industrial purposes, in particular for the manufacture of explosives. The historical industrial uses have left behind a legacy of ground contamination and their demise has also resulted in substantial areas of dereliction. The nature of the ground contamination prevents the site being easily reused without first being remediated. The re-use of this land is encouraged through Government guidance which places a sequential importance on the reuse of brownfield land in favour of greenfield. To facilitate the re-use of this brownfield land, an effective programme of enabling development is required to support the necessary remediation and regeneration. In the Ardeer area there is a proven local demand for land for a range of uses. Site remediation will provide a platform and catalyst for the regeneration of the area. The total costs of remediation on the site is in excess of £13m. Without significant investment the site will remain sterilized from future development and the economic and employment fortunes of the site will continue to decline.

Employment Creation Protection & Enhancement

Jobs are the key to the regeneration of Ardeer. The masterplan seeks to protect and enhance existing employment, and to increase and diversify the range of local employment options. It will help to attract investment by providing a range of flexible accommodation across the spectrum of tenures, and will exploit the site for strategic and high profile uses. Through the process of regeneration it will create ongoing job opportunities for skilled trades people.

Protection and Enhancement of the Environment

The site is surrounded by areas of significant ecological value, from dune grasslands to the mudflats of the Irvine and Garnock Rivers. A key regeneration objective is the retention of these habitats and their enhancement through a committed programme of stewardship and opening up these areas to the wider community by encouraging public access through education facilities and pro-active nature conservation.

Promotion of a Sustainable Community

It is an objective of the masterplan to encourage development that represents a sustainable community extension to the existing settlement.



Figure 2: Site location in regional context



Figure 1: Site location in national context



Figure 3: Aerial image of site

The Site and Surrounds

The Ardeer Peninsula is situated on the west coast of Scotland (Figure 1), approximately 28 miles to the south west of Glasgow, at the mouth of the Garnock Estuary between Ardeer/Stevenston and Irvine in North Ayrshire, Scotland. (Figure 2) The masterplan site extends to approximately 926ha (2290 acres).

Until 1998, the site was the home to several ICI plants, previously the largest explosives plants in the world and home to Alfred Nobel's Explosives Company. The site was economically important to the area and was a major cause of the establishment of the villages of Ardeer and Stevenston. The works expanded to cover the whole of the Ardeer Peninsula and the adjoining lands east of the River Garnock. Activity on the site was at its peak during the 1950-60's when site employed up to 15,000 people from the surrounding towns (Figures 4 & 5). Towards the end of the 20th century, the fortune of the explosive works declined, partly related to the reduction in the use of explosives due to the contraction of the mining industry and downward global trends in the use of explosives. As the activities and production on site declined the land actively used by the company reduced leaving much of the site derelict. There has been a basic programme of infrastructure rationalisation with some ground remediation.



Figure 4: Historic image of storage bunkers



Figure 5: Historic image of nylon works

Stevenston and Ardeer

The decline of industry in the Stevenston area has had a profoundly negative impact on the local economy. Like many towns in the west of Scotland, the vitality and viability of Stevenston town centre has also suffered in recent years due to the trend in out of town retail developments. Figure 6 shows the town centre.

The residential area of Ardeer and the Ardeer Beach Park abut the western boundary of the site and future development within the site would form an extension to this community. Figure 7 shows recent residential development in Ardeer.

Stevenston Industrial Estate and Nobel Business Park are located within the masterplan boundary. In general terms, the accommodation within both the industrial estate and the business park could be described as dated (Figure 8), however, combined they provide employment for 340 people. Clearly opportunities exist for enhancement of existing business and industry and for development of new business and industry.



Figure 6: Stevenston town centre



Figure 7: Recent residential development



Figure 8: Existing business

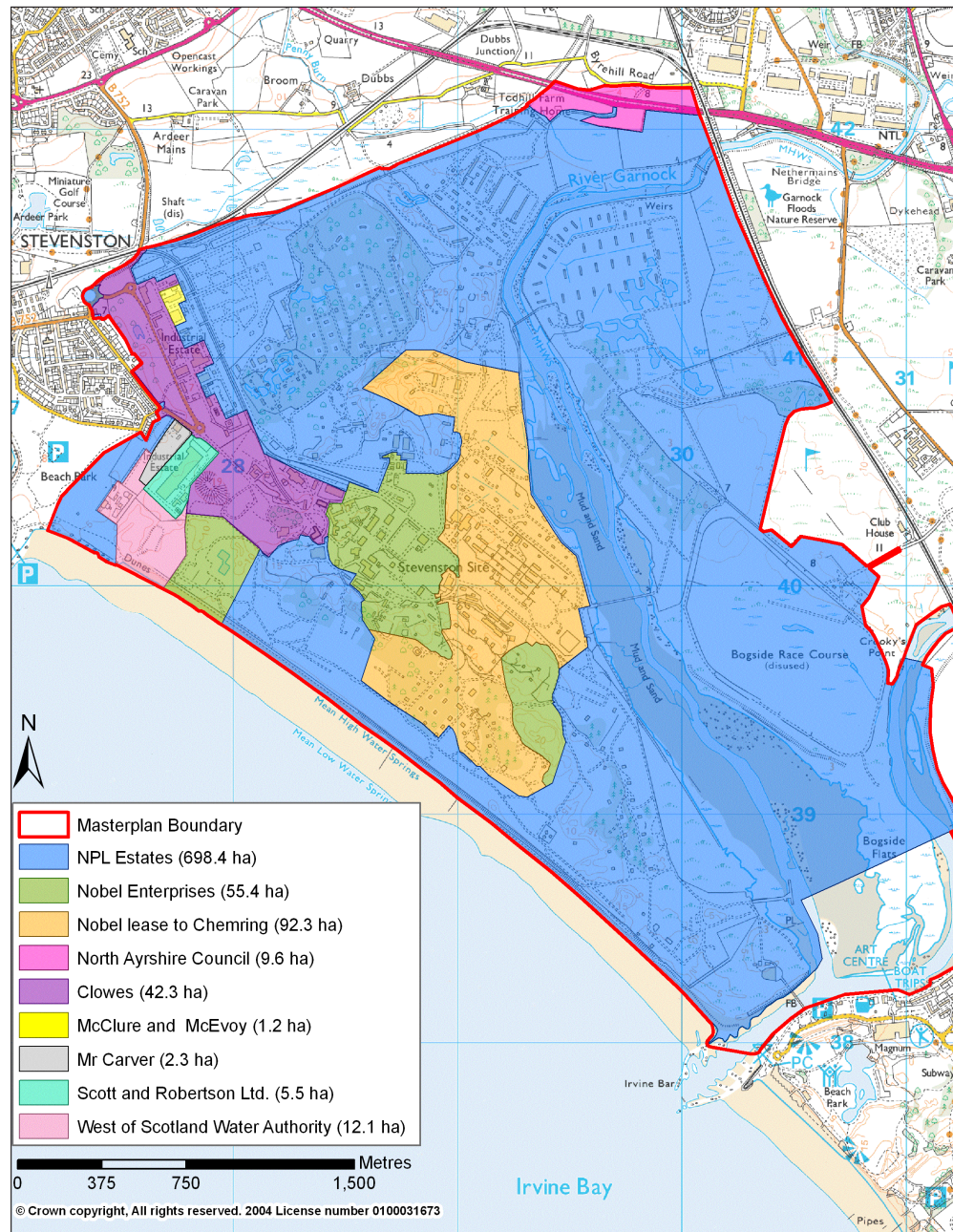


Figure 9: Landownerships and masterplan boundary

Land Ownerships and Masterplan Boundary

The principal land owners on the site are summarised below and indicated on Figure 9:

- NPL Estates
- Nobel Enterprises
- Clowes

In order to present a co-ordinated and comprehensive approach to land use planning across the whole of the Ardeer Peninsula the proposed Ardeer Masterplan includes the adjacent lands owned by others in order to ensure consistency with the activities that take place on these lands. Figure 10 illustrates the masterplan boundary.



Figure 10: Aerial image of site and boundary

Environmental, Social and Economic Development Influences

A great deal of research has been carried out in order to inform the masterplan, focused on environmental, economic and social influences. A detailed review of relevant policies, strategies and initiatives has been undertaken and detailed discussions have taken place with senior officers from NAC and Irvine Bay Urban Regeneration Company. Consultation has been carried out with key stakeholders including the local community. The development influences identified have been given full consideration during preparation of the Ardeer Peninsula Masterplan.

Summary of Development Influences

- Industrial safeguarding zones associated with existing operations
- Natural heritage, Bogside Flats is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Flood risk due to the location of the site
- Ground contamination and conditions from previous industrial activities
- The population of North Ayrshire, which has been in decline for the past 3 years, has shown a slight increase in 2007, rising by 207 people to 135,760.
- Population projections indicate that the population of North Ayrshire will decline by approximately 2.9% by 2031. Current trends suggest that the decline will be at or above this level in and around Ardeer/Stevenston.
- Ardeer/Stevenston are within an area identified by the Scottish Government as a key community regeneration area falling within the 15% most deprived zones of Scotland. NAC has identified the wards within the Three Towns as requiring specific intervention.
- The area has lost a significant number of jobs within the last 50 years.
- The number of people collecting Job Seekers Allowance in North Ayrshire currently stands at 3.9%, one of the highest rates in Scotland.

- The Stevenston area is ranked 3rd in North Ayrshire in terms of unemployment with a rate of 6.3%
- There is a large supply of general industrial land throughout North Ayrshire, a legacy of its industrial past. Much of this is under-utilised and un-developed.
- There is an emerging shortage of modern industrial and business floorspace in many of the main towns in North Ayrshire.

Key Themes

Review of the socio-economic baseline has led to the development of four key themes for inclusion in the masterplan:

- Protection and enhancement of existing employment
- New local employment: diversify local employment options
- Utilise existing resources to create new long term employment
- Construction employment



Figure 11: Aerial Image of Site

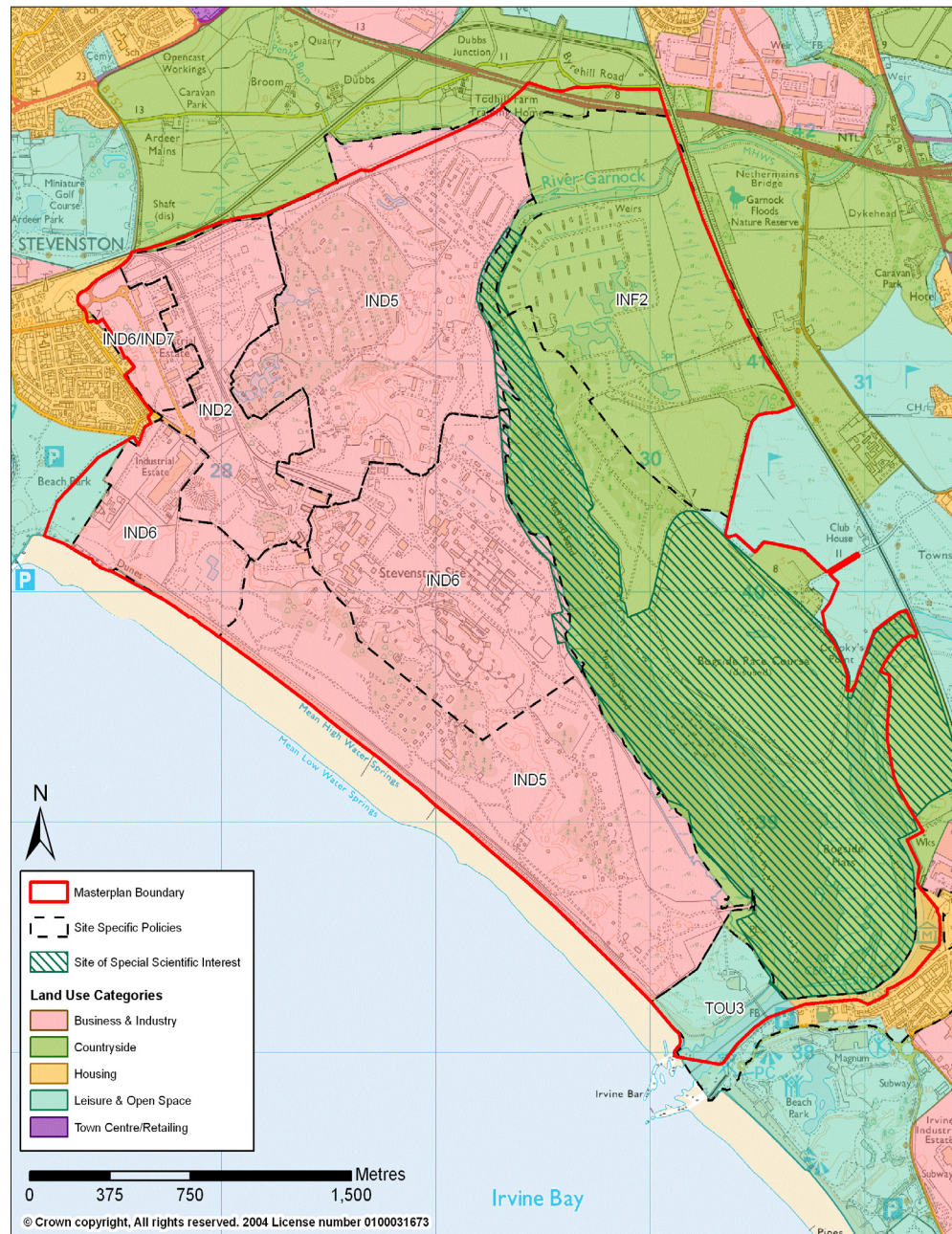


Figure 12: Extract from Local Plan proposals map

Development Plan

The development plan comprises the approved Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan 2007 and the adopted North Ayrshire Local Plan (Excluding the Isle of Arran) 2005. The approved Structure Plan gives priority to proposals that regenerate existing communities and promotes the Irvine Bay area as part of the national regeneration initiative. The masterplan proposals accord with the content and spirit of the approved Structure Plan.

The adopted Local Plan proposals map sets out the land use allocations for the site. (Figure 12) The major land use allocations for the site are focussed on business and industry, and countryside. As such, a key focus of the masterplan is retaining existing employment and creating opportunities for new business and industry development.

Proposed Masterplan

The masterplan presents a coherent development framework that will integrate with the existing settlement of Ardeer/Stevenson and the wider patterns of settlement growth in the Irvine Bay area, whilst respecting the site's sensitivities and constraints. It contains a programme of development that will maximise the economic and environmental benefits of regenerating the site. In addition to the social, economic and environmental factors outlined earlier, NPL Estates have considered the viability of the proposals in terms of the types and levels of development required in their own development appraisal. Figure 20 illustrates the proposed masterplan. The masterplan proposals can be separated into the key components listed on the following pages.

Business and Industry Regeneration

To provide diversity in employment, the masterplan seeks to provide for offices for rent in a high quality business park setting. The offices will be flexible in use, able to provide floorspace for varying sizes of occupants. Low rents can feasibly offered in the context of returns and revenue of the masterplan.

The masterplan targets power generation as a key driver to employment at Ardeer, providing the catalyst that the site needs to attract other investment. Any power station is likely to be under 300MW fuelled by gas and/or other products. Potential investors to date have cited lack of power supply as a reason for rejecting the site.

The masterplan aims to attract a diverse spectrum of medium sized companies to Ardeer. Furthermore, to facilitate smaller local firms, the masterplan promotes the development of start up units for this purpose. In addition to the proposals for new employment uses, the masterplan safeguards and enhances existing employment. A key factor in both securing the future of existing employment and attracting new employment is the proposed link to the A78. Figures 13 and 14 show high quality business and industrial developments.

Sand and Gravel Extraction and Restoration

Extensive reserves of sand suitable for use in building related products lie beneath the disused and contaminated former magazine buildings on the eastern side of the River Garnock. A programme of extraction is proposed alongside phased restoration, including remediation of existing ground contamination. The restoration strategy will be planned to maximise the ecological value of the site as a managed nature reserve open to the public.

Green Waste Facility

The masterplan provides for a green waste facility to modern standards that could assist the local authority in meeting its composting targets and providing composting facilities for the community.



Figure 13: Examples of high quality industrial units



Figure 14: Examples of high quality business and industrial units



Figure15: Golf course



Figure 16 : Marina

Potential Irvine Bogside Golf Course Extension

The Irvine Bogside Golf Course currently benefits from national status as a championship qualification course, however, due to rule changes the course may lose its current status if it is maintained at its current size. The masterplan can potentially offer a 7.1 hectare (17.5 acre) extension to the course that will allow it to maintain its status and secure employment.

The Peninsular Golf Course

The proposed golf course finds an appropriate new use for an extensive area of brownfield land (Figure 15). The natural features of the site will enable a high quality links golf course to be established quickly. The underlying theme of development of the golf course will be maximising the ecological benefit of the course.

Marina

The Ardeer Peninsula has the potential to become a prestigious resort destination in it's own right. Central to this will be the development a marina (Figure 16). The inlet provides access to some of the best sailing waters in Scotland and would appeal to both regular weekend sailors and tourists providing step ashore, power, fuel and water facilities nestled in a low key harbour development respecting the traditional buildings at Irvine Harbour. The masterplan also proposes residential and potential holiday accommodation which could cater for golf and sailing visitors. Furthermore, the footbridge link to Irvine will support the waterfront pubs, eating places and other services. New mooring chains will provide affordable facilities and discussions are being held with a view to enhancing links with the Irvine Watersports Club, the boat-owners and the sub-aqua club. The Harbour Authority will work as a statutory consultee with developments in proximity to its jurisdiction including the IBURC/ Urban Splash Harbourside proposals to ensure the safety of harbour users and to complement the delivery of land based projects with water use.

Bogside Flats Wetland Sanctuary and Conservation Management

A significant portion of the masterplan area covers the Bogside Flats, an area of flat riverside grasslands that is designated as a 'Site of Special Scientific Interest' for its value to bird life. The former Bogside Race Course forms part of the SSSI and is informally accessed via the Irvine Bogside Golf Club. Through minor upgrading and alternative route proposals, access would be provided for informal recreation and bird watching across the protected lands.

NPL Estates will fund the ongoing management of the natural environment through the appointment of a nature conservation warden with a remit to complement an agreed programme of investment and management over a 15 year period. The conservation warden will work with NAC with a view to complementing the aims of the Ayrshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

Residential Extension to Ardeer/Stevenston

Residential development is required within the masterplan site in order to enable decontamination of the site, and construction of the infrastructure for business and industrial uses to be located on the site. This in turn will facilitate the regeneration of the area. Furthermore, the site provides an opportunity for significant brownfield windfall housing, which will provide variety and choice in the housing market and reducing the amount of greenfield land required for housing.

It is proposed that the residential development will form an extension to Ardeer/Stevenston and should contain a mix of house types and tenures built with a varying density. The new development will complement the housing types of the existing settlement, and will draw in a wide range of occupiers. A diversity of architectural styles will be encouraged to enhance both character and interest, including opportunities for self-build plots in the lower density periphery. Figures 17 and 18 show high quality housing at Irvine Harbour.



Figure 17: High quality housing at Irvine Harbour



Figure 18: High quality housing at Irvine Harbour

Neighbourhood Centre

A mixed-use neighbourhood centre is proposed, complementing the existing services located within Ardeer/Stevenston and providing retail and health facilities for the new and existing population. It is envisaged that the range of services provided may also include a pub and landscaped amenity spaces. The neighbourhood centre development will provide a transition zone, linking the proposed residential extension with the existing settlement.

Beach Housing

Acknowledging the site's beautiful coastal location a group of low density beach house villas will be introduced on the south western edge of the site in a seaside position experiencing dramatic views across Irvine Bay and to the Isle of Arran and beyond.

Sports Facilities

The masterplan identifies an area for sports facilities in close proximity to the proposed residential, business and industrial areas. This will provide access to recreation, social and leisure facilities for the local community, and will provide some local employment. It is envisaged that the sports facilities will comprise high quality multi-purpose including synthetic pitches.

Access

Given the nature of the site and the complex constraints on access, the options for providing transport infrastructure for the proposed masterplan required careful consideration. As a result the following access components have been identified:

- A road access in the north east to the A78 trunk road
- Connection to the local road network in Ardeer/Stevenston to the northwest via the existing roads
- Potential for a spur to a railhead on the Largs-Glasgow line to serve the industrial elements of the Masterplan
- Potential relocation of the existing roundabout on B752

In order to encourage use of public transport and to enhance existing services the masterplan provides for the relocation of Stevenston train station and creation of a park and ride facility. The masterplan encourages extension of bus services to provide public transport connections throughout the site. It also proposes the creation of a system of pedestrian and cycle routes to maximise connectivity through non-motorised means.

Landscape Framework and Conservation Management

The masterplan proposes that the site will be drawn together through a holistic landscape structure drawing on the site's existing natural communities. NPL Estates intend to fund the ongoing management of the site through appointment of a nature conservation warden with a remit to implement an agreed programme of investment and management over a 15 year period.

Urban Design Guidelines

At the request of NAC, Urban Design Guidelines have been developed in order to identify the key design principles which should be adhered to in the interest of creating a high quality, successful, well designed environment within the site.

Summary of Benefits of the Masterplan

- A development that supports economic growth and regeneration
- Retention of just under 1000 existing jobs
- Helps to create an additional 1600 direct jobs
- Anticipated that many indirect jobs will be created for example, in construction, transport, facilities management as well as from shops, health services etc)
- New vehicular link to the A78
- Attraction of visitors and further investment adding to the local economy over the longer term
- New opportunities for outdoor access and recreation, and management of the site's natural resources
- Facilitates movement by public transport, reducing reliance on cars
- Remediation of hundreds of acres of contaminated land
- In excess of £500m inward investment into the site

It is anticipated the Ardeer Peninsula Masterplan will be formally recognised as supplementary planning guidance by the end of 2008.



Figure 19: Aerial view of the Ardeer Peninsula

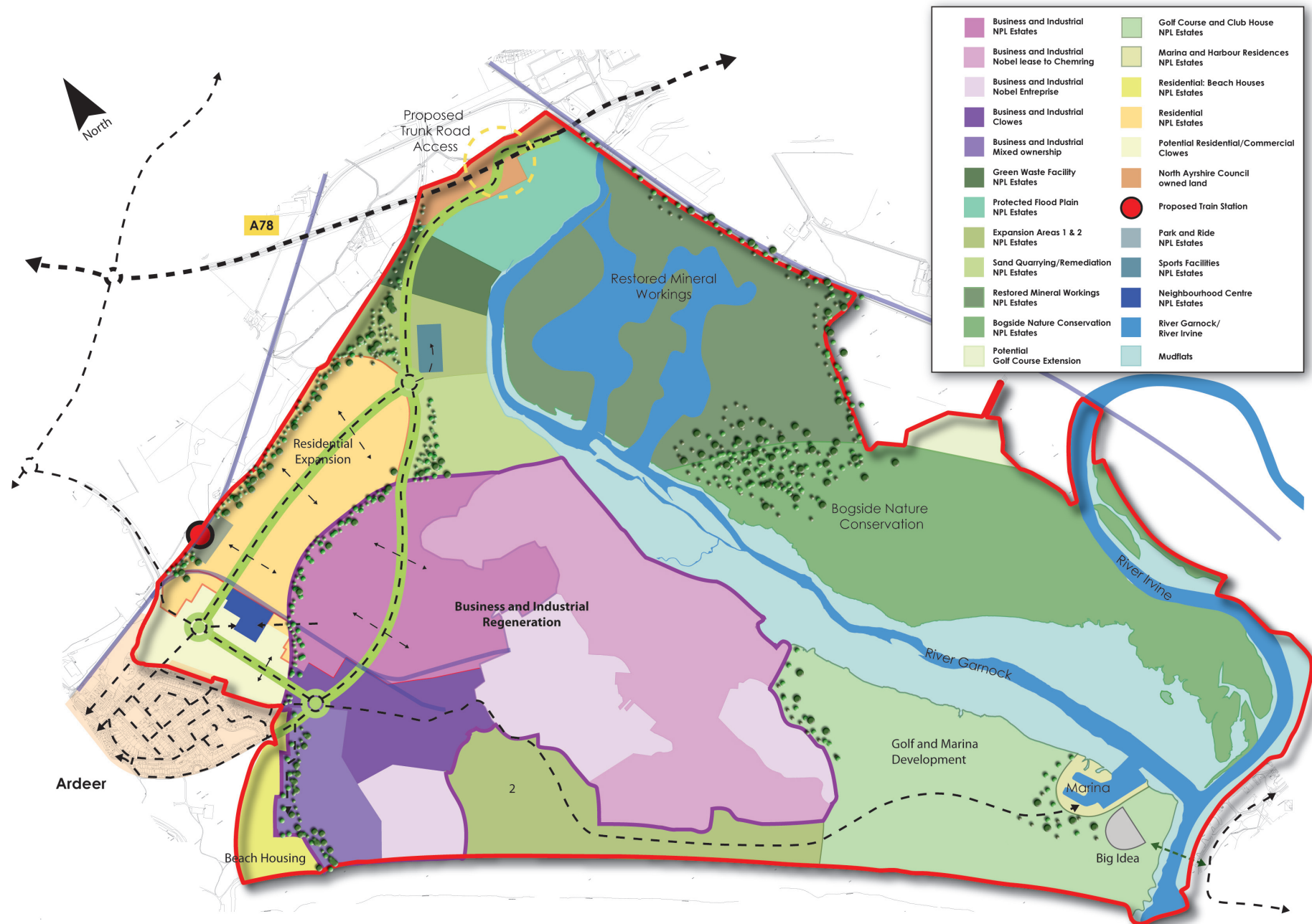


Figure 20: Ardeer Peninsula Concept Masterplan

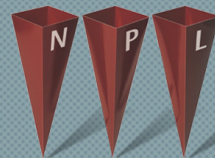
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