









INTEGRATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT INTO THE MORAY LANDSCAPE

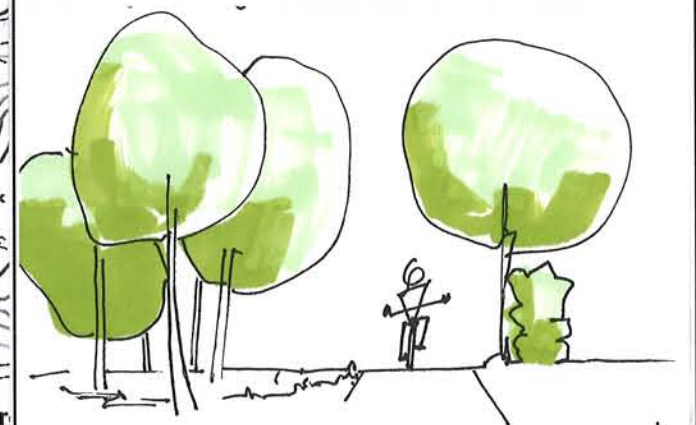
Forres South East

LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS

Scale 1:10 000

-  Suggested locations for development: these could be in a woodland setting
-  New woodland structure planting
-  Riparian woodland
-  Feature trees
-  Open space which contributes to the setting of the distillery
-  Public open space
-  New footpaths and other access routes
-  Area appropriate for wetland habitat creation, including open water, wet grassland meadow and extensive riparian woodland

Link several elements together to reinforce the settlement edge:



Woodland Cycleway Hedge

9 FORRES WEST: ASSESSING THE DEVELOPMENT BIDS

9.1 Forres West: Landscape Survey and Site Observations

This study area has been further subdivided into two landscape character units. Forres West encompasses an area of more complex landform and a low lying, level flood plain.

Key characteristics which influence settlement expansion include:

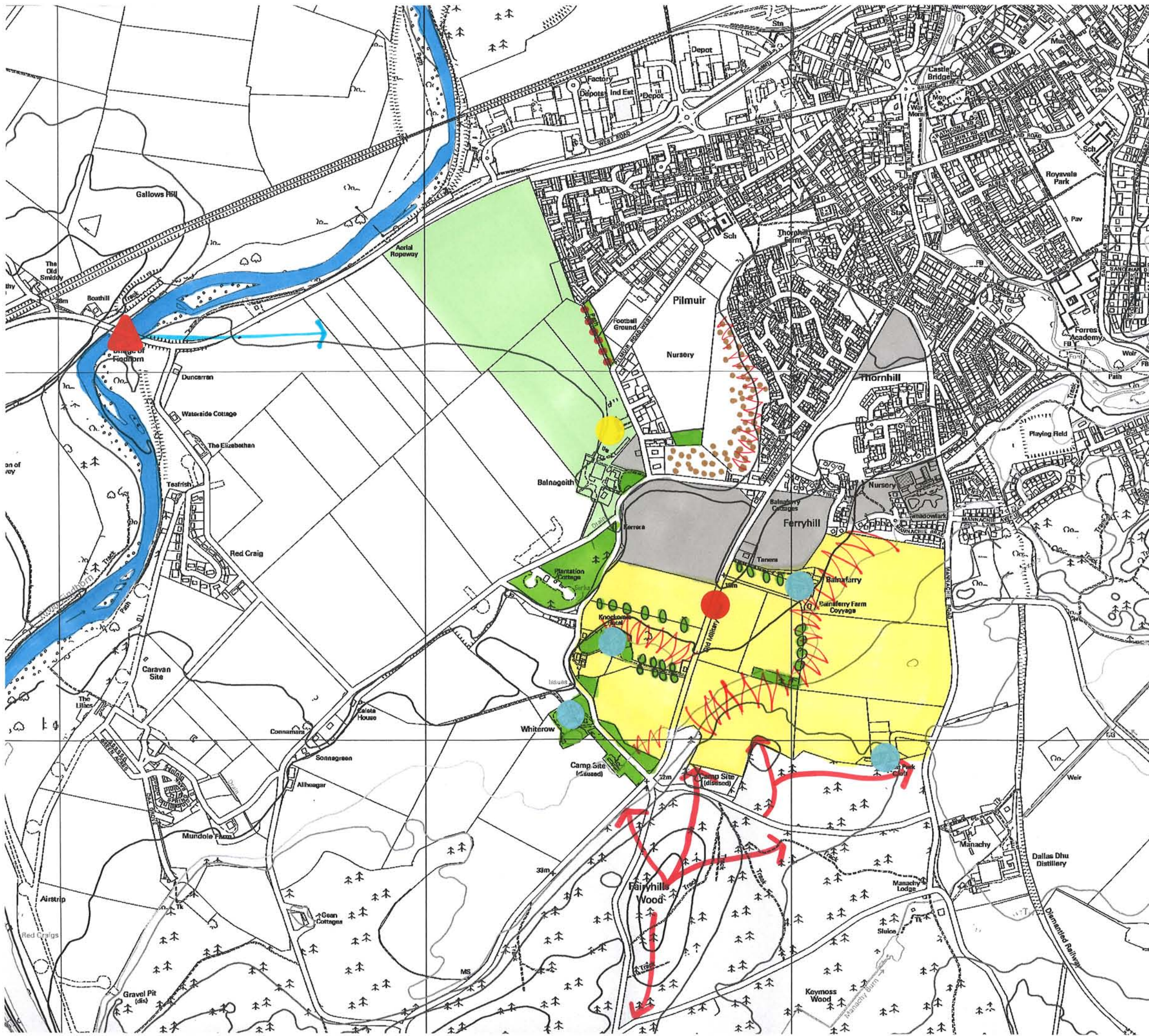
Complex Landform

- a series of pronounced ridges and knolls, where steeper slopes create a strong sense of lowlying containment alternating with elevated undulating plateaux
- cultivated arable land is subdivided into fields by post and wire fences, but policy woodland associated with large houses, shelterbelts, small woods and occasional field trees provide key features in the landscape and in places reinforce the sense of containment
- houses and farms are located at high points, and often emphasised by a wooded setting
- the area is contained to the south by rising ground and extensive commercial woodland which creates a visual backdrop when viewed from the north
- although some distance from the main town, the land adjacent to the A940 is so directly linked to the town centre by the road, that it does not feel detached from the town
- the settlement has recently expanded onto fields adjacent to this area, and the settlement boundary is emphasised by a line of mature field trees to the east of the A940, and rising ground creating containment adjacent to Manachy Road
- sense of arrival is emphasised and enhanced by the descent into the settlement on both approaches from the south: views to the skyline of the old town are visible

Level Plain

- level plain of cultivated, largely arable farmland
- the plain is relatively featureless, with few trees and fields divided by post and wire fences
- the landscape has an open character and is exposed to south westerly winds
- the area is very low lying, and is subject to flooding from the River Findhorn

- the area feels detached from the settlement, despite relative proximity to the centre: this perception is reinforced by the distinctive and relatively inhospitable existing character
- adjacent to the A96, the existing settlement edge, which is rather anonymous in character, is highly visible, and has no enclosing or defining features, except for a fragmented line of mature trees
- further south, the settlement edge is fragmented by scattered development and isolated dilapidated buildings, notably at Balnakeith
- the existing sense of arrival is enhanced by the elevated view of Forres from the Bridge of Findhorn, which includes its setting of Cluny Hills
- opportunities for directly accessed informal recreation are more limited than in other character areas



INTEGRATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT INTO
THE MORAY LANDSCAPE
Forres West
SURVEY AND SITE OBSERVATIONS
Scale 1:10 000

- Landscape Character**
- Complex Landform
 - Level Plain
- Landscape Survey**
- Steep slopes
 - Prominent ridges
 - Mature woodland
 - Paths and Tracks
 - Houses and farms on high points
 - Bridge over River Findhorn
 - Land already been developed
 - Derelict buildings at Balnakeith
- Landscape Setting**
- River Findhorn
 - Sense of arrival characterised by descent into town
- Visual Assessment**
- Views on approach are limited to the edge of the settlement

The Potential Effects of Built Development on Landscape Character: Forres West

	Complex Landform	Level Plain
Landscape Character	<p>Neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parts of this area are well enclosed and contained, with good access to the centre of Forres reducing any perceived sense of detachment felt by distance Elevated landform is more exposed, both visually and physically 	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development offers the opportunity to enhance the first impressions of the character of Forres as approached from the west The landscape is relatively featureless and therefore development would not impact on significant landscape features, although it would affect the openness of the character However, much of the area is subject to flooding and may not be appropriate for built development
Settlement Form	<p>Neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modest development on the lowlying land would be contained by a series of rising slopes to the south. This reflects the character and form of the settlement pattern which has developed to the east 	<p>Negative/Neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The settlement could become excessively elongated if it extended west along the flood plain, but some development offers the opportunity to consolidate settlement form along the western edge at Pilmuir
Landscape Setting	<p>Neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Woodland character and the enclosure could be retained with development 	<p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This plain is part of a plinth of level land which curves round the settlement to the north and west The quality of this landscape may not be high, as it is generally relatively featureless, but the plinth contributes to the setting because of the contrast in character
Sense of Arrival	<p>Neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The existing sense of arrival is well defined, characterised particularly by the descent into the town and would not be affected by low lying development 	<p>Neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The existing sense of arrival is unlikely to be affected by development across this plain, as already the edge of the settlement is visible from the Findhorn bridge