



Development Brief

Gap site at 269-293 High Street, Cowdenbeath

Approved March 2011



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

- Planning background
- The need for a revised Development Brief
- Consideration of development scenarios

THE SITE

- Context
- Existing site
- Potential additional land

PLACE MAKING AND URBAN DESIGN

- Vision
- General redevelopment requirements
- Options

INTRODUCTION

This document covers the redevelopment of a gap site off Cowdenbeath High Street, shown in *Figure 1*.

PLANNING BACKGROUND

The Draft Mid Fife Local Plan records brownfield land between numbers 265 and 295 Cowdenbeath High Street and on adjacent land to the rear as COW11. It identifies this as a development opportunity and sets out development requirements.

Fife Council prepared guidance for this area – 269-293 High Street Cowdenbeath Planning Brief - that received Committee approval in 2002. In 2005 outline planning consent was granted for a medium sized supermarket, parking and civic square on the land in Council ownership, together with private property to the rear of the High Street at 295f. Full planning applications in 2005 and 2006 were refused and withdrawn respectively. The grounds for refusal concerned vehicle access onto the High Street, insufficient open space in the Town

Square, and the form and external appearance of the building.

THE NEED FOR A REVISED DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

Elements of the original planning brief are no longer supported by the Local Members and by current government policy, Designing Streets. This has established the need for a revised Development Brief that meets the requirements of the draft local plan and responds to the current economic climate.

CONSIDERATION OF DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

Exploration of options and informal discussions with potential partners suggests that opportunities are limited by constraints imposed by issues including access and ground conditions. The addition of further plots in private ownership would assist comprehensive redevelopment.

THE SITE

Figure 2: Site Analysis – Key features provides information on the site and surrounding context. A Site Investigation report for 269-293 High Street carried out prior to demolition of the buildings is available from Fife Council.

CONTEXT

The site lies within Cowdenbeath Town Centre boundary [proposed modification to Mid Fife Local Plan Oct 2009], with a key frontage onto the town's main shopping street and thoroughfare, and adjacent to good public transport by bus and train.

EXISTING SITE

Plot 1 comprises cleared land in Fife Council ownership [COW11 in the Draft Mid Fife Local Plan]:

- Between numbers 265 and 295, fronting Cowdenbeath High Street, including an area of temporary landscaping.

- A narrow strip beyond the rear access lane.

Plot 2 is a possible extension of the site on land in private ownership to the east to help deliver a viable solution incorporating:

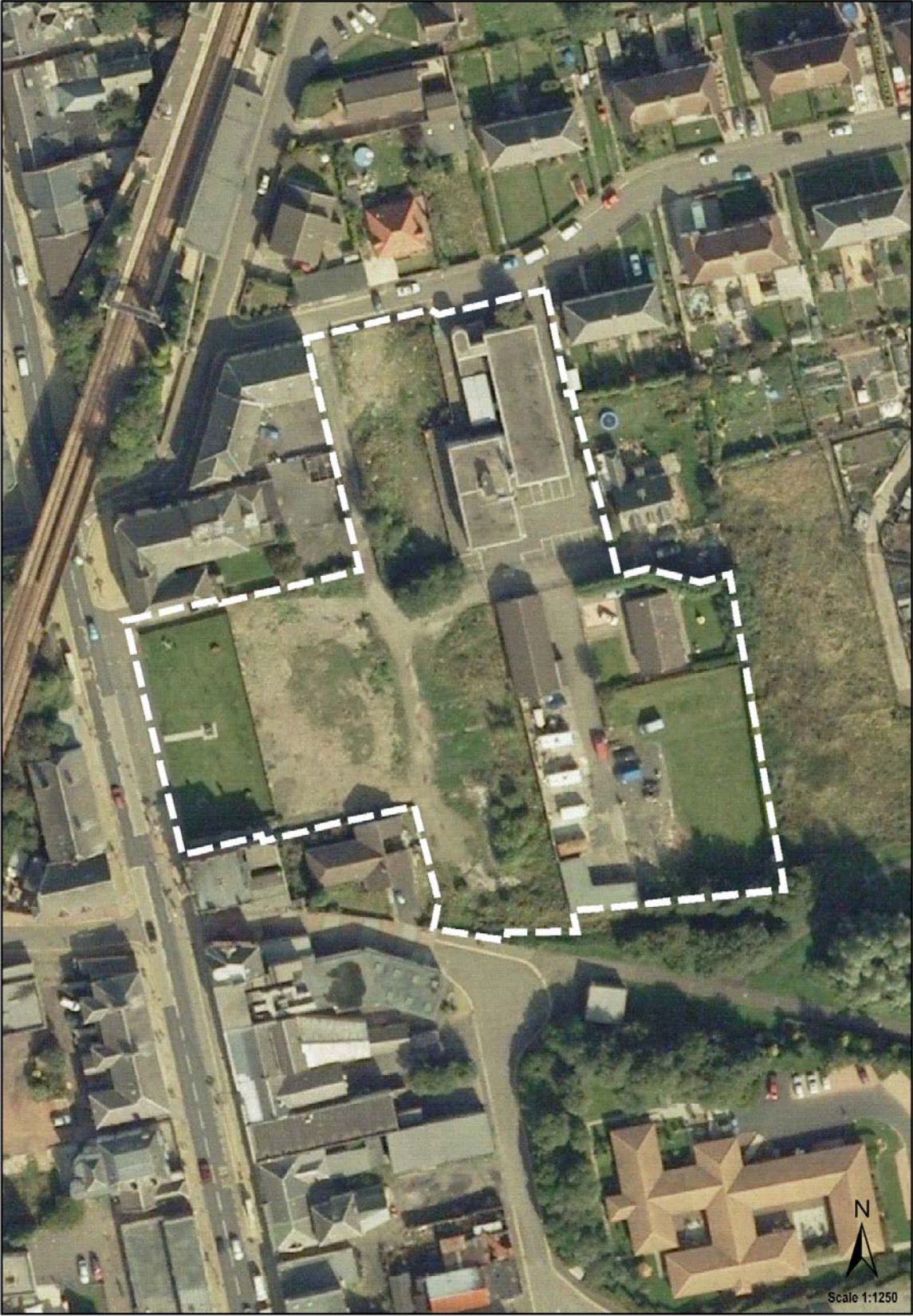
- A vacant office block and grounds at 12 Factory Road.
- Residential properties and outbuildings at Rosebank View.

Plots 1 and 2 may be developed at the same time or this may be phased, but in either case the layout must assist the comprehensive development of both plots.

POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL LAND

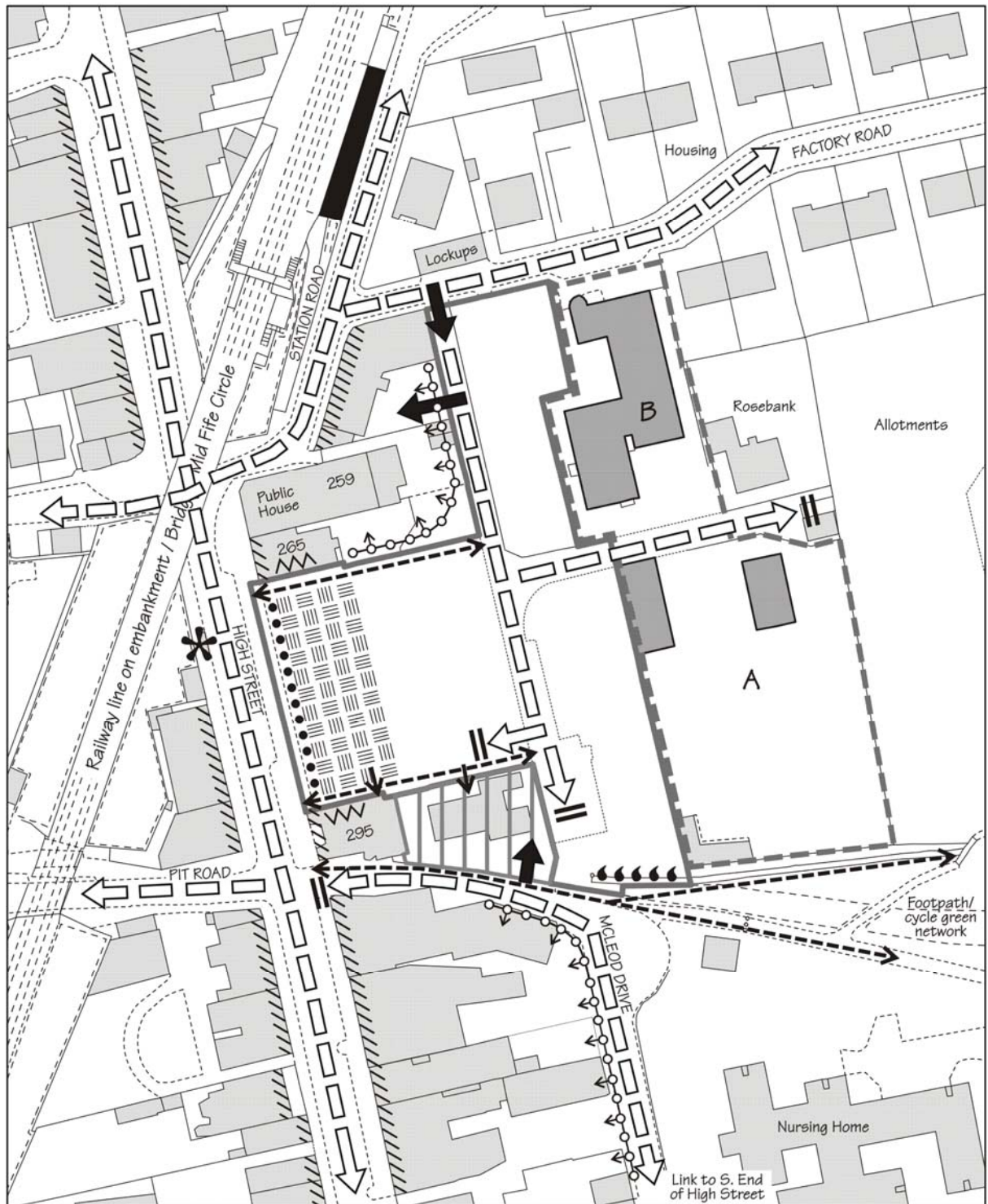
The owner of 295f High Street is willing to discuss proposals for this land, should it prove necessary, to deliver a viable development scheme. Proposals for this additional land must be consistent with the principles of the development brief if they form part of a wider scheme.

Figure 1 - Site



Aerial Photography © copyright Getmapping.

Figure 2 - Site Analysis - Key Features



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|--|---|--|-----------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| | Plot 1 - 0.6 ha Fife Council ownership | | Existing access point | | Key frontage onto High Street |
| | Plot 2 - 0.5 ha private ownership | | End of road access | | Exposed gable end |
| | Potential additional land - 0.06ha private ownership residential - 295F High St | | Pedestrian route | | Rear of properties/backlands |
| | Residential - Rosebank View | | Bus stop | | Open watercourse |
| | Offices (vacant) - 12 Factory Rd | | Shop fronts | | Station |
| | | | Temporary landscaping | | Existing road network |

PLACE MAKING AND URBAN DESIGN

THE VISION

To replace derelict land and a gap on the High Street with a mixed use scheme overlooking an attractive and well-used public space, bringing life and prosperity to Cowdenbeath town centre.

GENERAL REDEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS:

- **Mixed use redevelopment** - a retail / residential mix that may include office / service uses to Option 1 or 2 below.
- **Flats over small retail units** - at each gable end fronting the High Street and civic space.
- **Civic open space** - fronting the High Street, of similar area to the temporary landscaping, and suitable for public gatherings / market trading in terms of layout and materials, as well as providing an appropriate setting for residential use.
- **Rear access road** – running between Factory Rd and McLeod Drive
 - bridging the watercourse;
 - providing access to parking areas, to servicing areas for

shop units, to properties on and beyond the site, and possible connections into phase 2;

- width no less than 6m with 2m footpaths either side, except at possible road narrowing to 4.5m with single footpath on east side.
- Layout to provide natural control of traffic speeds in accordance with Designing Streets.

• Parking standards –

- Housing - 1.5 communal parking spaces per unit
- food retail – 1 space per 17 sq m
- non-food retail – 1 space per 30 sq m

These are maximum parking standards in accordance with the Fife Council Transportation Development Guidelines. Fife Council may consider a lesser provision, but only if it can be justified and supported by the developer.

Parking must not dominate the spaces that can be seen from the High Street.

• Housing / flatted units in phase 2

- **Building heights** –
 - generally 2 storeys [2 ½ storeys where the roof space is used]
 - some buildings or elements of a building may be 3 storeys high where this can be justified by location, function and quality of design
 - no buildings shall exceed 3 storeys in height
 - there may be some single storey housing east of the vehicular access route and a single storey shop unit under Option 1.
- **Materials** – on all prominent public elevations to reflect the local context which includes slate, tile, brick, stone, and render/ harling.
- **Flooding** - a Flood Risk Assessment should be provided to assess the influence of the small watercourse which flows along the southern boundary of the site on redevelopment, including bridging/ culverting it.

OPTIONS

Alternative options in addition to the general redevelopment requirements above:

OPTION 1: RETAIL EMPHASIS

[Figure 3]

- **Flats over medium sized shop unit** – to back of civic space and with active frontages onto it,

forming ‘L’shape with shop units onto High Street; servicing and parking off rear access road. A secondary active frontage onto the vehicular access route for flats at ground level or first floor should animate this area.

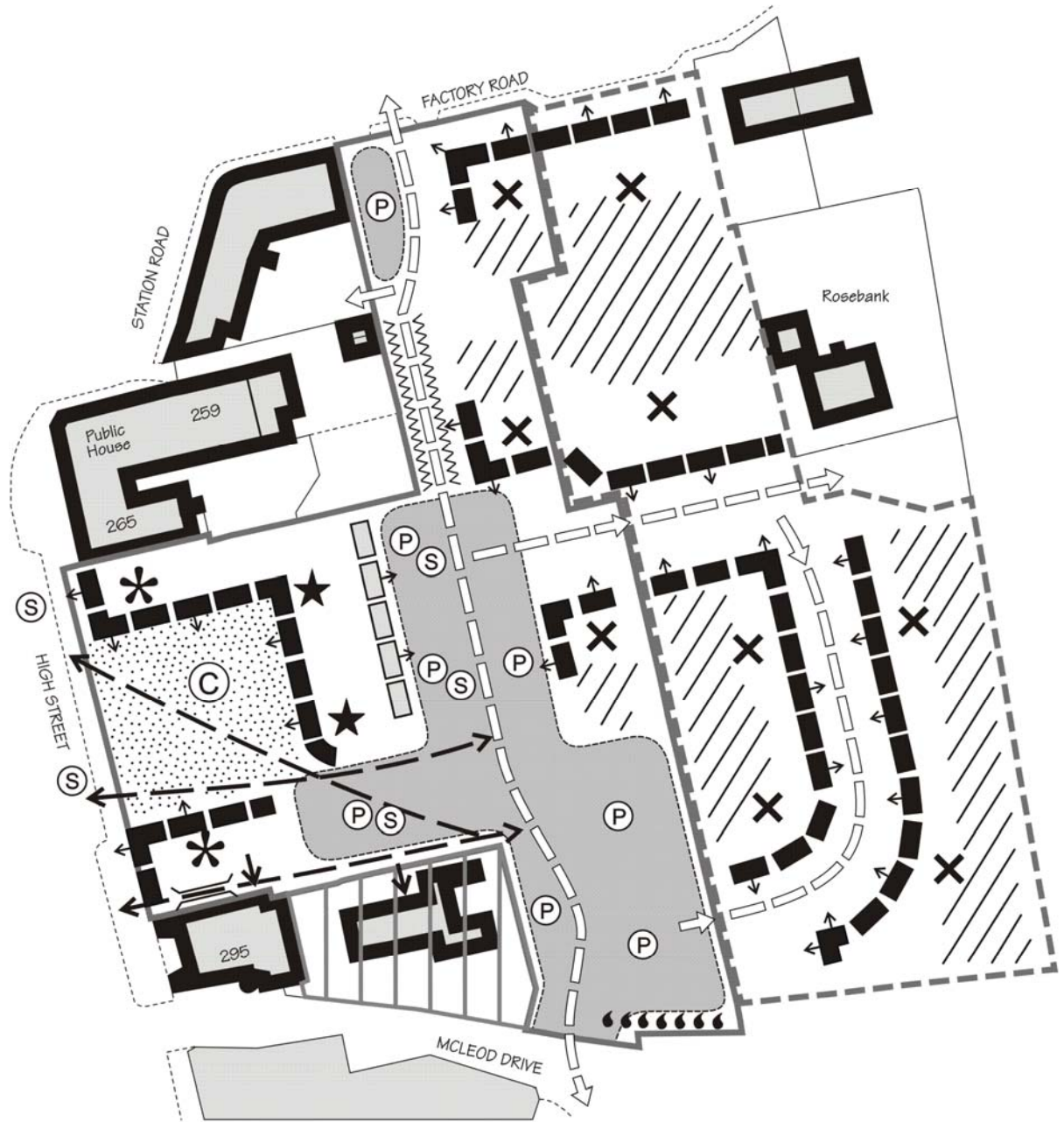
A single storey shop unit may be considered provided it can demonstrate a high quality design solution, particularly in respect to massing, proportions and roof lines.

- **Limited housing / flatted units** in remainder of phase 1

OPTION 2: RESIDENTIAL EMPHASIS [Figure 4]

- **Flats over amenity housing** – to back of civic space and with active frontages onto it, forming ‘L’shape with shop units on High Street; parking off access road. There must be clear definition of public and private space through the use of boundary treatments associated with narrow privacy strips/ gardens/ set backs/ changes of material to provide amenity and privacy for residents at ground level. A secondary active frontage onto the vehicular access route at ground level or first floor should animate this area.
- **Housing / flatted units** in remainder of phase 1

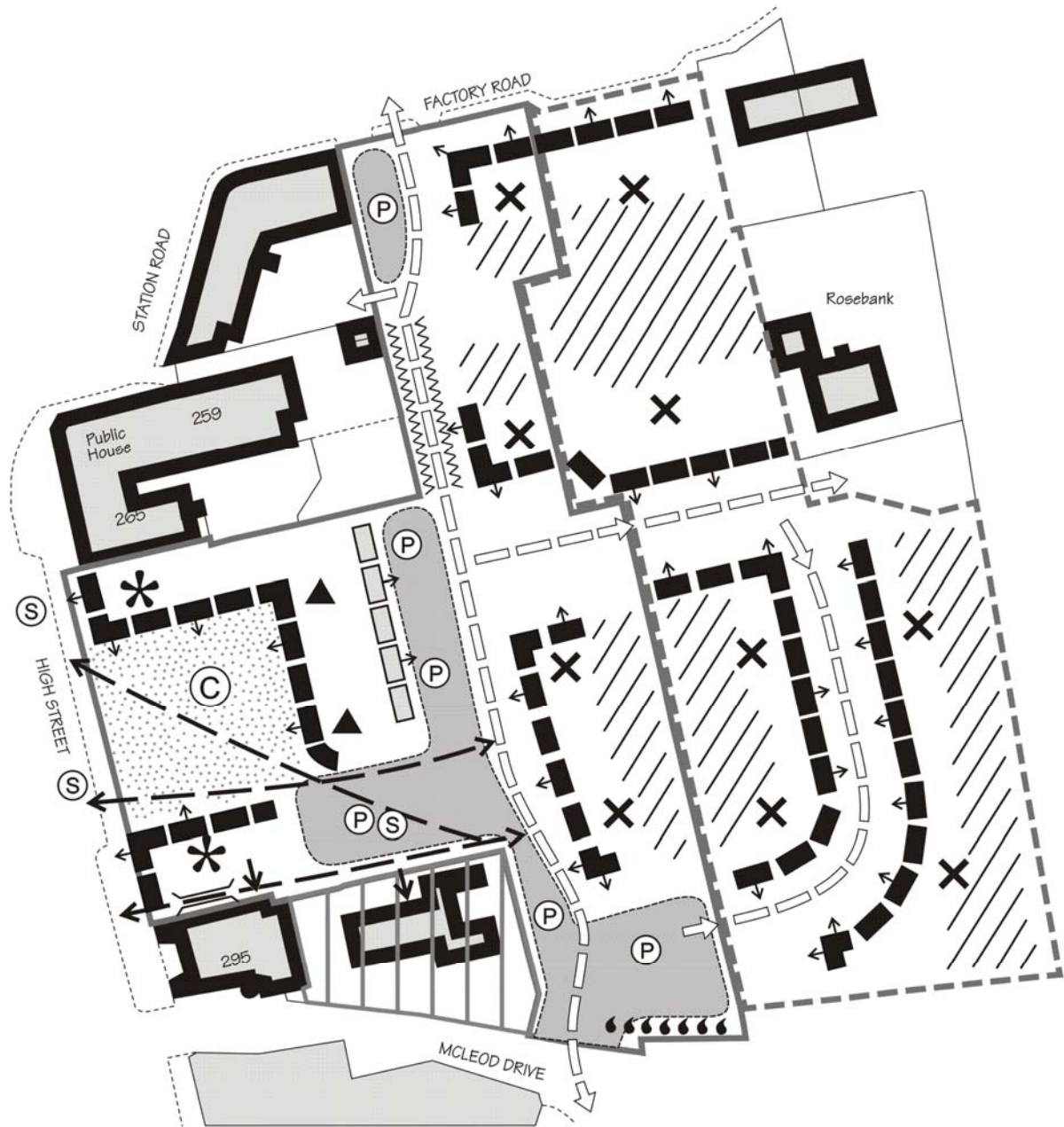
Figure 3 - Redevelopment requirements
Option 1 : Retail emphasis



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|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Site boundary plot 1 | Key pedestrian route | Servicing for shop units |
| Site boundary plot 2 | Pedestrian access point | Parking & landscaping in Courts/bays/on street |
| Potential additional land | Pend through building | Civic space |
| Existing buildings | Active building frontage | Small shop unit(s) with flat(s) above |
| Vehicular access point | Secondary active frontage (if there is an upper floor) | Medium shop unit with/without flat(s) above |
| Street - Vehicular access (2 way) | Private garden ground | Flats/houses with on plot/on street parking |
| Possible road narrowing | Culverted / bridged watercourse | |

**Figure 4 - Redevelopment requirements
Option 2 : Housing emphasis**



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| Site boundary plot 1 | Key pedestrian route | Servicing for shop units |
| Site boundary plot 2 | Pedestrian access point | Parking & landscaping in Courts/bays/on street |
| Potential additional land | Pend through building | Civic space |
| Existing buildings | Active building frontage | Small shop unit(s) with flat(s) above |
| Vehicular access point | Secondary active frontage (if there is an upper floor) | Flats over amenity housing at street level |
| Street - Vehicular access (2 way) | Private garden ground | Flats/houses with on plot/on street parking |
| Possible road narrowing | Culverted / bridged watercourse | |