

Key opportunities for enhancement relate to the screening of the grain depot, particularly as it is viewed from the south on arrival to the town, expansion of riparian woodland and wetland management. Planting of single trees along roadsides and the extensive track network would create a more diverse and unified landscape character.

Planting to create a stronger sense of arrival, and to screen or create a setting for the grain depot, would be required to be undertaken by private sponsorship.

Expansion of woodland, wetland management and the enhancement of access tracks could be undertaken by farming interests as part of a wider RSS bid. This would include considering the best management options for increasing biodiversity, and has the potential to link into the establishment of larger areas of riparian woodland assisted by the SFGS.



INTEGRATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT INTO  
THE MORAY LANDSCAPE  
**Keith South West**  
LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS  
Scale 1:10 000

-  New woodland structure planting
-  Extensive riparian woodland
-  Feature trees
-  New footpaths and other access routes
-  Managed wetland habitat
-  Hedge planting to create definition





## 9 CONCLUSIONS AND LONG TERM STRATEGIC OPTIONS

The purpose of this study was to identify potential opportunities for development which would allow the expansion of Keith while retaining the existing character of the settlement and important qualities of its landscape setting.

The study has concluded that Keith has a very distinctive relationship with the landform on which it is located, occupying the elevated land between a series of steep sided river valleys, and maintaining a clear relationship with gentle slopes which rise above the river Isla. The landscape setting has many positive attributes, including a strong sense of unity, the accessibility of the river valleys and woodland, the elevated location, which offers many fine views, and the structured layout of the town, which includes several strong built foci.

### 9.1 Major Landscape and Visual Constraints

While this study has focussed on landscape opportunities and constraints, it also recognised that some constraints related to the perception and character of the existing settlement, therefore opportunities to use development to strengthen positive qualities and enhance the settlement were recognised as having a particular significance. The major constraints to development which would respect the existing character and setting of the town were therefore:

- The summits and brows of the many subtle ridges which provide some sense of definition and containment for the existing settlement
- The steep slopes and contained character of the river valleys, which contribute to its distinctive setting and also provide the main recreation resource for the settlement
- The low lying Strathisla, which although not of a particularly high scenic quality, provides a very clear edge for the existing settlement to the north
- Any existing woodland within or adjacent to the settlement, which despite their small size, make a large contribution to the visual setting of the town

### 9.2 Major Landscape and Visual Opportunities

A number of sites have been identified which have the potential to expand the settlement and still maintain the landscape character, scenic quality and visual attributes of Keith and its setting. In all cases some mitigation would be required as part of any future development and these are further developed in the accompanying section on landscape enhancement. The major opportunities for development are therefore:

- Expansion across higher slopes within contained fields to the north of the settlement
- Expansion across the shallow slopes and adjacent to the south east edge of the settlement

- Expansion, combined with extensive planting to the immediate east of the town, although it was recognised that the scope may be limited by overhead lines

In addition, the northern outskirts of Keith, where there are large buildings, sewage works and extensive areas of poorly drained land, could benefit from major investment in enhancing the setting of the town.

### 9.3 Long Term Options for Settlement Expansion

One option for long term significant expansion was identified in the course of undertaking this study. This option requires the establishment of a new neighbourhood within an appropriate landscape and townscape structure. It is therefore required to be considered at a more strategic level, alongside the opportunities identified for expansion of other settlements in Moray which are discussed in the sister reports. These have not been researched in detail, but are presented as part of the findings for future consideration. They are not presented in order of preference.

The option identified for Keith is to expand the settlement in the south east corner. This would elongate the town, but would retain the association with the more elevated land surrounded by steep sided river valleys which very much forms part of the settlement character. A new neighbourhood focus would be required, ideally strengthening links to Reidhaven Square, and creating a similar townscape focus within the centre of this new development. Development here would have good access to informal recreational resources related to the river valleys and tracks across the surrounding farmland. Vehicular access to development in this area should not be allowed from the south, but should always be directed from Balloch road if possible, to reinforce links with the rest of the settlement. Additional measures might include drawing up a design brief to ensure that a sense of identity could be facilitated through some consistency in approach to layout, orientation, materials, proportion, scale and landscape works.








INTEGRATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT INTO THE MORAY LANDSCAPE

**Keith**


**CONCLUSIONS AND LONG TERM OPTIONS**

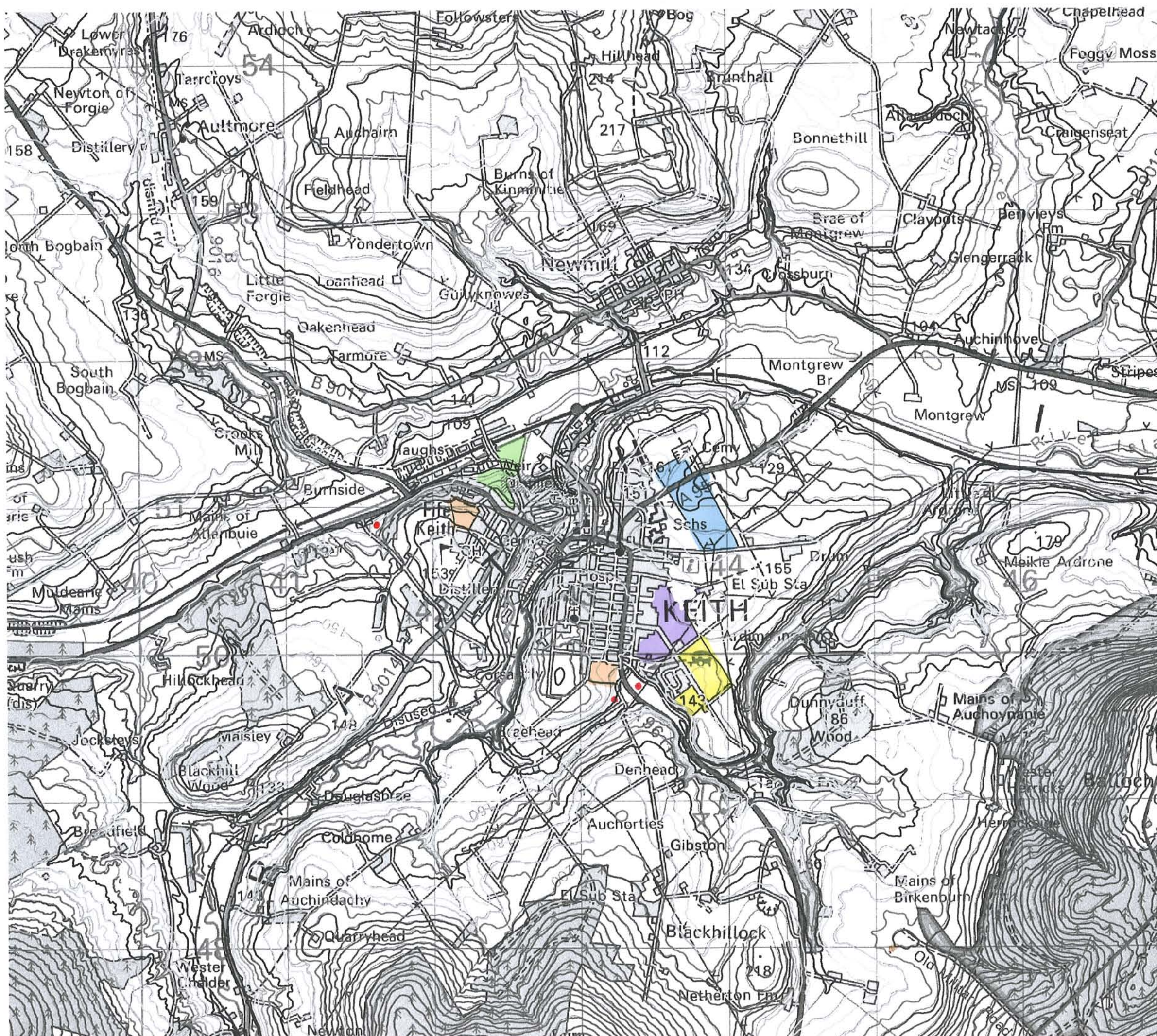
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Recommended Locations for Development

-  Expansion across higher slopes within contained fields to north of the settlement
-  Expansion across slightly contained basin to the east of the school and adjacent to the cemetery
-  Expansion across shallow slopes adjacent to the south east of the settlement
-  Possible extension of settlement onto golf course and Seafield Park; but only if alternative land can be found and established for recreation use
-  Optional sites for high quality prestigious business use

Long Term Options

-  Extension of the settlement to the south east



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