



# Project Proposal: Holmehill, Dunblane

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Gardens *by* Water Gems

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Brief

To design a unique landscape centred on water with a combination of a large pool with streams, waterfalls and cascades. Additionally there will be pathways, seating and level areas capable of being wheelchair friendly and attractive, yet cost effective. These features will be set amongst a 'botanical' style of planting containing ornamental trees, shrubs and wildflowers. The planting will enhance the biodiversity of the site and create year round interest that the local community of Dunblane can use.

### Objective

The objective of the design scheme is to take an already well loved, central greenspace in the heart of Dunblane and better connect it to the local community through the addition of water features, new plantings and access pathways.

### Goals

The design aims to make the space a focal point that the residents of Dunblane will feel a strong attachment to and that they will see as an asset to the wider community.

### Solution

The project will create an area of year round interest and enable community interaction that will help to further connect the greenspace of Holmehill with the existing public pathways around the site. Along with the proposed new community facility to be built at the foot of the site, the water features, paths and plantings will improve the environment for the local community as well as for the natural biodiversity of the site.

### Project Outline

The project will include a mixture of water feature elements, pathways, hard landscaping features and new planting schemes.

- **Water features.**

- ▶ A large pool with surrounding plantings, jetty and encompassing path. The western edge of the pond will be along the line of the existing stone wall that will be removed. With the pool being in the lowest point of the site it will reduce the need for excavation into the hillside. As much as possible of any excavated topsoil will be retained elsewhere within the site.
  - ▶ 3 main water features originating from a 'lade' platform at the top of the slope.
  - ▶ A series of 'aqueduct' waterfalls projecting into a pool each will be stepped down the on the northern side of the sight
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- ▶ A series of 3 individual pools with feature cascades (sculptured faces, bolders) will progress down the slope in the middle. Water will spout into each pool and then be piped underground to the next pool eventually finishing in the large bottom pond.
- ▶ A naturalistic stream with small pools running from the 'lade' at the top of the slope to the large pond at the bottom. Near the bottom of the site, above the carpark next to the pond, an area containing reed beds (*phragmites*) that will help to screen the carpark and create a SUDs ( Sustainable Drainage systems) zone. This will collect runoff from the hard surfaces of the carpark and be a habitat for local biodiversity to inhabit undisturbed.
- ▶ There will be a clear view of the large pool from the proposed new community centre extension. This area immediately in front of the centre will have a drivable reinforced turfed area that can link the 2 parking areas as well as being an area for people to gather.

- **Pathways**

- ▶ In order to keep costs down yet still be effective, compacted whin dust paths would be created through the site, connecting various elements.
- ▶ There would be interesting bridge/ crossing features and wooden board-walks where paths cross water features.
- ▶ There will be a new series of steps that will angle up between the large trees at 2/3 the way up the slope. This will help to connect the front of the site to the existing paths and summit of Holmehill.

- **Hard landscaping elements**

- ▶ At the top of the slope there will be an engineered multi-level platform as a gathering place and a space to take the extensive views across the town. This is where the water features will begin.
- ▶ Simple seating made out elements that compliment the site- stone , corten steel, wood. These would be situated to make the most of views looking out of the site as well as to features within the site.
- ▶ Large natural stones would be partially buried on the slope to allow for sitting and to add interest to the site.
- ▶ Where possible existing elements such as stone walls will be improved and enhanced to show the character of the site.
- ▶ There will be the opportunity for sculptural elements to be incorporated within the site to add further interest. It could be a place for local artists to showcase suitable pieces.

- **Plantings**

- ▶ New botanical plantings of ornamental trees that are suitable for Scottish conditions will be added. They will be medium sized trees that will give interest throughout the seasons, such as *Cornus*, *Sorbus*, *Prunus*, *Ginkgo*, *Metasequoia*, *Cercidaphyllum*.
  - ▶ Hardy, larger growing perennials and shrubs will be used to help connect the tree species to the enhanced wildflower grasslands. These areas will also allow for safe areas for local wildlife to reside.
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- ▶ Large areas of wildflowers will be used to retain the present feeling of open space and enable views out across the site to the wider landscape. Here there is room for community involvement and to also enhance the habitat for the wildlife that already live there.

### **Considerations**

- ▶ 3 phase power to the site
- ▶ irrigation, especially for the first year of new plantings
- ▶ landscaping elements that are constructed in a way in which to minimise vandalism
- ▶ community involvemen



