

Elgin South

DEVELOPMENT SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

Assessment of Development Bids

- ### Additional Opportunities

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10 ELGIN SOUTH: MITIGATION MEASURES AND ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS

10.1 Elgin South: Identifying Positive and Negative Landscape Features

The southern edge of Elgin is likely to change most significantly due to the potential expansion of the settlement across the south facing slopes. However, the area is also characterised by extensive, level, farmed land and some mature conifer forestry and riverside trees, all of which will be influenced by initiatives associated with agriculture and forestry.

One of the most enduring features is likely to be the golf course, and the trees and landscape works associated with the fairways. There are also opportunities for informal recreation, particularly associated with the woodland and watercourses.

There were some opportunities for immediate settlement expansion identified in this area, associated with the south facing slopes and the redevelopment of the farm steading at Linkwood. Expanding development across these slopes offers opportunities to enhance the sense of arrival and approach, maximising the sense of edge created by the break in slope.

10.1.1 Existing Positive Characteristics and Features

- Mature woodland, although largely commercial in nature, provides some visual diversity and containment as well as providing an informal recreation resource
- Watercourses, which are fairly substantial burns, their presence and location emphasised by sporadic riparian woodland
- The policy woodland associated with Dunkinty House and Maggot Wood, which contributes to the setting of the south east corner of the town
- The planting associated with the golf course, which will mature in time
- Informal access routes and footpaths take advantage of the woodland and watercourses
- Wetland, which adds textural diversity to the low lying plain

10.1.2 Existing Negative Characteristics and Features

- The slightly ambiguous sense of arrival: although this is in part created by ongoing construction work and may be more resolved on completion

10.2 Landscape Change

The key pressures for change relate to development opportunities and the economics of the agricultural and forestry sectors. A creative approach to new development on the edge of town could provide opportunities to enhance the sense of arrival from the south.

10.2.1 Features and Characteristics in Decline

- Mature trees, in particular along watercourses, have a limited life span and are not easy to replace
- Mature commercial woodland is likely to be felled, but will be replanted: there may also be some opportunity for continuous cover felling in this low lying location
- Some access routes, which may be absorbed into land which is likely to be developed

10.2.2 Features and Characteristics in Ascendance

- Residential development, particularly across the south facing slopes
- Planting and other features associated with the golf course

Elgin South: Opportunities and Objectives for Enhancement Landscape Enhancement Opportunities



- Fine, but mature, avenue out Troves Road could be replaced



- Trees associated with watercourses could be supplemented



- Watercourse could be the focus for riparian woodland



- Watercourse is already the focus for informal recreation

10.3 Elgin South: Opportunities and Objectives for Enhancement

10.3.1 Wooded Estate

This area contributes to the setting of Elgin due to the fine quality of some of the woodland. The existing mature broadleaves at Maggot Hill and the planting associated with Dunkinty house contribute to this, and this characteristic could be extended onto neighbouring land, particularly where it could be used to contribute to the immediate setting of new development.

Long term management of the existing woodland is desirable, possibly with the assistance of SFGS, and opportunities for extending planting with forest scale trees and policy woodland type planting should be explored, along with enhanced access along burn of Linkwood and to Maggot Wood. New planting should ensure that a setting for future development (or redevelopment of the farm) reflects the policy type character of the landscape.

Creating recreation links through this area, to link south and east Elgin, should be researched as part of the core path network for Elgin, and options are identified on the proposals plan.

10.3.2 South Facing Slopes

The south facing slopes are likely to be largely developed, providing the opportunity to create an enhanced sense of arrival and robust settlement edge as part of the development. Existing informal recreation use should be reinforced and expanded to link directly to the town within any new development proposal. Links to adjacent access routes and to other recreational resources along the edge of the town should also be explored.

The main objective for this area is to enhance the setting of the settlement on arrival, and ensure the long term future of a well developed access network .

Creating a more positive sense of arrival and robust settlement edge are likely to be considered along with development proposals, although enhanced riparian woodland along the burn of Linkwood might be supported through SFGS.

10.3.3 Level Plain

The farmland across this level, open plain is relatively featureless, although mature woodland lies to the south, notably at Birkenhill Wood.

The area is identified as having severe landscape constraints for development, and will provide an undeveloped plinth on approach to the town from the south. It is likely to become more important as an informal recreation resource as the town expands, and opportunities to expand riparian woodland, and manage existing forest should take into account increased informal access provision.