Welcome to the Post Charrette edition of the Tornagrain newsletter. Our intention with this publication is to provide you with a comprehensive review of the outcome of the Charrette that took place in September last year at the Drummossie Hotel.

The design team, led by Duany Plater-Zyberk, have been busy collating the findings from the Charrette and this paper is our opportunity to present to you all the outputs that have been achieved.

We hope you enjoy the paper and find it of interest. As ever, we would welcome any comments or feedback you would like to give. Our contact details can be found on the back page of the paper.

The first edition was published last August and since then the project has progressed significantly, not least due to the success of the U.K’s first ever “Charrette” which attracted both national and international media attention.

A Charrette is an intensive planning workshop where the public, designers and consultants work together on a vision for development. The Charrette process is the brainchild of the renowned Miami based firm Duany Plater-Zyberk and Company (DPZ). Andres Duany and his team oversaw and orchestrated the event over ten exhilarating days in September, which was attended by an estimated six hundred members of the public.

While some people who attended were against the fundamental concept of a new community, the vast majority were keen to engage in the debate and many became positively enthusiastic especially when they learned of the DPZ approach to town planning.

In recent years over two thousand people per year have been moving to Inverness and its environs. The Highland Council conservatively estimate that one thousand people will move to the area every year over the next thirty years. Many more homes will be required if local people are not to be priced out of the market.

Unplanned growth and disjointed suburban sprawl can result in new communities suffering consequences ranging from social dislocation to a lack of environmental sustainability. The Charrette demonstrated the benefits of careful planning and a long-term perspective, as we hope this newsletter makes clear.

The range of topics covered was wide, with more specific proposals including the realignment of the A96, greater integration of Tornagrain with the new Business Park, and some very stimulating discussions on architecture.

It is now six years since The Highland Council first identified the A96 corridor as the area around Inverness most suitable for the location of new homes and businesses. Within the identified area Moray Estates is proposing a new community with the ambition of excellence in its planning, its architecture and in the quality of life it offers to its inhabitants.

John Doune – Moray Estates

Tornagrain at a Glance

4730 homes comprising flats, townhouses, semi-detached and detached, including:

• 1190 affordable houses
• Shops, cafes, pubs and hotels
• 3 primary schools
• A secondary school with additional community facilities
• 28 Ha. of parks and green space

The Charrette

How did the Charrette work and what issues were raised?

The Charrette

Preparation for the Charrette started back in May with the instruction of all the background studies – transport, ecology, landscape, engineering and socio-economic – required to inform the design process at the Charrette. These studies took some months, together with liaison with public agencies and other parties with an interest in the issues in the corridor.

The period running up to the Charrette also saw increasingly intense activity in arranging the logistics of the Charrette – a not inconsiderable task given the size of the team and the variety of locations they came from.

The multi-national team was assembled with experts from the USA, Spain, Argentina, France, Philippines, Bulgaria, Scotland, England and Germany.

It was something of a relief therefore that everyone, and everything, arrived at the Drumossie Hotel at the beginning of September for the Charrette.

Public Participation

The Charrette comprised three large public meetings, the first of which set the scene, the second examined options for the site layouts mid-Charrette, and the third being the final presentation. The first three days of the Charrette consisted of meetings on specific issues and open design sessions.

A design studio was set up in an incredibly short time. The team then, with remarkable smoothness, quickly set about analysing the site and all issues raised by the pre-Charrette studies prior to commencement of the public process.

The Issues

Although some meetings were intended to focus on specific issues, almost all were widened in focus to cover a whole range of issues related to the Tornagrain proposal and the corridor as a whole.

The issues raised most frequently, from a number of perspectives, were:

- Where was the growth in the area coming from and was it desirable?
- Where were all the additional people going to work?
- Would the proposal damage Nairn?
- Could the A96 and other infrastructure cope?
- Is the proposal sustainable?
- What would it look like?

You can find further information on these issues overleaf and elsewhere in this paper.
Addressing the Issues

Many issues were raised at the Charrette which Andres and the team did their best to clarify or respond to. For those unable to attend the Charrette we have highlighted some of those issues and comments here.

Where are all the additional people coming from?

Most people moving here in recent years have been from England and Wales, although the last two years has also seen growth in migration from the EU accession countries. The level of population growth anticipated by the Highland Council is consistent with growth over the past 30 years and is supported by our own studies carried out by DTZ.

Where will all the people work?

Despite the well documented success of the Inverness area economy we are aware of particular challenges in the economy – for instance an over-reliance on the public sector.

Growth; none more so than at

Despite the well documented success from urban near Tornagrain to more dispersed near Nairn.

Is building on a Greenfield site sustainable?

As Inverness and Nairn are fast growing places with no industrial heritage, brownfield sites are unusual and with the exception of Whiteness small. Growth in all locations in the corridor will therefore be on greenfield sites. The challenge therefore is to create the lowest impact development possible. Tornagrain will be a compact, walkable settlement with comprehensive services, jobs and a rail halt in walking distance. This reduces car transport and creates a more sustainable lifestyle. We are also examining ways to make individual houses much more energy efficient.

Where will all the people work?

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Despite the well documented success of the Inverness area economy we are aware of particular challenges in the economy – for instance an over-reliance on the public sector.

However all the proposals for the corridor focus on the creation of suitable locations for employment growth; none more so than at

Tornagrain with the adjacency of Inverness Airport Business Park (IABP).

IABP will ultimately comprise 2.6 million square feet of business space with in excess of 5000 jobs expected to be created.

This figure has repeatedly been challenged. We can be clear that this figure is independently assessed for the Environmental Statement for the IABP planning application and is fully supported by all partners in IABP – including Highlands and Islands Airports Limited and HE.

Shouldn’t the growth go to Nairn, to support it, rather than to Tornagrain?

A significant proportion of the planned growth in the corridor will be in Nairn. Over the period to 2041, Nairn’s population is expected to nearly double from 10,000 to 19,000 with significant proposed developments to the south and west of Nairn. Should Tornagrain proceed, by 2041 it will still be only approximately half the size of Nairn.

Even more rapid expansion of Nairn could be difficult for Nairn to accommodate. Indeed should Nairn accommodate more growth than has been allocated in the current strategy document, it would likely contravene the Council’s own policies on the rate of growth of existing communities.

Tornagrain, Whiteness, Nairn and Inverness provide choice to potential residents. This is important in retaining the attractiveness of an area to potential residents.

Is growth good for the area? Won’t it just bring congestion, crime and change for the worse?

Inverness and the area at large have enjoyed considerable economic success in recent years which has gone hand in hand with its general growth including an increase in population.

The challenge for Inverness is to harness the benefits of growth – better services, shops and expanded employment market – without the downsides – congestion, loss of amenity etc. The downsides of growth are often related to the way growth is accommodated and planned for not the growth itself. The A66 Corridor studies are all directed at meeting this challenge.

Isn’t the architecture too traditional?

The architects’ illustrations are studies to help illustrate how the town might look, not just in building style but also scale and relationship to the street and each other. It so happens that the illustrators favoured more traditional styles. However the code (see pages 18 and 19) is unlikely to be prescriptive providing scope for both modern and traditional. Either way styles will need to be varied and of a high quality in terms of designs and materials.

Isn’t local infrastructure already overstretched?

This is largely correct even in existing communities like Nairn, which is why corridor wide studies are nearly complete to resolve these issues which affect all the growth areas identified in the strategy. The interim results of these studies have produced affordable solutions. Developer contribution arrangements are currently being worked up.

Design work for upgrading the A66 is ongoing and it seems possible the rail halt adjacent to the Airport will be built in 2088/09.

In addition, the compactness and completeness of the proposed new town at Tornagrain helps reduce the impact on local infrastructure.

Will Tornagrain result in the closure of services in local communities?

There is no evidence that Tornagrain will have such an impact for three reasons:

1 These local communities are also expected to grow adding customers and service users.

2 Public services are often assessed on a potential user basis – if those communities qualify now they should continue to do so if they are bigger.

3 If residents of these communities cannot buy what they want in their immediate community they will travel by car to somewhere they can. This may be Tornagrain, or Inverness or Nairn. This dynamic exists already.

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The Masterplan

This is the illustrative masterplan following post Charrette refinement. Principal buildings and features are identified. More detailed analysis can be found overleaf.

Feature

1. Town Hall / Place of Worship
2. Supermarket
3. Secondary School / Library / Adult Education Centre
4. Primary School
5. Police, Ambulance, Fire Station
6. Hotel
7. Community Leisure / Pool
8. Tornagrain Park
9. Bowling Green
10. Health Centre
11. Train Station (Tentative Location)

Colour Key

- Civic / Public
- Commercial / Retail
- IABP

The plan consists of three neighbourhoods around the south of the town each with a small neighbourhood centre to provide basic services. The two town centre neighbourhoods are joined by the High Street which is the focus of commercial and retail activity in Tornagrain.

The A96 continues along its existing alignment but is civilised due to a new A96 alignment to the north. IABP, which is between these roads, has been designed here for illustrative purposes to show how the urban fabric of the town could extend into the business park. The original, civilised A96 becomes crossable for pedestrians allowing greater connection between the business park and the town.
The Masterplan in Detail

Here we use the artists’ illustrations to explain in more detail how the town might work and look.

1. Offices and flats along existing A96 after conversion to Boulevard. The A96 is civilised with tree planting and side streets. Lower traffic volumes mean it will be crossed easily.

2. Neighbourhood street terminating in a crescent. As the street is near a neighbourhood centre, a small front garden permits privacy and greenery without suburbanisation.

3. Green-space near neighbourhood centre. These green spaces provide both amenity and recreation opportunities. This space is on a larger street but all neighbourhoods have a number of green spaces within them for children to play in.

4. This image (demonstrating the artist’s German heritage) shows how buildings could use the shape of the existing quarry to create spectacular housing around a lake in the centre. In the plan the quarry also accommodates a public park adjacent to the lake.

5. Neighbourhood street. Again the use of a small piece of open space is important to the street scene. The houses have slightly larger set backs allowing greater greenery but still maintain the feel of a street. Parking is to the rear as for most of the town.

6. This image shows how the rural edge to the town might be accommodated. Larger gardens prevail with privacy gained from garden walls in traditional materials. Houses become less regular in their relationship to the road. Note the absence of pavements on this minor street.

7. Tornagrain High Street is designed to be the centre of retail activity in the town. This illustration shows the importance of consistent shop front design, key buildings such as the town hall and varied building heights and styles. On the street, notice the lack of street furniture and the wider pavement on the south facing north side.

8. Smaller houses on minor streets near the town centre suitable for young and old alike. Modelled on Fishertown, Nairn.

9. One of the wonderful features of Edinburgh New Town is the formal buildings on main streets with much more eclectic buildings behind on mews or lesser streets. Streets such as this provide a great town centre location and an opportunity to let design run a bit more wild!

10. We experimented at the Charrette with both elegant formal town planning features such as crescents and with trying to find a unique architecture; in this case wooden houses with a copper roof.
The Masterplan Explained

Sections of the town were drawn in greater detail to illustrate many of the design principles being used.

1 The Existing Hamlet of Tornagrain
2 Western Neighbourhood
3 The Quarry
4 Town Centre
5 The Crusty Edge

1 The Existing Hamlet of Tornagrain

The existing hamlet of Tornagrain is located adjacent to the new town’s western boundary and comprises some 20 or so dwellings. The main access point to and from the village is at the T-junction on the A96. The volume and speed of traffic on the A96, and the curve in its alignment at this point, makes it hazardous for the residents to drive in and out of their village.

The trifurcation of the A96 is a major benefit to the integration of the existing Tornagrain with the new town. We are grateful for the assistance of some of the residents of Tornagrain in helping to design the template of their hamlet. The new properties create a crescent to mirror the existing crescent of houses at Tornagrain with further properties providing a buffer to the town edge. The minor road through the hamlet is diverted through the town reducing traffic issues for residents.

2 Western Neighbourhood

This neighbourhood will be clustered around a square located along the route of the future High Street. The square itself is equipped with a bandstand and paved area for markets, while the remaining area is designed as green space lined with trees. There are additional smaller green spaces, sprinkled around the neighbourhood for playgrounds and parks.

The street network’s geometries were designed responding to local Scottish precedents and the site’s topographical context and existing infrastructure restrictions.

3 The Quarry

The existing quarry is one of the special projects in the Tomagnarin plan, and is located between the western neighbourhood and the town centre.

At the quarry, a series of courtyard apartment buildings form an irregular crescent around a lake. The main road is taken around the water, and a necklace of detached homes frame the meandering road. The apartment buildings form the edge of the quarry and then climb down the slope. The courtyards between the wings of the buildings form green semi-public spaces belonging to the residents in the apartments. These alternate with entirely public terraced “vertical squares” which are accessible to all residents of Tornagrain. Next to the lake is an optimal spot for an amphitheatre.

4 Town Centre

A Main Plaza
B Town Hall / Ecclesiastical
C Plaza with Secondary School
D Potential Sites for supermarket
E Typical Block
F Parking Lot for Shared Use

Tornagrain’s town centre is located between the east and west central neighbourhoods. To the south, it encompasses the park of Tornagrain; to the north it is fully integrated with the Inverness Airport Business Park.

The upper portion of the drawing detail shows the newly proposed boulevard which will connect, rather than separate, the town and office buildings.

The portion of the High Street located within the town centre has the highest urban density. It is framed to the west by a plaza that will accommodate markets and community festivals, and to the east by a square on which is located the secondary school.

5 The Crusty Edge

This detail shows the southern edge proposal for Tornagrain’s east neighbourhood. The edge forms a “crust” creating transition from the town into the woods to south, with a fair amount of open space permeating the urban fabric. The plan is based on an arrangement of “steadings” – large plots with compounds of buildings. These groups of buildings form smaller communities within the larger community and make the walk from town to countryside more interesting. This will be a complex and rich place that is different from the usual suburban development.
The Urban Fabric

Explaining a new town can be a challenge. This analysis aims to explain how the town works.

1. Successful Neighbourhoods
The size of a successful neighbourhood is not usually determined by the size of the population but by an area within which most residents choose to walk to destinations rather than drive.

For most activities, shopping, leisure and social activities, this distance is about 450 m, or a walk of about 5 minutes. For travel to bus stops or railway stations this distance tends to increase to about 800 m, or 10 minutes walk.

These areas are known as pedestrian sheds and are illustrated above. As you can see from the diagram the retail and civic buildings (shown in bold) are in the centre of 5 minute walkable neighbourhoods. By planning in this way the chance of people walking to use local services is greatly enhanced which is good for people using the services and good for those running them.

2. The A96 Triplex
One of the key issues to resolve in maximising the potential of Tornagrain and IABP was how to keep unwanted traffic away from the town, and that which you did want coming through the town.

The answer was to divert the heavy, fast moving trunk road traffic onto a new A96 to the north of the IABP and near the railway. The existing A96 can then be civilised, traffic slowed down, allowing it to be easily crossed.

However traffic is also important to a successful High Street – after all you want people to be able to travel through and spend money. The road network is therefore designed to encourage traffic in less of a hurry to travel down the scenic High Street and hopefully stop.

Although the diversion of the A96 sounds a very costly process, because you avoid dualling the existing A96 – dualling existing roads is very expensive – the cost is no greater and provides greater options.

3. The Hierarchy of Streets
One of the many features which will contrast Tornagrain with most modern developments will be its street network. Whilst many new developments have little variety in street type and width, the street network in Tornagrain will be complex-reflecting the many different requirements of streets in different parts of a town.

Some streets will be designed to support free flow of traffic, others prioritise the needs of pedestrians.

As well as the character of streets varying for traffic needs, so will the character change with regard to the way buildings front the street. For example, the High Street will have wide raised pavements with buildings up to the pavement. On lanes at the periphery there may be no pavements, a different road surface and buildings set further back from the road. Where each of these streets are suitable is regulated by the Urban Design Code (See pages 18 and 19).

One key design element all roads will have in common is that they are specifically designed to reduce traffic speed. Not with bumps and signs but with alignment, width and sight lines – natural traffic calming.

4. Pedestrian Network
Although the streets of Tornagrain are specifically designed to reduce traffic speed, some will prefer the variety of solely pedestrian routes. Tornagrain has many such routes adding to the complexity of the thoroughfare network.

5. Recreational and Sports Greens/ School Grounds
Primary schools and attached playing fields are located between neighbourhoods – increasing accessibility and introducing green wedges. Playing fields for the secondary school are nearby and accessed within 5 minutes walk.

The plan provides for large recreational/ amenity areas in the central park and the quarry park together with a wide distribution of smaller green spaces for recreation and amenity through the neighbourhoods.

6. Private Space
All the aspects of the town discussed on this page have so far been the public space of the town. What is vital is the relationship between private space – people’s houses – and public space. The Tornagrain Urban Design Code will regulate the relationship between these private spaces – buildings – and the street and other public areas. The Code will deal with how buildings meet the street, the style of shop fronts, and the use of buildings in certain parts of the town (see pages 18 and 19).
The High Street

The High Street is the heart of most Scottish Towns. What makes a successful High Street?

Comparative Analysis

In order to further understand what makes High Streets work in the 21st century, we have examined a number of examples in Scotland, England, continental Europe and the USA. Some of these High Streets are in existing traditional towns, while some are in new planned communities.

We sought to examine the factors that made some high streets more successful than others, focusing on two local towns, Nairn and Forres. These were analysed in greater depth to understand the level of retail provision with the aim of determining what which may be appropriate in due course in Tornagrain.

The following are the common features of the High Streets that we studied.

- Attractive physical environment, pedestrian orientated scale, well proportioned buildings and balanced relationship between pedestrians and vehicular traffic.
- Well maintained and co-ordinated physical environment; consistent and coherent shop front design.
- Good traffic flows – no traffic means less shoppers.
- Accessible formal parking with opportunistic on-street parking.
- Large numbers of people within 5 – 10 minutes walk of centre.
- Good retail management.
- Relationship of supermarkets to High Street: there are no hard and fast rules but generally the further the supermarket is from the High Street the more the former compromises the latter.

Tornagrain High Street

Having looked at the above success factors, the High Street at Tornagrain was prepared with the following features:

- The High Street runs along a SW/NE axis via wynds.
- The Street terminates at each end with squares at the centre and squares at each end, calms traffic naturally.
- The deflected course of the street, with narrowing at the centre and squares at each end, calms traffic naturally.

A. Market Place with main retail buildings wider on north side to enjoy sun.
B. Town Hall/community meeting facility.
C. Secondary School and community facilities – its central location brings children and users of the community facilities to the heart of the town each day.
D. Possible supermarket location, on or adjacent to High Street to act as draw for other shops.
E. Hotel.
F. Main car park with access to High Street via wynds.
G. Secondary starter retail units for smaller and embryonic retail units.

It is our belief that the High Street will benefit enormously from:

- Being on one of the main thoroughfares through the town.
- A large percentage of the town’s population being within walking distance.

Being within 5 – 8 minutes walk of a large part of the Business Park.

Professional High Street management dealing with matters such as shop front design and retailer distribution.

It is intended that this degree of planning will create a vibrant and successful heart for Tornagrain.
Sustainability

The big challenge for the 21st Century is likely to be minimising our impact on the environment.

Sustainability

A major issue from the outset of this project has been its sustainability, so it was of considerable interest that this was one of the issues repeatedly raised at the Charrette. Principally, people wondered how were we going to make Tornagrain as sustainable as possible. Most remarks tended to be directed at specific environmental or sustainable issues affecting individual properties. Whilst this is understandable, we are seeking to address sustainability at three levels: from a town planning perspective; from an architectural perspective; and from a technological perspective.

Sustainability and the Town Plan

Essentially, without a sustainable town plan any inroads you can make with architecture and technology will not have as significant an impact. Put simply, unless we can create places that reduce our reliance on car based journeys and long distance commuting, we will do little to adjust our currently unsustainable activities.

We believe Tornagrain makes very significant steps forward in sustainability terms. Its very design allows more people to do more things without a car journey – be it travelling to work, shopping, or going to school. The mixed use and compact nature of the town combined with the Business Park makes this possible. This “traffic capture” greatly increases the sustainability of the town.

Tornagrain will be served by a rail halt, which will also serve the Business Park and the Airport. This will increase greatly the public transport options open to residents. These two major elements – the Business Park and sustainable transport links – make Tornagrain a very sustainable site within the context of the options in the A96 Corridor.

Careful attention has also been given to the street layout and building orientation in Tornagrain. This helps to maximise benefit from solar gain which is not only energy efficient but also increases the comfort and attractiveness of people’s homes.

Sustainability in Architecture

Although far from finalised the architectural style at Tornagrain will need to be sustainable in terms of its durability and adaptability. Traditional architecture has proved successful in this regard – think of how durable and adaptable many older buildings are. Traditional materials also tend to be more repairable and adaptable. This all reduces the need to destroy and renew.

However we are hoping to develop a new vernacular for Tornagrain. We intend that sustainability will act as a benchmark for where this might lead. The practical implications of sustainability will tend to guide the architecture in some circumstances. Traditional buildings have been good at this, but technology has changed.

Sustainability in Technology

Sustainability in technology includes things such as insulation, heating and power generation and other energy saving tools and techniques. Our thoughts in this area are less developed for the simple reason that technology changes so fast; given we are some years from potential construction, alighting on particular technologies at this stage may leave us out of date. Instead we are examining how an intention to adopt innovative energy saving technology can be incorporated in the urban design code.

In order to get some measure of our success in sustainability terms, the Estate has asked the Building Research Establishment (BRE) to carry out a sustainability checklist for Tornagrain. This will examine the sustainability of the current plan and propose improvements, where appropriate. Further details of BRE, their work, and sustainability checklists can be found at www.bre.co.uk.

Mackintosh Report

An independent report commissioned to examine the success, or otherwise, of the Charrette as a public engagement tool.

Stage 1

Initial Research

On Site setup

Logistics

Stage 2

Stage 3

Stage 4

Initial Meeting

Workshops

Progress Meeting

Design

Final Presentation

Final Proposals

Diagramatic illustration of the Charrette process: MEARU

The report concluded that the Charrette process had brought profile and national interest to the project, that those who attended had been impressed by the process although there was some concern that such profile and scale can distort debate. The professionals involved were also clear that they had gained significantly in the design process from local knowledge and ideas.

The report examined the effectiveness of the Charrette as an engagement process and concluded that it was subject to the following factors:

- the process needs to be led by experienced facilitators
- adequate resources need to be provided which may need to be substantial
- the method needs to suit the process - aspects of the project must still be open to influence
- people involving themselves in the process must have influence.

The Tomraigain Charrette at the Drumossie Hotel was subject to an independent study by the Mackintosh Environmental Architecture Research Unit (MEARU) at the Glasgow School of Art.

The MEARU were commissioned to observe the Charrette process in its entirety to gauge the attitudes and perceptions of those who attended the Charrette as well as the mechanics and structure of the Charrette itself in order to assess how replicable the event might be for other schemes.

John Ongango, a member of MEARU, was present throughout the Charrette, making notes of all the public meetings, the opening presentation, progress report and final presentation. He also devised a questionnaire and invited attendees to the Charrette to complete the form to further bolster his research. In addition, he interviewed and engaged in informal discussion with many of the participants from both the US and UK teams.

The report, which did not assess the merits or otherwise of the proposal was then submitted by MEARU to the Scottish Executive to inform their consultation on community engagement in the planning process.

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The Urban Design Code
Ensuring the implementation of the masterplan vision over the long term.

A considerable number of people, both during and outwith the charrette, have asked us what reassurance they can have that the vision being developed for Tornagrain will actually be delivered. What is to say a developer won’t just vary the planning permission and build something different or that the Estate gets tired of the project and reduces its control or standards? We believe that the solution to this concern is the creation of an Urban Design Code to provide controls on development above and beyond the terms of any planning permission.

What does the code do?
The code regulates certain aspects of the town plan such as:

- The street layout
- The character and size of streets
- The relationship of buildings to the street and each other
- The uses of buildings in certain areas
- The nature and location of public and civic space
- Building materials and on occasion architectural style.

How does the code do this?
The code is based around 3 main pieces of information:

- The regulating plan
- The transect
- The code document

The regulating plan (see page 18) assigns the transect zones within the town plan. The transect is a method of classifying the different types of urban character from essentially rural to special urban districts (see page 18). The transect zones can then be used to set parameters for plot sizes, setbacks (distance of building from street), building types, building height and building function. The details of all this are set out in the code document.

It is important to understand that the code sets parameters within which designers work. There is a degree of latitude. For instance on the High Street buildings may be between say three and five storeys.

The Code and Architecture
Some codes are very prescriptive about the appearance of buildings, not just their use and relationship to the street. DPZ codes are not usually so prescriptive. The benefit of this more flexible approach is that designers have more scope to design varied, interesting and exciting buildings. This we expect to add to the vitality of Tornagrain. We may however use the code to provide parameters for materials, for instance specifying the use of locally sensitive building materials, and in a few key areas such as the High Street on certain architectural features. Guidance on shop frontage style and wall to window ratio could make a substantial difference in the cohesive appearance of the High Street.

Enforcement of the Code
Design codes are not in fact new. They existed in the New Town of Edinburgh which in part helps explain the uniformly high standard of design in the buildings in the New Town. Those codes were enforced through the feudal system by the original landowner. Following feudal reform in Scotland this is no longer possible, so we are currently exploring the options for enforcing the code at present. It is our intention that ultimate responsibility for the code will rest with a community management company – owned and controlled by the Tornagrain community itself. Given the correct structure, this should prove more robust and enduring than the interests of the Estate as landowner and the local planning authority.

“For a city to be well built the exterior of buildings cannot be left to the wishes of private citizens. Everything in a street must be approved by public authorities and abide by general rules for the design of streets. It is necessary to establish by law the sites on which buildings can be erected, but also the manner in which this should be done.”
Laugier, Essai sur l’Architecture
Press Coverage

The Charette and the new town proposal received considerable press coverage. Here are a few examples:

New town plan would re-route trunk road

From page 7

Press releases from the UK government have revealed that the 1,000,000 population of the new town of Inverness would be doubled in size. This is the first of a series of major announcements that will be made over the next few weeks by the Scottish government.

The plans for the new town are ambitious. A major new road will be built to link the new town with the existing city centre. This will be a major investment in the infrastructure of the region.

Bridging the gap

So the A96 might be turned into a Portakabin-style boulevard under plans for a new town at Turrach.

However, if this plan goes ahead, it will create a major bottleneck on the existing road network. This will have a significant impact on the local economy and will make it difficult for people to get around.

New town will have boulevard feature

by Judith Davie

The route of the A96 could be turned into a boulevard under plans for a new town at Turrach. This is part of a major new road scheme that will be built to link the new town with the existing city centre.

Support

Andrew Howard, a landscape architect, said: "We're delighted this new town is being built. It will provide a much-needed boost for the local economy and we are pleased with the progress that has been made so far." Howard has worked closely with the local community to ensure that the new town is designed to meet the needs of the community.

New town scheme would see section of A96 rerouted

by Judith Davie

The route of the A96 could be turned into a boulevard under plans for a new town at Turrach. This is part of a major new road scheme that will be built to link the new town with the existing city centre.

Support

Andrew Howard, a landscape architect, said: "We're delighted this new town is being built. It will provide a much-needed boost for the local economy and we are pleased with the progress that has been made so far." Howard has worked closely with the local community to ensure that the new town is designed to meet the needs of the community.
The proposed A96 Corridor Strategy is currently out for public consultation by the Highland Council. The Strategy consists of Framework Plans for East Inverness and Nairn which were approved by the Planning, Development, Europe and Tourism Committee (PDET) on 15th November 2006; the Green Framework Plan also approved at the same committee meeting; proposals to expand existing small communities in the corridor, the two new proposed communities at Tornagrain and Whiteness; and finally Inverness Airport Business Park. Whiteness has been granted planning permission (subject to the completion of a legal agreement) and Inverness Airport Business Park is allocated in the current Inverness Local Plan.

The Framework Plans for East Inverness and Nairn show the preferred growth areas, land uses and transport infrastructure (such as the Nairn bypass) for each of those areas. The plans also detail expected population growth and employment potential in each area. Population growth in East Inverness is expected to be approximately 7000, and 9000 in Nairn.

The Green Framework Plan provides the backdrop to growth in the corridor seeking to conserve and enhance those areas not subject to development.

The Green Framework should allow the growth in the Corridor to be integrated with the landscape and provide clear safeguards to ensure settlements in the Corridor are defined and protected.

The Highland Council has, as part of the Strategy preparation, undertaken extensive infrastructure studies to assess the feasibility of the Strategy and to design solutions where infrastructure deficiencies exist. These studies are accompanied by draft developer contribution and delivery models showing how the extensive infrastructure requirements can be met across the whole corridor.

The PDET will consider the Strategy in its entirety in March.

Further details of the Councils work and reports can be found at www.highland.gov.uk/businessinformation/economicdevelopment/regeneration/a96-corridor-masterplan.htm

The IABP masterplan is currently being reviewed by Make Architects Ltd
The Next Steps
Where does the proposal go from here?

As noted on page 22, the proposed A96 Corridor Strategy is out for public consultation at present. It will be considered by the Planning, Development, Europe and Tourism Committee in March.

If the result of that committee meeting is support for the A96 Corridor Strategy, then the Estate will begin the process of preparing the information that would ultimately support a planning application for the Tornagrain masterplan.

The scale of the Tornagrain proposal would require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999. The findings are then reported in an Environmental Statement which would accompany any planning application.

Although the extent of the EIA would be confirmed via a scoping opinion from The Highland Council, the EIA will look at the impact of the proposal on such matters as ecology, landscape, archaeology, hydrology, local and regional transport links, historic buildings and socio-economic issues.

The impact of the proposal will be assessed and, where appropriate, mitigation measures proposed. Extensive discussions will be required with consultees such as The Highland Council, Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Historic Scotland.

Parallel to this process the Estate will continue to liaise with the Local Community Consultative Forum which comprises representatives from all community councils in the A96 corridor, major employers in the Corridor, and business representative organisations. Regular updates will also be posted on the Tornagrain website www.tornagrain-newtown.co.uk.

Finally, it is important for those who perhaps have concerns about the proposal, or aspects of the same, to understand that this proposal has a very rigorous public process to go through before any planning permission can be granted. There will be extensive opportunities for public comment and engagement in that process.

The Estate are more than happy to deal with any queries, expressions of concern or ideas at all times.

For more information and up to date news visit the Tornagrain website www.tornagrain-newtown.co.uk