

## Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere Heritage Interpretation & Design

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# 1.0 Introduction & Background

The interpretation proposals for Grant Lodge have their roots in 'The City of the Future' strategy, which recommended the use of Elgin's heritage as a positive force for change and regeneration. The resultant Heritage Interpretation Plan identified Grant Lodge as a key component to deliver the heritage objectives.

The new facilities at Grant Lodge includes an Orientation Centre that will use heritage interpretation to promote the culture of Elgin and Moray and encourage the exploration of the City and wider area, introducing visitors to events, activities and things to do and see.

Grant Lodge will be a focal and for many a starting point for the 'Elgin City Experience', connecting Elgin's historic attractions through a series of interpretive signpost locations in a navigable route around the City.

The Orientation Centre will be the visitor hub of Grant Lodge and will use state-of-the art technology and media with a range of interactive exhibits. The interpretation will tell the story of the people of Elgin and Moray who shaped the City and the region. This will not be limited to historic figures and families, but will include the commoners who gave colour and character to local life.

The central feature of the exhibition space is an interactive 3D map of Elgin and Moray. The space around the map will be flexible and able to support new exhibits and changing interpretation

Although the permanent exhibition will be the main interpretive focus of the building, heritage interpretation, photographs, objects and paintings will be dispersed throughout Grant Lodge. The café will flow into the exhibition space and expand or contract to meet seasonal demands. There is a great degree of flexibility and informality built into the scheme that allows the building to be used as a regular venue for local activities as much as a visitor destination.



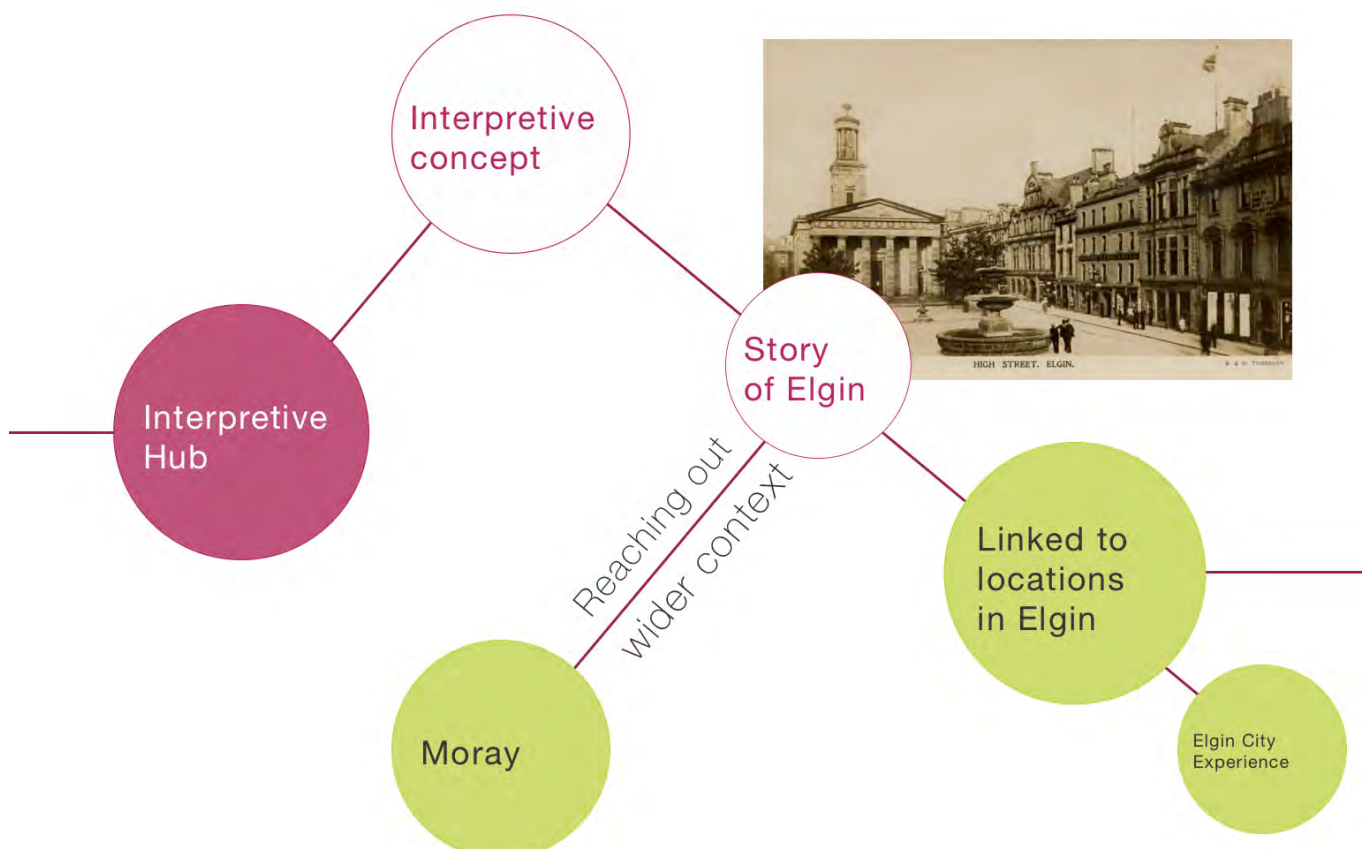
# 1.0 Introduction & Background

One of the main functions for Grant Lodge is as a 'hub', linking to sites of interest in Elgin but also beyond to broader Moray. The TIC (also housed in Grant Lodge) will provide practical links to these other places and the heritage experience will provide the thematic links while not duplicating existing offers.

The stated goals for Grant Lodge related to interpretation include:

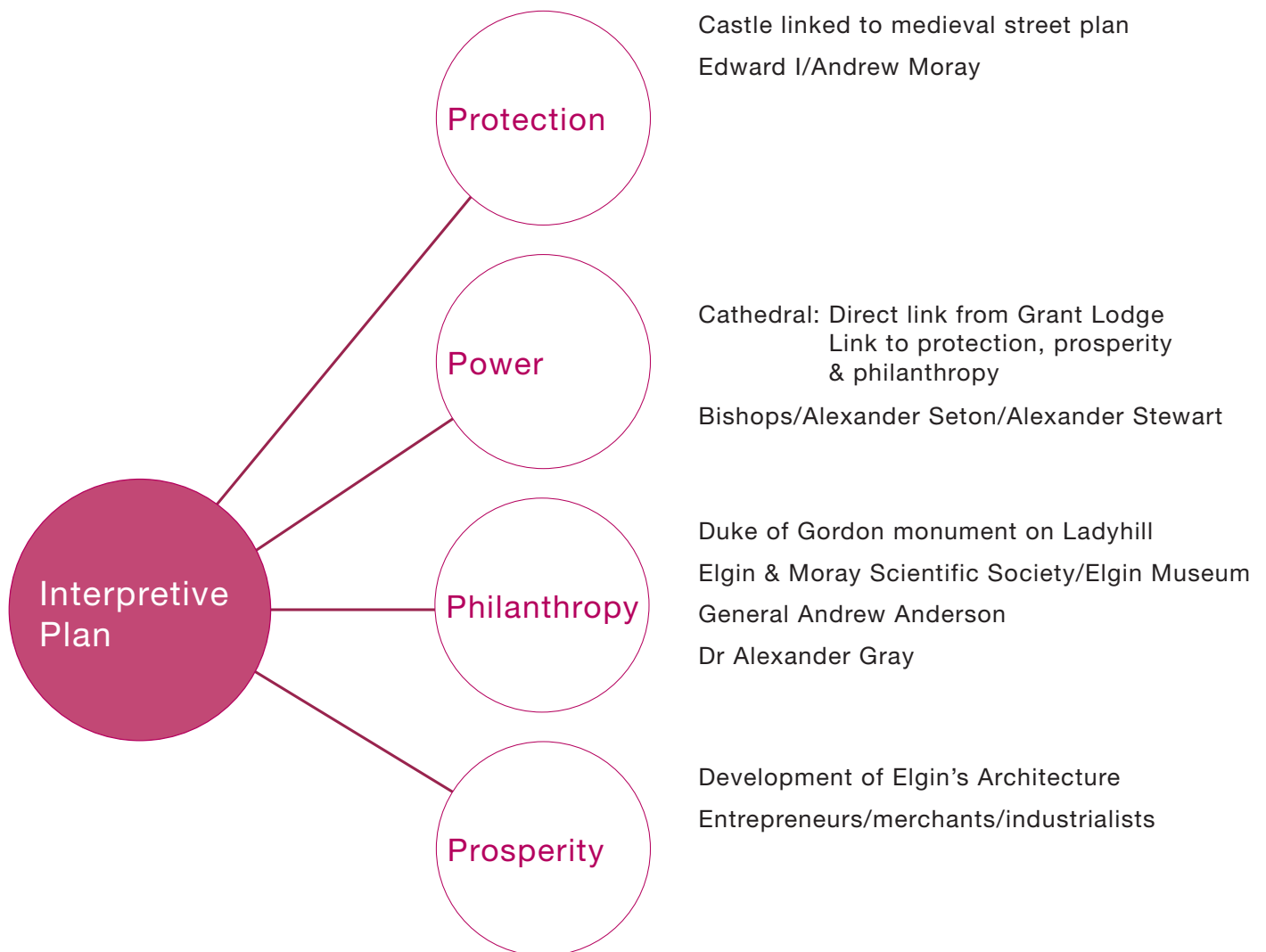
- A 'hub', promoting Elgin as a whole and greater Moray
- An orientation centre for out-of-town visitors
- A starting place for the town heritage trail
- A meeting place for locals
- A resource for schools to teach local history
- Welcoming
- Family-friendly
- Engaging, fun, interactive (especially appealing to young people)

The unifying concept for Grant Lodge is 'family'. The facility is to be family-friendly, and families constitute a target audience. People coming to be married are creating new families. The Local Heritage Centre (also to be housed in Grant Lodge) is a destination for people and schoolchildren researching their families. Grant Lodge itself was a family home over several generations. One aspect of the proposed heritage experience is to trace Elgin's development through the lens of its prominent families and the industries in which they were involved. 'Average' families – past and present – will also appear, with contemporary audiences given an opportunity to engage in the conversation.



## 2.0 Interpretation Concept

The Title of the project is Castle, Cathedral to Cashmere (C2C2C). From the Heritage Town Trail Interpretive Plan the themes that relate to this title and considered most appropriate to be explored at Grant Lodge are Protection, Power, Philanthropy and Prosperity. These themes provide the opportunity to tell the story of the people who helped shape Elgin and Moray, From the grandees, Earls and Bishops to the ordinary local people and characters all linking to the people of Elgin and Moray today.

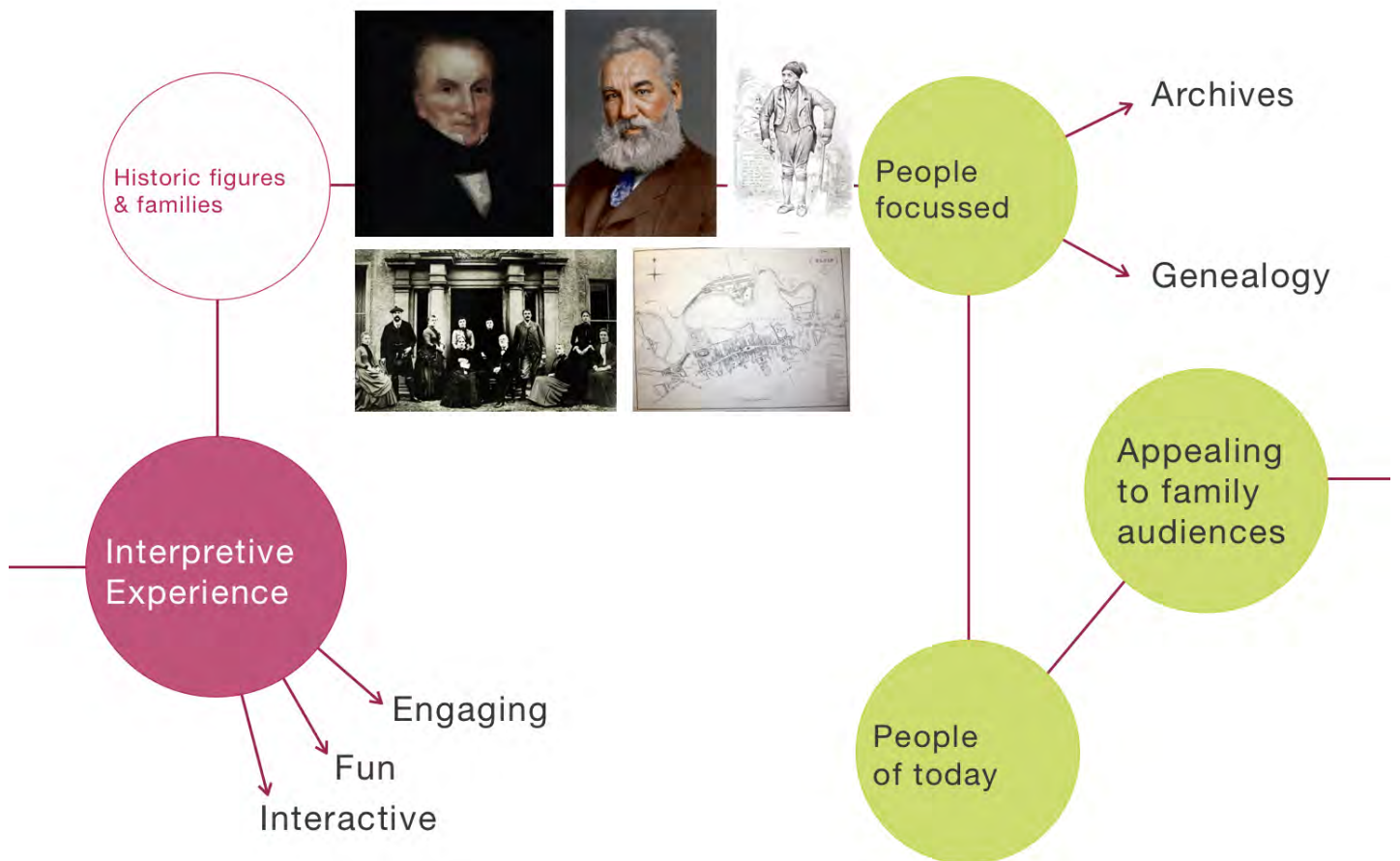


## 2.0 Interpretation Concept

Visitors to Elgin need orientation and context for their visit, in both a practical and historical sense. Locals may benefit from historical content, but for them the heritage experience may be more about getting a 'sense of place' and instilling pride about their home town.

The following topics have been identified as the focus for the new heritage experience at Grant Lodge:

- Creating a 'sense of place' for Elgin, especially for younger residents
- Place of Elgin in Moray, place of Elgin/Moray in wider Scots history
- Prominent families in Elgin / Moray (Note: The interpretation should be careful about not overemphasising the 'great families of Moray' which perhaps has limited appeal to out of town visitors who might not ever have heard of them.)
- Physical development of Elgin over time (as an orientation to the Heritage Trail, and also because this chronological story isn't told elsewhere in Elgin)
- Main industries contributing to the wealth/development of Elgin / Moray



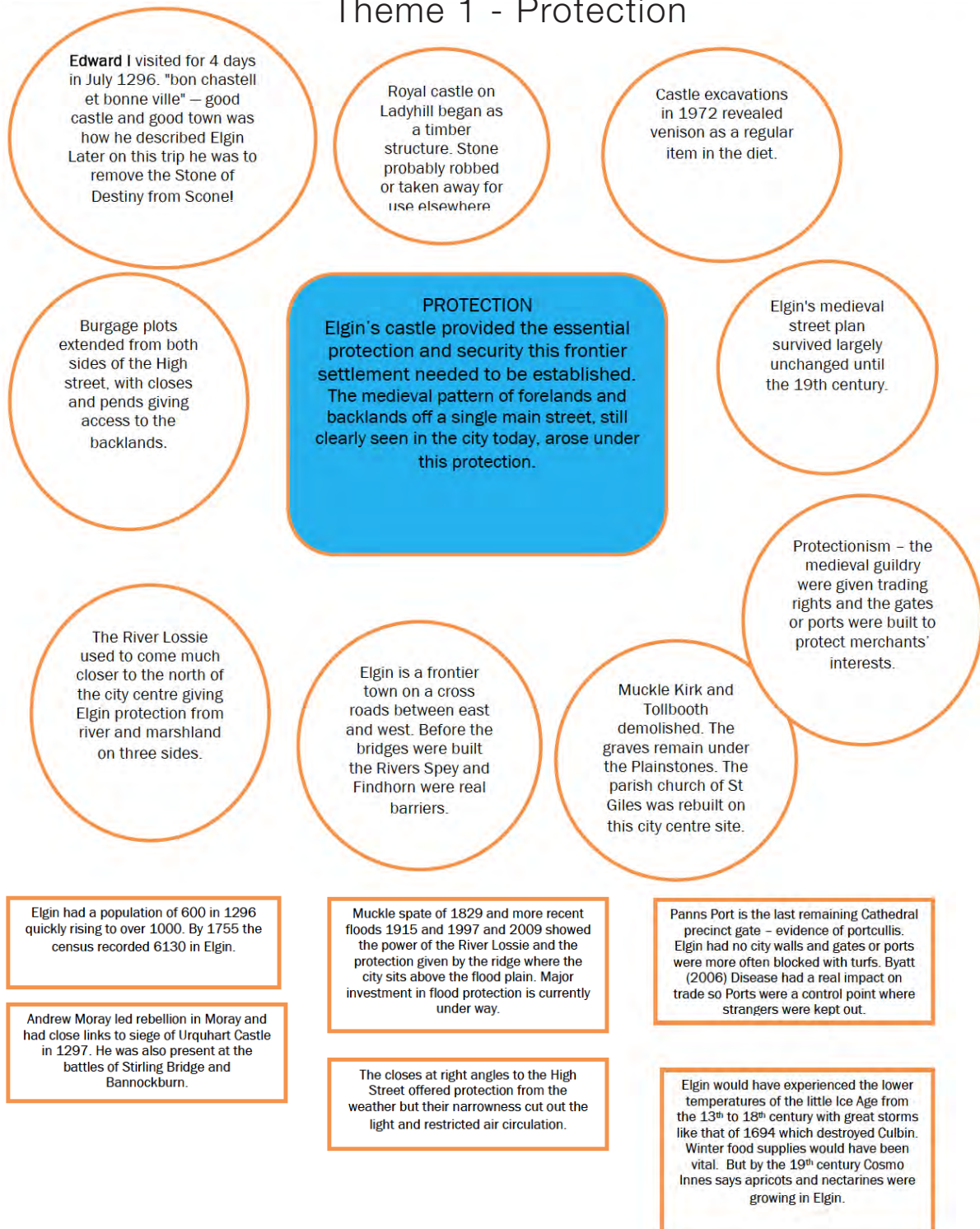


## 2.0 Interpretation Concept

In the Elgin High Street Conservation Area (Part4: Heritage Trail Interpretive Plan) completed in February 2012 Duncan Bryden Associates identified four interpretive themes for the development of new visitor facilities at Grant Lodge. These themes have been used as the primary source to guide the interpretive designs of the Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere Heritage Interpretation & Design project.

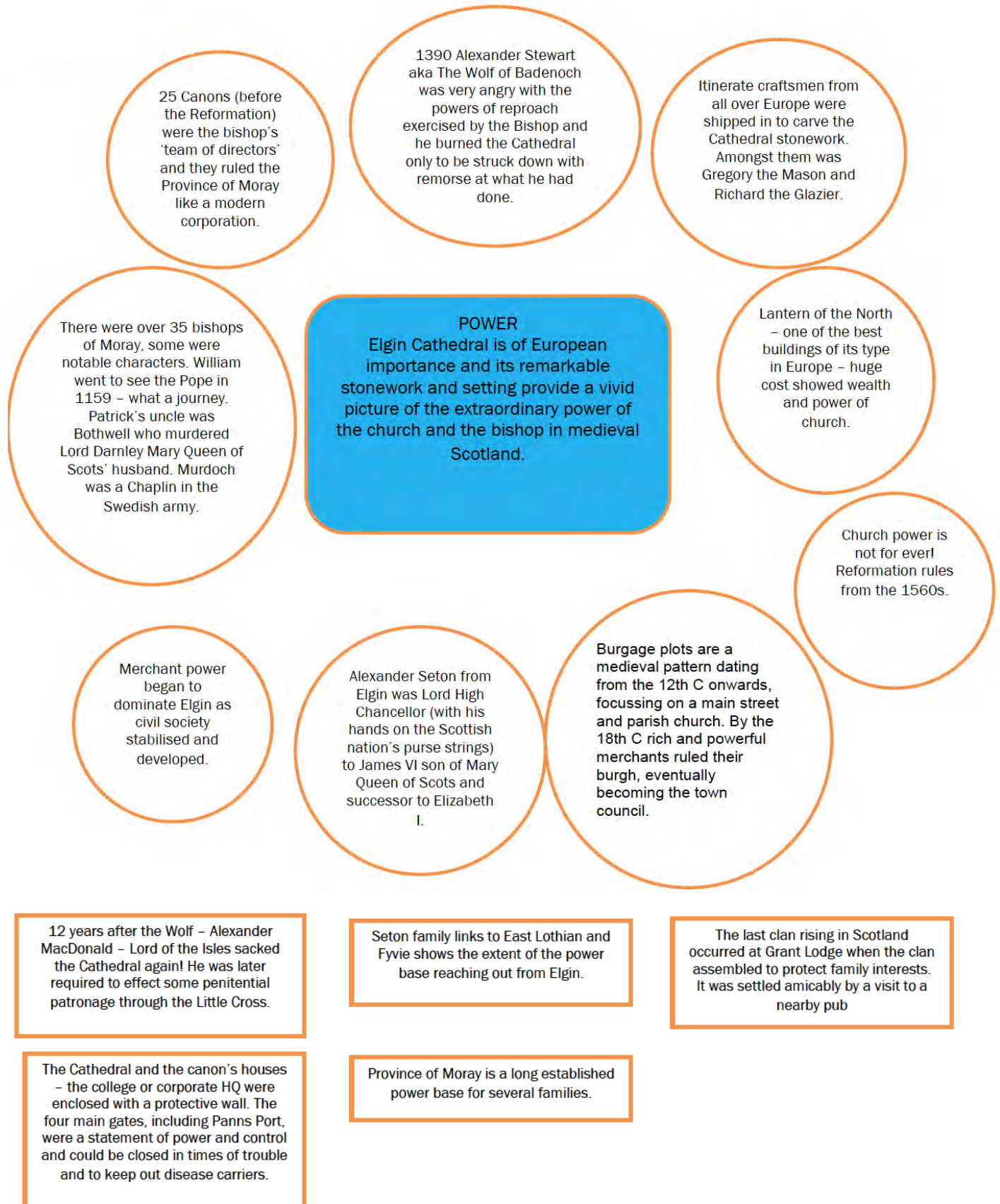
Around each of the central themes there are a series of primary themes and sub themes illustrating the many story lines and significances that could be communicated through the Elgin City Experience.

### Theme 1 - Protection



## 2.0 Interpretation Concept

### Theme 2 - Power





## 2.0 Interpretation Concept

### Theme 3 - Philanthropy

The Duke of Gordon's monument on Ladyhill. Is this a philanthropic city monument or an expression of power and rank?

General Andrew Anderson's Institute for the Education for the Young and care of the elderly was funded by a huge gift of £70,000.

Born in an Elgin close Dr Alexander Gray, a surgeon, large donation of £20,000 provided for new hospital in Elgin.

1836 Elgin and Morayshire Scientific Society was formed. By 1843 Elgin had one of the first private museums in Scotland.

**PHILANTHROPY (and Patronage)**  
People from humble Elgin backgrounds made their mark on the world but never forgot their city roots with, what would be today, multimillion pound philanthropic gestures. Fortunes won in far off places were reinvested in Elgin's fine building fabric and echoes of Roman and Greek styles still dominate the High Street and skyline.

Civic pride – the old St Giles Church or the Muckle Kirk was demolished in 1826 and replaced by the neo classical St Giles Church. The Tollbooth was taken down in 1843 and replaced by a fountain.

Public Art in Elgin was frequently provided by wealthy benefactors. Sculptures – crosses (penitential patronage), fountains, war memorials etc.

Land was given in medieval times to Black and Grey Friars - Dominican and Franciscan - who in return provide some social services.

**PATRONAGE**  
Patronage is perhaps an early form of philanthropy. The giver of patronage often expected something in return. The Bishops and the Church used patronage to help maintain their power.

Shaw, in 1760, complaining about architectural change - "But the luxury and vanity of our times know no bounds."

Cosmo Innes complaining in 1860 about the 'vulgar modernity' of new buildings described the loss of Elgin's early architecture as a 'veritable orgy of destruction.'

Links to Muckle Kirk remain in the history of the Big Bell that rang out from the Muckle Kirk and is now in the Elgin museum.

General Anderson and Dr Gray both found fortune with the Honourable East India Company. The HEIC was the first 'corporate' joint state/business venture in the world. Adam Smith denounced the Company as 'a bloodstained monopoly: "burdensome", "useless" and responsible for grotesque massacres in Bengal!

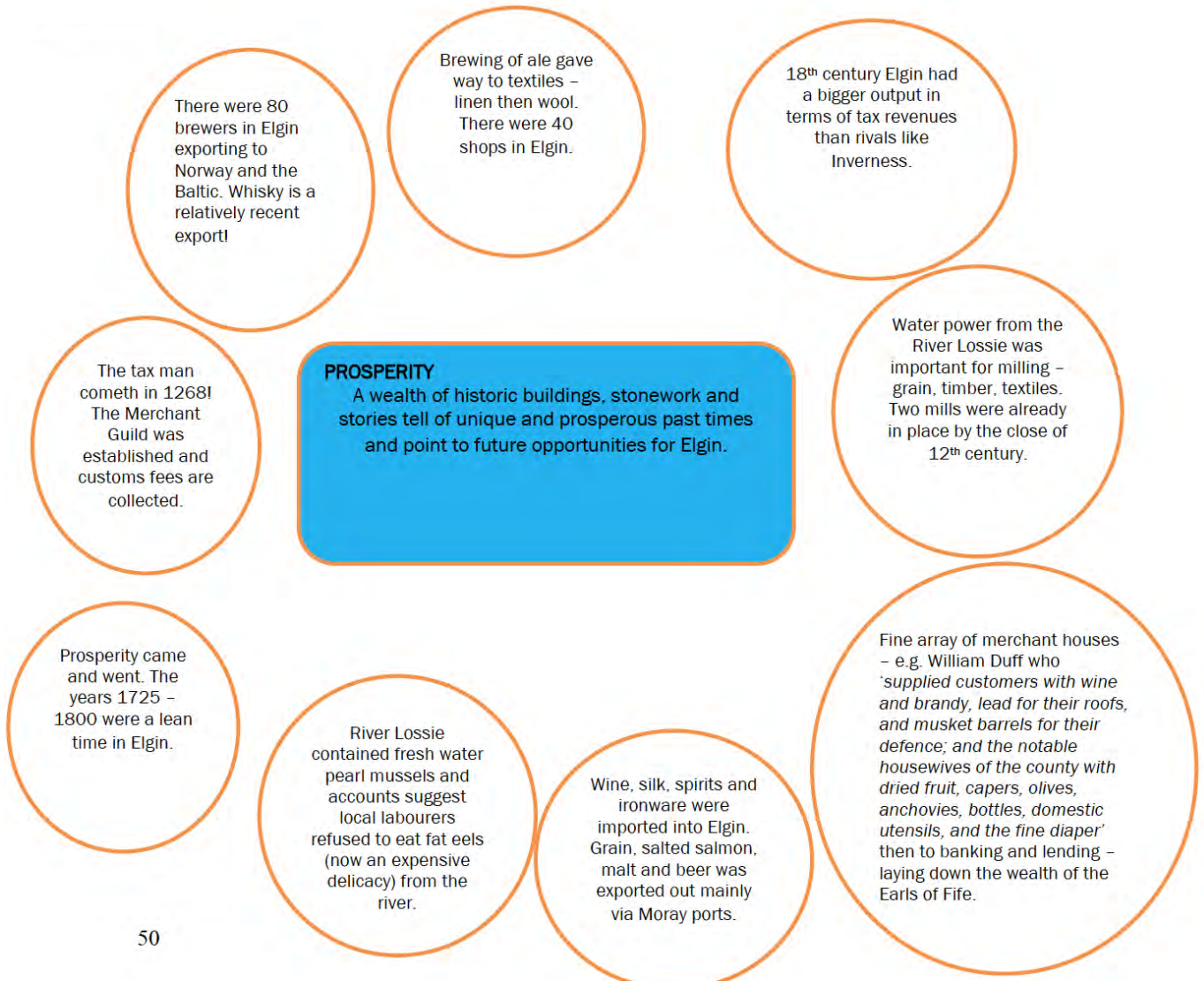
Less attractive elements of wealth creation – like slavery. Large estates around Elgin benefited from investment in places like Demerara in modern Guyana.

Welcome was the name of a black domestic servant at Innes House who was probably the first black face seen on the streets of Elgin and perhaps in the north of Scotland.

*I fear they were ill-housed, ill-clothed, ill-fed, not considered by their masters, except as hewers of wood and drawers of water. The beasts of their plough, though starved also, were somewhat better off—their hide, at least, was thicker. It fared ill with such a population in seasons like this, for a bad harvest surely brought famine, and famine brought pestilence; and the marsh fever and ague swept off those whom hunger and the plague spared. For the most part they were slaves, bound to the soil, and bought and sold with it. Cosmo Innes 1860.*

## 2.0 Interpretation Concept

### Theme 4 - Prosperity



50

Edwardian cast iron shop fronts are still common place in the city centre making attractive street frontages.

Cashmere links Elgin with Mongolia and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue in New York.

What about the local people in times of prosperity and during recession? Stories about what they ate, their clothing, housing, disease – leper hospital, their work and how much they earned – who was paid the most and why? In the 18<sup>th</sup> century crime and punishment included witchcraft allegations and executions.

Built between 1837 and 1860 the new harbour in Lossiemouth allowed Elgin to import and export and to improve contact with the wider world. A rail connection was also made to move goods from port to city.

Johnstons established their mill in 1797. Now it is about Hermes, Louis Vuitton, Hugo Boss and Chanel.

A grammar school for Elgin was established in 1566 due to the close link between education and economic prosperity. Children not bring a peat for the fire meant a cold day at school for them!

The Victorian close dweller's life in Elgin contrasted with that of those living in the grand houses facing the High Street. Social deprivation and crowding was common but each close had its own atmosphere and characters - Punchie Grant, George the Garb King, Peter Porridge Laing and Nelly Homeless are just a few.



## 2.0 Interpretation Concept

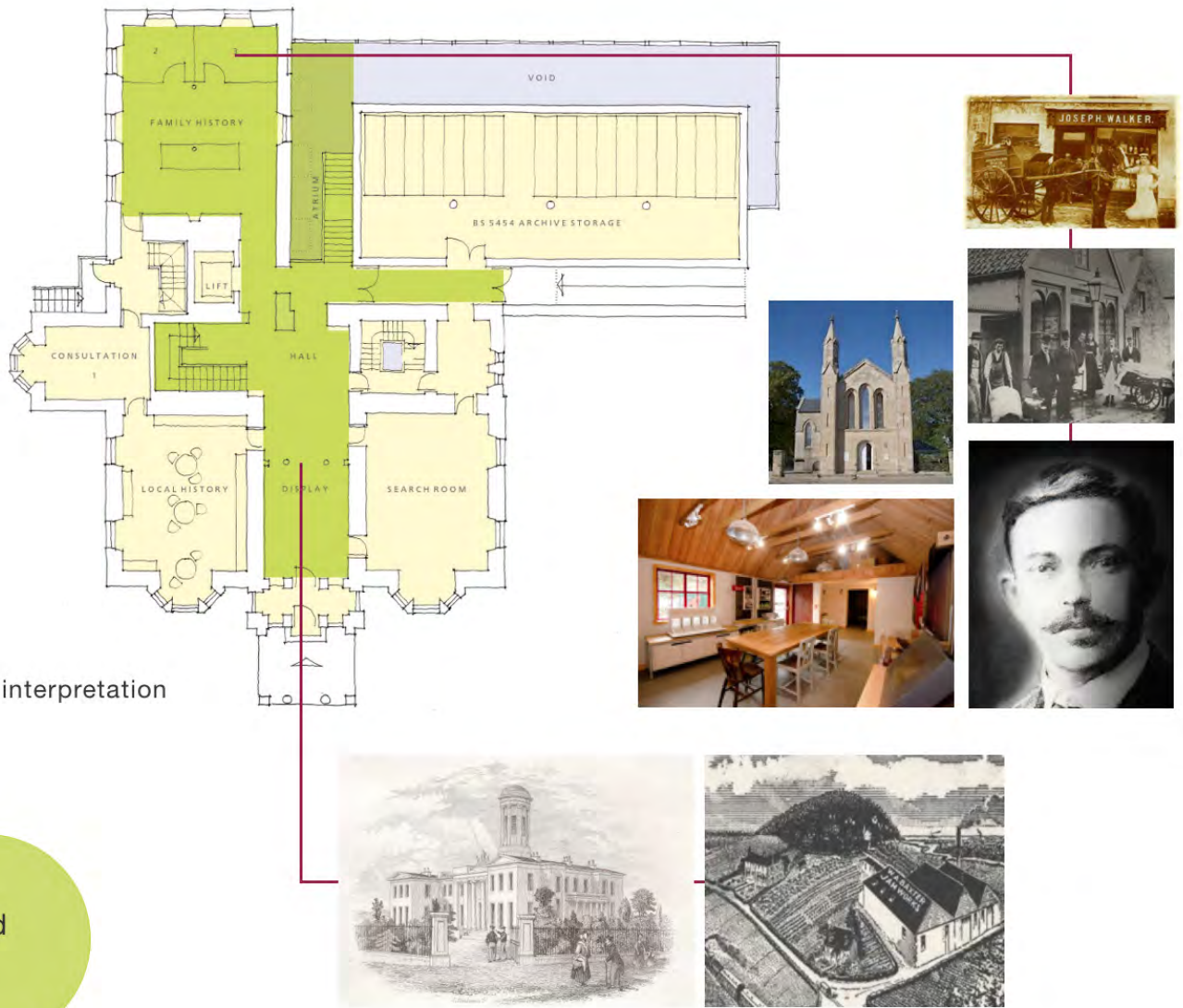
### Target Audiences for Grant Lodge

The heritage experience at Grant Lodge seeks to reach out to some of the underserved audiences in Elgin, both local and from further afield. A list of the target audiences includes:

- Locals
- Schools
- Out-of-town visitors (drawn by the TIC, and if Grant Lodge is suitably promoted as a 'hub' and the first place of arrival in Elgin)
- Families
- Researchers to the Local Heritage Centre (esp. those researching family history in the genealogical archives)
- Wedding guests (Note: it is proposed that the Registry Office move into Grant Lodge and this is where marriages will be held. While wedding guests are not likely to view exhibitions at the time, wedding may bring new audiences to the building who might not otherwise have come, and they should be considered as potential future visitors for the heritage experience.)

### 3.0 Interpretive Design Concept

The interpretation at Grant Lodge will inhabit much of the public spaces through the building, generally on the walls in the form of artwork and 3D objects.

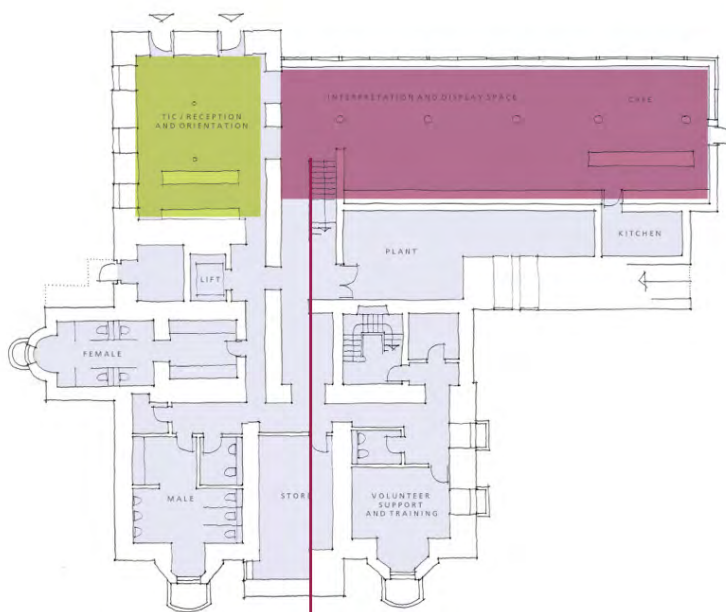




### 3.0 Interpretive Design Concept

The main focus of the interpretive provision will be at entry level adjacent to the Tourist Information reception point. The design concept is to provide maximum flexibility that can respond to various levels of audience demands from family groups to children and senior citizens.

There is a natural flow from the provision of general tourist information on what to do and see with heritage interpretation to orientate visitors to where they can find out more and engage with heritage locations. There is therefore no exclusive exhibition space. The café adjacent to the exhibits will be allowed to permeate into the exhibition space and expand and contract as use demands. This informality will encourage casual visitors and locals in particular who might otherwise see the interpretation as something for 'tourists'.

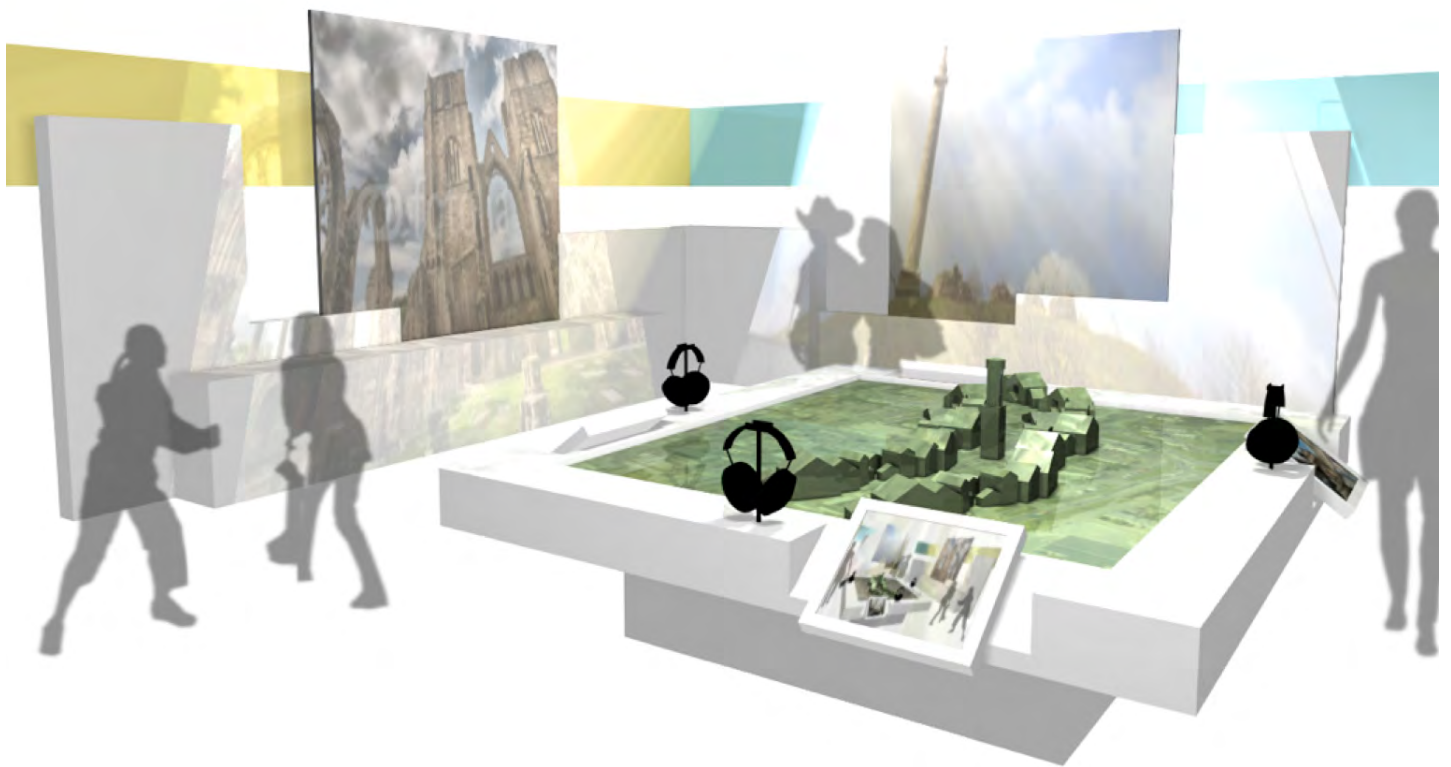


Heritage interpretation



### 3.0 Interpretive Design Concept

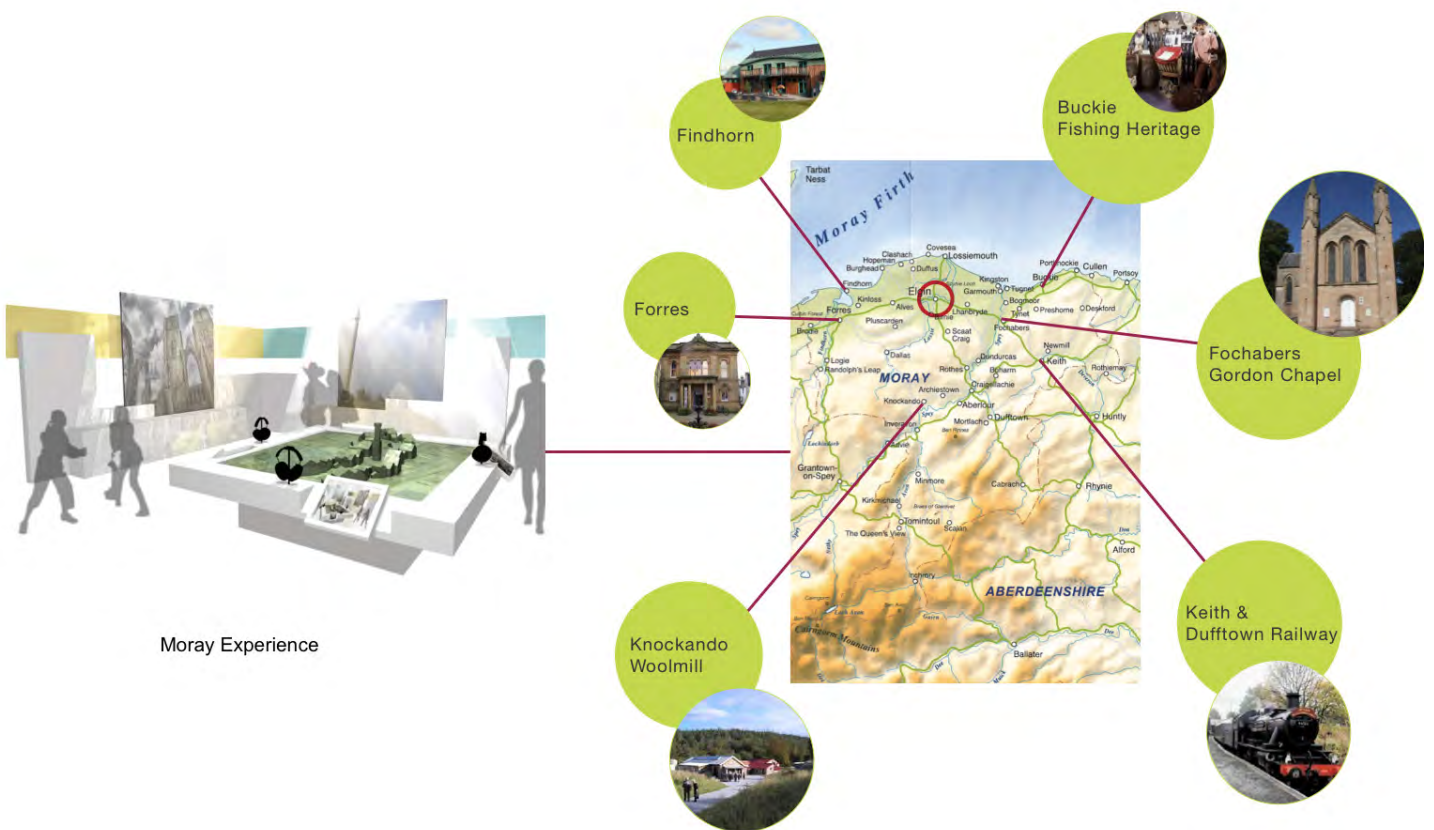
The visitor experience at the core of the interpretive exhibition is gathered around a 3D map table that will highlight the locations of heritage sites in Elgin and Moray. The map will be linked to a series of touch screens or iPads where interactive interpretation can be explored in depth. The surrounding walls will include changing graphics and a graphics system to support temporary exhibitions and a number of display cases to display loaned objects from the Elgin Museum and others.



## 4.0 The Moray Experience

The interpretive exhibition will use the interpretive themes to explore the cultural and natural history of the wider Moray area directing visitors to heritage sites, places of historic interest and other visitor destinations in Moray.

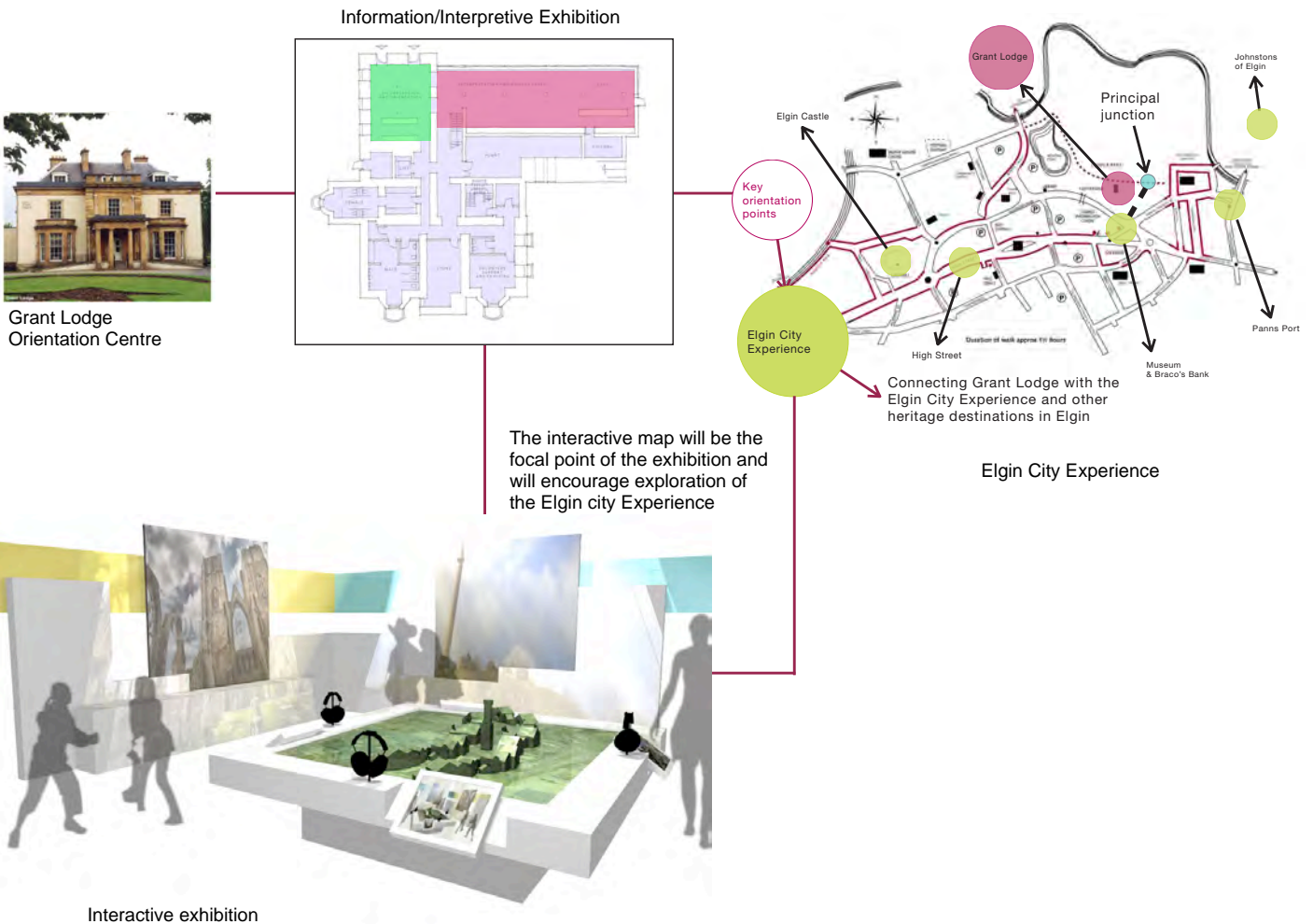
The interpretation will be supported by traditional Visitor Information services.



## 5.0 The Elgin City Experience

Elgin has a wealth of important historic sites and architecture including the medieval High Street and Cathedral.

A significant part of the function of Grant Lodge is to encourage the exploration of Elgin's heritage and history. The design concept for this function is based on the Heritage Town Trail Plan. It is recognised that very few visitors use Town Trails as a means of visiting heritage sites in a particular order or following a marked route. However a trail is a very effective method of promoting heritage sites under a common theme or banner, in this case it is called the Elgin City Experience.





## 5.0 The Elgin City Experience

Although the 'Experience' will begin at Grant Lodge in the exhibition, but there is no real start point and visitors will encounter interpretation as they move around Elgin. Nevertheless there will be a series of distinguishable interpretive hub points located at important heritage sites, such as the Cathedral, the Museum, the High Street and other important buildings and sites. Individual buildings will also have interpretive panels on or adjacent to them in the same style as the 'interpretive hubs'



Key Orientation Hub

Way finding post

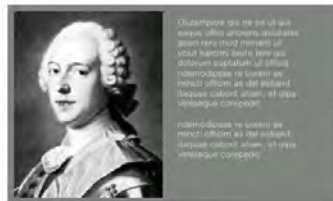
## 5.0 The Elgin City Experience



Key Orientation Hub



Each Interpretive Orientation Hub will be based on the identified interpretive themes, linking theme to place - to building - to people



Charles Edward Stewart



High Street

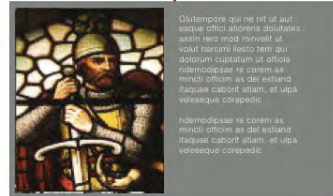


Thunderton House

## 5.0 The Elgin City Experience



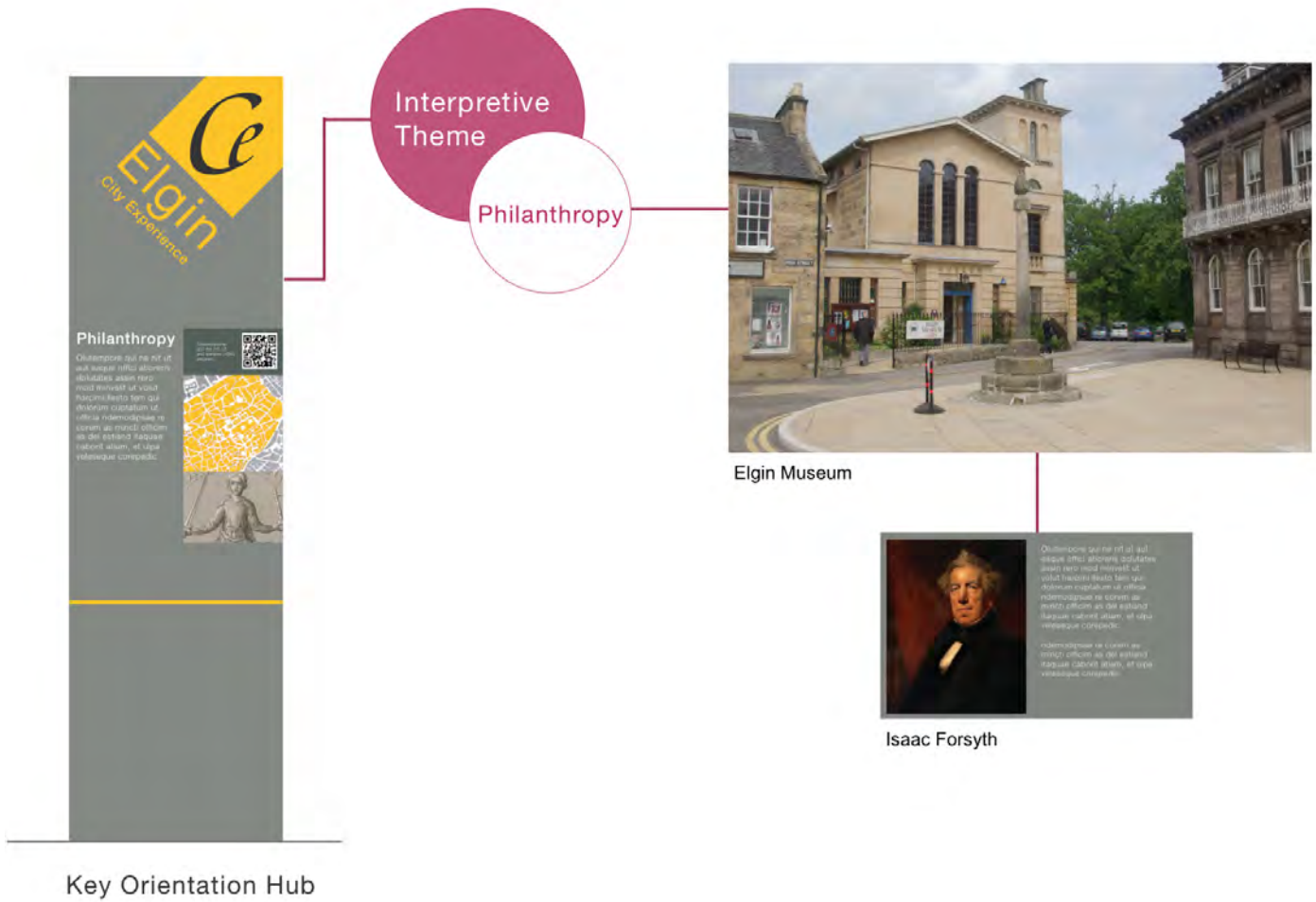
Panns Port



Andrew Moray

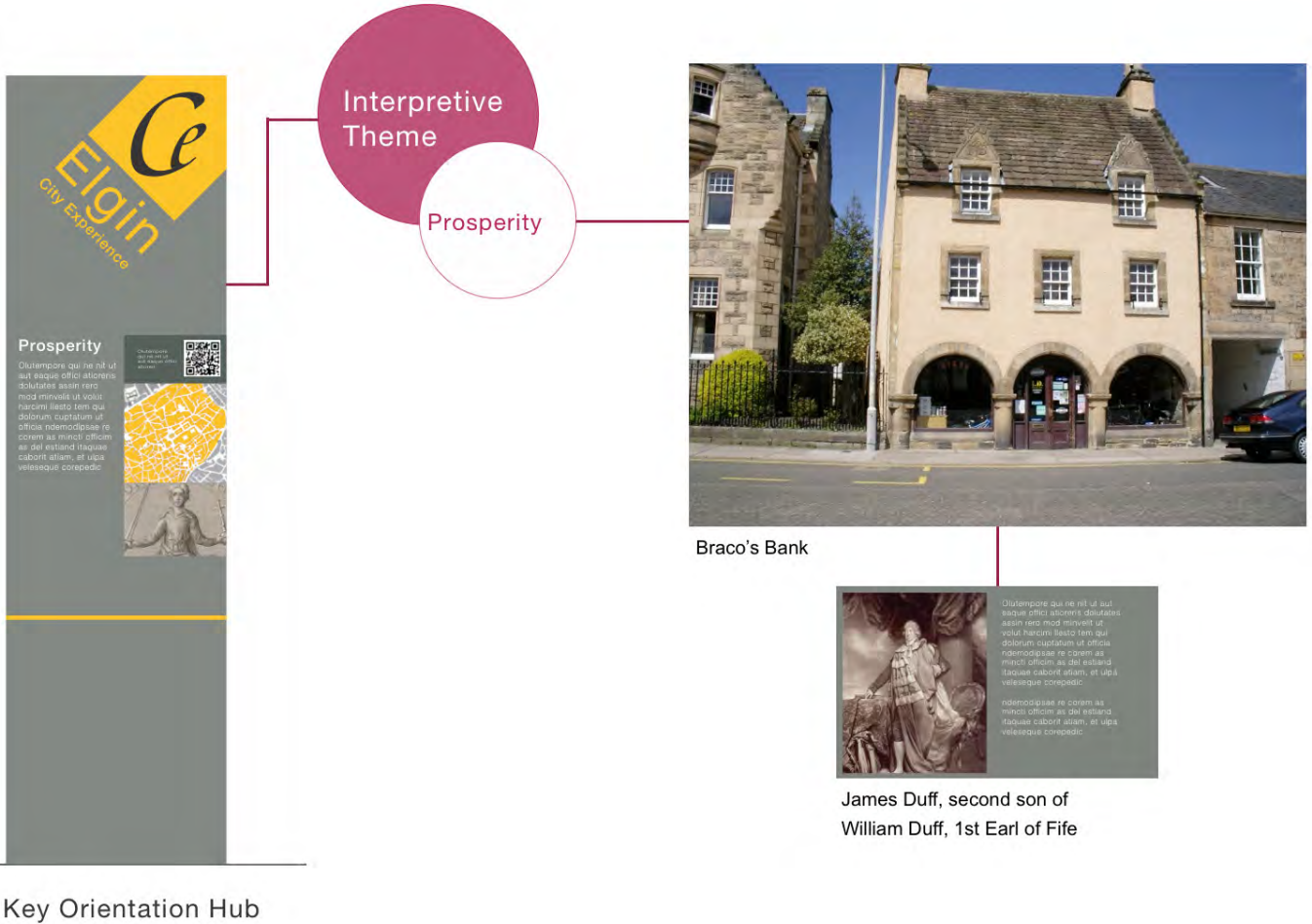
Key Orientation Hub

## 5.0 The Elgin City Experience





## 5.0 The Elgin City Experience



## 6.0 Mobile App Development

Engaging teenagers in heritage interpretation is traditionally a difficult task. At Grant Lodge it is proposed to create a project with two local schools to involve teenagers in helping to develop a heritage app for smart phone technology. The concept for this piece of work is to design a tour of Elgin by teenagers for teenagers showing the town's heritage sites, but also other sites important to Elgin's teenage life. History that might otherwise seem dull to this group could be spun in a 'horrible histories' fashion and could include humorous and scary stories.

The tour would be available as an option on the Elgin City Experience and could be downloaded using QR tags or it will be a discreet app for use on smart phones.



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