



# Laigh Hills Park, Dunblane Strategic Landscape Masterplan Report 2014

## Executive Summary

This document reports on the landscape masterplanning process which has been initiated by Stirling Council's Land Services Department for Laigh Hills Park, Dunblane. This report summarises the masterplanning process and sets out recommendations at this stage in an ongoing design, development and management process. This process will continue into the future and beyond the commission for this strategic stage of the project. It is acknowledged that this document will be built on and added to with revised and updated reports as detailed designs and other key phased changes within the park are developed.

The main aim of this document is to assist both the Land Services Department and other key stakeholders to make informed and targeted decisions with regard to the use, management and any physical changes within Laigh Hills Park and surrounding environs, which will meet the needs and aspirations of both local people and visitors to the area. This report is set within the wider framework of National and European Governments' planning, social and environmental policy.

This document will also allow third party stakeholder and funding organisations the opportunity to see how proposals recommended through the masterplanning process have been developed based on clear evidence.

This masterplan is therefore underpinned with baseline studies included within the technical appendix, addendum Extended Phase One Ecology report and Laigh Hills Park Civil Engineering Inspection and illustrative landscape spatial masterplan drawings. Together, this information provides a structured and evidence based tool for informed decision making with regard to all aspects of the park and park environs moving forward.



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## 1.0 Background & Introduction

Connon Design Ltd. with JDC Ecology, Millard Consulting Civil Engineers, The Rennie Partnership Quantity Surveyors & Ideas Economic Development consultants, were commissioned on 21st August 2013 by Stirling Council's Land Services Department to develop a long-term, Strategic Landscape Masterplan for Laigh Hills Park, Dunblane. It was agreed that, as the project was strategic, further detailed studies, such as; detailed topographic surveys, hydrology, detailed ecology, tree/woodland condition surveys, civil engineering feasibility studies would be better targeted, following the recommendations from this strategic landscape masterplan.

The main aim of the masterplanning process at this stage therefore, is to understand and document Laigh Hills Park's; Social, Environmental, and Economic contexts. This will inform the development of targeted, meaningful and prudent design and management solutions, which best balance the identified *needs and aspirations* of the local and wider communities, including visitors to the area.

A key aim of this report is also to document the approach taken and to record the evidence in support of the strategic landscape masterplan. This will give funders and decision-makers confidence in supporting proposed improvements to Laigh Hills Park.

Connon Design has been working closely with a steering group throughout this process comprising; Stirling Council's Land Services Department, local elected Councillors, Dunblane Community Council and Dunblane Development Trust.

A wider key Stakeholder group was identified by the steering group (see appendix). This group, together with the wider community, have been consulted

throughout the process so far at key project milestones.

### Report Structure

The report is structured in two parts. The first part is an illustrated summary of the masterplanning process that has been carried out to date. This part concludes with recommendations and the proposed way forward, including recommendations for possible sources of funding. This is summarised in two park proposals drawings which are included at the end of this document.

The main proposals recommended comprise a combination of use & management and physical interventions within the park & the park environs.

The second part of the document is a technical appendix which includes evidence of the baseline studies, including the community consultations carried out in support of the development of the masterplan proposals and recommendations.

### Key Stages Summary

#### The Masterplanning Process

In order to produce a robust masterplan, it is necessary to develop a framework of understanding including a project Vision and Aims & Objectives (see consultation summary below). These have been developed together with the key stakeholders and the project steering group. This took place alongside a strategic policy review in order to understand the contexts within which this project is being developed.

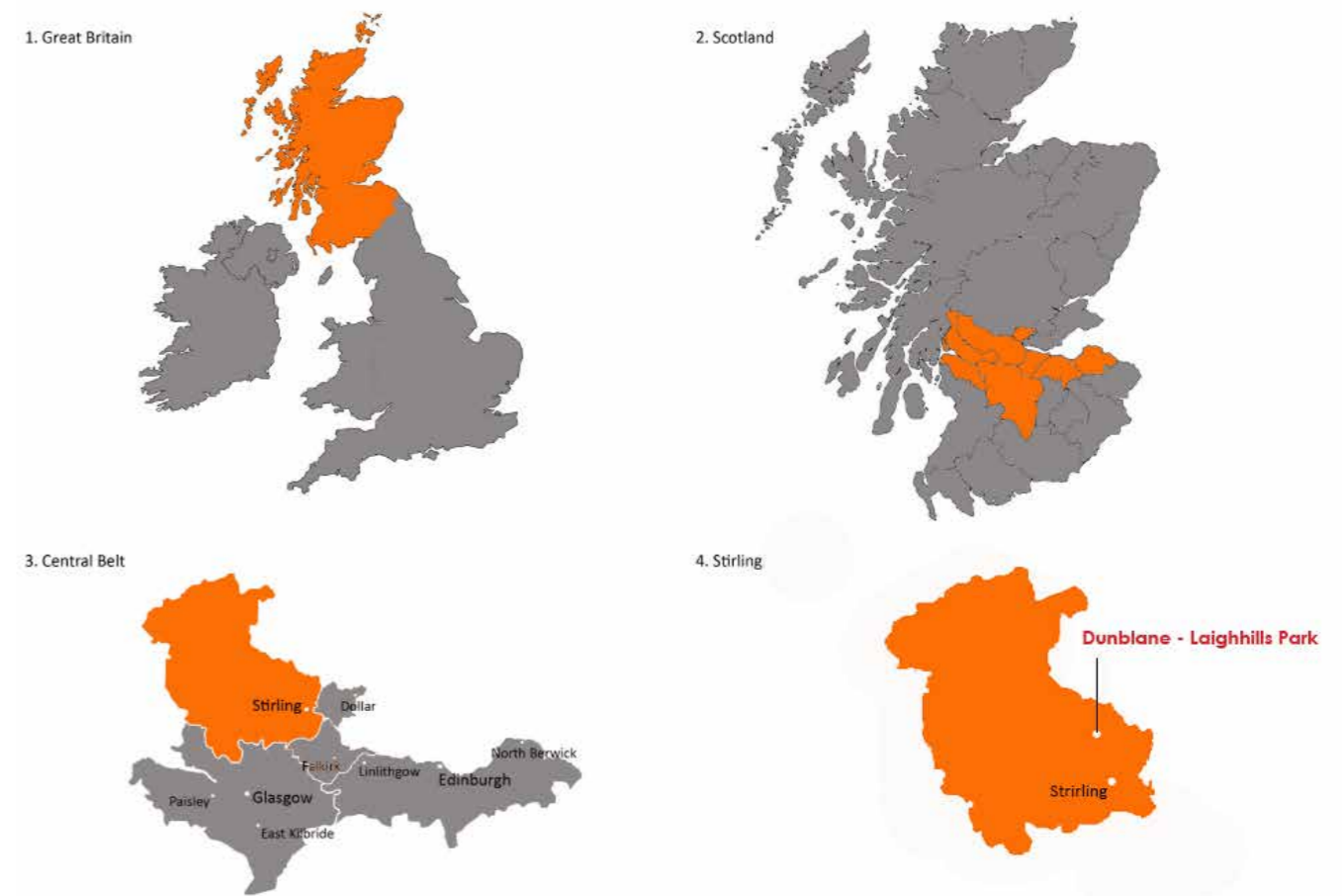


Fig 1.0 Project Location

**“ Modern public services should be shaped by evidence-based policy making. This means using evidence to design policy that we know, or at least have strong objective reasons to believe, will work. Without evidence, it can be impossible to tell if good intentions will turn into good outcomes ”**

ref: Equalities Impact Assessment Guidance 2009 -

The key stages are summarised below:

## Stage 1 - Framework

- Policy Context & Area Appraisal including; Baseline studies (desk & field studies see technical appendix).
- Project Vision, Aims & Objectives developed through key Stakeholder consultations:

The Steering Group  
Dunblane Primary School  
Dunblane High School  
Public Consultation Open Day

## Stage 2 - Masterplan

- Detailed site appraisal including detailed baseline site studies (desk & field studies - see technical appendix).

## Masterplan Proposals & Recommendations:

1. Spatial landscape proposals
2. Use and management recommendations
3. Laigh Hills Park Design Guide
4. Detail Design & further studies
5. Funding

It should be noted that the design process is iterative. Information gathered and assessed through the masterplan therefore continually shapes the process. This should continue beyond the scope of this strategic stage in the masterplanning process through the detail design stages.

## Laigh Hills Park Location

Laigh Hills Park is a significant and very well used public open space located to the Northwest of the historic centre of Dunblane (see fig. 1.0 & fig. 2.0 above). It covers an area of approximately 21 hectares (circa 52 acres). This is equivalent to approximately 21 times the size of Dunblane's Cathedral precinct (including

the Cathedral). Much of the extent of the park is defined by the Allan Water which flows in a distinct loop to the north, northwest and north-north-east of the park.

Other boundaries include; the Barbush housing development to the eastern edge of the park, and 20th century housing developments adjacent to the historic Ramoyle area of Dunblane to the southern extent (see fig. 2.0)

Laigh Hills Park is recognised both locally and regionally within the Stirling Council Area as a significant recreational and ecological landscape asset for both visitors to, and local residents of, Dunblane.

Laigh Hills Park forms part of the Dunblane Greenbelt and is identified as Public Openspace in the Local Development Plan. It forms part of both a green and blue ecological corridor and has a significant and diverse range of wildlife and ecological habitats. This enriches it as an asset and as a destination for park users to experience the benefits of the natural environment within walking distance of much of Dunblane.

## Policy Context Review:

Planning Context & Other Relevant Local Developments.

The following Local, National & International Policies have been reviewed in the preparation of the proposals within this masterplan:

- The emerging *Local Development Plan*
- Conservation Area & Tree Protection Orders (TPOs) including *Conservation Appraisal, Dunblane revised 2012*
- *Central Region, Landscape Character Appraisal, 1999* (Ash Consulting Group) SNH
- Stirling Core Paths review & Local Green Paths Network Map, Harvey



Fig 2.0 - Park location

- *Stirling Open Space Strategy 2012.*
- *Stirling Countryside Access & recreation strategy, 1999*
- *Stirling Pitches Strategy 2013*, Kit Campbell Associates
- *Active Stirling Sports Strategy*
- *CSGN Draft - Green network & Open space - Supplementary Guidance, 2011*
- *Equality Impact Guidance, Equality & Human Right Commission, 2009*
- *PAN 78 Inclusive design - Scottish Government 2006*
- *Designing Places - A Policy Statement for Scotland, 2001*
- *Cycling By Design 2010 - Transport Scotland*
- Future Stirling to Perth Railway electrification - Transport Scotland
- *Laigh Hills Cycle Access Route Preliminary Inspection & observations, December 2011, IKM consulting*
- Sherrifmuir Park – cycle trails - current planning application.
- NCN Dunblane to Doune NCN no. 765
- *Ponds Pools Lochans - SEPA*
- *Water Courses in The Community - SEPA*
- *Secure By Design - Youth Shelters*
- *The Street and Place Names of Dunblane and District*, Archie McKerracher, T.
- *The History of Dunblane*, Alexander B. Barty
- *100 Years of Golf in Dunblane*, Pat MacLachlan
- Improvements to walking & Cycling paths & routes in the Dunblane Area, Jan 2011 - Sustainable Dunblane
- *Dunblane Allan Water Restoration Project, repair and Maintenance Strategy, September 2013 - IKM Consulting/DDT*
- *Civil Engineering - Laigh Hills Park Inspection. November 2013, Millard Consulting*

Relevant Guidance, Studies & other proposed developments within the area:

The above policy context has provided information on the wider policy aims of Stirling Council, The Scottish Government and includes European policy for example; on access to the countryside & protected species of plants and animals. Local study work has also been taken into consideration including the Dunblane Green Travel Map.

Policies and directives from other key stakeholder organisations such as Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) and Sustrans have provided a policy framework of information which has informed the masterplanning process. This is particularly relevant to this project in terms of equalities and access to the countryside legislation and policy.

**Key Issues:**

The site is not within the Dunblane Conservation Area. There are no specific Tree Protection Orders, although existing trees are currently within the legal control of Stirling Council.

The site is within the Local Plan Countryside policy boundary, forms part of the Openspace Audit (policy 1.3) and is designated as 'Green corridor' (policy 1.3). The Towns and Villages Plan notes the following with regard to Laigh Hills Park:

*'The Laighhills Park is the main recreational area in Dunblane and while it provides the usual items of play equipment it is also a Wildlife Site with a natural and semi-wild character which is appreciated by many local residents. An Urban Nature Conservation Strategy, prepared on behalf of and adopted by the Council, has suggested that the Laighhills Park should be designated as a Local Nature Reserve. The Scouring Burn is also identified as an important wildlife corridor which will be protected from development.'*

The above also notes the importance of connectivity to the local paths and long

distance cycle networks.

It is likely that major infrastructure works in close proximity to the railway line will require planning approval.

Any improvements or building within the park will require planning permission.

Any increase modifications to the adopted Haining access road will require Roads Construction Consent (RCC).

There are Core Paths running through, and connecting to the site, that have informed the development of the masterplan.

Proposed works affecting existing water courses and wetlands may require SEPA screening & approvals.

**2.0 Project Framework & Baseline**

**Social Context**

Dunblane is a settlement with a population of approximately 8,930. It is a significant tourist attraction due in part to it's historic Cathedral and Town Centre. While there is some mixed local employment, many local people use Dunblane as a place from which to commute for work in larger surrounding settlements.

There are three primary schools and two secondary schools within the settlement.

Dunblane has a vibrant high street with a number of small to medium sized business including cafes, pubs and restaurants through-out the historic centre.

There are a number of churches and other places of worship as well as other key local community-use buildings which are generally located in and around Dunblane centre.

Dunblane also has a tennis club which is centrally located to the south of the

settlement centre.

Laigh Hills Park is a significant local asset and is currently well used by local people for a wide range of social and recreational activities. The parks location close to the centre of Dunblane and between two large housing areas contributes to its popularity with both local people and visitors to the area.

It is understood from historical research that the park has been used in the past for organised social gatherings such as Highland Games. The community consultation provides some evidence in support for increasing organised use of the park for festivals or public events.

A historic and current park uses survey has been carried out (see 3.1.0 technical appendix) and clearly shows that the park has been used for a wider range of more formal activities in the past than it is currently being



Fig 3.0 - Public Meeting Advert in 'The Wire' local advertising publication to over 4000 homes

The Project's Draft Vision Statement, Aims & Objectives were developed with the steering group members. These were then presented at the community wide consultation event where no adverse comments were received.

**“ Vision Statement:**  
***'The Vision for the Laigh Hills is to maintain and enhance the benefits which the area can provide as a significant recreational, environmental, cultural and historical asset for all the residents of Dunblane and for visitors to the area. ’***”

*Aims of the masterplan:*

1. To work towards encouraging use of the park by as wide and diverse range of people as possible.
2. To improve the management and maintenance of the park in a way that balances recreational uses together with conservation and increased use of the park.
3. To improve the system of paths and access routes, throughout the park in order to improve accessibility, connectivity, use and safety.
4. To build on and strengthen existing local sustainability plans/initiatives.
5. To make Laigh Hills Park easier to locate from other parts of Dunblane and navigate through the Park to other destinations.
6. To make the most of key views to, from and within Laigh Hills Park.
7. To create a park development/masterplan which connects with other key local environmental initiatives including education.
8. To identify improvements to the parks physical facilities such as; sports pitch drainage, children's play, teen facilities, seating, & signage.
9. To define and build upon the character of the place which makes Laigh Hills Park both a local and regional destination.

used for. The community consultation explored some of these opportunities which subsequently influenced the development of the masterplan proposals with recommendations for an events programme.

Laigh Hills Park is a popular destination for leisure, health, exercise, sports and outdoor recreation for local people. The park offers the opportunity to expand access to all of the above.

Where the park's primary paths and bridges are improved, the park also offers the opportunity to better connect local residential areas to local facilities and services orbitally within the wider movement framework of Dunblane.

## Community Consultation

A project pre-start steering group meeting was held on the 12th of September 2013 in Dunblane. Meetings were held with key local stakeholder representatives from organisations including the following:

- Dunblane Football/Soccer Club
- Fishing – Forth Fisheries
- Forth Invasive Non Native Species Programme (FINNS)
- Sustainable Dunblane
- Dunblane High School (presentation & workshop)
- Dunblane Primary School (presentation & workshop)
- Stirling Council Biodiversity Officer & Countryside Ranger

The above meetings included a site 'place check' walkover with local people. Site photographs and comments were recorded on the day.

Baseline technical site appraisals were then carried out, and a draft project vision statement, aims & objectives developed with the steering group.

Two presentations and consultation

The Project's Draft Vision Statement, Aims & Objectives were developed with the steering group members. These were then presented at the community wide consultation event where no adverse comments were received.

### Masterplan Objectives:

*1. Provide a structured process through the development of a park masterplan in order to document evidence gathered, record public opinion and to steer a strategic long-term process of change in Laigh Hills Park in order to support the above aims and aspirations of the local community.*

*2. To produce a masterplan report which identifies and supports funding applications from a robust evidence base.*

*3. Carry out a series of studies and consultations in order to understand who currently uses Laigh Hills Park and for what purposes, in order to make recommendations for new, improved or expanded park uses.*

*4. Carry out technical appraisals of the area to identify and understand the constraints and opportunities within the park.*

*5. Develop a deliverability strategy with recommendations for further detailed feasibility and/or technical studies to be carried out.*

*6. Develop a paths hierarchy and phased plan for appropriate physical path improvements reducing barriers to park access and/or circulation.*

*7. To enable The Dunblane Development Trust to co-ordinate and encourage new activities and to manage a park activities/events programme.*

*8. To make recommendations for ways in which to increase awareness of the park's history to encourage local people and visitors to the area into the Park.*

*9. Make recommendations for the enhancement of the existing park's physical infrastructure and facilities including; park furniture, construction materials, methods and technologies through a Park Design Guide.*

workshops were then carried out in Dunblane Primary School and Dunblane High school respectively - see technical appendix 4 for summary reports.

A further community wide public consultation event was then held on the 8th of February, 2014 (see fig. 3.0) in order to ask local people what their priorities are, and to confirm whether the project draft Vision, Aims and Objectives were appropriate for the project.

It was agreed that this approach was more likely to achieve what local people and visitors to the area actually wanted to see happen within the park, and was more likely to lead to solutions based on a common understanding with regard to the issues, opportunities and project constraints.

From this key milestone stage, questionnaires (hard copy & online version) were used to record and inform the masterplan proposals (see 4.3.0 technical appendix).

It was agreed that the final draft strategic landscape masterplan would be made available in the local library to allow for further community input and to ratify support before going forward.

Key findings from the community consultations:

1. Strong support for sensitive changes within the park in terms of retaining the 'wild sense of place'.
2. Teenagers / young adults should be included in the consultation process and their views given due consideration.
3. Toilets are a key need within the park for both younger and older users particularly given the park's edge of settlement context. Comfort break partners opening hours conflict with peak main park use i.e. evenings and weekends for significant numbers in the population.

4. Primary school aged park users use all of the park for play including natural play in the landscape.
5. There is a strong need for path improvements (appropriate to the context & history of the Park) to reduce current barriers to the use of the park including as a route to other connections such as Schools, amenities, services and longer distance paths/ cycleways.
6. Increased use of the park for organised activities is supported eg. Highland Games.
7. Ponds and wetland improvements with educational use is an aspiration.
8. A park management plan is a key need.
9. Laigh Hills Park needs to be better publicised and more easily found by visitors to Dunblane.
10. Long distance views are recognised and supported through the consultation process as a key opportunity within the park.
11. Increased educational use within the park is also supported through the consultation.
12. Sports pitch drainage is now performing better on the lower pitch so upper pitch should be the focus for additional drainage provision.
13. The Draft - Vision, Aim & Objectives received no comment through the consultation process either for or against.
14. The main entrance bridge at the Haining should be prioritised for improvement.
15. There is a local aspiration for a 'park shelter' possibly including toilets - (not a 'teen shelter').
16. There is an aspiration for more seating within the park.
17. There is an aspiration for a picnic area including BBQ facilities.
18. There is an aspiration to include a feasibility study into micro hydro energy production on the Scouring Burn in the masterplan.

The design principles below were developed and presented at the community wide consultation event in draft, where no adverse comments were received.

**Masterplan Design Principles:**

- To make Laigh Hills Park a sustainable and inclusive place in the widest sense of the terms.
- To make Laigh Hills Park more welcoming, legible and easy to find your way into and around without unnecessary signage & clutter.
- To make Laigh Hills paths network appropriately connected & as accessible as possible.
- To make Laigh Hills Park as safe & have as good a sense of safety as reasonably possible.
- To create design guidance which will assist and control future works within the park in a way which respects the desired quality of place and the agreed character of place which the community wish to maintain or enhance.
- To protect and enhance, where appropriate, the local habitats and associated ecology.
- To make informed management & maintenance recommendations which will help to achieve the core aims of the masterplan and to protect and enhance the positive local characteristics which make Dunblane unique as a destination.



Fig 4.0 - A1 consultation information - paths analysis

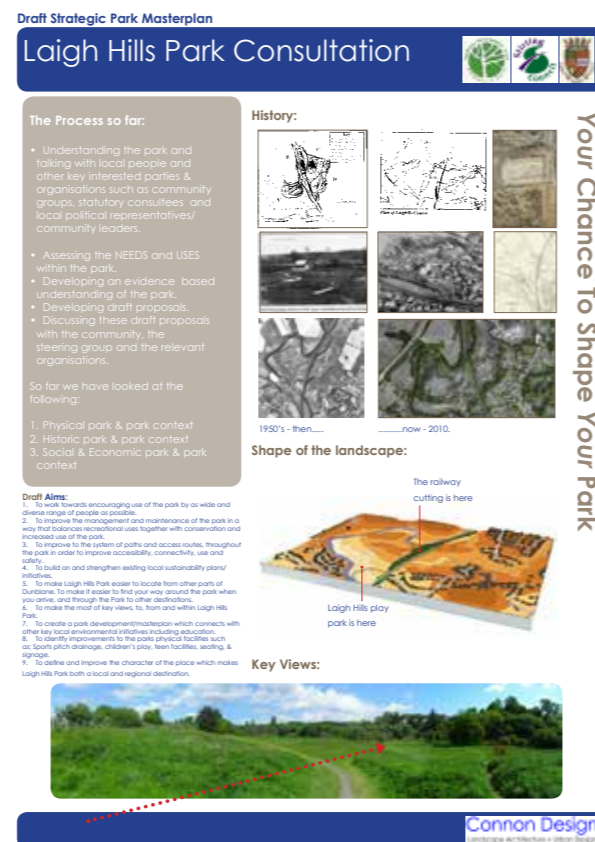


Fig 5.0 Typical A1 Consultation material

**Draft Strategic Park Masterplan**

**Laigh Hills Park Consultation**

**Uses Review Summary:**

**Historic Uses and/or Formally proposed Uses:**

- Golf
- Curling
- Football
- Shinty
- Bowling
- Putting
- Quoiting
- Badminton
- Croquet
- Animal Grazing (sheep Pasture)
- Fishing
- Leisure views
- Strategic defence
- Riverside walks
- General outdoor leisure and recreation
- Highland Games
- Sand and Gravel extraction

**Current Uses review:**

- Children's Playground + Natural Play
- Wild Swimming + paddling
- Sports - Football
- Orienteering/cross country running
- Walking
- Dog walking
- Wildlife watching
- Foraging
- BMX (& Cycling)
- Skateboarding
- Fishing
- Leisure/Historic Views
- Access to local path connections (alternative non vehicular routes) to/from schools
- Education (Scouts/Guides/Schools/Nurseries)

**Potentials Uses:**

- Increase habitat - wetland
- Better managed existing habitats - ecology to advise (native grass lands and less invasive native weeds & enriched woodlands where appropriate)
- Energy - micro hydro
- Cultural Events - Highland Games/Fireworks/Bonfire night
- Increased use as an alternative non vehicular commuting/safer route to schools etc.
- Historic interpretation and tourist destination within Dunblane
- BMX / off road bike track or a Pump Track
- Picnic ? BBQ area provision

**Constraints & Opportunities Summary:**

**Constraints:**

- Steep slopes - topography
- Allan Water & Scouring Burn (flood plains)
- Existing buildings/development around entrances
- Ecology & Habitat (particularly Otters, Voles & Bats - but also other issues)
- Trees/woodland
- Access - there is no disabled parking with in the park.
- Existing railway cutting
- Existing services - above and below ground.

**Issues:**

- Limited funding available - support access to funding sources
- Semi remote site (edge of main settlement) on peninsula
- Play area improvements?
- Currently limited scope for management of habitats within park
- Anecdotal - flooding to upper (and lower) pitches.
- Sports pavilion in poor state of repair.
- Derelict Public Toilets.
- Derelict seating.
- High quality historic walls in poor state of repair.
- Some paths eroded due to flooding.
- No paths lighting.
- Poor natural surveillance in some areas
- Well used park for dog walkers - dog litter bins?
- Derelict BMX track
- Hard to find the park from the City centre (Visitors/Tourists)
- Giant hogweed eradication.
- Derelict paddling pond adjacent to formal play area
- Replacement of main vehicular access bridge required.
- Anti social behaviour - various types

**Opportunities:**

- Hills/topography
- Power production
- Productive uses such as community orchards/fruit growing
- Views to significantly wider landscape context
- Historic & geographical interpretation
- Improved paths network
- Make it easier to find your way to & around the place including some targeted signage
- Derelict Public Toilets
- Derelict/poor condition seating/litterbins
- Repair historic field boundary walls
- Improved and structured approach to management of landscape for emerging aims of the master plan - i.e. Increased use/events
- Improved entrance and connections to the park including key strategic connections e.g. Formalise Barbush desire paths through existing shelterbelt.
- Improve Scouring Burns flood plain
- Enriched Habitat creation within the above floodplain/wetlands area
- Enrichment woodland planting as part of a management plan
- Natural play - paddling pond - gravity fed fountains?

**Emerging Priorities Summary:**

(in random order)

**Top Priorities:**

- Replacement vehicular bridge at main park entrance.
- Replacement Public Toilets.
- Replace railway crossing bridge to eliminate steps.
- Paths improvements based on hierarchy of paths.
- Signage & make it easier to find your way around
- Play Equipment
- Sports pitch drainage - upper pitch.
- Maintenance to Sports Pavilion.
- Hog weed control.
- Enhance educational use.
- Redesign BMX or off road cycle feature.
- Maintain and enhance valued habitatsBBQ & picnic area upgrade.
- Comprehensive landscape management plan.
- PR and raising public awareness of the park and what it has to offer.

**Medium Priorities:**

- Seating & Park Furniture.
- Restoration or redesign of Victorian Paddling Pool.
- Temporary Events - Highland Games.
- Interpretation signage and view points enhancements.
- Wetlands, ponds & pools in & around Scouring burn.

**Long term Aspirations:**

- Micro hydro scheme feasibility study?
- Tea room / Summer Cafe feasibility study?

Fig 6.0 - Draft summary of the Park uses and the emerging constraints & opportunities with early priorities.

Your Chance To Shape Your Park

Your Chance To Shape Your Park

Your Chance To Shape Your Park



Fig 7.0 Typical excerpts from the community consultation questionnaire providing objective quantitative information.

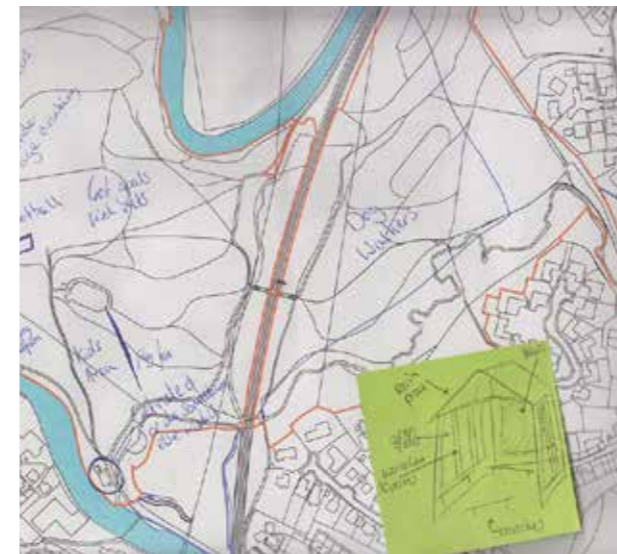


Fig 8.0 - Typical sketches by local high school pupils

**Site Walkover Appraisal**  
Project: Laigh Hills Park, Dunblane  
Date & Time of Day: 20/4/13 - 9:30 AM  
Name: [Redacted]

Local Resident: Yes  No   
Visitor: Yes  No   
Other Representative: Yes  No   
Details/Organisation(s): DUNBLANE DEVELOPMENT TRUST

**Please list the things which you like and/or value about the Site:**

- Range of different landscape/character areas
- Home play equipment
- Steps for adventure play
- Brick building

**Please list the things which you dislike and/or don't value about the Site:**

- Foot access and difficulties with pedestrian circulation, especially the bridge over the railway line.
- Lack of maintenance to paths
- uneventful slope/steep path
- Poor state of buildings (pavilion/tables)
- Lack of toilets
- View from site/cabin
- Under-use building

**Please list your three main priorities for things you would like to see change in the park.**

- improved footbridge across railway line
- better signposting and sense of arrival
- more events

Please list any further comments overleaf or by mail to www.connondesign.co.uk

Fig 9.0 - Typical 'place check' feedback response.



Fig 10.0 - Questionnaire front cover (digital & paper)

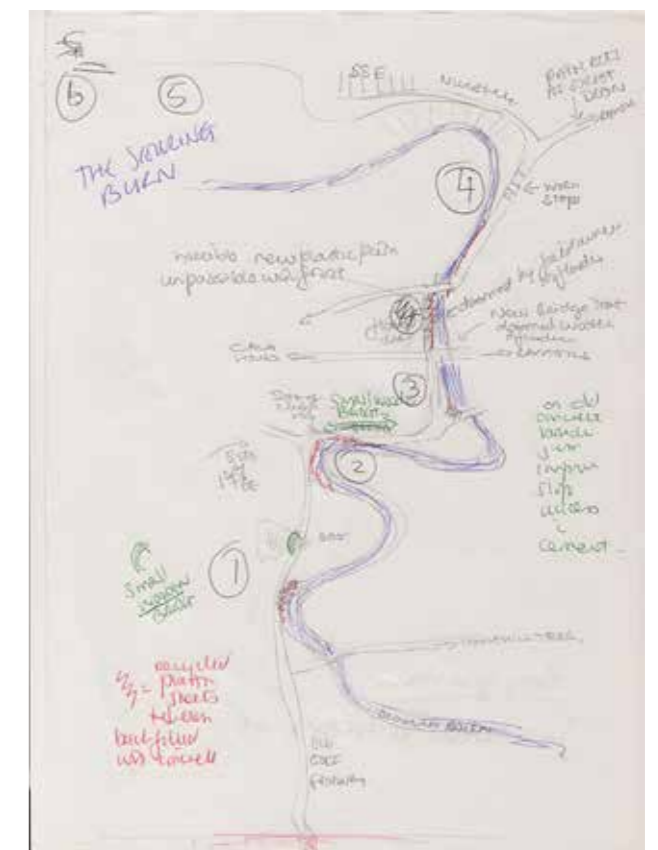


Fig 11.0 - Typical 'mind map' by local resident

**Historical Context**

The etymology of Laigh Hills suggests that the name means 'low hills'. This is probably relating to Holme Hill and the surrounding hills. Dunblane, is named after Blane, a missionary who came to Dunblane in the 7th century, who later became a saint and 'Dun' meaning 'fortified hill'. The strategic importance of the place was due to the topography and the relationship to the Allan Water – with a place to ford the river. The cathedral significantly boosted the importance of the place which developed politically into a burgh and associated market town – the burgh status allowing the political and economic control of trading activities.

Laigh Hills is thought to have been the prehistoric site of an early settlement and is also reported to have been subsequently the site of a Roman Camp. Though the evidence for both of the above is unsubstantiated at this time, the strategic physical advantages of the site – i.e. hilly topography and protection on almost all sides by both the Allan Water and the Scouring Burn with associated wetlands, are likely to have been historically significant during this time.

Most of the early detailed mapping for the above is Ordnance Survey based, from the early to mid 19th century only. Graphic evidence for the site history is however supported by engravings, drawings and photographs. The main landscape changes which occurred include the formation of the railway cutting in 1845 and the general natural regeneration of shrubs and trees, most of which are the result of changed maintenance after the closure of the golf club. It is interesting to note the historic open views from key hill tops, to key landmarks in and around Dunblane, particularly the hydro, the cathedral, Holmehill locally (as well as local Buildings and features such as the Allan Water, the old mill, the railway

viaduct, and locally typical Victorian villas, farm houses and their associated land uses). There are also notable expansive views to the wider landscape including Ben Vorlich, Ben Lomond, the Touch Hills and the Ochils.

The Laigh Hills has historically been recognised as having poor agricultural value. The original plan to feu the lands by the Cromlix Estate during the early 1870s was rejected on the grounds that the land was too hilly and of poor agricultural value for people to use for subsistence growing. The area was only suitable for rough grazing or for recreational use as a public park. This has therefore been the prevalent historic use of the land with remnants of Victorian walks, curling ponds, and more recent golf course and BMX track still evident.

From the study of the historic record for the site, the most useful information, in terms of the strategic landscape masterplan, has come mainly from the illustrations and early photographs rather than from historic mapping. What has been established through this review process is that the Laigh Hills park has had a number of historic uses, mainly associated with either agriculture - grazing of livestock, or leisure and recreational uses. This is principally due to the hilly topography and poor quality topsoil as noted above.

What is clear from a comparison between the 1950 aerial photographs and the more recent 2010 aerial photographs is that the vegetation is slowly changing the character of the park, through natural regeneration of trees and shrubs - see fig. 14 & 17. This has informed the development of the masterplan proposals with regard to recommendations for a park management and maintenance plan, and also in terms of proposals to protect key long distance views from



Fig 12.0 From 100 Years of Golf In Dunblane

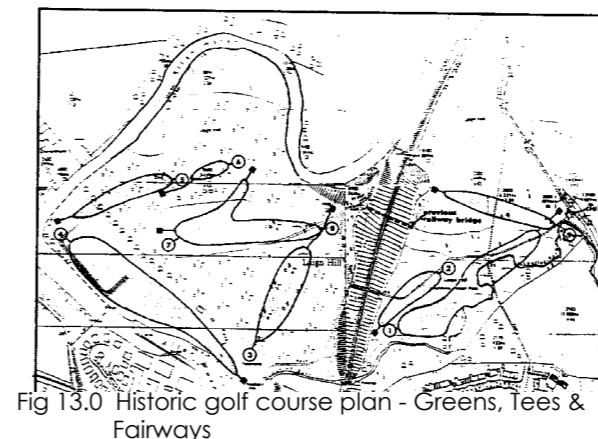
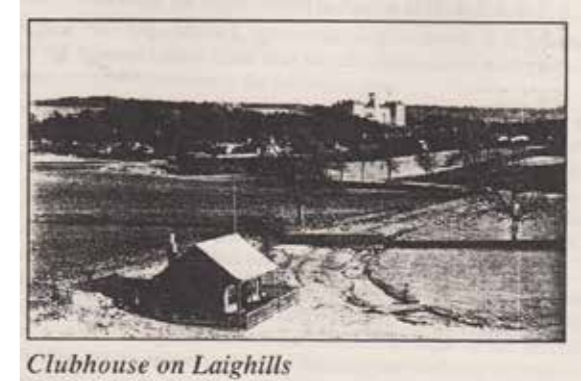


Fig 13.0 Historic golf course plan - Greens, Tees & Fairways

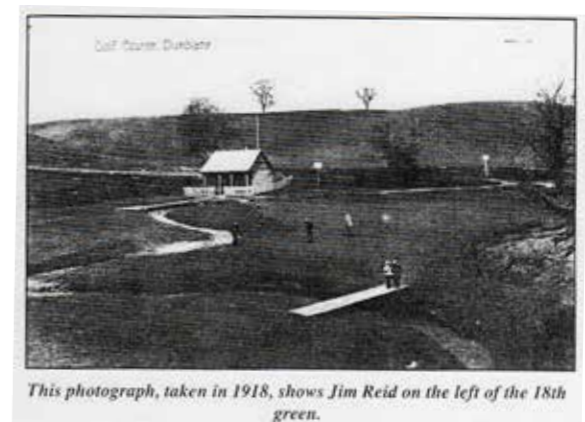


Fig 14.0 1950's Historic Aerial photography



Clubhouse on Laighills

Fig 15.0 - Club house on the scouring burn with Dunblane Hydro in the distance. Note historically more open views.



This photograph, taken in 1918, shows Jim Reid on the left of the 18th green.

Fig 16.0 - Historic Golf Club house with scouring burn in foreground & Barbusch drumlins in the background (now housing)



Fig 17.0 Contemporary aerial photography with trees and shrubs regeneration.

strategic hilltops within the park.

**Environmental Context**

An environmental analysis of the park has been carried out and, together with the framework studies highlighted above, has informed the masterplan proposals. This has looked specifically at the following elements:

**Topography**

A topographic study has been carried out in 3D (see fig.18.0) based on ordnance survey data. The park is characterised by the hilly underlying topography with significant implications in terms of historic use, current & future use, particularly in terms of paths connecting through the park.

The mainline railway cuts through the park and is a significant barrier to access and connectivity from the eastern to the western side of the park and beyond.

The masterplan has sought to reduce the necessity to make further significant alterations to the existing topography in terms of cut and fill. This is in order to both protect the existing landscape character, and to reduce the carbon cost associated with significantly reshaping the landform. This is specifically relevant to the pedestrian crossing over the railway and any future improvements.

**Existing Utilities & Services**

An existing public utilities desk review has been carried out for the park. There are two main known service corridors within the park (see 3.1.12 technical appendix 3). The first carries overhead power lines approximately parallel with the west side of the railway corridor. There are therefore significant implications for works in this part of the site. This has informed the approach being recommended with regard to pedestrian bridge improvements over the railway.

There is an electrical services corridor(see 3.1.12 technical appendix) which passes under the existing footpath and which connects Barbush with Barmyle & Ramolye. This is unlikely to have significant impacts on proposals within this area.

Other unrecorded services may be present within or around the site and investigations should be carried out in accordance with current best practice.

**Movement framework - Paths, Access, Legibility & Connectivity**

A full existing and connecting paths study has been carried out (see 3.4.7 appendix 3). This has identified formal, informal paths and movement routes in and around the park. This has allowed a paths hierarchy to be developed which has then been reviewed through the consultation process with local people and key stakeholders.

A Core Paths Review (see 3.4.5 technical appendix) has also informed the masterplan together with a review of other paths and access strategies in the local area (see 3.4.0 technical appendix 3). These include: The Dunblane Green Travel map, CSGN strategy, Sustrans NCN and the Sherrifmuir development proposals.

Key destinations have been considered through the above process and include; locals schools, services, shops & amenities and public transport connections. This study has considered local housing within the settlement and also connecting local communities. It is noted in the emerging settlement plan that the car parking provision for the railway station is currently at capacity and that improvements to pedestrian or cycling links should be considered.

Through the draft aims and objectives, the need to minimise signage has emerged as a key objective in developing an appropriate design response to the site.

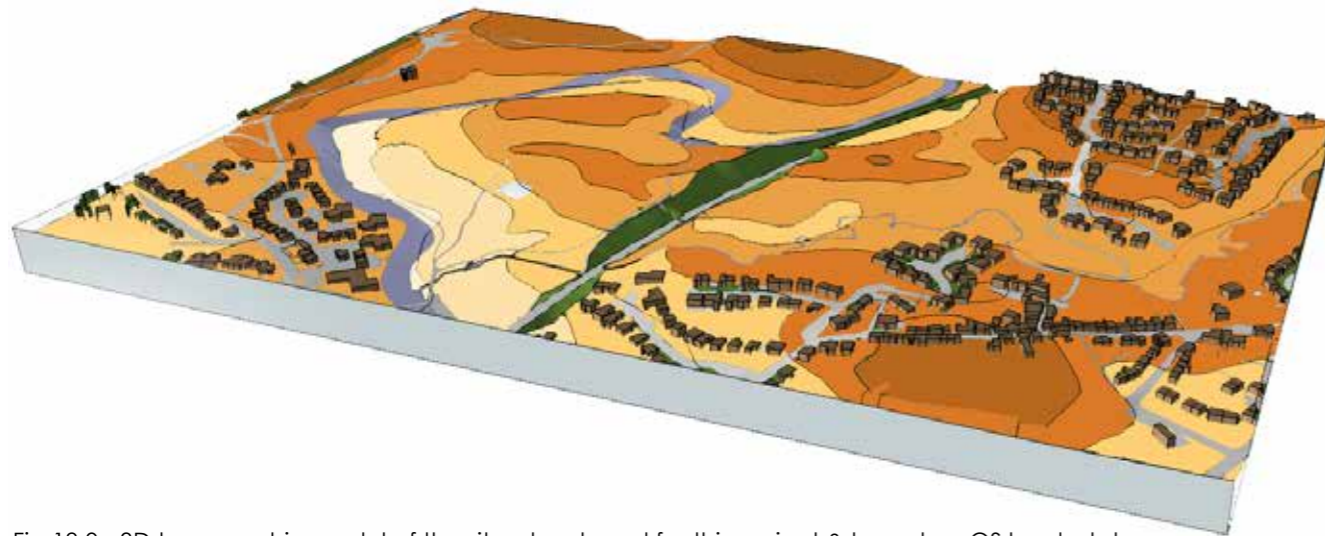


Fig 18.0 - 3D topographic model of the site, developed for this project & based on OS levels data

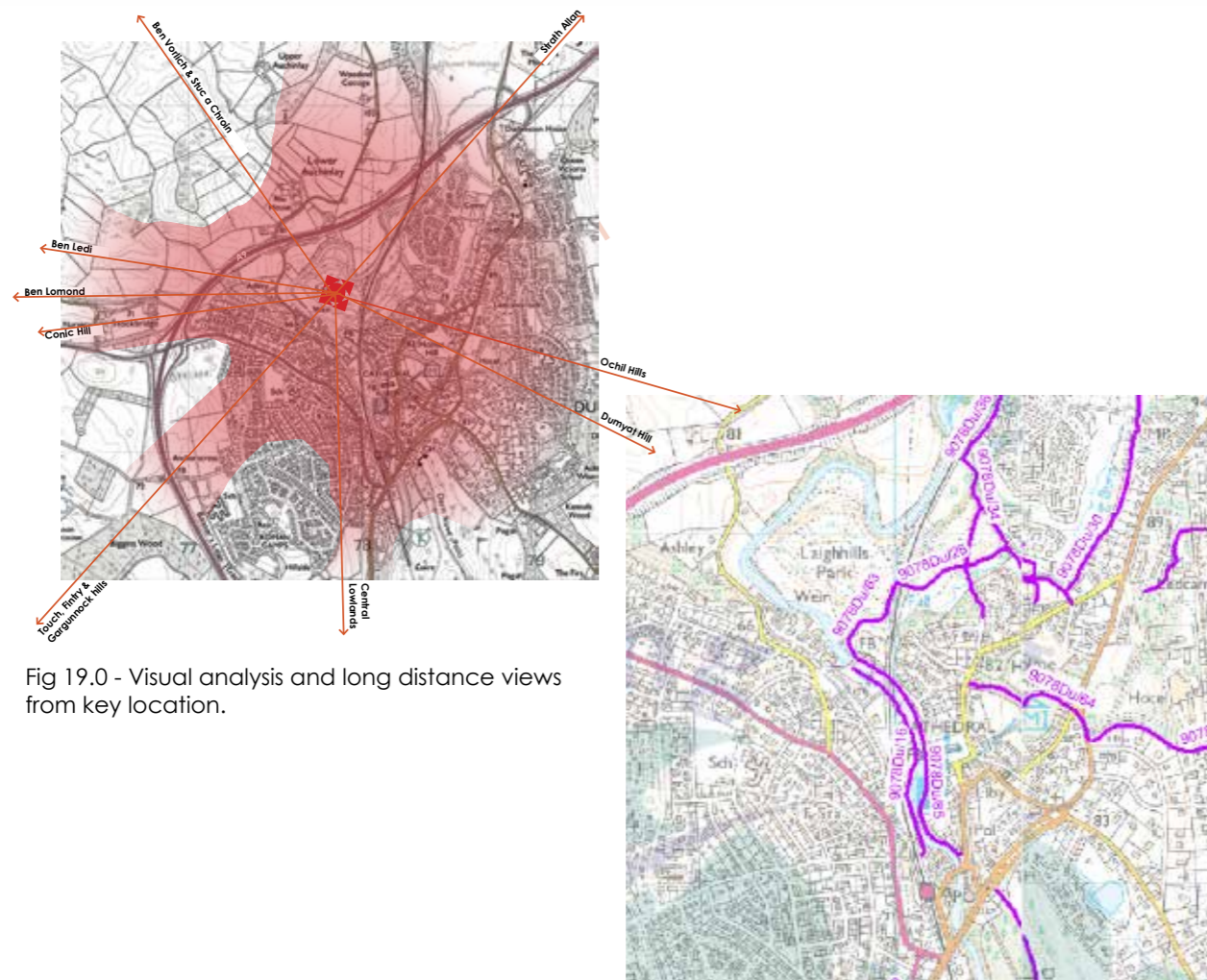


Fig 19.0 - Visual analysis and long distance views from key location.

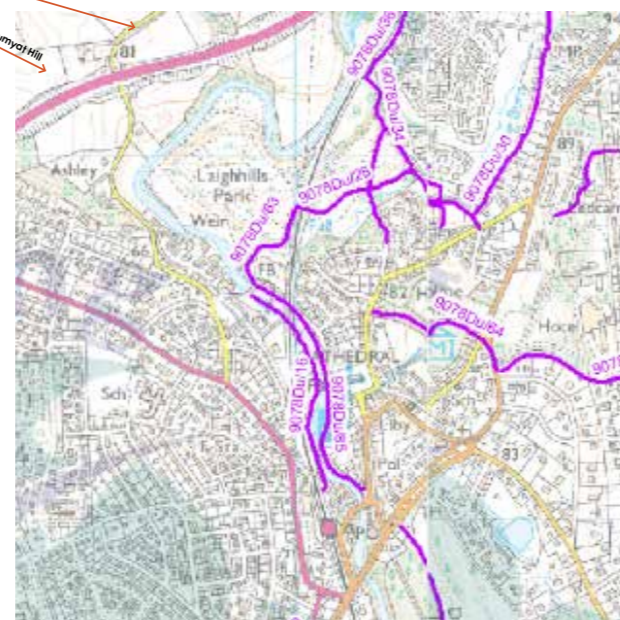


Fig 20.0 - Core paths data 2010

Local perception of place has therefore been considered and, together with objective mapping and study work, has also informed the masterplan design development.

The larger extent of Dunblane is within reasonable walking distance of Laigh Hills Park (see fig 22.0 & 23.0 - from 3.4.0 technical appendix). The park is within approximately 5-10 minutes walk of 19 bus stops and also the Stirling to Perthmainline. There are two public car parks within approximately 10 minutes walk of the park including one car park which is within a 5 minute walk of the park.

Although there is no dedicated public car park for Laigh Hills Park and vehicular access is very constrained, the need for additional car parking is reduced due to the walkable scale and public transport provision highlighted above. There may however be a need for dedicated disabled car parking closer to the main entrance to the park.

**Existing Civil Engineering, Paths & bridges infrastructure**

An engineering review has been carried out by Millard Consulting to report on the condition of all primary and secondary paths within the park. This has included a visual survey of the shared vehicular and pedestrian access bridge over the Scouring Burn adjacent to the Haining entrance to the Park (see 2.0 technical appendix).

The above engineering report has informed the masterplan in terms of proposals for replacement paths, steps, bridges and boardwalks and future site engineering investigation works.

**SEPA - Hydrology & flooding review**

A desk review of the current SEPA Indicative River and Coastal Flooding mapping has been carried out and

has informed the proposals within the masterplan - particularly in terms of path routes and design. These proposals take into account the flood plain and respond in the selection of materials and construction types that are proposed.

**SNH Landscape Character Context (framework)**

A desk review of existing SNH landscape character assessments has been carried out and has informed the development of a more detailed local landscape character assessment within the park.

**Connon Design Detail Landscape Character Appraisal**

A detailed landscape character appraisal has been developed in order to support the masterplan. This has identified and mapped landscape character components within the park and has informed the design proposals within the masterplan in terms of landscape management proposals - particularly with regard to the proposals for managed natural grassland areas, the park design guide and the areas of proposed native woodland in the wilder character areas of the park.

**Vegetation**

A study of vegetation has been important in understanding how the site is changing over time in response to the way the landscape is managed. This has been recorded and used to inform the consultation discussion and subsequent proposals within the landscape masterplan, particularly in terms



Fig 21.0 - SEPA 2014 indicative flood risk mapping

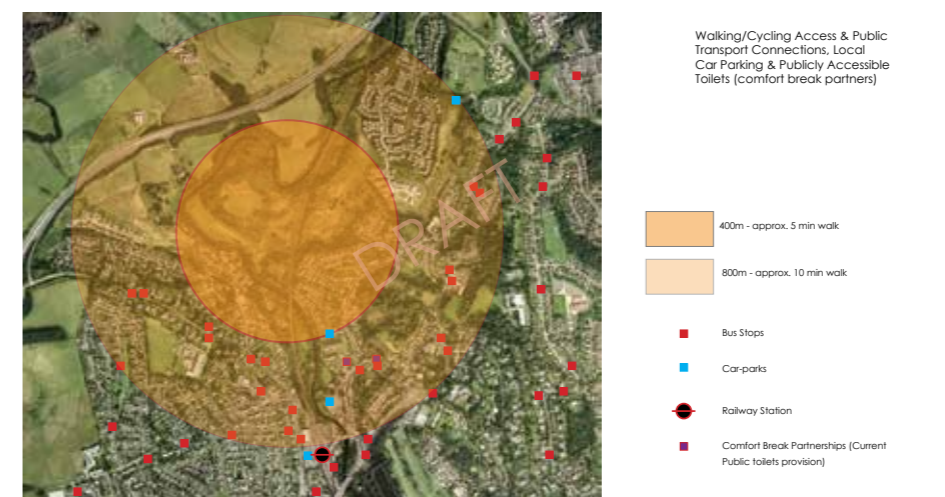


Fig 22.0 5-10 minute walking in relation to key public transport and local 'comfort partners' (toilets).



Fig 23.0 - Walking scale centred on main settlement with park in context.

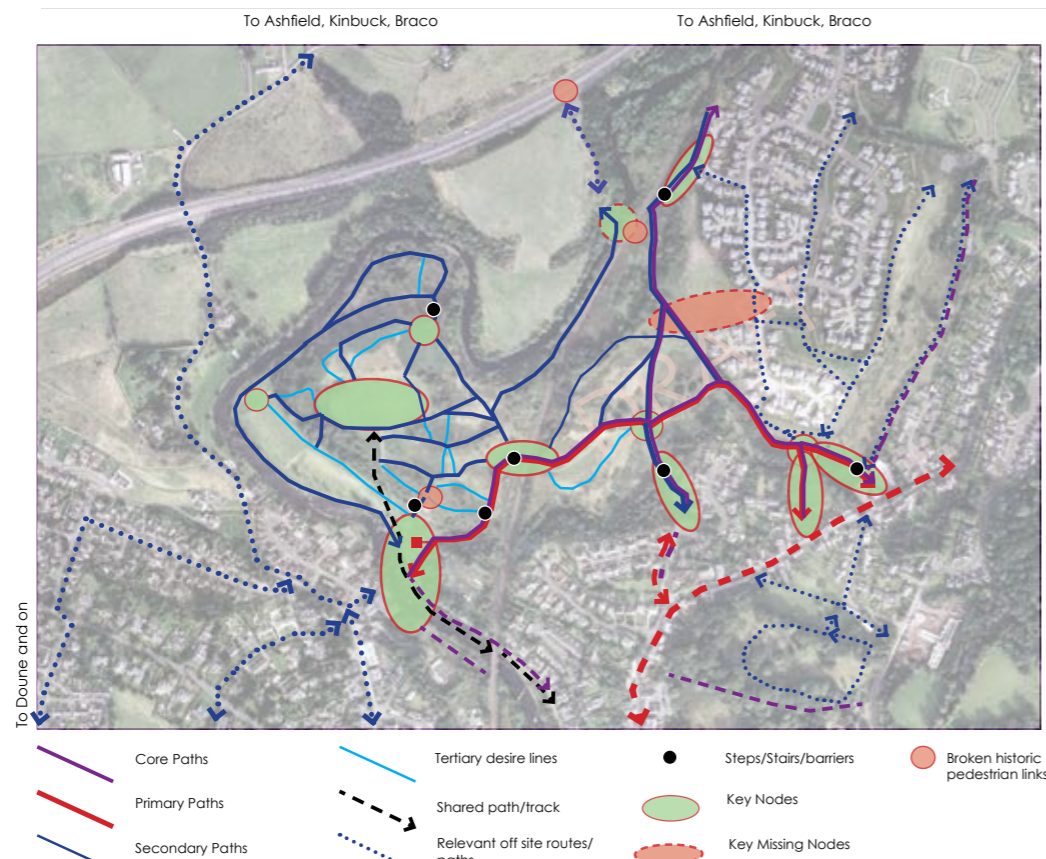


Fig 24.0 - Existing paths hierarchy analysis diagram.

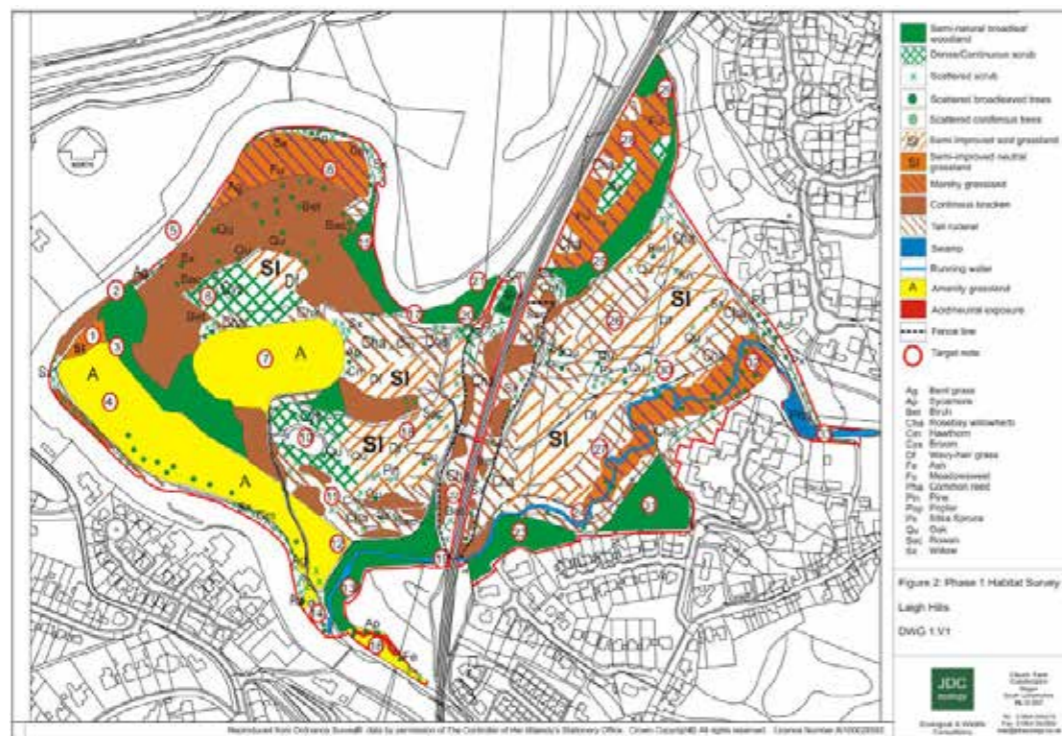


Fig 25.0 - Excerpt from Preliminary extended phase one habitat survey.

of opportunities for the protection of key long distance views and management of existing habitats. (see Historical Context pg.10 & 3.1.8 technical appendix 3).

### Photographic Appraisal

An extensive photographic survey of the park has been carried out. This information has specifically highlighted the opportunity for a view point interpretation location as part of the masterplan (see 3.2.0 technical appendix 3).

A preliminary visual appraisal has been carried out on site to assess the strategic long distance views from key hilltop locations within the park (see 3.2.0 technical appendix 3).

It is also recognised that sequential views are also an important aspect of this park, and which are also reflected in the masterplan proposals.

### Ecology

An Extended Phase One Habitat Preliminary Survey has been carried out by JDC Ecology, to inform the design process (see 1.0 technical appendix).

European protected species known to be present within the Park are:

1. Bats (*Myotis myotis*)
2. Water voles (*Arvicola amphibius*)
3. Otters (*Lutra lutra*)

Further ecological & habitat studies are recommended where physical or management proposals from the Strategic Landscape Masterplan have the potential to impact on sensitive habitats.

Non-Native invasive species: Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) is known to be present across much of the site. There is an ongoing programme of eradication being carried out by various local organisations under the Forth Invasive Non Native

Species Programme. It is recommended that the extent of the existing Hogweed is mapped in order to monitor the performance of the ongoing eradication programme.

Invasive native species:

There are a number of invasive native species present in the park for example Bracken (*Pteridium*). It is recommended that these be controlled through the development of a park wide management plan with the aim to manage desired wildlife habitats, to increase biodiversity in the park and to maintain long distance visual amenity in accordance with the historic and social traditions of the park.

### Play area/Skate Park/BMX

A review of the existing play area, skate park and BMX track provision has been carried out. This was used through the consultation exercise to develop an understanding of local users needs and aspirations for the park into the future.

In addition to general park wide improvements, a redesign of the semi derelict BMX track offers a good opportunity to increase provision for children and young people within the park.

### Sports Pitches and Sports Pavilion

A preliminary review has been carried out into the two grass sports pitches for which there is a high demand for football use (240 members in Dunblane Soccer Club, Thistle local Football Soccer Club & visitors on match days). Both sports pitches have had some drainage improvements with the lower pitch being reported by the Dunblane Soccer Club to be much improved. The upper pitch drainage remains problematic and currently restricts use through the winter months.

There are artificial all-weather pitches

available for local use at Dunblane High School which has good parking provision. This currently meets the need for football training, and while there is some aspiration locally for a 4G pitch, Laigh Hills Park is considered inappropriate for this level of investment given the lack of parking.

The sports pavilion is currently leased by Dunblane Soccer Club who have responsibility for internal maintenance. The external building fabric is the responsibility of Stirling Council who currently have a programme for essential works to keep the building wind and water tight.

## Materiality & Place-making

A photographic record of the park has recorded the existing patterns of landscape/streetscape materials, colours and detailing in and around the area. This has informed the process specifically in relation to designing with local identity and in accordance with the current National 'Place-making' agenda.

## Framework & Baseline Studies Conclusions

The above studies and community consultations have provided a clear direction for the project in the form of the vision statement. The aims and objectives provide a structure and system to both support the development of, and measure the success of the project moving forward. The synthesis of all of the above elements and information is therefore reflected in the development of the masterplan proposals.

The framework is supported by a combination of both quantitative & qualitative data analysis. This is available within the technical appendix and is reflected in the masterplan proposals.

## 3.0 MASTERPLAN PROPOSALS

The above site appraisals and studies, including the stakeholder consultations, have been assimilated and have informed design decision making throughout the strategic landscape masterplanning process. It is recommended that these studies continue to provide information and evidence in support of future detail design projects and feasibility studies within the park.

Further technical studies such as detailed topographic surveys, tree & woodland condition and trees in relation to demolition design and construction analysis should also be carried out on an individual project by project basis.

The masterplan proposals for Laigh Hills Park comprise:

1. Physical proposals
2. Use & management proposals

The masterplan spatial layout drawings illustrate the main physical proposals for the park and park environs (see drawings section 7.0: 4410-001 & 4410-002).

### Physical Proposals

#### Park Entrances

All park gateways / entrances should be improved with detailed designs with the aim to increase both local peoples' and visitors' ability to find, and access the park.

A detailed design brief is recommended for the main park entrance at the Haining entrance and should include traffic control measures to limit vehicular access to the park to all but emergency and maintenance vehicles.

#### Path Improvements Generally

The main opportunities identified for physical infrastructure change within

the park are improvements to the path network including access/egress and through connections - particularly the upgrading and relocation of the low level pedestrian bridge over the railway. Improvements to the primary and secondary paths will allow better access to significantly greater parts of the park, and for a wider and more diverse range of people.

An improved primary through path has been identified as a high priority within the masterplan. This main path has the potential to significantly meet the aims of the project in terms of inclusivity, equality and sustainability. It would, with appropriate detail design, reduce barriers for people who wish to access the park and use it as an alternative route connecting residential areas to local schools, services, work places and other key destinations. This proposal would also strengthen links to strategic public transport connections and long distance paths including the railway station and the National Cycle Network.

Improving internal circulation paths throughout the site will allow access to be made to the 'wilder' areas for a wider range of people for leisure, recreation and for educational purposes.

In Dunblane, like many urban environments, private cars are increasingly one of the main modes of transport. The above proposals would assist in reducing and better balancing, alternative modal transport choices by local people.

#### Improved Access & Paths Connections

The masterplan proposes a new park access route which would formalise the current informal link between the Barbusch Estate and the eastern section of the park. This would provide the opportunity to create a more accessible route with smoother gradients, connecting to

the existing 'Green Travel Map' paths network in a logical and legible way, commensurate with achieving the aims of the masterplan. It would also allow controlled maintenance vehicles into the park to maintain this eastern area of the park for the future.

#### Sports Pitches

The main recommendation for the sports aspect of the park is to build on the success of the lower pitch park drainage with a similar improvements to the upper pitch.

The recommendation for a park management plan should allow for appropriate annual maintenance of the grass pitches and drainage to Sports Scotland standards.

#### Play Area

Play provision should continue to be maintained for as long as safely possible with a detailed design for the play area developed which increases the provision for toddlers and which, over time, reduces the visual impacts of the equipment selected within the overall context of the park. A detailed design exercise is recommended for this area of the park with further consultation specifically with parents, toddlers groups and local nurseries.

#### Viewpoint Enhancements

Key views and a desire to protect and enhance the 'natural' feel of the park with its countryside character have driven the proposals for proposed physical improvements. This includes the proposal for a panoramic viewpoint location with interpretation information within the park.

#### Proposed Park Pavilion & Toilets

The existing public toilets within the

park are in a derelict condition and are scheduled for demolition.

Fully accessible modern public toilets are regarded locally as being very important in terms of meeting the key aim of a more inclusive public park. It should be noted that the current comfort partnership facilities are often unavailable at key times when the park is most likely to be used and by the largest number of people for leisure and recreation i.e. at evenings and weekends. It is noted however that this element will require to be funded by the local community, both in terms of capital costs and future running costs.

### BMX Track

The BMX track is in derelict condition but offers an opportunity to expand on the success of the skate park facility if improved. From the evidence gathered at local schools, there is support from the younger members of the local community to see this element of the park developed and would further help to meet the aims and objectives of the masterplan.

### Park Furniture

Improvements to park furniture include; replacement seating, picnic tables and BBQ facilities. Educational and interpretational signage are also recommended at key locations across the park.

### Native Woodland Planting

Mixed native woodland planting is recommended to the steeper slopes within the park. This will increase the park's biodiversity and strengthen wildlife corridors within the park.

### Community Orchard Planting

A community orchard area is proposed to south west facing slopes as shown on the

masterplan drawings.

### Ponds & Wetlands

There are a number of historic ponds and semi natural wetland habitats in various locations across the park. It is recommended that these are re-formed or created with a detailed design brief to maximise wetland & associated habitat creation.

### Feasibility Studies:

1. Upgrading the pedestrian bridge over the railway to modern standards of accessibility. Where the railway line is scheduled for electrification, the opportunity should be taken to raise the bridge crossing and to locate the bridge to better link with the primary paths in a way which improves ease of movement through the park.
2. Drainage and hydrology study of the upper sports pitch.
3. An investigation into the potential for micro hydro power should be considered on the Scouring Burn.
4. Ponds construction & wetland habitat management proposals including; greater areas of open water should be investigated on the Scouring Burn (and two other locations within the park). The aim should be to enhance and encourage wildlife habitat while maximising this amenity value for local park users.

### Use & Management Proposals:

#### Park Management Plan

A detailed management plan is recommended in accordance with the agreed vision, aims & objectives. This should cover sports pitches, recreation and play area maintenance & management and habitat management for the more semi-natural areas of the park.

### Park Events Co-ordination

A local community trust such as the Dunblane Development Trust in co-ordination with Stirling Council, might take responsibility for the co-ordination of a programme of activities and organised uses within the park.

These might include:

- A revived 'Highland Games'. Similar events which are appropriate to the context.
- Arts/sculpture trails/events
- Educational programmes including; organised litter picks or Environmental Education through seasonal walks and talks with ecologists and park rangers.
- Increased sports such as co-ordinating the rebuilding of the BMX facility with volunteer help - and young person direct involvement.
- The making of and installing of bird and bat boxes within the site with the involvement of local schools and nurseries.
- Bulb and wildflower planting / management.

### Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

Further consultation should be carried out with Scottish Natural Heritage to assess whether Laigh Hills Park could be designated as a LNR.

### Green Flag Award Status

The Green Flag Award Scheme is a nationally recognised benchmark aimed at raising the standards of sustainable parks and green spaces. The following are the eight key criteria against which projects are assessed for inclusion under the scheme:

1. A welcoming place

2. Healthy, safe and secure
3. Clean and well maintained
4. Sustainability
5. Conservation and heritage
6. Community involvement
7. Marketing
8. Management

The proposals within the strategic landscape masterplan take all of the above into consideration with the exception of marketing. An appropriate marketing strategy is therefore a key recommendation for the project going forward.

### Further Research

It is recommended that detailed research into who is using the park's primary through paths, when and for what purpose, is carried out. Research should include local households and should focus on determining how many more people would use the park as a route to connect to other parts of Dunblane. The aim would be to develop quantitative information in support of demonstrating the reductions in carbon and also the increases in public health benefits.

## 4.0 Park Design Guide

### Hard Landscape

#### Materials, colour, maintenance & sustainability generally

All materials selected for use within the park should be from local suppliers and local sources where possible. All timber should be FSC certified.

The selection, specification and detailing of materials should aim to maximise the serviceable lifetime of each element within the park while minimising the maintenance required. Each element within the park should be approved on this basis with Stirling Council. It is noted that a balance will require to be made on elements where capital costs are outweighed by the ongoing high maintenance costs.

The materials palette and colour selection for elements within the park should minimise visual impact within the park context. Colours and finishes should therefore be selected or specified with a view to long-term weathering to mid tone colours. Black, white or other target primary finishing colours should be avoided within the park except where they are necessary for health and safety reasons. To reduce visual impacts within the park, consideration should be given to a the selection of colours within the local context against which elements will be predominantly seen by most people.

All timber should be either untreated durable hard wood or, semi-durable softwood with an appropriate finish. Where durable hardwood is specified or selected, timber should not have an applied finish, relying instead on inherent natural preservatives and should be allowed to weather to it's natural colour. Where semi-durable softwood is used, applied finished should guarantee a minimum 25 years of serviceable life. All

timber should be detailed to shed rain water - particularly where end grain is exposed.

All metalwork should be either nonferrous such as stainless steel and finished through shot peen blasting to reduce inappropriate visual impacts. Where ferrous metals are specified or selected, all metal work should be galvanised and or painted/finished in accordance with the above guidance on colour.

Where possible, combinations of metal and timber detailing should be used to maximise the longevity of all elements.

Litter bins and metal sign posts should be designed & detailed (or specified) and finished around ground level in order to reduce the impacts of corrosion through disposal of unfinished soft drinks (bins must have drainage provision within the collection chamber) and dog urine (within 300mm of ground level).

All elements specified or selected should aim to reduce the potential for vandalism. All park furniture should have concrete anchor foundations with fixings to reduce the potential for vandalism and should be robustly designed.

All stone should, where possible, be natural stone from Scottish or UK quarries.

Acrylics/plastics should only be used where there is overwhelming evidence to show that they are sustainable in whole life cost terms and where this includes disposal/recycling costs. Appropriately specified, detailed and finished natural materials should prevail in most circumstances to ensure that elements are fit for purpose.

### Soft Landscape

All plants should be Scottish native and of local provenance with supporting certification.

### Exceptions

The existing play area should continue to be maintained with historic colour schemes. Future play equipment should aim to maximise the use of timber elements and to reduce the use of primary, high visual impact colours.

Temporary installations, festivals or events within the park are excluded from the above.

Temporary flags or banners are also excluded from the above.

'Naturalised' rather than fully native plant stock may be considered.

Orchard trees will require to be from non-native stock, however local historically grown varieties should be considered.

### Site Specific Design

In order to enhance and strengthen the individual character of Laigh Hills Park as a distinct local place, consideration should be given to the design of site specific furniture. It should be noted that the capital costs of site specific responses are generally higher than mass manufactured elements, and that replacement parts costs are also correspondingly often higher. Site specific elements should therefore be carefully considered for key areas only such as gateways and entrances, or where there are sufficient repeat elements to achieve economy of scales.



The following are typical examples of elements which are considered appropriate for use within the park and the park environs.

Typical seating & Picnic Tables



All seating should be set within an area of hard landscape such as stone dust, setts or paving in order to reduce maintenance.

Typical litter bins



All litter bins should be set within an area of hard landscape such as stone dust, setts or paving in order to reduce maintenance. Litter bins must be seagull proof, rain proof, should include smoking ashtrays and must conform to Stirling Councils maintenance/service access requirements. All litter bins should be located discretely with provision at key entrances/egress points to the park and within amenity areas only. Bins should be for general litter **and** dog waste. No separate dog waste bins should be provided.

Typical directional signage



Park signage should be minimised with ease of navigation through the park environment supported through the design of the paths network and other physical elements within the park. Information signage including park rules and the Scottish Countryside Access code should be contained within a general information sign close to the main park entrance (Haining). This should be considered as an opportunity for a site specific design solution.

Typical interpretation signage



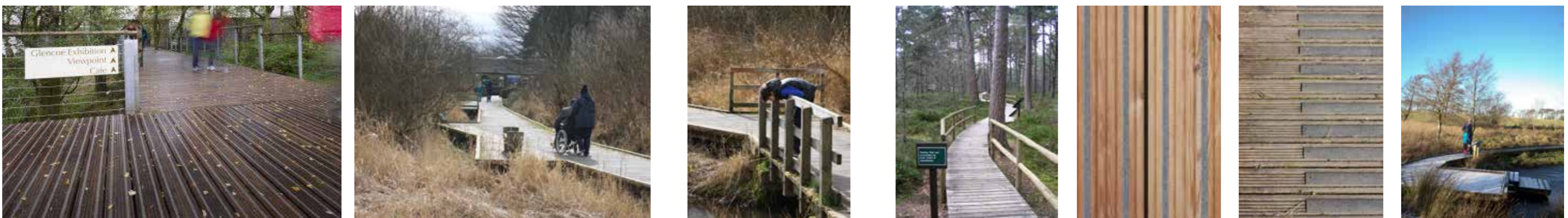
Existing Dunblane mapping has been developed by the Dunblane Development Trust. This should form the basis for future interpretation and mapping signage within Laigh Hills park for reasons of consistency. A detailed design project is recommended to expand the educational, historical and view-point interpretation opportunities within Laigh Hills Park.

Bollards/vehicular control



Bollards should be consistent in appearance across the whole site. Bollards should be demountable only where maintenance and emergency vehicles require access.

Typical boardwalk & decking



Boardwalk & decking should be appropriately detailed with durable non-slip strips.

**Typical play equipment**



Before the specification of any generic play equipment, a detailed design highlighting the play value should be developed. Toddlers play equipment should be located within a open and easily policed area, with seating for supervising adults.

**Typical Walls/fences**



Existing walls should be reconstructed to match existing. Proposed walls should respect local historic wall building construction types including coping. Opportunities to reinforce this high quality local pattern should be seen as an opportunity to strengthen the sense of local place which makes Dunblane distinct. Fences should be either post and wire field boundary types or simple post and rail estate fencing only. Opportunities for feature metal work should be reserved for main entrances only.

**Typical paths**



All proposed paths should be detailed and finished to minimise visual intrusion into the context and setting of the park. This can be achieved through the use of local stone dust or local stone aggregates for sealed surfaces. The aim of the path design should be to meet current equality standards, and to allow reasonable access to the park in accordance with the aims of the masterplan. Where limited areas of paving are necessary, then paving slabs or setts should be high quality natural stone.

## 5.0 Priorities & Implementation

The following are a list of project priorities as agreed by the steering group in Spring 2014. The priorities are not fixed and will require to be reviewed periodically and in response to funding opportunities as they become available.

1. Detailed design brief for a replacement vehicular and shared pedestrian access bridge at the Haining and this main park entrance.
2. Safety works in and around areas of the path network which are collapsing due to erosion
3. Fundraising.
4. All park entrances - detail design briefs required.
5. Feasibility study for Park Shelter and Public Toilets – including costing and funding options
6. New & upgraded formal, sealed paths following the Allan Water to connect with path to the historic curling pond at the north of the park.
7. A detailed park wide management plan.
8. Feasibility study to upgrade and improve accessibility of the pedestrian bridge over the railway. This should adhere to the Strategic Landscape Masterplan to achieve access over the railway and should link at or close to existing levels to minimise cut and fill. The location of the bridge should be adjusted north east of its current location in order to make the Primary paths network clear and legible and therefore minimising the need for additional signage.
9. A feasibility and detailed design brief should be developed for the main park entrance at Haining / Faery bridge and

which should resolve controlled access to the park for maintenance and emergency vehicular access only.

10. Detailed designs are recommended for the other access/egress points to/ from the park. Further community consultation and negotiations with the Greenbelt Company should be carried out in order to explore the opportunity for a new park access route to Barbush. This will have direct implications for design and maintenance proposals in the eastern area of the park which is currently constrained for access by maintenance vehicles.
11. Feasibility Study for micro-hydro on the Scouring Burn.

### Cost Estimate Summary

For full details of project budget costs, see The Rennie Partnership's Budget cost estimate report 2014 in appendix 5.

### Funding Strategy & Grant Funding Opportunities Summary

The funding strategy has 6 key elements:

- Ensure funding applications are made by an appropriate body. This could be the Dunblane Development Trust although consideration could be given to setting up a linked body with charitable status to help overcome issues where one trust can only apply say once per year and to overcome any de minimis grant aid issues. Gaining charitable status might bring difficulties but is recommended.
- Understand the different types of fund available and ensure there are activities targeted at grant applications, sponsorship, community fundraising activities, donations and investments. Understand what each potential funder is looking for and meet their rules or aspirations. It is important to distinguish general fundraising – where local residents

could carry out activities to generate funds towards the overall cause – from specific grants, where an application will be made for a specific element – say sports pitch drainage – and where the precise costs is known at the outset.

- Develop a balance of quick wins to ensure momentum (quick applications for small grant sums that have only marginal impact but provide a feel good factor) together with the slower, bigger applications. Expect over half of all applications to be unsuccessful but don't become disheartened despite the wasted time in an unsuccessful application.

- Create partnerships or work with others if it can help meet the bigger picture. The local authority, schools and others may have better opportunities for winning certain funds, so best to team up with them than go alone and submit an unsuccessful application. This also spreads the support base.

- Maintain a grant funding schedule. Keep track of deadlines, responsibilities and new funds as they come on stream. Grant funding is a constantly changing world so it needs to be monitored effectively.

- Maintain a proactive approach to fundraising, as it's easy to become disheartened, so working to deadlines and dividing responsibilities will help keep a funding team active and positive. Some elements of the Strategic Landscape Masterplan can be targeted relatively simply in funding terms. For example, the micro hydro feasibility study is a suitable candidate for funding through the CARES scheme and an application could be submitted in early course.

Another priority might be to work with Sport Scotland to prepare the way for an application for sports pitch drainage. Preliminary steps, such as calculating precise costs and full scope of work could

start now and might be funded through one of the Sport Scotland or 2014 grants. A further liaison should be developed with the Forestry Commission and Scottish Natural Heritage to plan for grant applications for biodiversity, land management, tree planting and general habitat work.

There are regional funds which might be useful towards the costs of community orchards, possibly some invasive species removal and some educational work. These funds need to be monitored regularly as they will have closing dates and may no longer be available at the ideal time.

A list of some of these relevant funds and further funding detail is available in the appendix 6.

Other aspects may be difficult to fund specifically, for example, there are few grants that specifically target a toilet block. But these elements could form part of an overall strategic park application for which the Lottery Fund and charitable trusts may offer the most likely sources of funding. Again regular monitoring is required as these funds change on a regular basis.

Please refer to the technical appendix 6 for the full Funding Strategy including a list of current potential funding organisations.

## 6.0 Conclusions & The Way Forward

This Strategic Landscape Masterplan is the first stage in a process of information gathering, strategic thinking and long-term planning. It sets out a shared vision for the future direction of Laigh Hills Park, with agreed aims and objectives. It identifies detailed design projects with indicative budget cost estimates to inform the prioritisation of improvement projects.

The process thus far has developed a robust evidence base in support of the proposals for both physical interventions and changes in the way Laigh Hills Park is cared for, managed and maintained going forward. It is acknowledged that the current capital funding context is, and will be for sometime to come, incredibly constrained. For this reason, this report (and associated reports) should be used as evidence to support funding applications, giving potential funders confidence that funding will be targeted, prudent and better able to meet the needs and aspiration of the local communities and key stakeholders involved in making Dunblane a more sustainable and desirable destination and place for people to live.

## 7.0 Drawings (separate sheets)

Drawing 001 - Park Masterplan (4410-001)

Drawing 002 - Paths & Hard Landscape  
Proposals (4410-002)

## 8.0 Technical Appendices (see booklets 1 - 3)

Please refer to the technical appendices for detailed information: technical reports baseline studies, consultation information, budget cost and funding information.

# Connon Design

Landscape Architecture + Urban Design

Unit 2.1, 59 Main Street  
The Village  
Cumbernauld  
G67 2RT

**KEY:**

	Existing woodlands.		Existing rivers/water courses.		Existing Railway cut
	Existing trees.		Proposed seating/benches		Existing Alignments
	Maintained/open amenity/recreation grassland.		Protection panels set in table tops.		
	Maintained Rough/Semi-improved natural grass land carry out limited tree & shrub removal to maintain key views.		Scouring Burn Micro Hydropower Feasibility Study.		
	Enrichment planting & maintenance: mixed deciduous native woodland		Viewpoint location with views interpretation signage & seating.		
	Managed mucky grassland & native wetland habitat restoration.		Site ownership boundary - Lough Hills Park (offset 5m for clarity).		
	Proposed Native Thicket planting with fencing to prevent access to dangerous erosion/fall.		Redesign Of road Bikes/BMX or pump track.		
	Proposed Indicative only wildlife ponds restoration & habitat creation		Preferred replacement Access for all bridge location (subject to detailed feasibility study)		
	Community orchard.				

**Note:** For footpaths & Bridge works key, refer to drawing: 4410-002 current revision.



**REVISIONS:**

NO.	DATE
A	18-03-14
B	29-04-14

**CLIENT:** STRLING COUNCIL

**PROJECT:** LAGH HILLS PARK STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN

**STATUS:** INFORMATION

**DRAWING TITLE:** PARK MASTERPLAN

**DRAWING NUMBER:** 4410.001 - Rev. B

**REVISION:** SCALE: From Dcr SHEET: A1

**DATE:** 08.01.14 **DRAWN:** jdc **CHECKED:** BC

**Connon Design**  
Landscape Architects + Urban Designers

Unit 21  
59 Main Street  
The Village  
G67 2R  
Tel: 01236 780660  
info@connondesign.co.uk  
www.connondesign.co.uk

**Strling Council**

**Detailed biological and hydrological assessment study** required in order to advise on the potential for ponds and watercourse habitat improvements linked with improved amenity value full extent of Scouring Burn through

**Improved gateway/entrance design:**

**Finger signage** required on Romye opposite Lough Hill Loan entrance. This signage must attach to the existing street lighting column.

**Improved gateway:** Parking restrictions should be considered to enhance entrance to the park. Key physical wayfinding and visual legibility.

**Welland habitat management**  
Erective select areas of historic river course to encourage welland habitat with select open ponds of water.  
Include educational information on interpretation signage at adjacent path.

**Native Thicket**  
Planting above drainage with safety fencing to prevent access to top of erosion bank.

**Potential new park entrance access path & gateway:** subject to agreement with local neighbours & with Greenbelt management company. Controlled for maintenance vehicles forming connection to local green paths network & improved links to housing area for local residents.

**Welland & habitat management & restoration of the historic Pond to form wildlife habitat:** Circular access boardwalk with pond dipping access deck. Educational interpretation signage. Paths and steps to North & NW facing slope.

**Upper pitch: Drainage Improvements**  
Reinforce grass to top of track where rutting is occurring.

**Goal nets** to be replaced (improved design of mesh hedge to lower pitch to control loose balls. **Males** to be controlled by pest control.

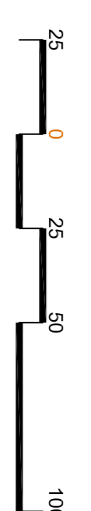
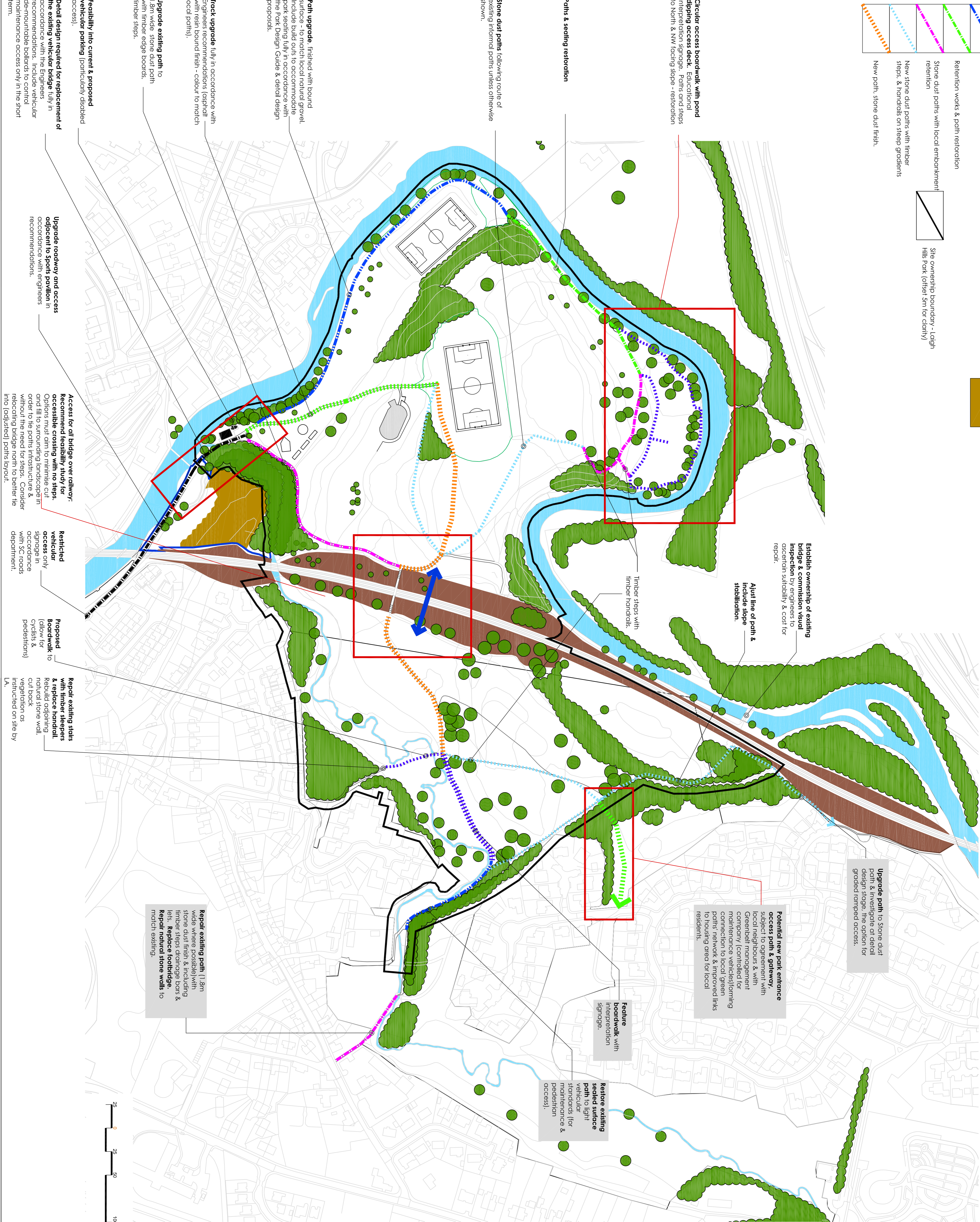
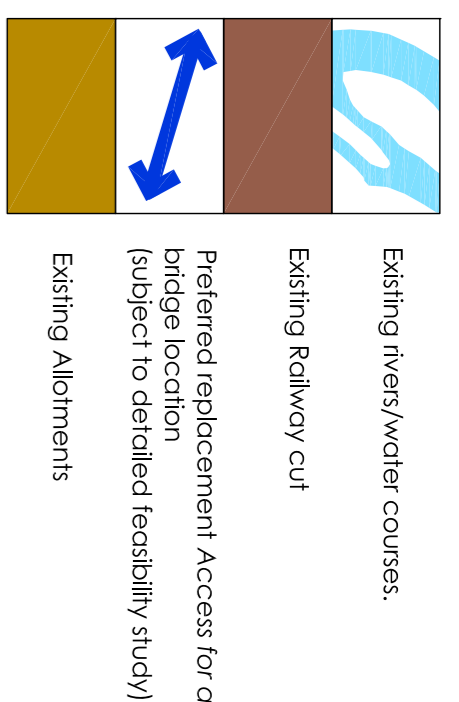
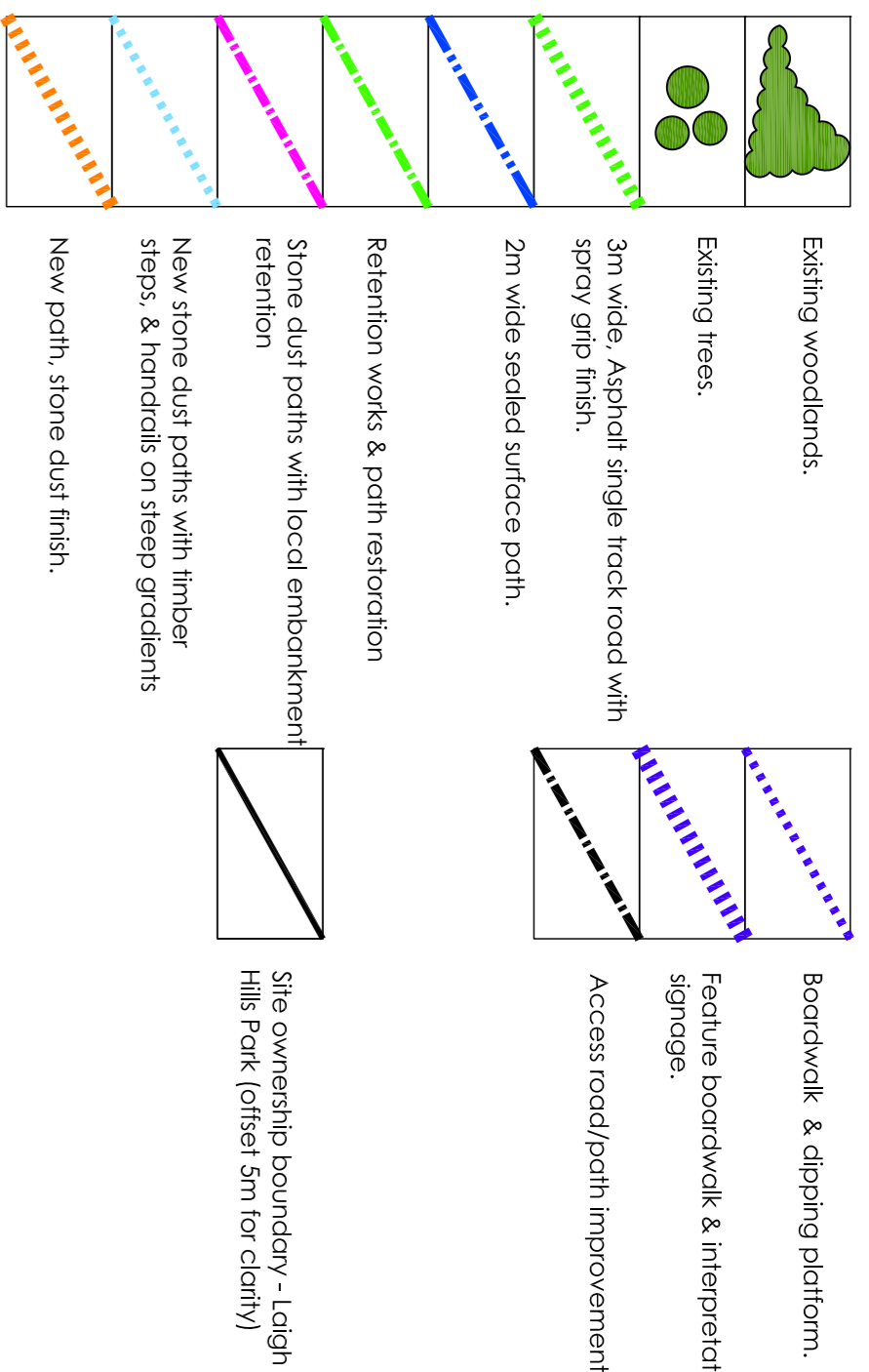
**Picnic & BBQ area** with country tables set informally within stone dust areas.  
**Built planting** in and around the amenity/recreation area - with local Primary school and/or nursery school children's participation.

**Existing Play area detail design - (brief required).**  
Maintain existing equipment in short term. Where funds are available install a zipline (location to be agreed). Increase provision for toddler age range. Where play equipment is at the end of its safe mountable life, replace with play equipment which is designed to better respond visually to the natural character of the site & context in accordance with park design guide, i.e. equipment with a more natural appearance maximising the use of timber elements where possible.

**Proposed Community led Park Pavilion & Toilets project.** All capital and maintenance funding to be the responsibility of Dunblane Development Trust.

**Sports Pavilion** - Strling Council to continue to maintain the fabric of the building in accordance with current delegations/maintenance report. Lease holder (Dunblane Soccer Club) to continue to maintain the interior of the Pavilion in accordance with the current lease agreement.

**Dedicated disabled parking spaces** provision on West side of the Allon Water from main roads & settlement centre.



Note:  
This drawing must be read in conjunction with Drawing - Leigh Hills Strategic Masterplan - PARK MASTERPLAN - No. 4410.001 current revision.  
All proposed park furniture or signage must be fully in accordance with the Park Design Guide.  
All paths & civil's engineering works which are recommended within this strategic landscape Masterplan must be fully in accordance with Millard Consulting's Report - Leigh Hills Park Inspection, November 2013 (or current revision) Doc Ref: 12770/DK/198 Revision A. Note that there are some additional points recommended within this strategic landscape Masterplan layout which superseded the above report.  
This Masterplan layout is strategic only and not for construction - any construction works should be carried out from detailed design layouts only.  
BS 5837:2012 - Trees in relation to demolition, design & construction must be adhered to, on a project by project basis, where there are likely to be direct impacts on either individual trees or groups of trees/woodlands. This must include any movement of vehicles to, or through the site for construction & management/maintenance. It must also include any onsite cut and fill exercises which take place as a consequence of each particular detail design project.  
Additional topographical, ecological, hydrological and waterways surveys should be carried out on a project by project basis to the extent of the physical works being carried out.  
Detail design projects must take into account all the information provided in the technical appendix which supports the Park's Strategic Landscape Masterplan.

REVISIONS:

NO.	DATE
A	18-03-14
B	29-04-14

**Common Design**  
Landscape Architects + Urban Designers

Unit 21  
59 Main Street  
The Village  
G67 2B  
Tel: 01236 780660  
info@commondesign.co.uk  
www.commondesign.co.uk

CLIENT:  
STIRLING COUNCIL

PROJECT:  
LEIGH HILLS PARK STRATEGIC  
LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN

STATUS:  
ISSUE

DRAWING TITLE:  
PATHS & HARD LANDSCAPE  
PROPOSALS

DRAWING NUMBER:  
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Laigh Hills Park, Dunblane  
Strategic Landscape Masterplan  
Booklet 1  
Technical Appendix 1 & 2



# Technical Appendix

## Contents:

1.0 Preliminary Ecology Assessment

2.0 Laigh Hills Park Inspection



**LAIGH HILLS PARK  
DUNBLANE  
STIRLING**

**PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

**SEPTEMBER 2013**

*For*

**CONNON DESIGN**

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***Refer to Appendices***

<i>Appendix 1</i>	<i>Plant List</i>
<i>Appendix 2</i>	<i>Summary of Legislation</i>

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

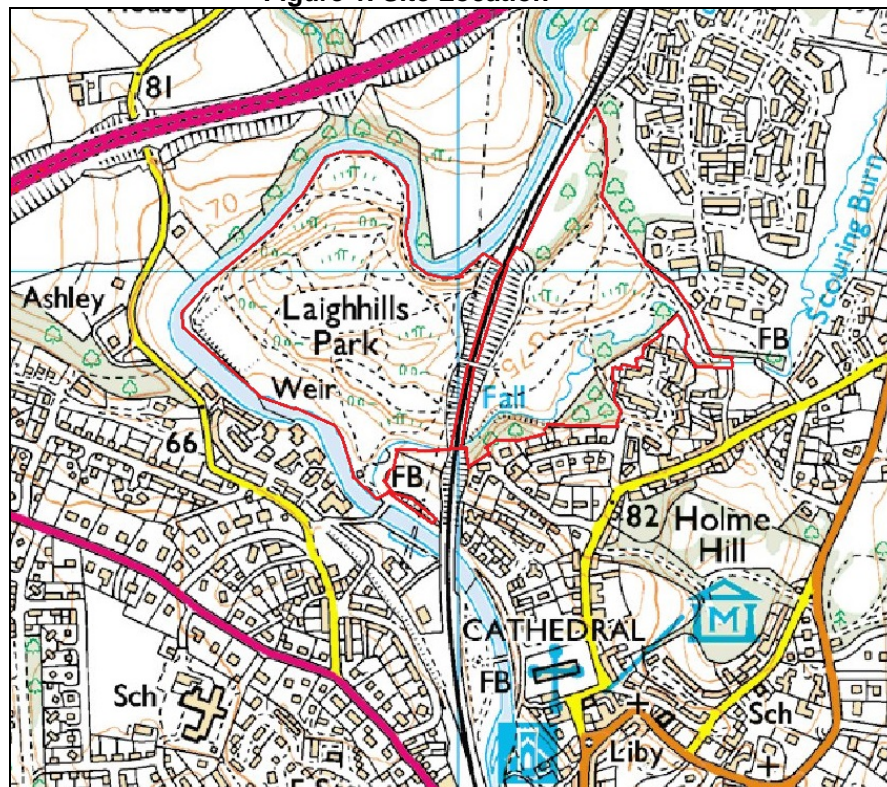
This report was commissioned by Connon Design on behalf of their client Stirling Council and concerns a preliminary ecological assessment of Laigh Hills Park, at Dunblane, Stirling. Stirling Council is proposing to redesign the park.

The survey, carried out in September 2013, was requested in order to provide Connon Design (and their client) with an overview of the area as regards the main habitat types and the presence or likely presence of protected or notable species. Particular attention was given to the potential for otter, water vole, badger, bat, amphibian, breeding bird and invertebrate activity within the survey area, which included the park area and a 50m boundary zones (where practicable).

## 2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The survey area is located at Grid Reference NN 778 019.

**Figure 1. Site Location**



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The park predominantly consists of a mix of semi-acid grassland, bracken dominated patches, areas with tall ruderals, trees and shrubs – in groups and scattered individuals - wet meadows, the Scouring Burn, amenity (mown) grassland, grass football pitches, a concrete-lined skateboard park, a children's play area, a formalised garden overlooking the Allan Water to the south and edged (in part) by the Allan Water to north, west and south. The wider area is split in to two halves by an active railway line – running south to north.

Land to the west of the park comprises housing and agricultural land – the river forming a strong boundary feature in between; land to the east consists of a mix of housing and open space; land to the north consists of agricultural fields and housing – again the river forms a boundary to the west of the railway line. Land to the south consists primarily of housing with the river forming a strong boundary to the site west of the railway line.



*Photo 1. Viewed north and west towards amenity grassland area and river*



*Photo 2. Formalised garden area to south of park*

### **3.0 SURVEY METHOD**

Phase 1 Habitat Survey was undertaken on 10 and 24 September 2013, using standard Phase 1 methodology as outlined in the *JNCC Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey* (JNCC, 1990). All accessible parts of the site were walked and mapped, and target notes were taken where areas of habitat were too small to map, or to provide further information on features of note. The survey was extended out by 50m around the area boundary where access was available.

During Phase 1 Habitat Survey note was taken of the actual or likely presence of faunal species such as otter, water vole, badger, bats, amphibians, birds and invertebrates, and habitats assessed for their likelihood to support these species. Habitats were also considered for their own significance and whether more detailed habitat work would be required.

Weather conditions were good during both periods of survey – dry and bright. September is later in the year for recording some plant species, and faunal species and activity such as breeding amphibians and nesting birds are also past recording. However, as this is a preliminary assessment, specific surveys can be recommended and undertaken in 2014 at the appropriate time.

Following completion of the habitat survey, all habitats (and species) identified as being present within the site are checked against the following documents in order to determine their specific legislative status and ecological significance:

- EC Habitats Directive (Annex I, II, IV);
- EC Birds Directive (Annex I, II);
- The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994;
- Berne Convention;
- Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (Schedules 1, 5, 8, 9);
- Protection of Badgers Act 1992;
- Local Biodiversity Action Plan
- National Biodiversity Action Plans
- Red Data Books
- RSPB Lists of Birds of Conservation Concern
- Scarce Plants in Britain (Stewart et al 1994)
- and other publications as relevant

#### **4.0 SCOPING**

Scoping has been undertaken and several organisations have been contacted for potential information on species (Stirling Council, RSPB, SOC, Butterfly Conservation, Central Bat Group, Scottish Badgers). There does not appear to be a local Amphibian & Reptile Group, or Local Biodiversity Records Centre.

Stirling Council advised that they do not hold any ecological information and that no local records centre exists for biological data in Stirling District. However, subsequently the Biodiversity Officer advised that there is a Local Wildlife Site designation for part of the site. There is no map, and a request to Scottish Wildlife Trust who may have a map has not yet had a response. Reading the LWS description, this would imply that the LWS is likely to be the river corridor and an extent of land (described as a narrow corridor), and not the whole site.

From the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (under review), Action Plans that would potentially be relevant to the site are for Barn Owl, Bats, Swift, Water Vole, Rivers & Burns, and potentially those relating to Atlantic Salmon and Lampreys (Allan Water) although there appears to be a restriction on movement further downstream for fish, and the river at this point is unsuitable for Lampreys.

The SOC (Scottish Ornithologists Club) confirmed Kingfisher higher up the Allan Water, Sand Martin on the banks of the river at the site, and that the site is used by spring/early summer and winter migrant species such as warblers and thrushes.

A report on the site by Scottish Wildlife Trust was done in 1994 (SWT Wildlife Site Survey, Laighhills, 1994). This is a thorough record of the site at that time, including plant lists. There are no species of particular significance in the plant record, but the report should form part of the data package for the site and its future management.

Alan Booth of the Dunblane Community Council commented on the first draft of this report, providing some data for the site. Revisions and inclusions have been made where relevant.

#### **5.0 STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS**

There are no statutory or non-statutory designations for the park area or the surrounding area. It has been suggested that Laigh Hills Park should be considered as a Local Nature Reserve under Stirling Council's Urban Nature Conservation Strategy – adopted by the council pre-1999. The Scouring Burn was also identified as an important wildlife corridor to be protected from developments.

#### **6.0 SURVEY RESULTS**

##### **6.1 Habitat**

The park contains 13 main Phase 1 Habitat categories, plus fenceline boundary features.

- A1.1.1 Broadleaved semi-natural woodland
- A2.1 Dense/continuous scrub

- A2.2 Scattered scrub
- A3.1 Scattered broadleaved trees
- A3.2 Scattered coniferous trees
- B1.2 Semi-improved acid grassland
- B2.2 Semi-improved neutral grassland
- B5 Marshy grassland
- C1.1 Continuous Bracken
- C3.1 Tall ruderal
- F1 Swamp
- G2 Running water
- I4.1 Acid/neutral exposure
- J1.2 Amenity grassland

The park predominantly consists of a mix of grassland types: semi-improved acid and neutral grasslands, marshy grasslands, and amenity grassland. The grasslands are bracken dominated in patches, and there are areas dominated by tall ruderals. Trees and shrubs – in groups and scattered individuals – run around and through the site and patches of dense scrub occur. Other features are wet meadows, the Scouring Burn, grass football pitches, a concrete-lined skateboard park, a children’s play area, and a formalised garden overlooking the river (Allan Water) to the south and edged (in part) by the Allan Water to north, west and south. The wider area is split into two halves by an active railway line – running south to north. The railway is not a barrier to movement of wildlife.

The Allan Water is a valuable riparian and wildlife corridor. The river varies in width and depth and appears to be carrying clean, clear water.

The Scouring Burn also provides further diversity of habitat conditions, from the freshwater channel to the associated wetland plant communities along its banks.

The survey was late in the year for a detailed plant list and this will need to be revisited. Nevertheless, several species were recorded (Appendix 1). No species of particular note or rarity were recorded, although the native bluebell is present. The extent of this species will need to be revisited in the appropriate months.



Funghi, mosses, and lichens, will all form a component of the park’s diversity, and may be worth further investigation.



Schedule 9 (Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 – Appendix 2), non-native, aggressive species recorded were Giant Hogweed. Noxious weeds are also present: Broadleaved Dock, Ragwort.



The following target notes are given on Figure 2 on Page 8.

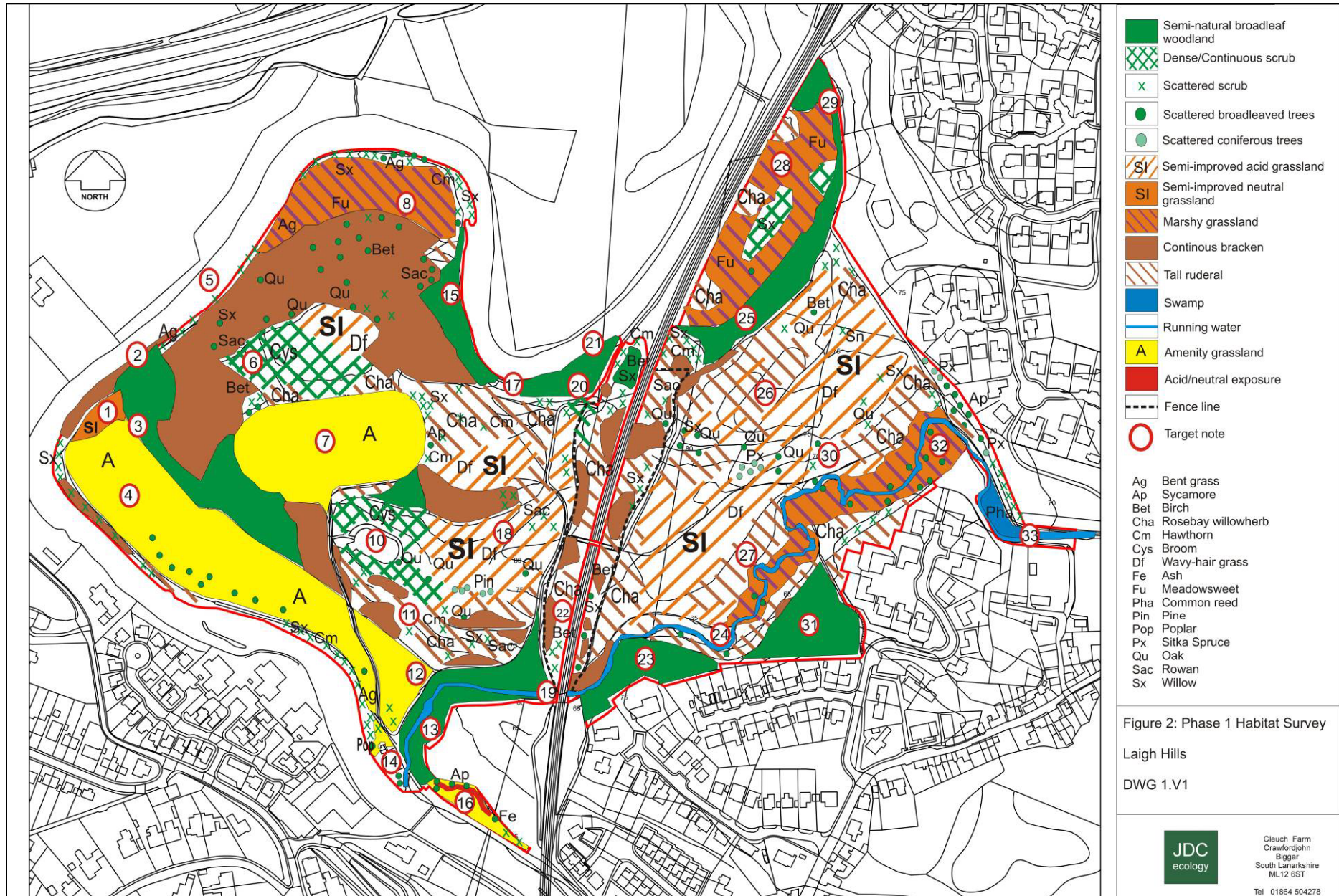
**Table 1: Phase 1 Habitat Survey Target Notes**

Target Note	Description
TN 1 NN 776 019	Un-mown grassland patch at the end of the football pitch with cock’s-foot ( <i>Dactylis glomerata</i> ), perennial rye grass ( <i>Lolium perenne</i> ), Yorkshire fog ( <i>Holcus lanatus</i> ), bent grass ( <i>Agrostis</i> sp(p)), yarrow ( <i>Achillea millefolium</i> ), broadleaved dock ( <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> ), common knapweed ( <i>Centaurea nigra</i> ), ribwort plantain ( <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> ) and cat’s-ear ( <i>Hypochaeris radicata</i> )
TN 2 NN 776 019	The edge to the river is lined with trees and shrubs including ash ( <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ), sycamore ( <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> ), oak ( <i>Quercus</i> sp(p)), rowan ( <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> ), hazel ( <i>Corylus avellana</i> ), rose ( <i>Rosa</i> sp(p)) and hawthorn ( <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> ). Wood avens ( <i>Geum urbanum</i> ), great wood-rush ( <i>Luzula sylvatica</i> ), meadowsweet ( <i>Filipendula ulmaria</i> ), common dog-violet ( <i>Viola riviniana</i> ), butterbur ( <i>Petasites hybridus</i> ) and false brome ( <i>Brachypodium sylvaticum</i> ) were all recorded in the field layer.
TN 3 NN 776 019	Woodland strip with sycamore, birch ( <i>Betula</i> sp(p)), elder ( <i>Sambucus nigra</i> ) and hawthorn. A lot of young growth to edge of the football pitch. A single large mature sycamore stands within the strip – the largest tree within the park – at NN 77668 01936.
TN 4 NN 776 018	Grass football pitch on ground, raised to create level playing area. This wider grassland alongside the river has been classified as amenity grassland, due to the conditions (intensively mown grassland habitat) although there may be some aspects (species mix) that fit with semi-improved neutral grassland.

<p>TN 5 NN 777 020</p>	<p>The Allan Water. The river has a variable width and depth but approximately 20m wide and c. 25cm deep – with deeper pools (at time of survey). It has a fast/rapid flow rate, over sand, gravel, pebbles, cobbles, boulders and bedrock. The water itself would appear to be very clear/clean. Giant hogweed (<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>) along the edge/margins – well established in some parts.</p> 
<p>TN 6 NN 777 019</p>	<p>Area dominated by broom (<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>) with occasional rowans.</p>
<p>TN 7 NN 778 019</p>	<p>Grass football pitch.</p>
<p>TN 8 NN 778 021</p>	<p>Low-lying ground by the river. Largely a mix of ruderals (rosebay willowherb (<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>)), with bracken (<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>) in parts but principally a wet area dominated by meadowsweet (<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>) and reed canary grass (<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>). Giant hogweed is well established. Trees through the area and up to the river include alder (<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>), willows (<i>Salix</i> spp), birch (<i>Betula</i> sp(p)) rowan, hawthorn and oak where the ground rises away from the river.</p>
<p>TN 9 NN 778 020</p>	<p>Steeply banked ground with oak, rowan, birch, broom over bracken. Broadleaved dock (<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>) and common sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosa</i>) both recorded.</p> 
<p>TN 10 NN 778 018</p>	<p>Concrete-lined skateboard park.</p>
<p>TN 11 NN 778 018</p>	<p>Raised bank with dense scrubby vegetation consisting of elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>), hawthorn, rowan, maple (<i>Acer</i> sp(p)), broom, bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>), bracken, rosebay willowherb, common nettles (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), common knapweed (<i>Centaurea nigra</i>) and false-oat grass (<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>). A large play park slide and steps cut through the vegetation from the top of the bank to the play park below.</p>
<p>TN 12 NN 778 017</p>	<p>Children's play park.</p>
<p>TN 13 NN 778 017</p>	<p>Woodland along the Scouring Burn with a mix of wych elm (<i>Ulmus glabra</i>), ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>), holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>), sycamore, alder, hawthorn, birch, willow, spruce (<i>Picea</i> sp(p)), cherry (<i>Prunus</i> sp(p)), rhododendron (<i>Rhododendron</i> sp(p)), cotoneaster (<i>Cotoneaster</i> sp(p)), male fern (<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>), broad buckler fern (<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>), hard-shield fern (<i>Polystichum aculeatum</i>), wood avens (<i>Geum urbanum</i>), bluebells (<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>), primrose (<i>Primula vulgaris</i>), herb Robert (<i>Geranium robertianum</i>), hedge woundwort (<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>), wavy-hair cress</p>

	( <i>Cardamine flexuosa</i> ), opposite-leaved golden saxifrage ( <i>Chrysosplenium oppositifolium</i> ), foxglove ( <i>Digitalis purpurea</i> ), red-dead nettle ( <i>Lamium purpureum</i> ) and willowherbs ( <i>Epilobium</i> spp).
TN 14 NN 778 016	Small sports pavilion and annex building. Tile/slate roofs, wooden soffit around pavilion. Do not appear to be in use – small structure derelict. Larger structure has some potential for bat roosts but overall they appear to be limited. 
TN 15 NN 779 020	Steep-sided wooded bank to river with oak ( <i>Quercus</i> sp(p)), rowan, hawthorn, hazel ( <i>Corylus avellana</i> ) and ash.
TN 16 NN 779 016	Formalised garden area with a backdrop of an exposed rock-face (quarried ?) with overhanging trees and shrubs (ash, sycamore, beech ( <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> )). The garden has been planted up with exotic species, has areas of mown grass and is edged with a metal railing along the front edge to the main path.
TN 17 NN 779 019	Large area of slumped bank – exposing soil below.
TN 18 NN 779 018	Open grassland, dominated by wavy-hair grass ( <i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i> ), tormentil ( <i>Potentilla erecta</i> ), heath bedstraw ( <i>Galium saxatile</i> ), sheep's sorrel ( <i>Rumex acetosella</i> ) and devil's-bit scabious ( <i>Succisa pratensis</i> ) but also with false-oat grass, Yorkshire fog ( <i>Holcus lanatus</i> ), foxglove, bluebells, fescue ( <i>Festuca</i> sp(p)) and bent ( <i>Agrostis</i> sp(p)) grasses. Small copper ( <i>Lycaena phlaeas</i> ) butterfly recorded, along with three bumblebee species – <i>Bombus pascuorum</i> , <i>B. lucorum</i> and <i>B. terrestris</i> . Rabbit burrows and diggings recorded.
TN 19 NN 779 017	Giant hogweed with flowering heads spread along the edges of the watercourse and up at edge of railway line – NN 77943 01745.
TN 20 NN 780 020	Otter spraint/droppings (old and fresh) on a boulder in-stream – NN 78012 02000.
TN 21 NN 780 019	Giant hogweed at the top of the steep wooded bank down to the river – NN 78020 01969. Possibly some treatment being undertaken but fresh growth clear as well.
TN 22 NN 780 018	Banks to the railway line – either side, are dominated by ruderals (rosebay willowherb) and bracken, with scattered scrub (birch, rowan, hawthorn, willow and broom) 
TN 23 NN 780 017	Wooded bank from burn up to the gardens above, dominated by ash, sycamore, willow, hawthorn, elder, rowan with alder by the burn. Rosebay willowherb scattered through with common nettle and ferns ( <i>Dryopteris</i> spp). Pink purslane ( <i>Montia sibirica</i> ) recorded.
TN 24 NN 781 017	Giant hogweed plants recorded – NN 78129 01772, along with a very distinctive stand of <i>Dryopteris</i> fern– most likely sterile hybrid.

<p>TN 25 NN 781 020</p>	<p>Broadleaved woodland along banked ground. The woodland consists of wych elm, ash, willow, hawthorn and bird cherry (<i>Prunus padus</i>). Rabbits are very active in one part of the bank with much exposed sandy soil.</p>
<p>TN 26 NN 781 019</p>	<p>Bike (BMX) circuit – appears to be largely out of use – now dominated by ruderals.</p>
<p>TN 27 NN 781 018</p>	<p>Grassland and tall ruderal mix. Species recorded include rosebay willowherb, raspberry (<i>Rubus idaeus</i>), heath bedstraw, Yorkshire fog, sweet vernal grass (<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>), common sorrel, bent grass (<i>Agrostis</i> sp(p)), ragwort (<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>) and harebell (<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>).</p> 
<p>TN 28 NN 781 021</p>	<p>Low-lying ground dominated by tall ruderals, tall herbs and grasses but with damp/wet mix. Species recorded include rosebay willowherb, creeping thistle (<i>Cirsium arvense</i>), cock's-foot grass (<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>), false-oat grass, meadowsweet, wild angelica (<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>).</p>
<p>TN 29 NN 782 022</p>	<p>Giant hogweed stand – NN 78222 02196. It would appear that treatment of the stand is being undertaken. Meadow crane's-bill (<i>Geranium pratense</i>), hogweed (<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>) and tufted vetch (<i>Vicia cracca</i>) all recorded close to railway line.</p>
<p>TN 30 NN 782 019</p>	<p>Small pool of water just off the footpath – NN 78262 01927. It is likely, from the habitat conditions and general appearance of the pool, that it retains water for much of the year. Species recorded include branched bur-reed (<i>Sparganium erectum</i>), common water-starwort (<i>Callitriche stagnalis</i>), water mint (<i>Mentha aquatica</i>), common duckweed (<i>Lemna minor</i>), lesser spearwort (<i>Ranunculus flammula</i>), water forget-me-not (<i>Myosotis scorpioides</i>) and sweet grass (<i>Glyceria</i> sp(p)).</p>
<p>TN 31 NN 782 017</p>	<p>Dense scrubby woodland with willows, alder, sycamore, rowan, hawthorn, elder, birch and lime (<i>Tilia x europaea</i>)</p>
<p>TN 32 NN 783 019</p>	<p>Generally wetter conditions alongside the burn with common reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i>), reed canary grass (<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>), wild angelica, meadowsweet, great willowherb (<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>) and common nettles.</p>  <p>Greater plantain (<i>Plantago major</i>) and a patch of Canadian goldenrod (<i>Solidago canadensis</i>) both recorded close by.</p>
<p>TN 33 NN 783 018</p>	<p>Large number of otter spraints below the footbridge – NN 73420 01861(hard to make out number but old to recent)</p>



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## 6.2 European Protected Species

European Protected Species are governed by The Conservation Regulations 1994 (Appendix 2).

### 6.2.1 Otter (*Lutra lutra*)

Two watercourses pass through or are at the boundary to the park – the Allan Water and the Scouring Burn. Neither watercourse was surveyed in detail. However, field signs of otter were recorded on both watercourses (see TN 20 and TN 33), and conditions could permit lying up along both watercourses.

### 6.2.2 Bats

It is likely that bats would be recorded foraging and commuting around the park. Several trees and the sports pavilion building (see TN 14) may have some potential for roosting bats.

### 6.2.3 Great Crested Newts (GCN – *Triturus cristatus*)

There is no clear evidence of breeding opportunities within the park or in the immediate area. A small pool was established to the east of the railway line (see TN 30) but the pool would appear to have very limited potential in relation to GCN's.

## 6.3 Badger (*Meles meles*)

Badgers and their setts are protected by the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (Appendix 2).

No evidence of badger was recorded within the boundaries of the site during the course of the Phase 1 Habitat Survey.

## 6.4 Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibius*)

Water vole burrows and animals in the burrows are protected by the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (Appendix 2).

The Scouring Burn has potential for water voles. However, no evidence was found during the course of the Phase 1 Habitat Survey, although the burn was not surveyed in detail. There is anecdotal account of water voles on the burn and it would be useful to carry out water vole survey to determine if this species is still present.

## 6.5 Birds

All wild birds, their nests, and eggs are protected by the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.

Species recorded within or around the park during the period of survey included white-throated dipper (*Cinclus cinclus*), grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*), common blackbird (*Turdus merula*), black-billed magpie (*Pica pica*), hedge accentor (*Prunella modularis*), chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*), common wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*) and European robin (*Erithacus rubecula*).

There will be a larger assemblage at the site, particularly in the breeding season. There are opportunities throughout the site for nesting birds to be present, and the site provides a forage and roosting resource throughout the year. Further bird work will be necessary to determine use of the site and advise on detailed design for the park to avoid significantly negatively impacting the bird population. This would relate mainly to a Breeding Bird Survey. The SOC have confirmed that winter migrants such as fieldfare and redwing use the site.

## 6.6 Amphibians and Reptiles

A small pool is established to the east of the railway line (see TN 30). There may be some potential for amphibians but that would appear to be limited. Alan Booth of Dunblane Community Council advised that frogs and small newt species have been recorded.

There is scope for reptiles in the park, although this is likely to be limited to the common lizard.

## 6.7 Invertebrates

Small copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*) butterfly recorded, along with three bumblebee species – *Bombus pascuorum*, *B. lucorum* and *B. terrestris*. It may be worth considering invertebrate survey for broad groups as part of the data gathering exercise for the park, and to inform re-design in terms of food and breeding patches for some species, butterflies for example. Broad groups would include: Hymenoptera (bees, wasps, ants, etc), Lepidoptera (butterflies, moths), Coleoptera (beetles) and Orthoptera (grasshoppers, ground hoppers, crickets). Freshwater invertebrates in the burn could also be sampled.

## 6.8 Fish

Three-spined stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus*) were recorded in the Scouring Burn. There is potential for fish on the Allan Water although desktop search suggests that there is an issue downstream for passage of fish, therefore salmon and lamprey for example may not make it to this stretch of the river. The river here is also unsuitable for lamprey. Alan Booth of Dunblane Community Council advised that the river has been stocked with brown trout in the past.

It is unlikely that the Allan Water would be affected by any proposals for the park. If that were to change it may be necessary to undertake detailed survey of the river habitats and species in due course.

## 7.0 CONCLUSIONS

### 7.1 Habitat

The site is a mix of amenity/recreational areas, and semi-natural habitats, and there is a good mixture of habitats across the survey area. Although they do not appear (from the broad based habitat survey) to be of significant quality relative to the recorded species, they do provide opportunities (niches) for a wide range of species and can be considered significant in that sense.

The main areas of interest are: the broadleaved woodlands, some of which may have been enhanced in the past by planting, but present a more 'natural' quality in their composition and structure; the grasslands, variable in their base status – ranging from neutral to acidic; the wet meadows (good foraging areas for invertebrates, birds and small mammals); the watercourses (potentially significant corridors for the movement of fish and mammals); and the dense scrubby habitats that provide good nesting habitat for birds. With the Local Wildlife Site designation for the river corridor at least (extent of the LWS not being known), this raises the need to protect this significant river and its habitats.

An NVC (National Vegetation Classification) survey of the plant communities may be of value to understand the vegetation types across the wider area, particularly if any significant changes to the landscape are envisaged.

Alan Booth of Dunblane Community Council has undertaken NVC surveys of the Laigh Hills area in the past and has made some suggestions with regard to management of habitats. He believes that the M27 *Filipendula ulmaria-Angelica sylvestris* mire is probably the "best" habitat on the LA site and that there may be some potential to expand the plant community further. This is clearly something that can be looked at once full information is gathered on the site. Certainly, retaining the swamp habitat and protecting the Scouring Burn and associated marshy grassland/mire habitats is recommended.

There is an issue with regard to the spread and local dominance of giant hogweed, which should be addressed. However, this is likely to require more than just the eradication of the plant from the park area, as it is well established to the north of the park (over the river) and potentially further upstream. A programme of treatment to manage and eradicate giant hogweed should be considered, that will involve all landowners and interested parties.

The dominance of other invasive species such as bracken and rosebay willowherb should be considered. At the time of survey these species were very prominent across the landscape, dominating large swathes. However, they provide vital resources, in terms of food and cover for a range of species and their ecological significance would require a more informed view of the conditions within the park over a greater time period (seasons) before decisions on management should be taken. The two areas of dense scrub adjacent to the football pitches are also a significant resource, particularly for nesting birds, and these areas take higher priority earlier in the year when the bracken and willowherb has not yet grown.

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The park offers a range of opportunities and resources to those species that make use of and inhabit the park – human and non-human alike. Those opportunities range from the more formal open spaces managed for recreational use (mown grassland for play or relaxation, grass football pitches), the more managed ‘garden’ space close to the river, and the footpath network for casual walking and dog walking. It then moves through a less intensively managed aspect of well-used footpaths and desire-lines, largely as a result of the dog walkers, through less used (in a human sense) spaces and ending with the more natural (‘wild’) habitats (east and north) – particularly the wetter areas and those slopes/banks that are difficult for people to pass through.

There is scope for the park to be utilised for educational purposes, whether a simple a “nature walk” with associated interpretation around the park, or could encompass activities such as pond dipping, plant identification, simple invertebrate studies, a “bat walk” (assuming a bat presence), putting up bird and bat boxes, creating invertebrate habitats (ie dead wood piles, installing bee houses). The list goes on. It would be worth investigating this with schools in the area.

During the initial survey work (Phase 1 Habitat Survey - 2013) it became clear that there are knowledgeable and experienced people living in the Dunblane area that could have a valuable input in to the direction of the management of the park, and continued consultation will undoubtedly be of significant value.

## **7.2 Otters**

It is clear that otters move along both the Allan Water and the Scouring Burn. The Allan Water should be a more significant channel in relation to food resources and places of shelter. However, the Scouring Burn channel will provide a corridor for movement and potential links to areas with good cover/shelter. Both watercourses should be protected from adverse impact at all times.

A more detailed survey of otter use of the watercourses (and park) should be undertaken to ensure best practice, particularly to determine if any places of shelter are present within licensable distance of any works at the re-design phase (currently licensable distance is 30m, but can be much more if a natal holt is present).

## **7.3 Bats**

There is some potential for roosting bats within the boundaries of the park, in particular the pavilion building near the entrance to the park and in some of the mature trees. It is certain that bats will use the site for forage and commuting (the tree belts and watercourse corridors providing easy commuting routes and foraging edges). While a bat survey of the park in general would be useful in terms of gathering data, it would be an extensive exercise. It may be more realistic to determine what trees, if any, would be removed for the agreed redesign of the park (or if the pavilion might be removed or altered), or what substantial changes might be made to foraging areas and potential commuting routes, and undertaken appropriate dusk/dawn surveys of those trees/areas to determine use.

## **7.4 Badgers**

While there does not appear to be a badger presence, a badger survey of the area would be prudent to be certain that badgers are not present in or within licensable distance of any working area for the redesign phase. This should be undertaken during the winter months, if possible.

## **7.5 Water Vole**

There is anecdotal evidence of water voles, and a survey for water voles should be undertaken at a more appropriate period, preferably April - July.

## **7.6 Birds**

Future management actions for the site will need to consider use of the site by birds. Breeding Bird Survey (April to June) should be undertaken to determine species, use of the site, and in particular important areas for nesting before any decisions are taken on habitat adaptations. There is scope to increase the availability of forage resources around the site by planting additional berry bearing species. Rowan berries and brambles are available and these could be supplemented by the addition of elder, hawthorn, bird cherry, and nut-bearing hazel. In addition to feeding birds this increases the diversity of the

site and feeds small mammals and invertebrates. Apple trees could be considered, which would feed both faunal and human species.

Notwithstanding use of the site, the nesting season would need to be considered in relation to any schedule of works. There is no provision in the legislation to license disturbance for the purposes of development. Therefore any works that would disturb nesting birds should be undertaken between October and February inclusive to avoid the nesting season. If that is not possible then nest checks would be needed from March to September, and any bird building a nest or any active nest would need to be avoided until no longer in use. Given the potential for nesting to occur in many areas of the site and the resultant delays that avoidance could cause, it would be prudent to carry out works in the October to February period.

## **7.7 Amphibians & Reptiles**

The nearest known site with great crested newts is currently not known. There is no obvious breeding opportunity for amphibians in general although they may be present in their terrestrial phases in suitable areas, eg the woodlands and marshy grasslands, and as discussed reptiles (common lizard) may be present. Survey would be required to confirm, and the small pool could be checked for any evidence of amphibians, most likely common frog.

There is scope to increase diversity at the site by introducing ponds. This attracts amphibians and a range of invertebrates and birds. The most potential for larger ponds lies in the marshy grassland zone immediately adjacent to the railway at the north point of the park, although how wet this area is would need to be investigated. Small pools could be created adjacent to the scouring burn, and the marshy grassland and the north-west could accommodate ponds. However, this area may be subject to flooding which would make it unsuitable.

## **7.8 Invertebrates**

Surveys would be needed to confirm the broad groups for invertebrates, and this would again inform habitat management.

## **7.9 Fish**

Information on the fish species of the Allan Water and Scouring Burn could be further explored if there were to be any impacts that may affect either watercourse. However, if the first principle for the river and burn is to avoid any negative impact, this may not be necessary.

## **8.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **8.1 Primary Surveys**

1. National Vegetation Classification of park habitats, record the extent of bluebells, and completion of a plant list. Timing - May to July.
2. Otter Survey of both watercourses to 250m up and downstream of the park. Timing – winter preferably when vegetation is down.
3. Bat survey. Active season – May to September, Winter season – December to February/March if hibernation potential exists. Bat survey could encompass the whole park for general bat movement and use, and target any trees or buildings that would be subject to removal or alteration and that are suitable for roosting or hibernation.
4. Badger Survey. Timing – winter preferably.
5. Water Vole Survey. Timing – April to September.
6. Breeding Bird Survey. Timing – April to June.
7. Amphibians and Reptiles Survey. Timing – February to June.

8. Invertebrates: Broad groups - Hymenoptera (bees, wasps, ants, etc), Lepidoptera (butterflies, moths), Coleoptera (beetles) and Orthoptera (grasshoppers, ground hoppers, crickets). Freshwater invertebrates in the burn could also be sampled. Timing -

## 8.2 Secondary Surveys

- 1 River Habitat Surveys of the Allan Water and Scouring Burn.
- 2 Fish Survey. Only if necessary
- 3 Funghi Survey.
- 4 Mosses and Lichen Survey.

## 8.3 Habitat Recommendations

There are a few key considerations in relation to habitat that should inform the plans for the park:

- 1 The park area east of the railway line is wilder and quieter (less human disturbance) overall than the west side. This should remain that way, keeping any new path construction to a minimum.
- 2 The north end of the western section is also quieter and again should be retained as such, protecting the marshy grasslands.
- 3 Protect the Scouring Burn and its associated wetland plant communities, e.g. the marshy grasslands/mire and swamp communities and examine the potential for habitat expansion/change
- 4 Ensure that the river is not negatively impacted by any works on site, and whether or not a map showing the Local Wildlife Site extent is located, the river corridor should be considered carefully for any design alterations, aiming to protect the corridor and enhance where/if appropriate.
- 5 Create additional 'wild and quiet' areas for use by humans (and faunal species that will inevitably move in).
- 6 Wooded areas should remain intact, ie do not fragment by cutting paths through.
- 7 Areas of dense scrub should be retained.
- 8 Areas of bracken and tall ruderal should be subject to further survey for use by birds in particular, before any decision is taken on managing these areas.
- 9 Consider installation of ponds and small pools to increase diversity of habitat and species, possibly locating them in the marshy grassland areas, although the hydrology would need to be investigated.
- 10 Consider installation of bird and bat boxes around the park, and features such as dead wood piles, invertebrate banks, hedgehog boxes, etc.
- 11 Consider supplementary planting of nut, berry and fruit plants, eg rowan, bramble, elder, hawthorn, bird cherry, apple, and nut-bearing hazel.
- 12 If the footbridge across the railway is to be altered this should include removal of the steps and installation of ramps. While the railway does not present any difficulties for species movement from west to east and vice versa, if any mammal were to use the bridge ramped access is necessary.
- 13 Consider using the park habitat educationally, increasing interpretation, and liaising with schools to encourage educational use.

**Ends**

## APPENDIX 1: PLANT LIST

Common Name	Scientific Name	Common Name	Scientific Name
<b>Trees and Shrubs</b>		<b>Plants</b>	
Sitka Spruce	<i>Picea sitchensis</i>	Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>
Pine	<i>Pinus sp(p)</i>	Raspberry	<i>Rubus ideaus</i>
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Wood avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>
Oak	<i>Quercus sp(p)</i>	Rosebay willowherb	<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>
Hazel	<i>Corylus Avellana</i>	Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Common knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>
Willow	<i>Salix sp(p)</i>	Primrose	<i>Primula vulgaris</i>
Birch	<i>Betula sp(p)</i>	Ragwort	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>
Bird Cherry	<i>Prunus padus</i>	Giant Hogweed	<i>Heraclium mantegazzianum</i>
Cherry	<i>Prunus spp</i>	Hogweed	<i>Heraclium sphondylium</i>
Alder	<i>Alnus sp(p)</i>	Herb Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Rowan	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Hedge woundwort	<i>Stachys silvatica</i>
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Opposite leaved golden saxifrage	<i>Chrysosplenium oppositifolium</i>
Poplar	<i>Populus sp(p)</i>	Red dead nettle	<i>Lamium purpureum</i>
Maple	<i>Acer sp(p)</i>	Foxglove	<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>
Broom	<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	Tormentil	<i>Potentilla erecta</i>
Wych elm	<i>Ulmus glabra</i>	Heath bedstraw	<i>Galium saxatilel</i>
Lime	<i>Tilia x europaea</i>	Sheep's sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosella</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Broadleaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Rose	<i>Rosa sp(p)</i>	Common sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>
Rhododendron	<i>Rhododendron sp(p)</i>	Devil's scabious	<i>Succisa pratensis</i>
Cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster sp(p)</i>	Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Greater plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
<b>Grasses, Sedges, Ferns</b>		Cat's ear	<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>
Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
Wavy-hair grass	<i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i>	Meadow crane's-bill	<i>Geranium pratense</i>
False-oat grass	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	Great wood rush	<i>Luzula sylvatica</i>
Bent grass	<i>Agrostis sp(p)</i>	Dog violet	<i>Viola riviniana</i>
Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Creeping thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
Fescue	<i>Festuca sp(p)</i>	Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Sweet vernal grass	<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	Cow parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
Perennial rye grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Wild angelica	<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>
False brome	<i>Brachypodium sylvaticum</i>	Meadowsweet	<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>
Reed canary grass	<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	Butterbur	<i>Petasites hybridus</i>
Sweet grass	<i>Glyceria sp(p)</i>	Tufted vetch	<i>Vicia cracca</i>
Common reed	<i>Phragmites</i>	Vetches	<i>Vicia spp</i>
Bracken	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Meadow vetchling	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>
Male fern	<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	Common mouse-ear	<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>
Broad buckler fern	<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>
Hard shield fern	<i>Polystichum aculeatum</i>	Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
		Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
		Wood horsetail	<i>Equisetum sylvaticum</i>
		Colt's-foot	<i>Tussilago farfara</i>
		Rushes	<i>Juncus sp (p)</i>
		Branched bur-reed	<i>Sparganium erectum</i>
		Common water starwort	<i>Callitriche stagnalis</i>
		Water mint	<i>Mentha aquatica</i>

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>
		Common duckweed	<i>Lemna minor</i>
		Lesser spearwort	<i>Ranunculus flammula</i>
		Water forget-me-not	<i>Myosotis scorpioides</i>
		Great willowherb	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>
		Canadian goldenrod	<i>Solidago Canadensis</i>
		Harebell	<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>
		Pink purslane	<i>Montia sibirica</i>

## APPENDIX 2: SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION

### ***EC Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC)***

The Directive aims to maintain biodiversity by requiring signatories to the directive to maintain or restore certain natural habitats and species at a favourable status within the European Community. Annex 1 lists habitats that require the designation of special areas of conservation. Annex II lists animal and plant species whose conservation requires the designation of special areas of conservation. Annex IV consists of animal and plant species of community interest, in need of strict protection.

### ***EC Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC)***

The Directive aims to deliver protection, management and control of all species of wild birds where they occur naturally. Member states are required to take steps to maintain populations at levels at which they are sustainable both ecologically and scientifically. For particular species a member state must designate Special Protection Areas (SPAs) of suitable habitat. An Annex 1 species is listed for reason of danger of extinction, vulnerability to specific habitat changes, rarity either by population size or restricted local distribution, or other specific habitat requirements.

**The Conservation Regulations 1994** make provision for implementing Council Directive 92/43/EEC, and provides for the conservation of natural habitats and habitats of species, provision for notification of "European Sites", and provides for the protection of certain wild animals and plants. It is an offence, except as permitted under the Regulations, to deliberately or recklessly:

- capture, injure or kill a European Protected Species;
- harass an animal or group of animals;
- disturb an animal in any structure or place it uses for shelter or protection;
- disturb an animal while it is rearing or otherwise caring for its young;
- obstruct access to a structure or place used for shelter or protection or to otherwise deny the animal use of that place;
- disturb an animal in a manner that is, or in circumstances which are, likely to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species;
- disturb an animal in a manner that is, or in circumstances which are, likely to impair its ability to survive, breed or reproduce, or rear or otherwise care for its young.

It is also an offence to:

- damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal (note that this does not need to be deliberate or reckless to constitute an offence);
- keep, transport, sell or exchange or offer for sale or exchange any wild animal or any part or derivative of one (if obtained after 10 June 1994).

Licences for disturbance are at the discretion of Scottish Natural Heritage. The following tests apply with regard to European Protected Species:

1. A detailed summary of why the works are justifiable as a derogation of the 1994 Regulations Section 44 (2). In the case of development, (e), may be the most likely option. This states:

"preserving public health of public safety or **other imperative reasons of overriding public interest** including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment"

In simple terms, the reason why the works are necessary must be clearly stated. **If Test 1 (or any test) cannot be met, the licence application will fail.** Holding planning consent for a site does not meet the conditions of this test.

2. That there is no other satisfactory solution both in terms of why this site was chosen instead of others considered, and that there is no other option other than to disturb etc the animals.
3. Reasons why the proposed work would not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status at their natural range. This would include detailed information on the mitigation measures to be employed. A mitigation programme should therefore be developed in consultation with a recognised expert for the species concerned and SNH

(Scottish Natural Heritage) prior to making the application and the methodology of this clearly stated. This is important information which is considered as part of the application.

### **Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004**

“The Act sets out a series of measures which are designed to conserve biodiversity and to protect and enhance the biological and geological natural heritage of Scotland. In doing so, the Act provides the principal legislative components of a new, integrated, system for nature conservation within Scotland....In relation to biodiversity in particular, it requires public bodies and office-holders to consider the effect of their actions at a local, regional, national and international level. Measures relating to the protection of species and habitats also recognise the importance of the wider international context.”

“It introduces, in Part 1, a new general duty on all public bodies and office holders (referred to in these notes as "public bodies") to further the conservation of biodiversity; It makes significant changes, in Part 2, to the existing arrangements for the establishment and protection of sites of special scientific interest. In doing so, it replaces most of Part II of the existing Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (c.69) ("the 1981 Act"); It extends in Part 3 the law in relation to the protection of birds, animals and plants by making significant amendments to the current provisions of Part I of the 1981 Act and by requiring production of a new code of guidance covering whale and dolphin watching and similar activities; It updates, also in Part 3, the provisions of the existing Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (c.51), in order to increase penalties for offences such as badger baiting and aims to ensure greater consistency between that Act and the 1981 Act; It requires, in Part 4, the creation by Scottish Natural Heritage ("SNH") of a code of guidance setting out recommendations, advice and information relating to fossils; It provides, in Part 5, for various supplemental matters including the publication of statutory guidance about the duty to further the conservation of biodiversity and SNH's functions under Part 2 and for minor and consequential amendments and repeals to a variety of other statutes

### **Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)**

The Act protects plants and animals, with general and particular provisions regarding wild plants, birds, and animals on the various schedules.

Schedule 1 birds are priority species for which special penalties apply to infringement of the Act either against the bird, its nest, or eggs. Additionally under the Act, all wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected. It is an offence, except as permitted by the Act to intentionally or recklessly,

- kill, injure, or take any wild bird
- take, damage, destroy, or otherwise interfere with the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built
- at any other time take, damage, destroy or otherwise interfere with any nest habitually used by any wild bird included in Schedule 1
- obstruct or prevent any wild bird from using its nest
- take or destroy the eggs of any wild bird

Schedule 5 lists animals which have particular protection under the Act due to their conservation status. Offences again relate to intentional or reckless behaviour as regards:

- kills, injures, or takes any wild animal
- damages, destroys, or obstructs access to any structure or place which any wild animal included in Schedule 5 uses for shelter or protection
- disturbs any such animal while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose

*At present water vole burrows have protection, and licences to disturb for the purposes of development are possible through Scottish Natural Heritage. It is anticipated that the animal itself will have protection by the end of 2012. Notwithstanding this, all wild mammals have protection under the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996.*

Schedule 8 protects certain plant species due to their conservation status. Offences relate to intentional or reckless behaviour as regards:

- picking, uprooting, or destroying any wild plant on that schedule

- or, not being an authorised person, intentionally uprooting any wild plant not included on that schedule

Other offences relate to sale of wild plants.

### ***Wild mammals (Protection) Act 1996***

The Act makes provision for the protection of wild mammals from certain cruel acts; and for connected purposes.

It is an offence except as permitted by the Act to: mutilate, kick, beat, nail or otherwise impale, stab, burn, stone, crush, drown, drag or asphyxiate any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering.

### ***Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (as amended)***

Badgers and their setts are fully protected by the Act. Except as permitted by the Act it is an offence to deliberately or recklessly:

- wilfully or recklessly kill, injure, take or attempt to take a badger from the wild;
- possess the body or any remains of a dead badger;
- possess, sell or offer for sale a living badger;
- cruelly ill treat a badger;
- use badger 'tongs' in any attempt to kill or take a badger from the wild;
- dig for a badger;
- use a firearm to kill a badger;
- interfere with a badger sett by obstructing the entrance;
- destroying the sett;
- encouraging a dog to enter the sett;
- in any way disturbing a badger while it is occupying a sett.

### ***Legislation with regard to non-native invasive species***

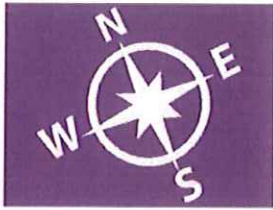
The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is the principal domestic legislation concerning non-native species. It was amended by the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011. It is envisaged that these amendments will enable Scotland to adopt the internationally recognised 3-stage approach to dealing with invasive non-native species and aim to:

- prevent the release and spread of non-native animal and plant species into areas where they can cause damage to native species and habitats and to economic interests;
- ensure a rapid response to new populations can be undertaken;
- ensure effective control and eradication measures can be carried out when problem situations arise.

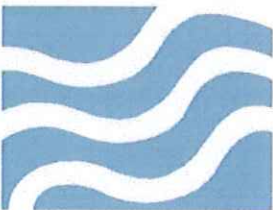
It will be an offence to:

- release or allow to escape from captivity any animal to a place out with its native range;
- release or allow to escape from captivity any other animal specified in an order made by the Scottish Ministers;
- cause any animal out with the control of any person to be at a place outwith its native range;
- plant or otherwise cause to grow any plant in the wild out with its native range.

Native range is defined in section 14P(2) as "... the locality to which the animal or plant of that type is indigenous, and does not refer to any locality to which that type of animal or plant has been imported (whether intentionally or otherwise) by any person."

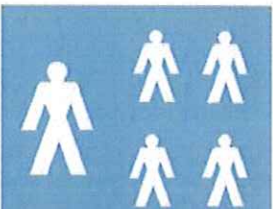
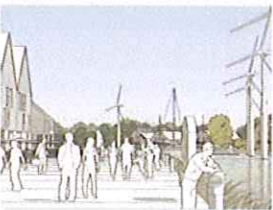


## LAIGHILLS PARK INSPECTION



NOVEMBER 2013

DOC REF: 12770/DK/198 REVISION A



more than **civil** engineers

# LAIGHILLS PARK INSPECTION

November 2013

REPORT REFERENCE: 12770/DK/198 Revision A

CLIENT: Stirling council

ENGINEER: Millard Consulting  
Seabraes  
18 Greenmarket  
Dundee  
DD1 4QB

Tel: 01382 227 380  
Fax: 01382 229 291

Report Prepared By:



Derek Kane

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Appendix A Location Plans

## Laighills Park Inspection

### 1.0 Introduction

Laighills Park is a neighbourhood park serving the community of Dunblane and its visitors. The park contains a mix of mown and naturalised grass/tree areas. Within the park there are football pitches, pavilion, childrens play area, skatepark, disused public toilet building, countryside footpath network and a water course.

The Glasgow to Aberdeen railway line runs through the park, and the River Allan meanders around the south, west and north boundaries of the site. The Scouring Burn runs through the park and flows into Allan Water at the south boundary.

### 2.0 Scope

Millard Consulting have been commissioned to carry out an inspection of the park infrastructure and to report on its condition, providing recommendations for repair/remedial work where required. We are also to provide an appraisal of the existing access vehicular bridge adjacent to the pavilion and provide a report on improvement required. A Plan of the following sections is included in Appendix A.

### 3.0 Inspection Report

#### 3.1 Main Access Road

##### 3.1.1 From Entrance at Haining to Footbridge over Allan Water (access from Auchinlay Road)

From the access point on Haining there are double yellow lines covering accesses to the first two houses. The road is kerbed on the south channel. This section of road may be included on Stirling Council's list of public roads. The surfacing is however continuous with the remainder of the road down to the park. From visual inspection there does not appear to be any major structural issues with the access, there are however numerous patch and track reinstatements in the surfacing along the route. The surface drains to the south channel, by either gully and/or direct run off.



Photograph 1

A small soft spot is evident at the end of the double yellow lines. This may be connected to the water supply to the adjacent house.

A stone retaining wall extends down the north side of the access to the railway bridge. The wall has been repaired in the past. The surfacing at the foot of the wall has been eroded. It is assumed water coming down and also through the wall has gotten below the surfacing at the interface, weakening the material and causing it to break up.



Photograph 2

On the opposite side from the stone retaining wall the road is also retained by mass concrete wall, with a handrail on top. No kerb upstand in this location, therefore water flows directly over the retaining wall to the grass slope.



Photograph 3

The road passes below a railway bridge, this point also being the low point of the access, then rises towards the footbridge over Allan Water. The north side has a low stone dyke retaining wall to the rock garden, again there are similar problem with water at the interface between the two although not to the same extent as before. The south channel is formed by a concrete coping stone on top of a retaining wall next to the Allan Water. The surfacing is similar to the previous section with numerous areas of patching and reinstatement.



Photograph 4



Photograph 5

#### Recommendation

- Without further engineering investigation/assessment, it is our opinion that the surface would benefit from complete replacment and reshaping to crossfall from north to south, ie

towards Allan Water. The poor seal along the north channel between surfacing and retaining walls has resulted in a breakdown of the bituminous materials and shall only worsen. A kerbline should be installed in front of these stone retaining walls to allow the surfacing to seal properly against a smooth flat surface. A concrete infill can be laid between kerb and wall. This will allow any water to flow over the surface of the concrete onto the road. Reshaping crossfall shall promote the water to flow to the south channel where it is drained by existing gullies or direct run-off. The drainage system should be regularly cleaned to prevent future maintenance problems. Any soft spots should be completely removed and reconstructed.

### 3.1.2 From Footbridge to existing Timber Bridge

This access is in poor condition, most likely due to standing water. Water also runs from the adjacent slope across the road towards the river. The low point shown in Photograph 6 between the bridge and the footbridge access has become eroded and now holds water. The bituminous surface is in poor condition. This section of road would benefit from kerbing both sides, a ditch or trench to prevent water and silt run-off from the slope and an outlet for drainage. The foundation of the access would appear to be firm, with no soft spots becoming visible at the surface. The bituminous surfacing however requires replacement. It should also be thick enough to cope with light goods vehicles and maintenance vehicles.



Photograph 6

#### Recommendation

- Kerbing to both sides with 125mm upstand. Bullnose kerbing to be installed at the interface with the bridge
- Gravel filter strip between slope and kerb – create fall in trench towards bridge
- New surfacing 100mm thick (2 layers - overlay) in crossfall toward slope and filter drain
- Form drainage outfall to the burn

### 3.1.3 West of the existing Bridge

This access has been previously kerbed and surfaced. The surfacing suffers from surface water flowing down from the playpark area and access tracks. The water appears to flow down to the bridge where it collects and finds its own way to the burn/river.

This has caused a build up of mud/silt/gravel along the channels and across the entire surface. There is a slabbed footway along the edge of the existing disused building. This is also in poor condition with many cracked slabs. There does not appear to be a drainage system installed to collect and dispose of surface water.



Photograph 7

#### Recommendation

- New kerbing to both sides. Flush kerb to the north for direct surface water run-off, 125mm upstand along the footway, maintain dropped pedestrian access. Bullnose kerbing should be installed at the interface with the bridge
- New filter drain or swale along the north verge with outfall to the burn
- New surfacing 100mm thick (2 layers), plane off existing surfacing, replace at existing levels
- Replace slabbed footway
  - A drainage system should be installed to the west to protect the access from silt/run-off from the higher level tracks (see item 5).

### 3.1.4 Bridge Over Scouring Burn Adjacent to Pavilion Building

There is a small bridge over Scouring Burn close to where it flows into Allan Water. The span of the bridge is just under 4.0m and is just over 3.5 metres wide. The bridge does not have any barriers or handrails. The deck consists of timber sleepers, estimated to each be 200mm

wide x 120mm deep. There is batten fixed to the top of the sleepers at each side. There is a steel support member under the deck at each side. This is thought to be a steel angle section. We were not able to gain access to the soffit of the bridge.



Photograph 8 – The bridge viewed from upstream



Photograph 9 – The bridge viewed from upstream

The photographs taken upstream give a general indication of the approaches to the bridge which are generally poor. The run-off from the access drains into the burn at each side of the bridge. The ground on either side was found to be uneven with standing water noted.



Photograph 10 – Downstream View



Photograph 11 – Prop

As can be seen in photograph 11, an acrow prop has been used to support the downstream end of the bridge. We do not know how long the prop has been in place. However, it was noted that debris was building up behind the prop.

The timber sleepers that form the deck were found to be in poor condition. The deck was noted to move in places when a vehicle was driven over it. Some of the sleepers have split in places. Photographs 12/13 show the gaps between and condition of the sleepers



Photograph 12



Photograph 13



Photograph 14 – Downstream edge of the deck



Photograph 15 – Condition of sleepers at point with road surface

It is in our opinion that the bridge has reached the end of its useful life and requires to be replaced. Consideration must be taken of the requirement to provide barriers/handrails. Although we are aware this will detract from the aesthetic feeling of a small walkway over a burn.

#### Recommendation

- A new bridge structure be constructed to replace the existing. The form of construction should be decided by the Client and Architect as it may be desirable to have a timber bridge or a timber deck on steel beams. We would be pleased to provide additional information if required.

### 3.1.4 Main Access Splits North and West

Once across the bridge and entering the park, the access road split 2 ways. Vehicle and pedestrian access continues ahead to the west and pedestrian only access heads north to higher ground. Both tracks create boundaries to the children's play area. The junction of the tracks in this area collects surface water. Water is directed towards the bridge. Erosion has dropped the surface level of the tracks, creating a dishd uneven profile. The small area of planting (top centre of photograph) in the centre of the junction has been kerbed previously but is now in poor condition. This area could be better used to prevent water flowing from the grassed area over this junction.



Photograph 16

#### Recommendation

- New kerbing to landscaping
- Ditch or filter drain to be installed behind the landscaping – outfall to burn
- Kerbing of access road to be continued throughout this junction area
- Full reconstruction of track. Levels to avoid excavation if possible due to high level of rock. Further assessment of CBR% values for track foundation required. 100mm surfacing (2 layers)
- All surfaces shaped to fall to the north directing water to the burn and away from the pavilion

### 3.2 Access to West side of Children's Play Area

The existing track along the western boundary of the children's play area is in poor condition with a rutted, uneven and loose surface. By inspection the track is regularly used

by vehicles, which we assume are for park maintenance, especially to the higher level football pitch.



Photograph 17 – Looking back towards pavilion



Photograph 18 - View northwards to pitch access

#### Recommendation

- Flush kerbing installed to both sides of the track
- Full reconstruction of track. Further assessment of CBR% values for track foundation required. 100mm surfacing (2 layers)
- Alternative construction using crushed stone, sealed with whin dust could be used with shorter design life

- Ditch or swale along the boundary with the play area, feeding down to the burn to prevent water run-off to lower level riverside path (informal)

### 3.3 Access to upper level football pitch

The track leading to the upper level football pitch is in poor condition with a rutted, uneven loose surface. The track may have been constructed in crushed stone. The majority being washed out by surface water. This track acts as a water channel. No offlet /outlets are present. The vertical gradient is also very steep for vehicular access. The steepness may pose difficulties to any new construction proposed.



Photograph 19



Photograph 20 – Top of access track

The area directly at the top of the access track has become very muddy from vehicular use. No path has been created at this point.

#### Recommendations

- Reconstruct track using type 1 sub-base material, sealed with whin dust
- Lay timber edging to both sides as a restraint to type 1 material
- Create regular offlet drainage to existing vegetation
- Given the steepness of the access and narrow width, this work may only be possible by manual labour
- The top area of the track should have a hardstanding area to prevent rutting through the clayey topsoil

#### 3.4 Westbound Path along Allan Water to Low Level Football Pitch

Continuing west from the access road, a well worn dirt track forms the first section of a pedestrian route along Allan Water to the low level football pitch. The initial section lies between the slope to the playpark and Allan Water. The toe of the slope has slipped in various locations. It appears to have slipped sometime ago as the ground is covered in grass, with little evidence of fresh movement. The surface of the path itself is hard packed, worn soil with many exposed stones. Exposed rock is also visible. The exposed stone and rock create a slightly uneven surface with little or no loose materials.



Photograph 21



Photograph 22

The worn path ends as the path reaches the flat area between the playpark and football pitch, where the entire area is covered by grass with an open aspect to Allan Water.



Photograph 23

Progressing around the pitch the path continues in grass. The chestnut pale fence between the pitch and path is in very poor condition, but poses no risk to pedestrians.



Photograph 24



Photograph 25

The route appears to terminate at the north west corner beyond the football pitch as it heads into the trees/bushes.

#### Recommendations

- The initial worn section of path could be improved. A path of timber edging infilled with sub-base material, sealed topped with fine gravel or whin dust would create a smooth even path.
- The raising of the path level will also help reduce the slope and more importantly the movement at the toe of the slope.
- The areas of slope that have slipped should be either regraded to reduce the gradient, or, small retaining walls constructed using natural materials.

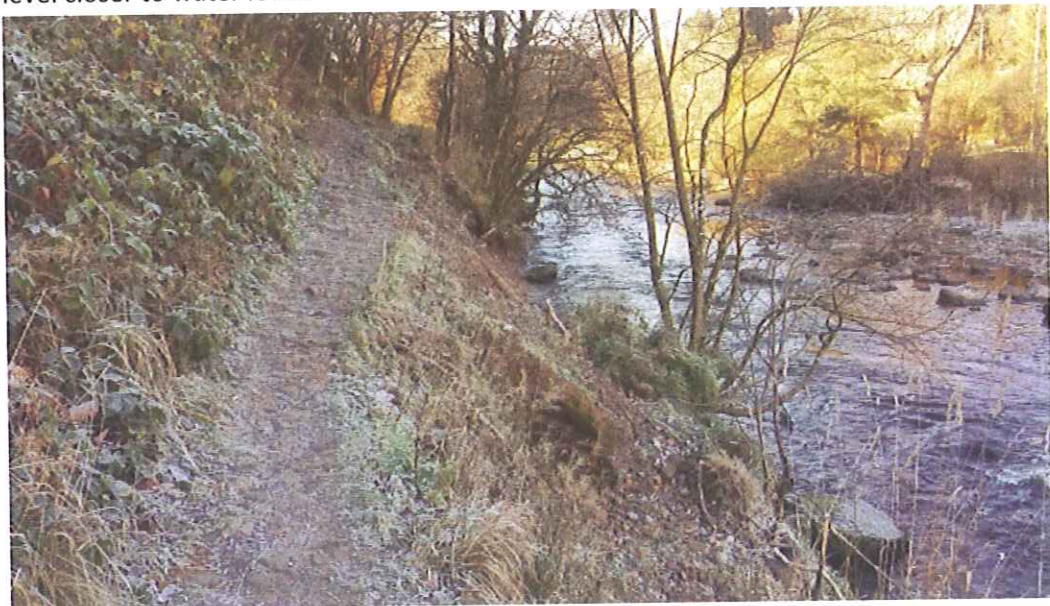
### 3.5 Countryside Path – West boundary

- 3.5.1 The path continues northwards along the bank of Allan Water on the Parks western boundary. The path is a hard packed, worn track, benched into the hillside, its width approximately 1.8 – 2m in places. The slope to Allan Water being relatively steep.



Photograph 26

The path narrows to less than 1m abruptly due to a land slip for a length of approximately 25m, where a section of the bank has fallen away. At this location the slope becomes even steeper and poses risk to the safety of pedestrians. There is little room for two people to pass each other without danger of falling. Beyond this slipped section, the path lowers in level closer to water level.



Photograph 27

The path quickly becomes very rough and uneven as it progresses to the bend in the river, no more than single file width available with numerous tripping hazards and trees blocking the path.



Photograph 28



Photograph 29



Photograph 30

There is an obvious route to take as the tracks are visible. Fluctuating water levels in the river may have had an effect on the path causing deep rutting, exposed pebbles and boulders, and washing out of materials.

The path follows the bend of the river from west to east where it doubles back on itself through an area of Giant Hogweed.



Photograph 31

3.5.2 This section is relatively flat and in good condition. It is perhaps a relatively new track worn out by pedestrians avoiding the now dangerous route around the bend of the river. As the path heads back westwards it meets the original track with some steps created using boulders. It would appear that this has now become the common route to take avoiding the original route along the river bank, although the Giant Hogweed may pose a safety risk during the growing season.



Photograph 32

3.5.3 There does not appear to be a route to take any further going along the river bank. The area is overgrown and steeply sloping. The only exit is a path that climbs uphill becoming steep and very narrow, posing a high health and safety risk.



Photograph 33

The narrowest part is around a tight bend on the edge of the hill, with a very steep drop off the side, the path is nothing more than a worn track.



Photograph 34



Photograph 35

The path stops at a relatively flat area on top of the hill. The area forms a junction with other routes and is the highest point of all the routes.

#### Recommendations – 3.5.1

- One option to consider should be to close this section of path due to the danger posed by the narrowing path at the section where the slope has slipped.
- The alternative option would be to construct a retaining wall of gabion baskets with fence on top for the entire length to protect the slope and widen the path. Further engineering assessment will be required.

- A new gravel path is required to follow the route of Allan Water, some clearance of scrub and trees will be required. This section, around the bend in the river could potentially be closed off and an alternative route taken (item 9.2).

#### Recommendations – 3.5.2

- Create a formal stepped access to its junction with path from item 9.1 or regrade the ground to tie in better
- Treat the Giant Hogweed problem to eradicate.

#### Recommendations – 3.5.3

- In its current state we would not encourage use of this route, the path is dangerous and should be closed
- Widen the path going uphill at the bend by benching further into the hillside to move the path a safer distance from the edge of the slope.
- Erect a fence to prevent falls over the edge
- A retaining wall will be required for the benching of the path

### 3.6 High Point to Eastern Ridge

3.6.1 From the high point looking east, the worn path can be clearly seen to the point it breaks through the ridge and continues to the footbridge over by the railway line. There is a very steep decent down to the flat plateau from this direction.



Photograph 36

The path passes by a very steep bank down to the river. Major erosion has caused the topsoil to slip from the slope exposing loose sands and gravels. The slope falls directly to the river with no river bank remaining. Further erosion is highly likely. Any preventative measures will be costly and practically difficult. The erosion is starting to create a dangerous overhang. The path itself is set back from the eroded edge a safe distance in its current state. There is evidence that there was fencing along the edge before the landslip.



Photograph 37



Photograph 38



Photograph 39

The path moves away from the river, heading through the gap in the ridge towards the footbridge, all paths in this area are grass tracks.



Photograph 40



Photograph 41

#### Recommendations

- We would not encourage the use of this path, new fencing should be erected to close this area off given the extent of erosion and landslip that has occurred. An alternative route is easily available through the flat area. A new route shall also remove the steep section to the high point.
- Any remedial work will require extensive engineering investigation. The solutions will be costly given the extent of the problem

#### 3.7 Pedestrian Access East side of play area (North from Section 5)

3.7.1 This path links the main access road by foot to the footbridge over the rail line further to the North. This section appears to be formally constructed, being even and solid in appearance. The path is narrow which may have happened over time. As with other pathways, it acts as a water channel down to the main access due to lack of offlet drainage and dished profile. It also collects run-off from the play park area, rather than letting it flow down the adjacent slope to the burn. This path seems well used.



Photograph 42 – looking back towards Allan Water

#### Recommendations

- Lay timber edging and infill with type 1 sub base material, raising level to remove the dished profile, finish with gravel or whin dust.
- Alternatively construct a formal footpath in bituminous material with precast concrete edging kerbs
- Create offlet drainage to the adjacent slope
- Little excavation required
- Increase width of path to 1.8m

#### 3.8 Countryside Path heading North to Footbridge over Railway

3.8.1 As the path heads north, leaving the play park area it becomes a more informal and well worn countryside path/track. There is a section heading north to the footbridge on a steep incline that has been eroded by surface water. The remainder of previous attempts at repairs are visible. The damage to the path is a danger to the public.



Photograph 43



Photograph 44

#### Recommendations

- The eroded section of path should be up filled with type 1 sub-base material to remove tripping hazards.
- Consideration should be given to the creation of low steps in this area
- Steps could be created using timber edging, timber sleepers for steps and filled with type 1 material
- Drainage offlets should be provided uphill from this area to protect it from further erosion

### 3.9 Footbridge Crossing

3.9.1 The area at the top of the access steps to the footbridge is badly worn, albeit not in a dangerous condition. Some boulders protruding from the worn ground could potentially become tripping hazards



Photograph 45

#### Recommendations

- Provide a hardstanding area at the top of the steps in type 1 sub base material
- Alternatively , extend the slabs at the top of the steps to create a more formal area

### 3.10 Countryside paths to BMX track area

3.10.1 Once across the bridge there are no formal footpaths. All paths are worn tracks or grass surfaces. The grass track leading to the BMX track area is relatively smooth and even. We would not recommend any work in this location to maintain the countryside appeal of the area



Photograph 46



Photograph 47



Photograph 48

3.11 BMX Track Area North to Housing Estate Link Path

- 3.11.1 The grass track from the BMX heads northwards through a wooded area. The grass path becomes worn to a narrow dirt track below the tree canopy, badly rutted in places. The track becomes very narrow with steep sides.



Photograph 49

The steep side consists of scrub and trees dropping away to a lower level. There is only room for single file movements.



Photograph 50

At the lower level the track again becomes a grassed path, smooth and flat, until it reaches the bottom of the slope up to the housing development.



Photograph 51

3.11.2 At the slope some informal steps have been created using random flat stones. The actual slope up to the housing estate level is very steep creating a difficult route for pedestrians. The track forms a rutted channel down the slope.



Photograph 52



Photograph 53

Once up at the level of the house plot a formal path has been constructed, albeit now in relatively poor condition but with no real problems.



Photograph 54

Beyond the housing estate to the north east a work track continues through the surrounding woodland river corridor.



Photograph 55

#### Recommendations 3.11.1

- Create a new gravel path through the woodland, widening the path to move away from the steep slope through the trees.
- Slope protection work is required to prevent further movement.

#### Recommendations 3.11.2

- Create a stepped access to the housing estate level as the slope is extremely steep.
- Alternatively take the path on an alternative route to the woodland section across the slope (3.11.1)

3.12 BMX area Southwards to Scouring Burn

3.12.1 This a natural worn out grass track down to the burn. There is a signpost at the bottom of the path directing users northwards along this route. No recommendations are given as this path is in good condition for a countryside type path.



Photograph 56

3.13 Countryside path along Scouring Burn to Eastern Park Access

3.13.1 This is a worn pedestrian track heading east along the route of the Scouring Burn. No formal construction has taken place. In some areas the path is very low lying close to the burn, causing flooding issues. Part of the Burn closest to the path has been eroded, creating an overhang that has recently suffered from minor collapse.



Photograph 57



Photograph 58



Photograph 59



Photograph 60

The track ends where it meets a formal access path with bridge over the burn.

#### Recommendations

- To maintain access to the parks at times of high water level we would recommend raising the level of the paths in the wet areas. The area shown in photographs 59 and 60 is between the north east boundary with the housing estate and the scouring burn. To raise this level some works will be required to the banks of the burn. To minimise groundworks and resultant flooding to other areas, a raised timber deck may be the best solution. This will allow the area to flood below the deck. There is little or no room to divert the path.

- Where the burn is eroding the banks close to the path, a form of protection should be constructed such as gabion baskets. This will also provide stability to the path

### 3.14 Pedestrian Access Steps

3.14.1 There is a stepped access to the park from Balmyle Grove. The boundary wall en route to the steps has collapsed and requires rebuilding. The steps themselves are in need of refreshing. The steps are slippery in the wet/damp, and are relatively steep. The flat areas require infilled.



Photograph 61



Photograph 62

Recommendation

- We would recommend complete replacement of the steps and handrails in similar materials. It may be worthwhile reducing the rise of each step to make them safer.

3.15 Eastern Access Points

3.15.1 Access from Laighill Place

The footpath from Laighill Place has been recently constructed in bituminous materials and is in good condition. A handrail is provided due to the steep gradient. The path leads to a new bridge over the scouring burn into the landscaped areas associated with the housing estate to the north east of the park.



Photograph 63



Photograph 64

Crossing the bridge the path splits three ways. North to the housing estate via a newly constructed path, west into Laighills Park meeting the track from item 17 via an old bituminous path in fair condition, and east along a newly constructed raised timber walkway.

Westwards into the park there is another path to take which crosses an old concrete bridge over the burn. The concrete is in poor condition, broken in places, and scoured at its edges with the path. This path is also of old bituminous construction and joins the track from item 3.13.1. These sections of path are under the tree canopy, and at the time of inspection were covered in leaves. The surfacing looks old but is not in disrepair.



Photograph 65



Photograph 66



Photograph 67

3.15.2 Access from Ramoyle opposite Backcroft

This access can be classed as in poor condition. The path is very narrow bounded on one side by a low height old stone wall and trees/hedging on the other.



Photograph 68

The path is of bituminous construction, but in very poor condition. It is a very dark and damp route into the park. At the time of inspection the path was thick with fallen leaves. The path leads to the corridor of the Scouring Burn opening into an area of very rough uneven ground.



Photograph 69

Steps give access to the lower level path by the burn which is generally smooth and flat. The steps themselves are in poor condition and require replacement.



Photograph 70



Photograph 71

In order to cross the burn and join the raised timber deck in item 19.1 users must cross a narrow dilapidated concrete bridge. The bridge is in poor condition and requires replacement.



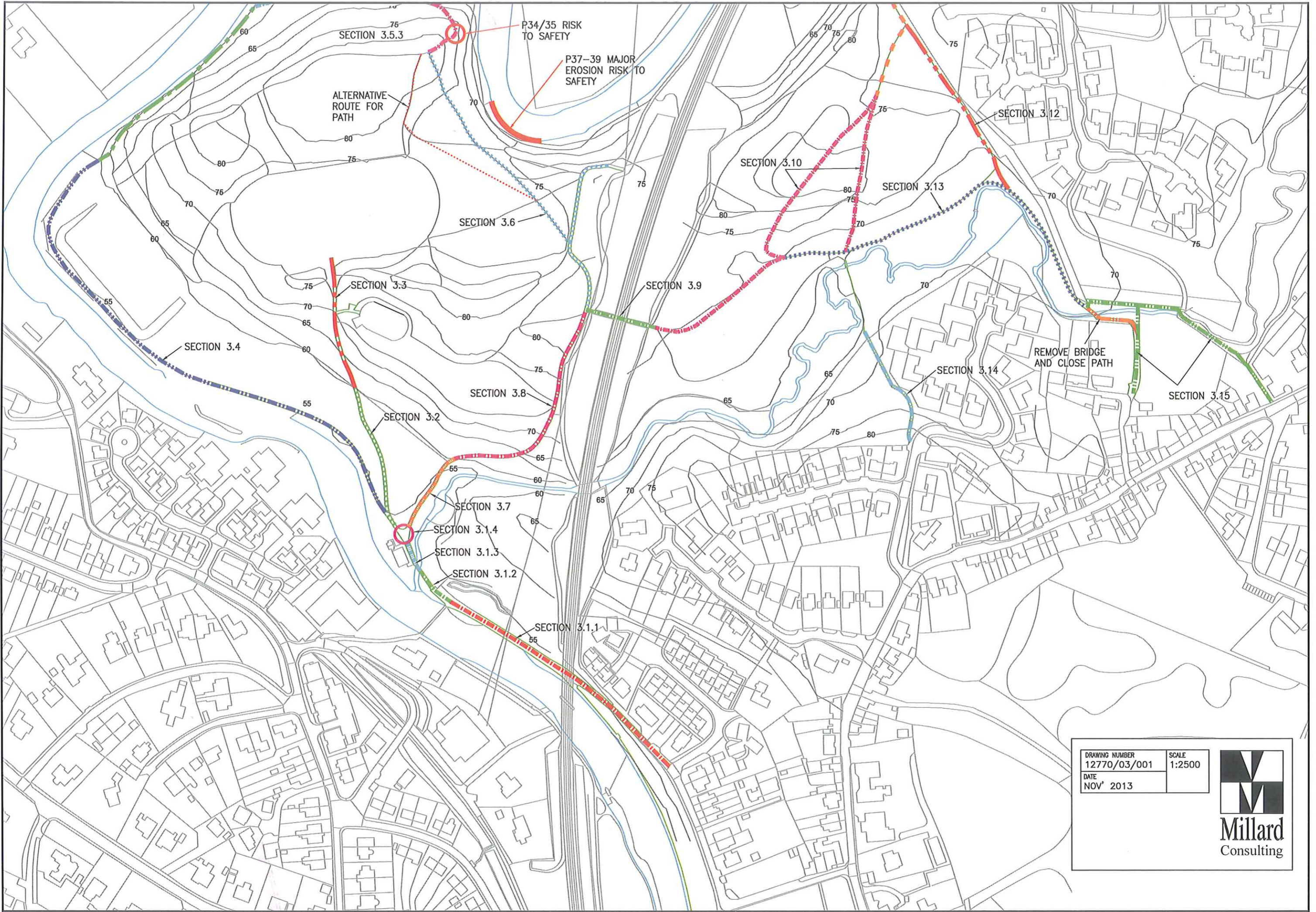
Photograph 72

#### Recommendations

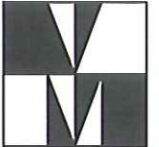
- 19.1 Remove the dilapidated concrete bridge and close the footpath linked to it. Direct users to cross the burn over the new bridge

- Infill the path from Ramoyle to the Scouring Burn with gravel, little else can be done in this location due to the close proximity of large trees and hedging. The rough area at the end of the path requires regrading to flatten off the uneven ground.
- The steps require maintenance, primarily to fill in the worn areas between the timber steps. May be beneficial at this time to replace the timber steps
- The concrete bridge requires replacement, including landing areas.

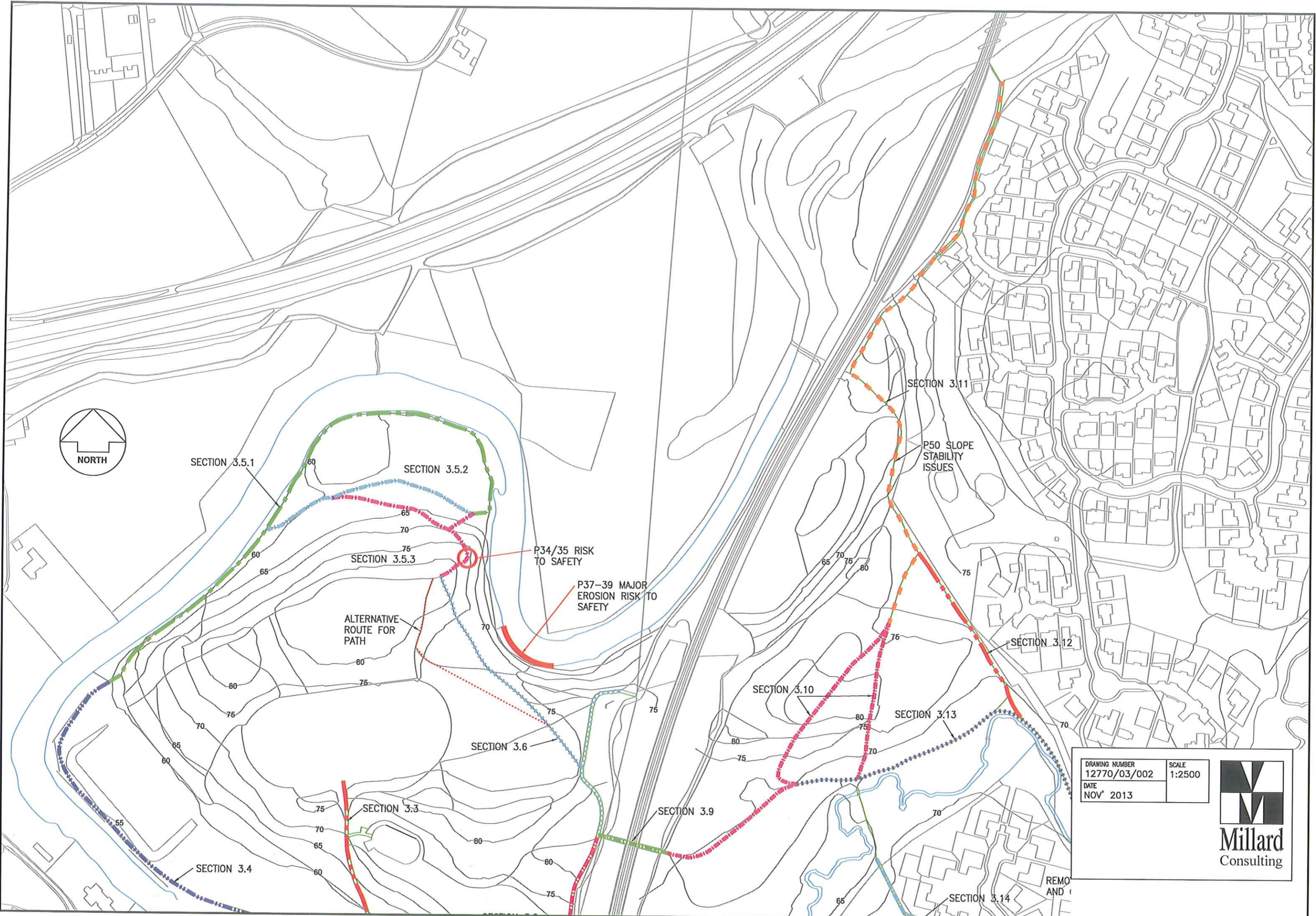
## APPENDIX A



DRAWING NUMBER 12770/03/001	SCALE 1:2500
DATE NOV' 2013	



**Millard**  
Consulting



SECTION 3.5.1

SECTION 3.5.2

SECTION 3.5.3

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE FOR PATH

SECTION 3.6

SECTION 3.3

SECTION 3.4

SECTION 3.9

SECTION 3.10

SECTION 3.13

SECTION 3.12

SECTION 3.11

P50 SLOPE STABILITY ISSUES

P34/35 RISK TO SAFETY

P37-39 MAJOR EROSION RISK TO SAFETY

DRAWING NUMBER 12770/03/002	SCALE 1:2500
DATE NOV 2013	



REMO  
AND

SECTION 3.14

# Connon Design

Landscape Architecture + Urban Design

Unit 2.1, 59 Main Street  
The Village  
Cumbernauld  
G67 2RT



Laigh Hills Park, Dunblane  
Strategic Landscape Masterplan  
Technical Appendix  
3 & 4



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  - 3.1.1 Aerial Photography Review
  - 3.1.2 Planning Context Review
  - 3.1.3 Conservation Area Review
  - 3.1.4 Core Paths Framework Review
  - 3.1.5 Stirling Council Open Space Strategy 1
  - 3.1.6 Stirling Council Open Space Strategy 2
  - 3.1.7 Historic Context Review - 1950's Aerial
  - 3.1.8 Existing Vegetation Appraisal - 2010
  - 3.1.9 Historic Context Review
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  - 3.3.3 Landscape Character Appraisal
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  - 3.3.5 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Appraisal
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- 3.4.2 Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) Map
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- 3.4.4 Barbush Legal Ownership Plan
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- 3.4.6 Physical Legibility & Perceived Spatial Environment
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- 4.1.0 Dunblane Primary School Consultation
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3.1.0 Context & Historical Appraisal  
3.1.1 Aerial Photography Review



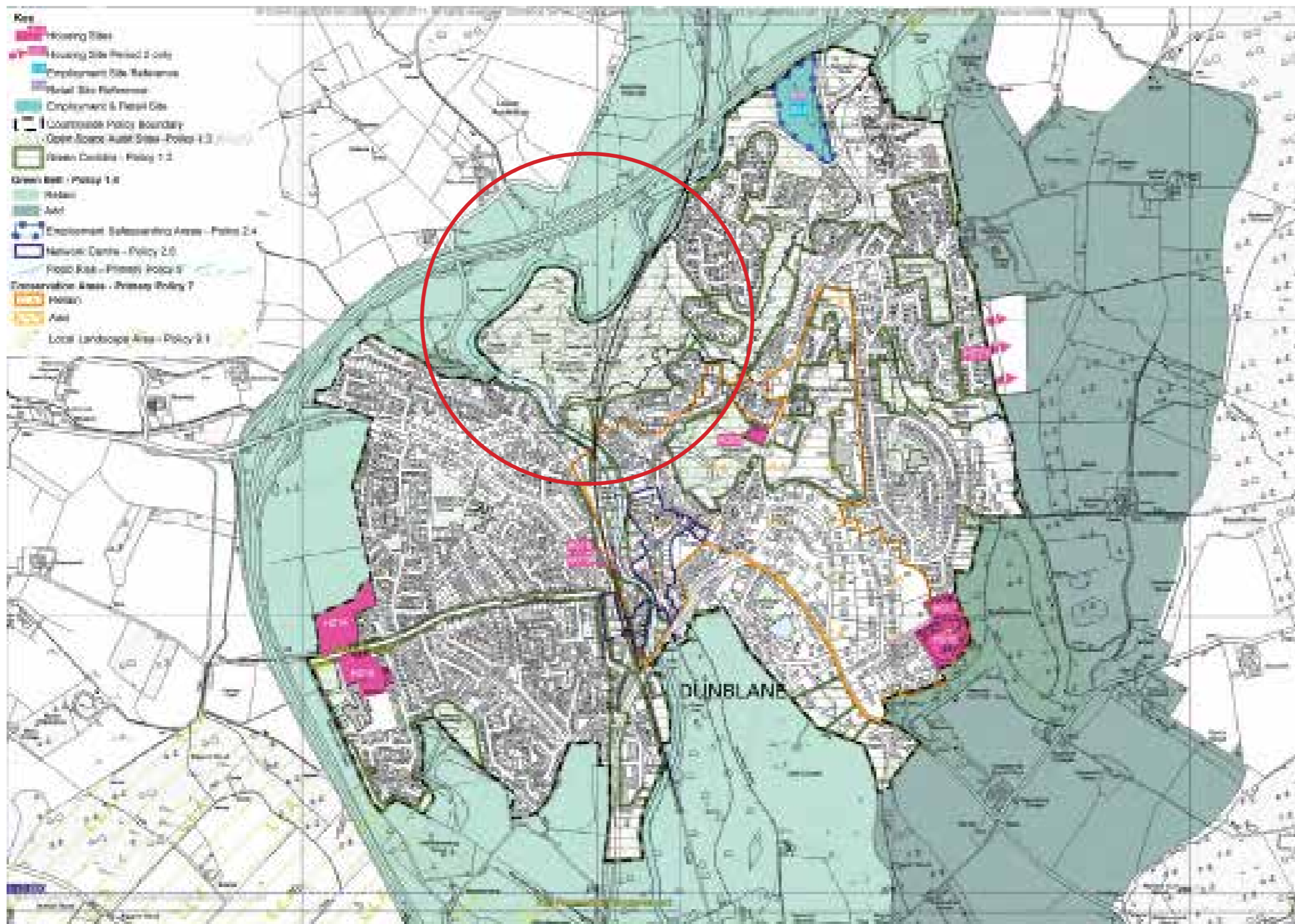
Google Earth - 2005

The above aerial photography provides visual evidence of the recent built developments in and around Laigh Hills Park which have an impact on the context, setting, ecology, use and physical geography of the park, such as the impact on hydrology.

Aerial photography has also provided a record of the BMX track in the eastern area of the site. It also helped identify the wear on various paths across the site, which assisted with the development of the paths hierarchy analysis.

### 3.1.2 Planning Context Review

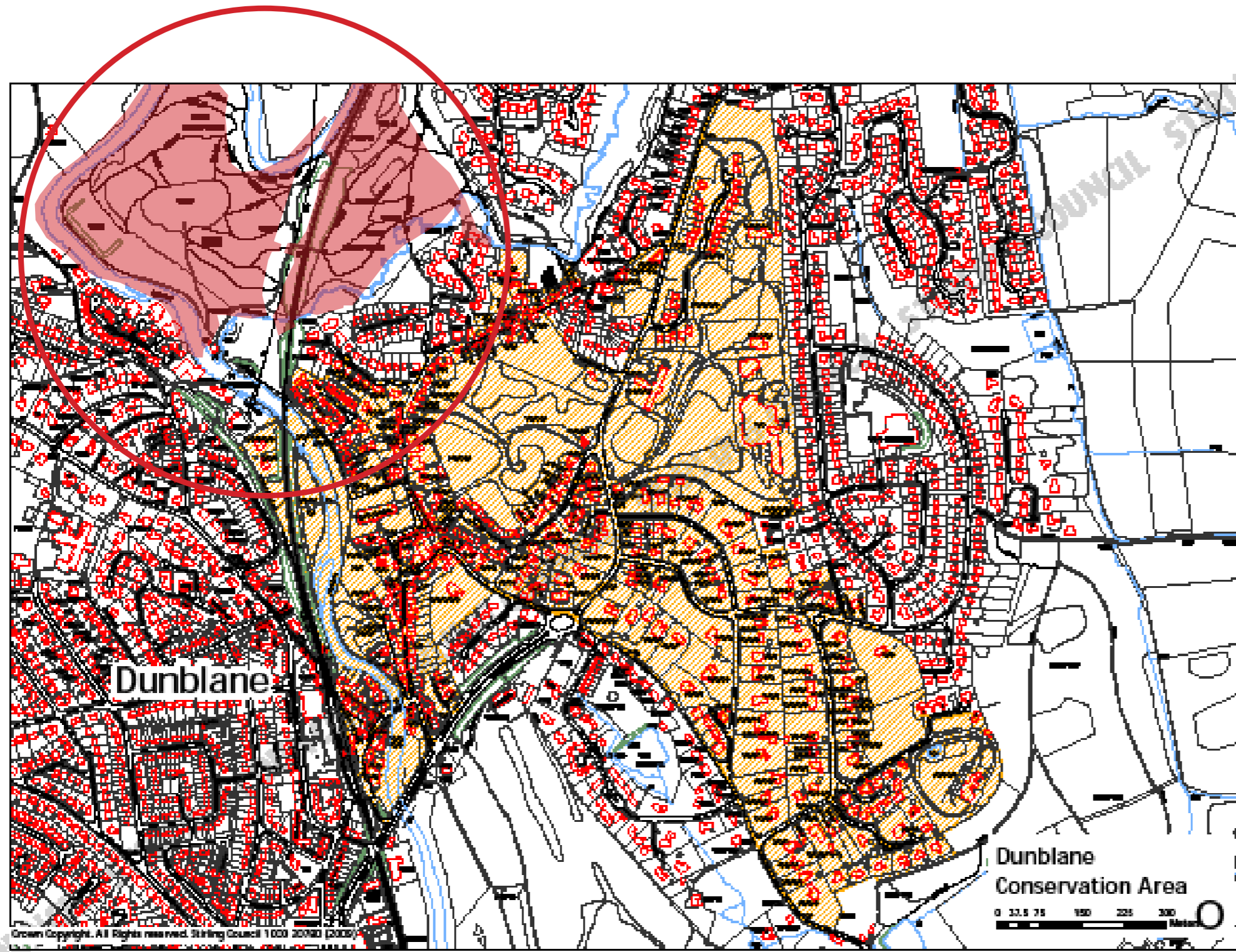
The map is an extract from the current Local Settlement Plan, from the proposed emerging Local Development Plan .



### 3.1.3 Conservation Area Review

The adjacent plan is an extract from the current Local Development Plan and illustrates Laigh Hills Park's proximity to the Dunblane Conservation Area.

Despite being outwith the designated conservation area, Laigh Hills Park does form an important historic open space component within the context of Dunblane as highlighted through the Historical Context section of the report (page 10.)



**3.1.4 Core Paths Framework Review**

Local Development Plan - Settlements

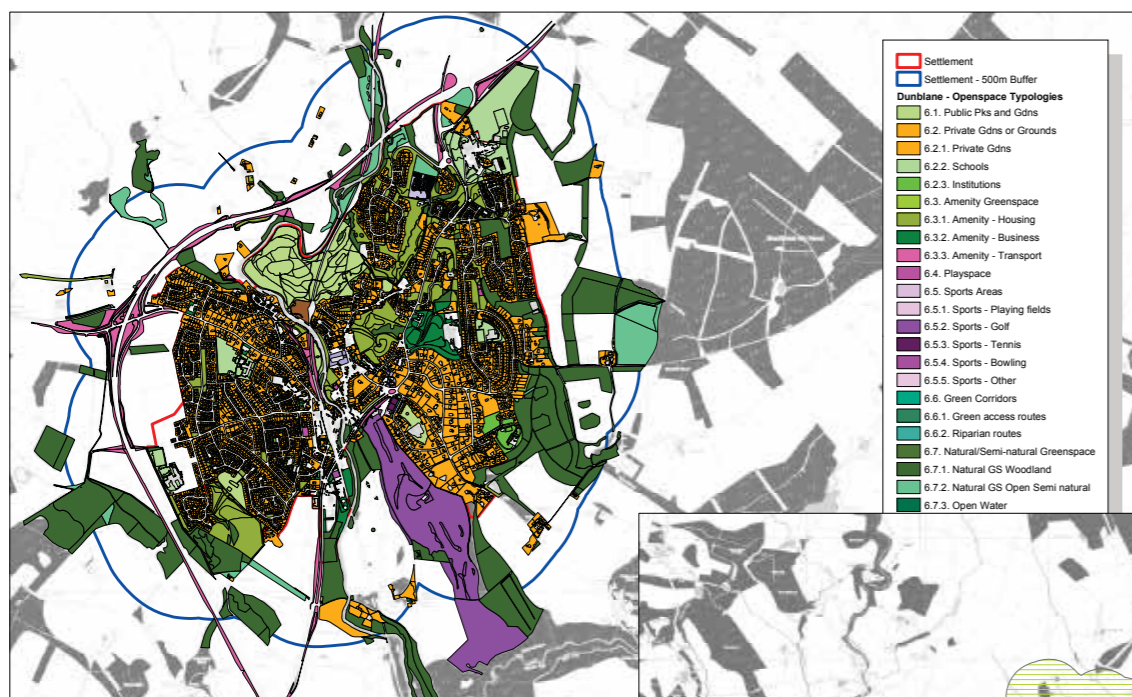


The above plan is an excerpt from the Local Development Plan - Core Paths. It has been used to identify core paths within the masterplan area and connecting paths at a framework scale.

### 3.1.5 Stirling Council Open Space Strategy 1

#### Open Space Strategy Review

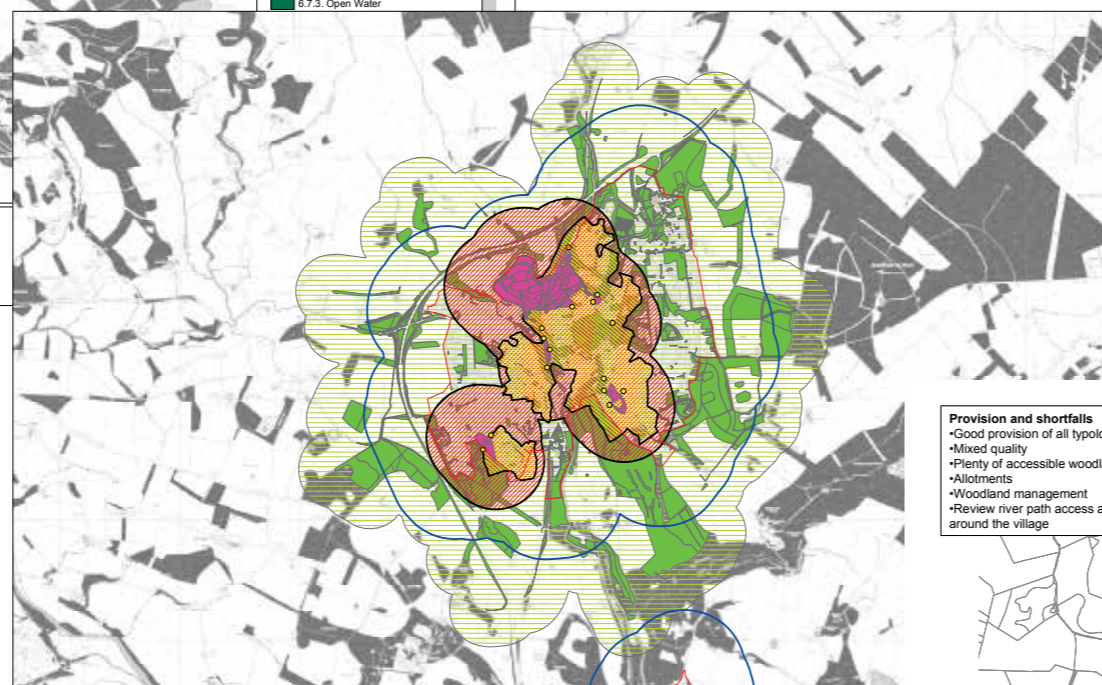
The current Stirling Council Open Space Strategy has provided strategic scale information regarding other key public open space provision within the area which has informed the masterplan and the framework.



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Scale : 1:17,000      Date : 25.03.2011

Stirling Council  
Openspace Strategy 2011  
Openspace Typologies  
Dunblane



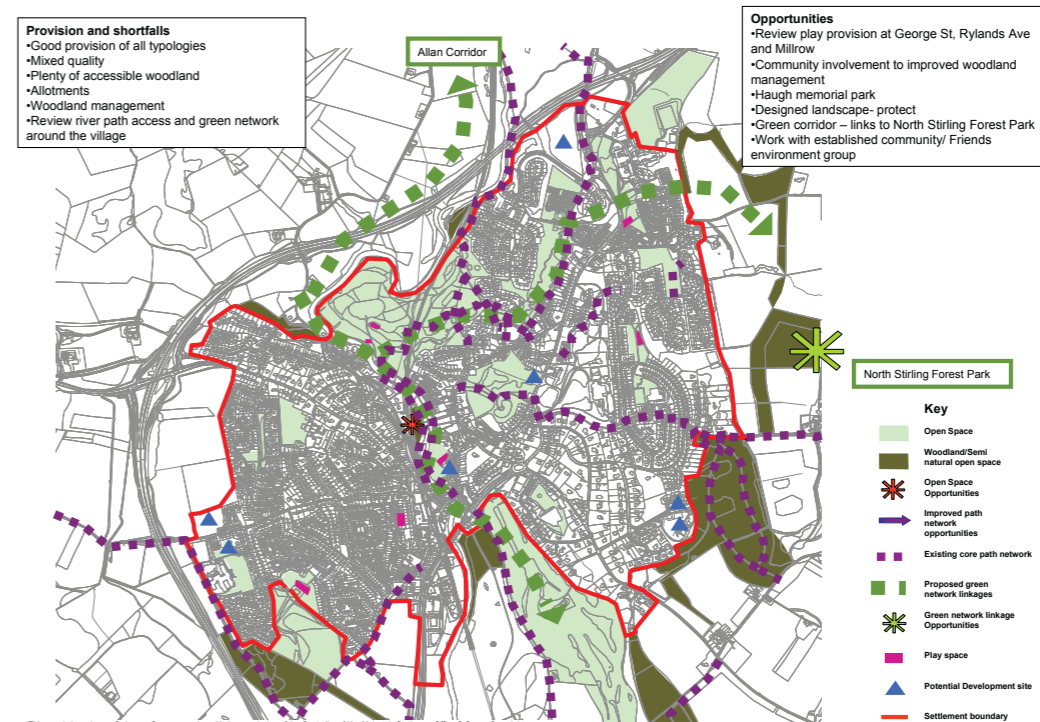
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Scale : 1:23,000      Date : 09/06/2011

Stirling Council Openspace Strategy - Access Audit  
Settlement: Dunblane

Legend  
Settlement  
Public Park  
Public Park  
Public Park  
Amenity Greenspace

Data Shown:  
Public Parks & Park Access Points  
Public Parks 400m Buffer & 5 min Walking Distance  
Amenity Greenspace & 300m Buffer



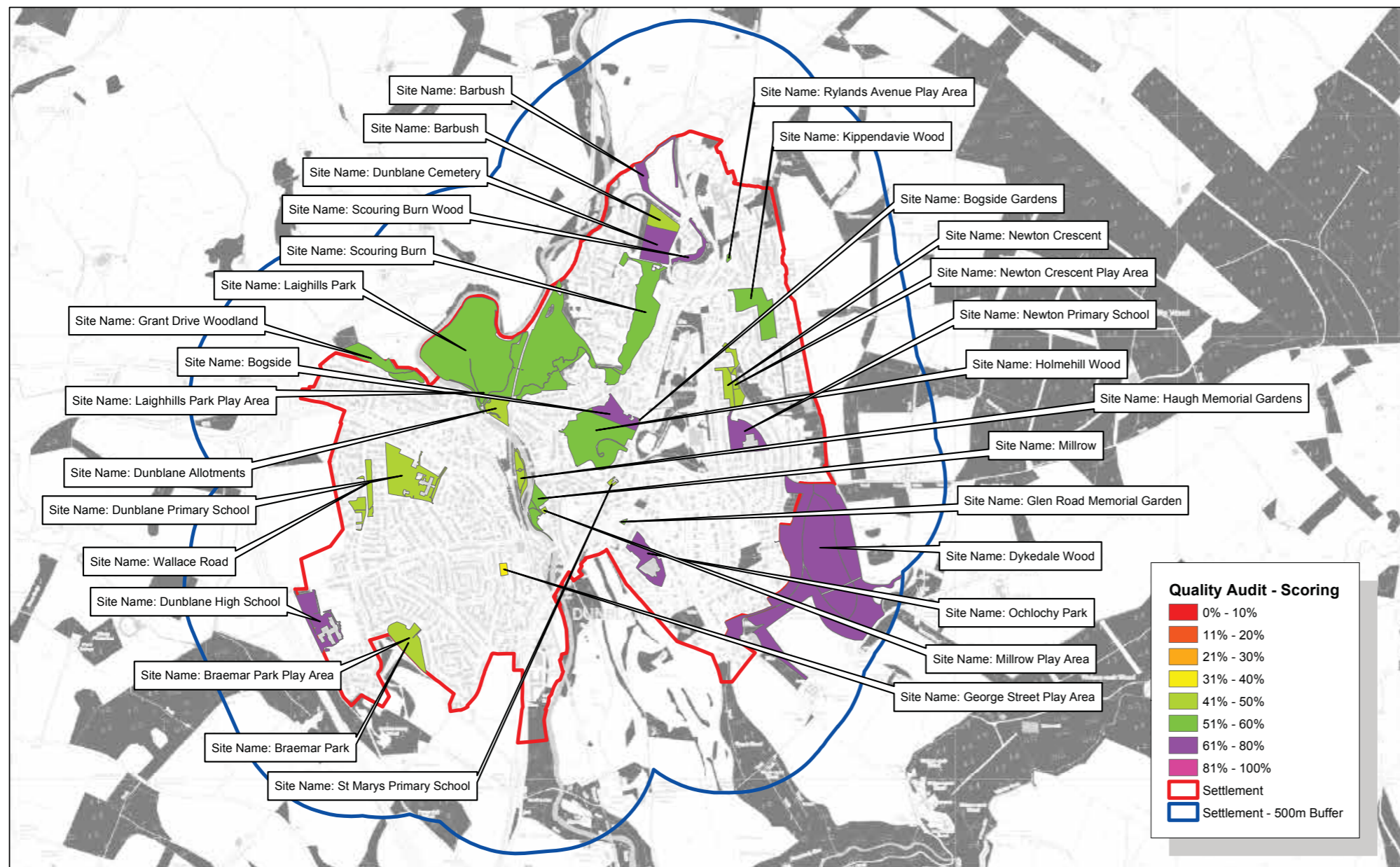
This map is based upon Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Stirling Council. Licence No. 100020780. 2011

Settlement opportunity plan      Dunblane

Stirling Council  
Open Space Strategy

3.1.6 Stirling Council Open Space Strategy 2

The adjacent plan is an extract from the Stirling Council Open Space Strategy Plan which illustrates the size and scale of Laigh Hills in relationship with other local parks and open space areas.



Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2011. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100020780		Stirling Council Openspace Strategy 2011  Openspace Quality Audit Dunblane	
Scale : 1:16,000	Date : 28.03.2011		



Aerial Photography  
Circa 1950

### 3.1.7 Historic Context Review - 1950's Aerial

'The Foundation of Dunblane

*Dunblane is one of the oldest settlements in Scotland. St Blane, after whom the town is named, lived in the late 6th and early 7th centuries and had his base at Kingarth on the Isle of Bute. His precise association with the town is unclear though in the first written recording of the town in the 10th century it is called Dulblaan or Blane's meadow. If you walk upstream along the river Allan to the edge of the town you will come to Laighhills Play-park round which the river curls. Is this Blane's meadow?'*

ref: <http://www.dunblane.info/index.php/aboutdunblane/>

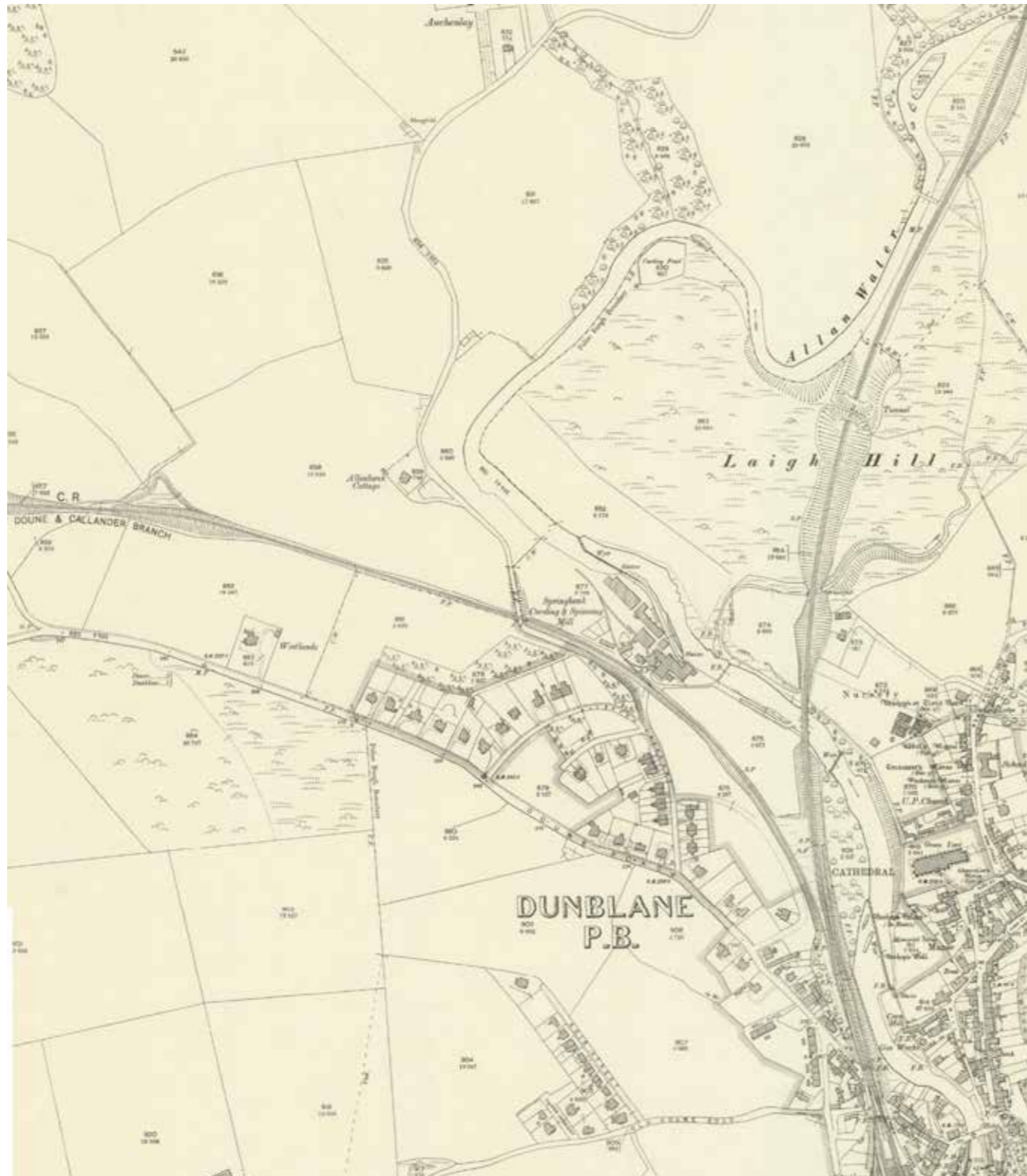
**3.1.8 Existing Vegetation  
Appraisal - 2010**

Review of the aerial photographic record illustrates the increasing numbers of trees and shrubs which is changing the natural character of the park. It was used for grazing, then subsequently a maintained parkland with a golf course to the present day, where the formal recreation grounds are the areas that are predominantly managed and maintained.



Aerial Photography  
Circa 2010

### 3.1.9 Historic Context Review



OS map Circa 1899

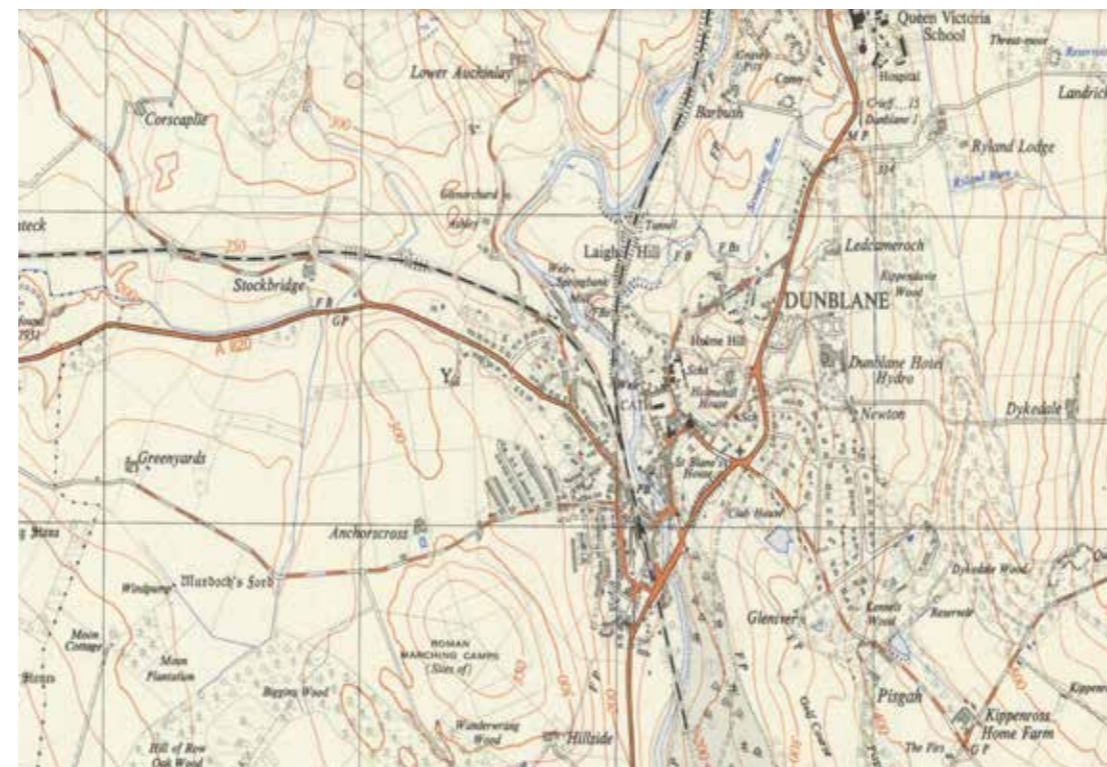
The adjacent historic map illustrated the site prior to the construction of the A9 bypass. There are clear riparian and pedestrian connections linking to the countryside north of the park. This is supported by contemporary evidence on site with historic gates and bridges remaining today.

The building of the railway and subsequently the A9 bypass, has significantly restricted accessibility and connectivity to and within Laigh Hills Park. Note the location of the railway tunnel and connecting land bridge (located further north) from where the current low level pedestrian bridge has been built.

This reinforces the need to recognise the importance and seek where possible to improve the remaining paths and connection in light of current equalities and access legislation.



OS map Circa 1899



OS map Circa 1956



OS map Circa 1932



OS map Circa 1945

### 3.1.10 Historic Maps Review

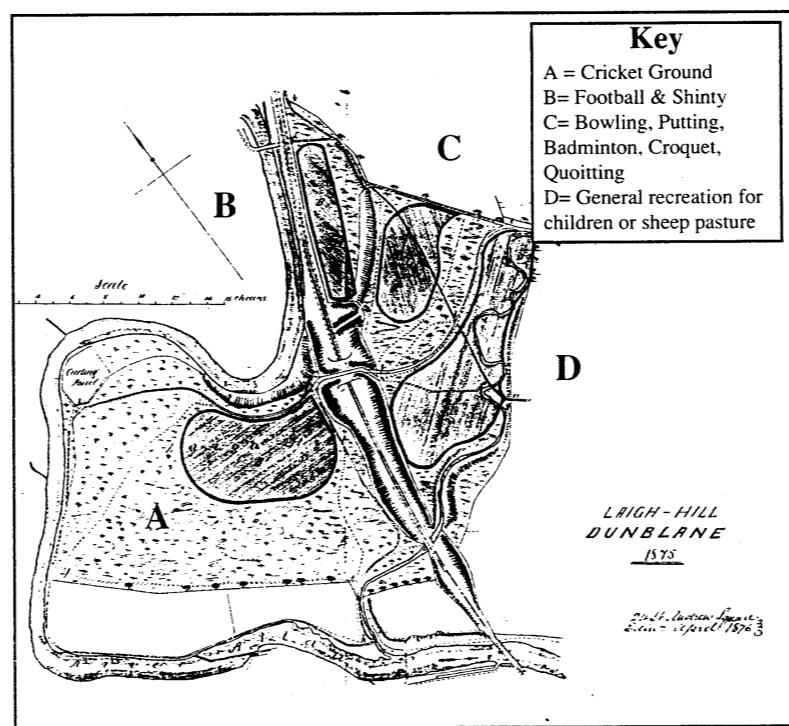
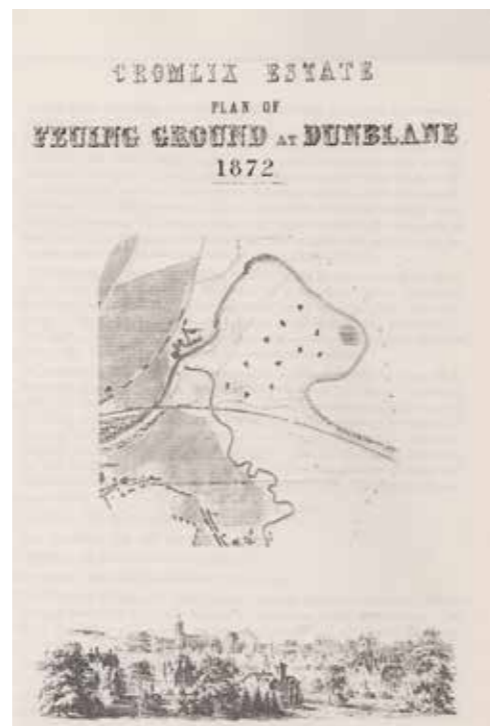
Excerpt from Dunblane Conservation Area Appraisal (revised edition 2012 - by Stirling Council)

'Dunblane is situated north of the City of Stirling on a natural fording point on the Allan Water. It was probably an early Christian site, with the medieval Dunblane Cathedral completed in 1240. The medieval burgh extended from the settlement of Ramoyle in the north through the market place to a ford on the Allan Water; the settlement of Bridgend at junction of the roads from Stirling and Doune on the west side of the river. Despite the loss of its religious power after the Reformation, Dunblane continued as a market centre and an important stop on the military roads north of Stirling. A number of important buildings remain from the 17th century including the Dean's Manse (now Dunblane Museum) and the Leighton Library. The development of weaving in the late 18th century stimulated growth; as did the arrival on the railway in the mid-19th century which supported a substantial Victorian villa development to the east of the historic burgh and construction of the Dunblane Hydro.

The 20th century has witnessed continued growth of the 'cathedral city', which retains its market town role with excellent road and rail connections.'



This photograph, taken in 1918, shows Jim Reid on the left of the 18th green.

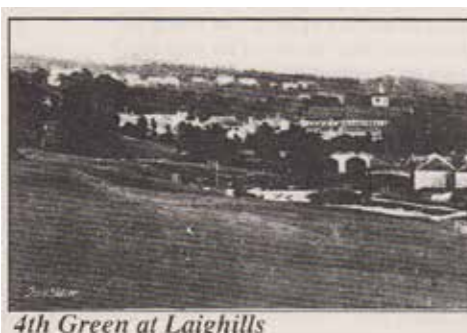


3.1.11 Historic Context Review - illustrations/maps/photographs

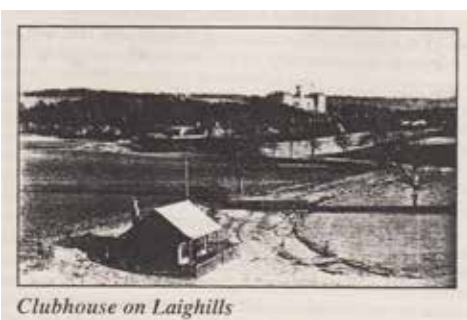
Illustrations and historic photographs illustrating the land-use changes and the associated impact on open views from the site.

Comparisons with recent photography show how much change there has been in the park in terms of regeneration of trees, shrubs and woodland.

The natural character is transforming as the vegetation regenerates and matures, which is substantially altering the extensive views from certain key hill top locations within the park.



4th Green at Laighills



Clubhouse on Laighills



**3.1.12 Existing Services Review  
2013-2014**

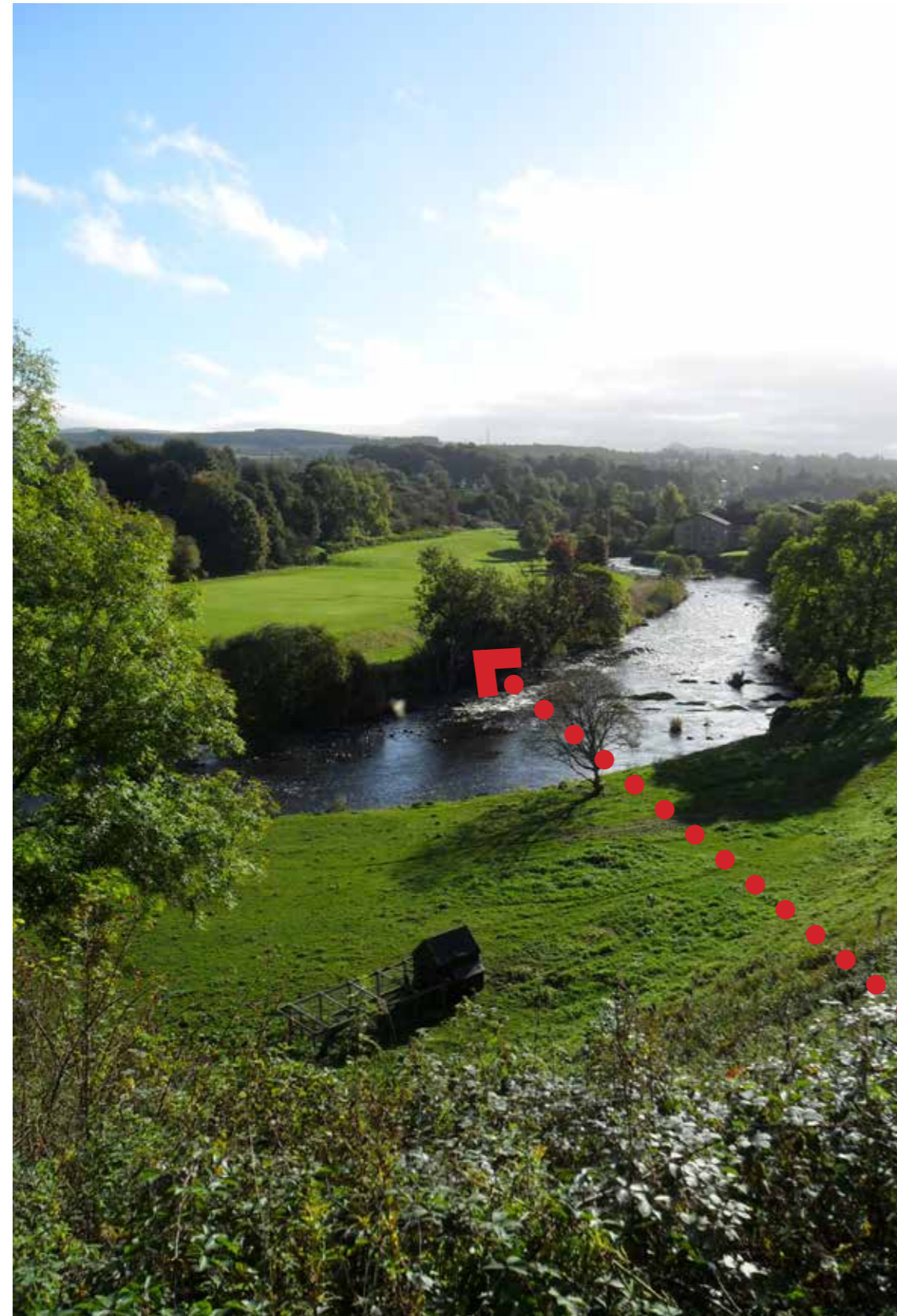
A desk based review has been carried out for the existing services within the extent of Laigh Hills Park.

There are existing over-head services running approximately north south across the site parallel with the Stirling to Aberdeen mainline railway.

There is also a known electrical underground service line which connects the housing on Balmyle Grove with the Barbush housing development, as illustrated on the adjacent plan.

Other services may be present on site, such as drainage, the locations of which are unknown.





### 3.2.0 Visual Appraisal

#### 3.2.1 Visual Envelope & Key Views Appraisal

Three main types of view have been considered in relation to Laigh Hills Park. These are as follows:

- Panoramic views
- Vistas
- Sequential views

Laigh Hills Park is part of a wider visual context and visual setting. There are important views within the park, out from the park toward the environs, views in toward the park, and in the general direction of the park.

Key views into Laigh Hills Park include; the views south & south-east from Auchinlay Road (unclassified). This is a quiet surfaced road which is used locally for walking and cycling and forms part of the sustainable Dunblane's Green Travel Network.

Most other views into the park are screened, or partially screened by; topography, vegetation, development or a combination of all of the above.

Sequential views form an important reason for people to visit the park with contrasting views along routes which fluctuate seasonally.

There are many key vistas from within the park which relate to the surrounding historic built form. Such as views to the historic Dunblane Hydro, Dunblane Cathedral and key Victorian villas, all of which are generally recognised as contributing to of the context and setting of the park.

There are key hill top view points which offer the opportunity for panoramic views beyond the local area. Significant horizons include: the Ochil hills to the south-east, the Fintry hills and Campsie fells to the south-west, to the north, Doune, Ben Lomond, surrounding hills of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.

These panoramas along the carse of Stirling and Strath Allan are part of Dunblane's historic *raison d'etre*.

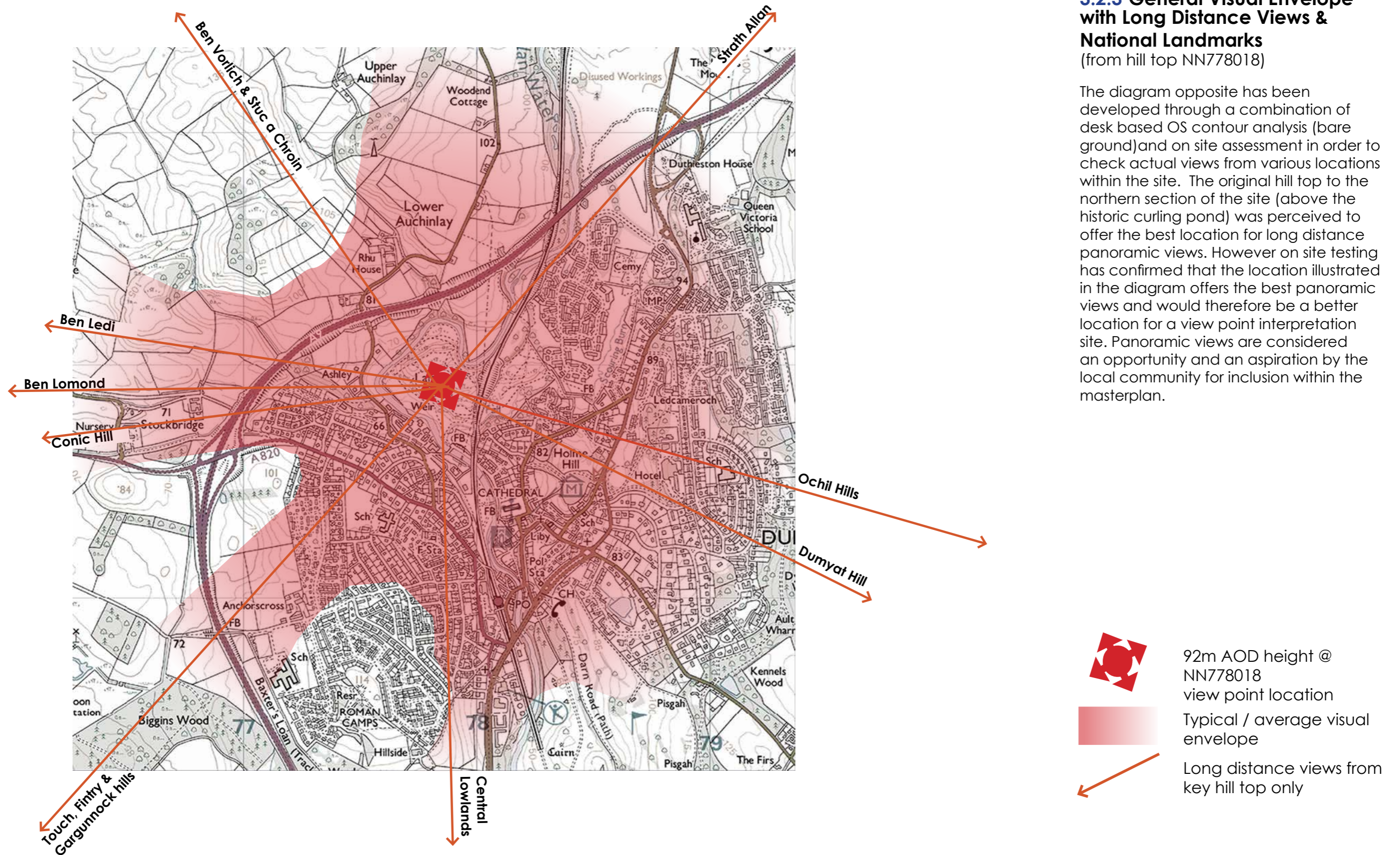
**3.2.2 Visual Appraisal -  
Site photos 1**

Sequential views have formed an intrinsic part of development of the paths circulation and interconnecting network.



**3.2.3 General Visual Envelope with Long Distance Views & National Landmarks**  
(from hill top NN778018)

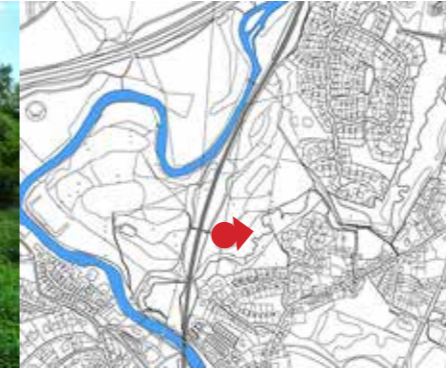
The diagram opposite has been developed through a combination of desk based OS contour analysis (bare ground) and on site assessment in order to check actual views from various locations within the site. The original hill top to the northern section of the site (above the historic curling pond) was perceived to offer the best location for long distance panoramic views. However on site testing has confirmed that the location illustrated in the diagram offers the best panoramic views and would therefore be a better location for a view point interpretation site. Panoramic views are considered an opportunity and an aspiration by the local community for inclusion within the masterplan.



Typical static views within, from & into the Laigh Hills Parklands

View point locations

3.2.2 Visual Appraisal -  
Site photos 2



3.2.2 Visual Appraisal -  
Site photos 3

Typical static views within, from & into the Laigh Hills Parklands

View point locations



3.2.2 Visual Appraisal -  
Site photos 4

Typical static views within, from & into the Laigh Hills Parklands

View point locations

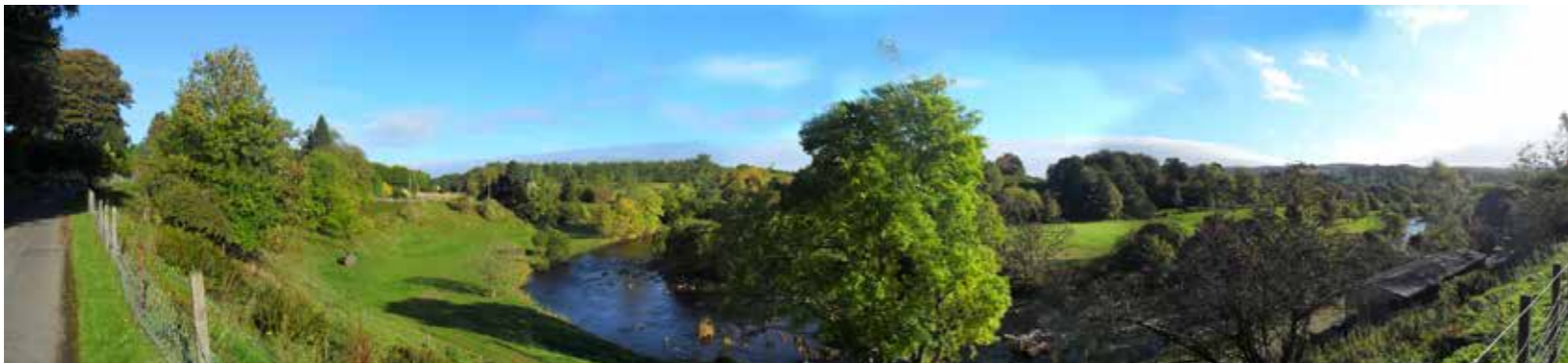


Typical static views within, from & into the Laigh Hills Parklands

View point locations

**3.2.2 Visual Appraisal -  
Site photos 5**

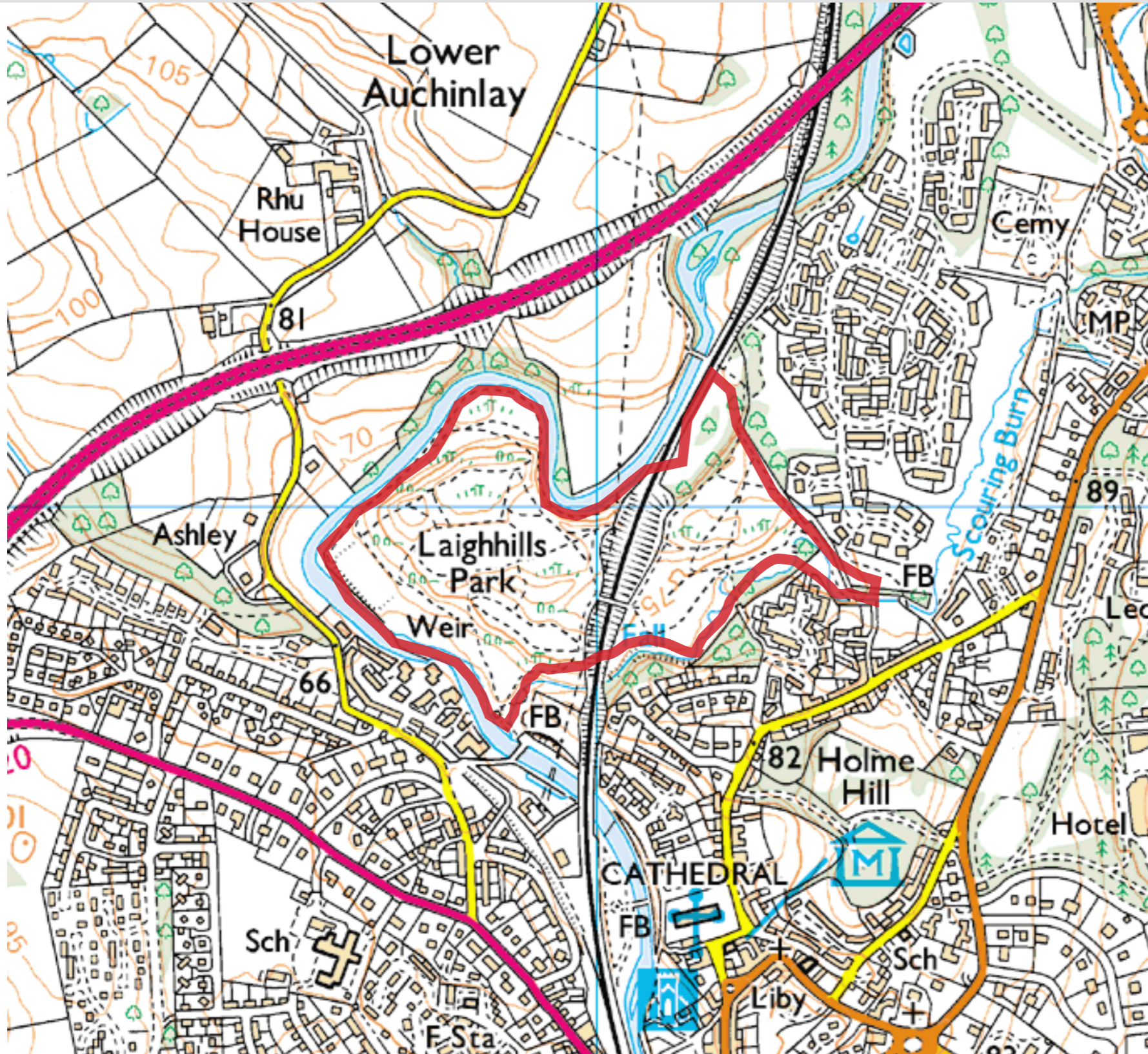
Views into the park, within and from the park have been taken into account throughout the process.



### 3.2.8 Existing Bridge Over Railway

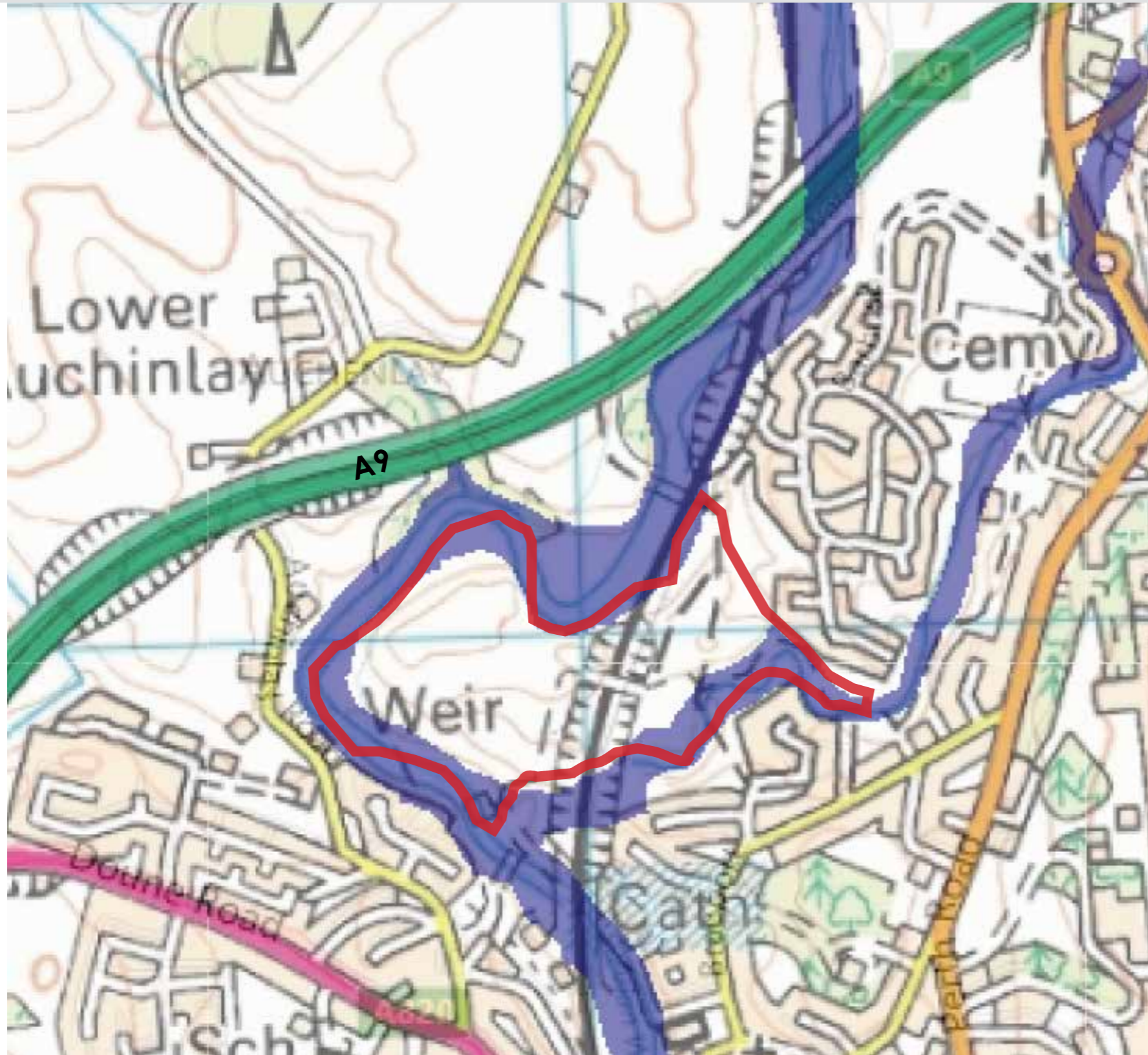
The photographic record of the site has assisted in the considerations for possible solutions to existing barriers within the park including the low level pedestrian bridge over the railway. Together with some elementary assessment of surrounding levels and connecting paths gradients, this has informed the proposals within the masterplan - particularly the need for a more detailed feasibility study into the options for addressing this key accessibility issue.





### 3.3.0 Landscape Appraisal 3.3.1 Ordnance Survey Review

Ordnance survey information has been used to support the initial site survey work and has been used to provide basic levels of information which has been used to create the digital park contour model.



### 3.3.2 Indicative Hydrology & Flooding Review - SEPA

The image opposite is from the SEPA website 2014 - indicative flood mapping tool.

Further detailed hydrology investigation has been deferred until key works proposals have been identified through the masterplan.

The mapping has however informed the design approach for path types and boardwalk proposals within the flood mapped areas shown.



- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  Riparian semi-natural woodland & incised river valley with steep sided slopes.   |  Local small scale floodplains and associated wetland areas.                       |  Formal riverside designed parkland landscape within steep sided river valley enclosure.         |
|  Predominantly rough grassland over rolling glacial-fluvial hills, drumlins & features with some semi-natural trees & woodland regeneration, bracken and ruderal mix. |  Allotments & productive gardening area within natural wooded enclosure & setting. |  Low design quality amenity landscape with some native structure planting.                       |
|  Amenity recreation grounds/pitches within riverside peri-urban & semi-countryside setting.   |  Formal children's play area within wider formal recreation parkland.              |  Railway communications corridor with associated infrastructure and character (none electrified) |

### 3.3.3 Landscape Character Appraisal

A description of Laigh Hills Park is included within the Central Region Landscape Assessment in the SNH landscape Character Assessments Review, no. 123, 1999.

The underlying geology is described as: 'Lower Devonian Sedimentary' with a fault-line running through the north of the site approximately east west.

The landscape character type is described as: River Valley - in this case The Allan Water Character Area 22.

Laigh Hills Park is made up of glacial moraines - sands and gravel deposited to form rounded hills, over sandstone bed rock. This moraine is cut through by the Allan Water which defines a physical peninsula of land to the north west of the park extents. The steeper valley slopes are generally wooded with mainly mixed native woodland species. The lower reaches are characterised by riparian woodland and vegetative cover.

The above and referenced reports provide broad classification for the landscape types and describe historical land-uses have influenced and shaped the character types.

Connon Design have carried out further detailed assessments of the complex character components found within the Laigh Hills Park, through site walkover surveys. These components are summarised in the adjacent illustration.

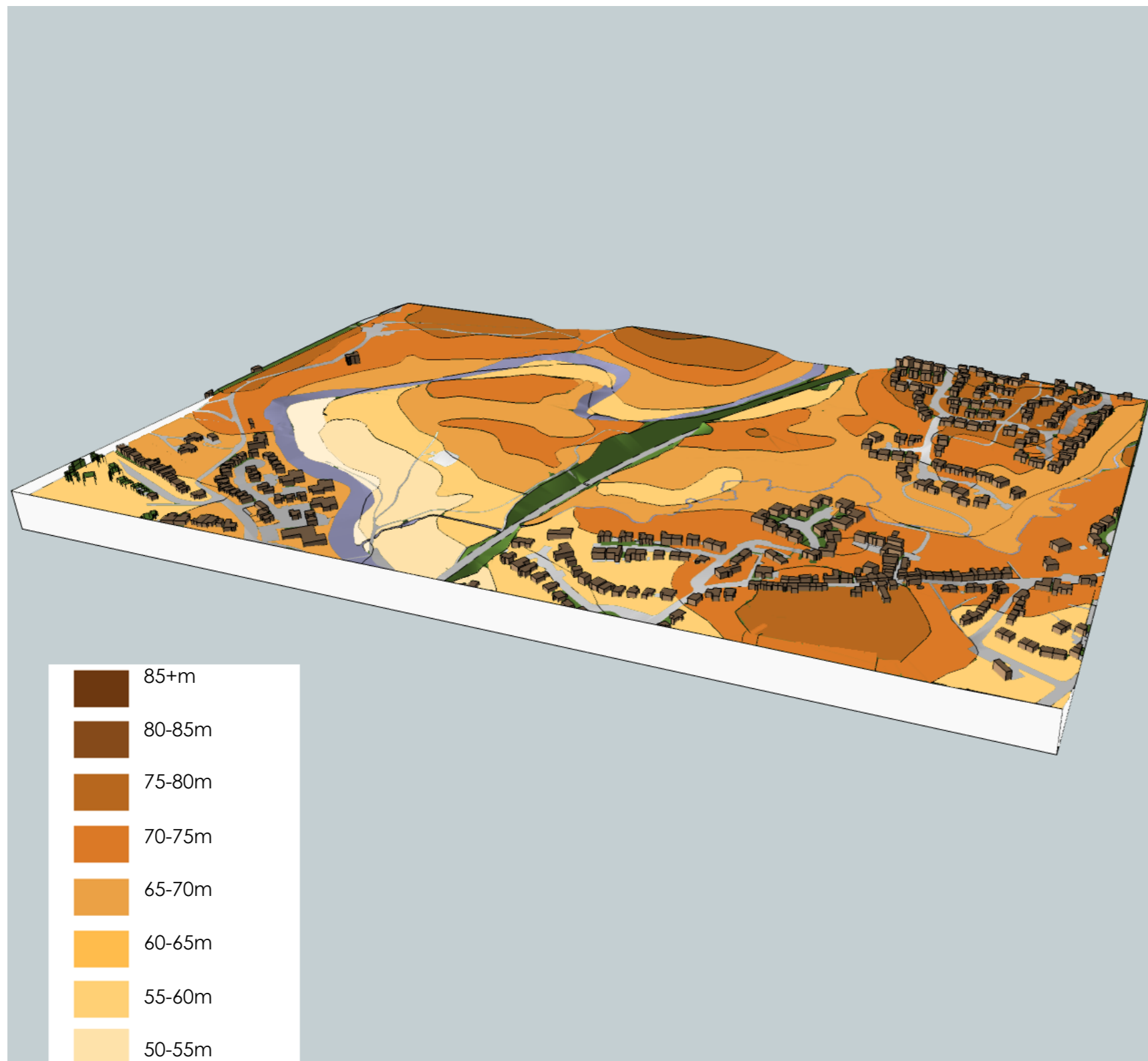
In general terms the landscape within the park red-line boundary can be identified by the following four main character components:

1. Formal historic designed landscape recreation parks (Play & sports pitches)
2. Riparian woodland valley and riverside walks with historic recreation features.
3. Semi-rural countryside parklands with historic recreation areas and remnant features.
4. Small scale watercourse and associated wetlands with semi-natural vegetation and shelter-belt planting.

### 3.3.4 Land-form Appraisal

The hilly landscape is a key landscape and visual characteristic of the larger area of Laigh Hills Park. The lower areas adjacent to the Allan Water and the areas adjacent to the upper sections of the Scouring Burn also significantly inform the landscape character of the park.

The interplay between the above is significant in determining the unique character of the place. These characteristics have significantly influenced the use of the area historically and is largely the reason that the park exists in it's current form.

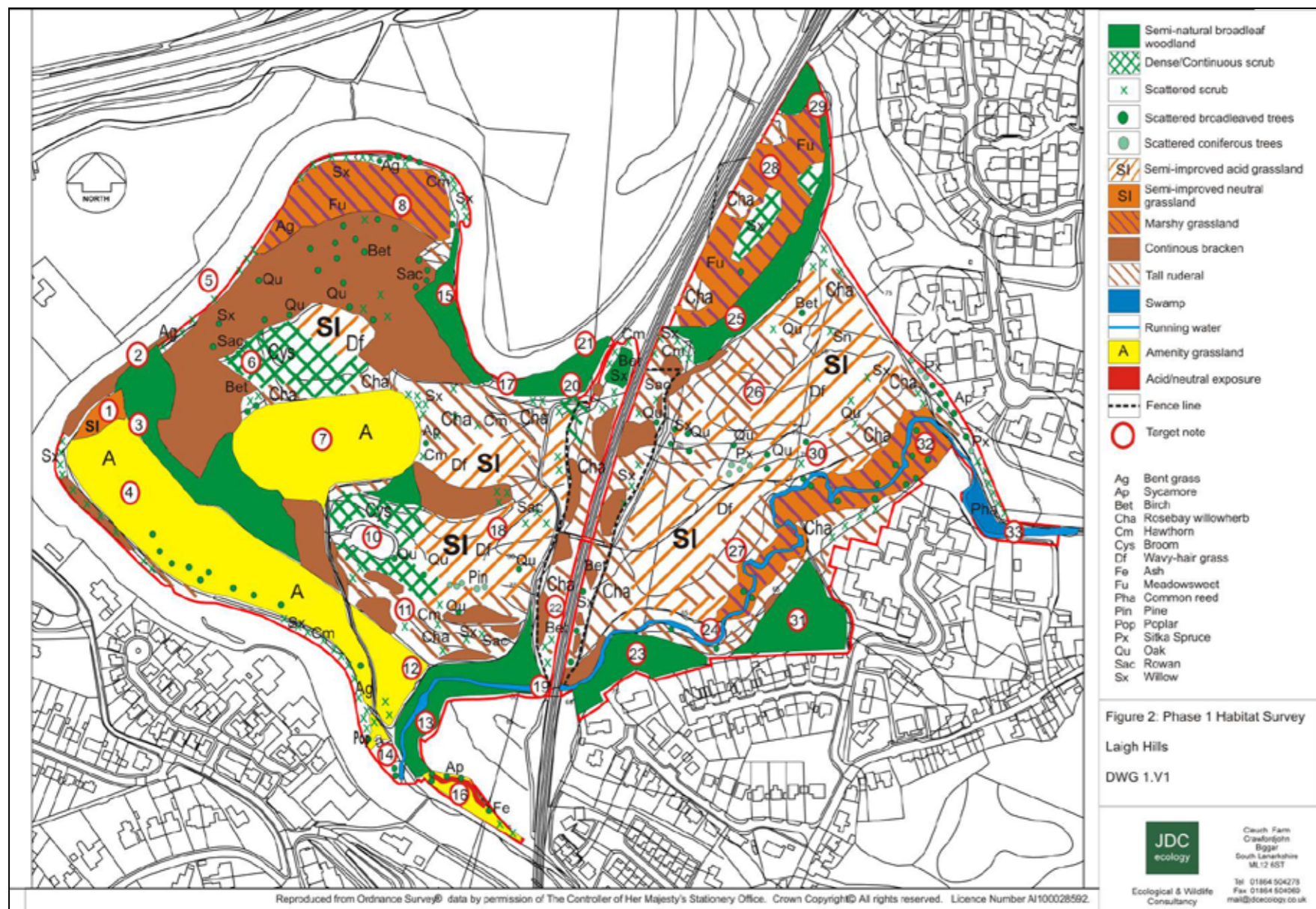


Data from OS 1:50,000 landranger series only

3.3.5 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Appraisal

Laigh Hills Park: Preliminary Ecological Assessment

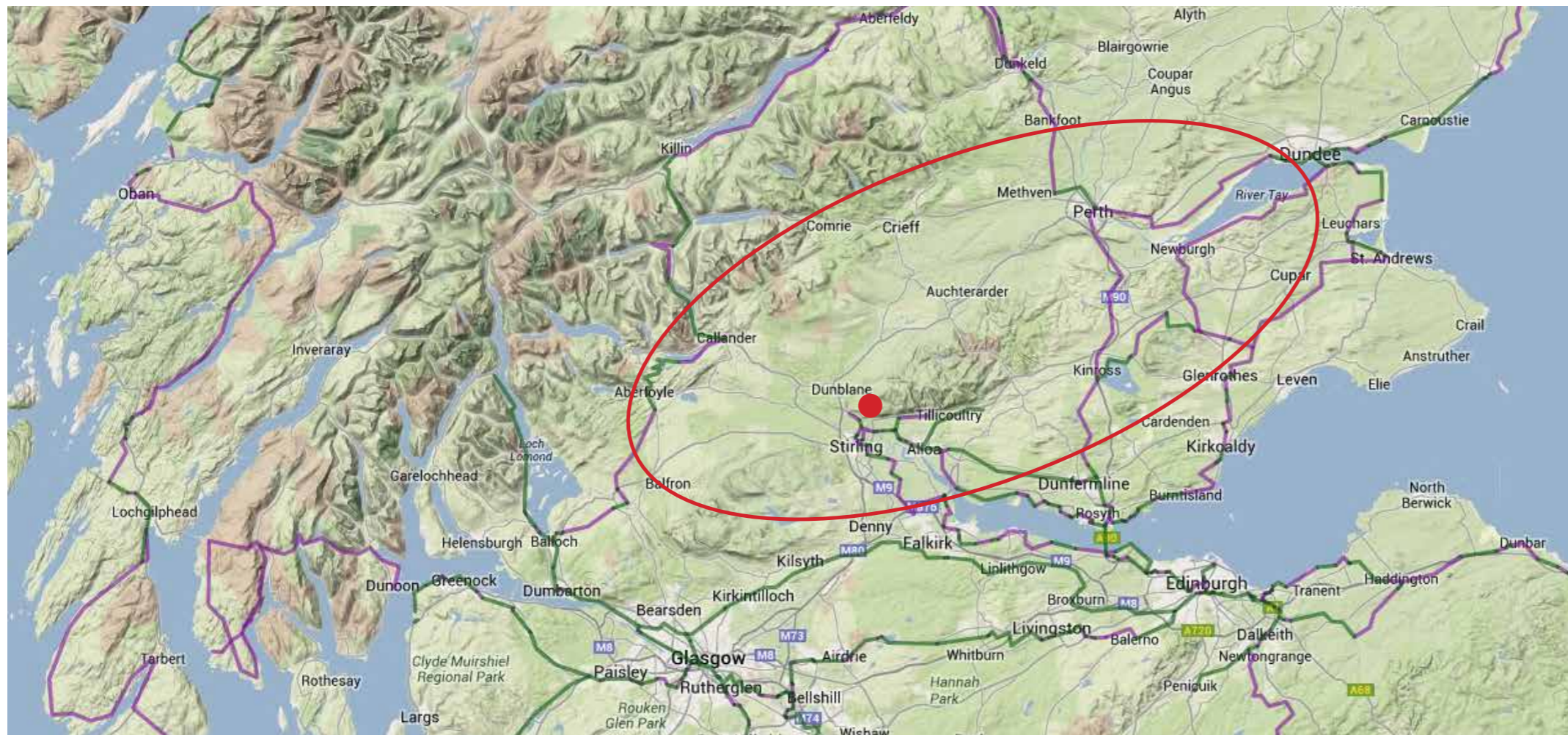
See appendix 1 for the ecology report.



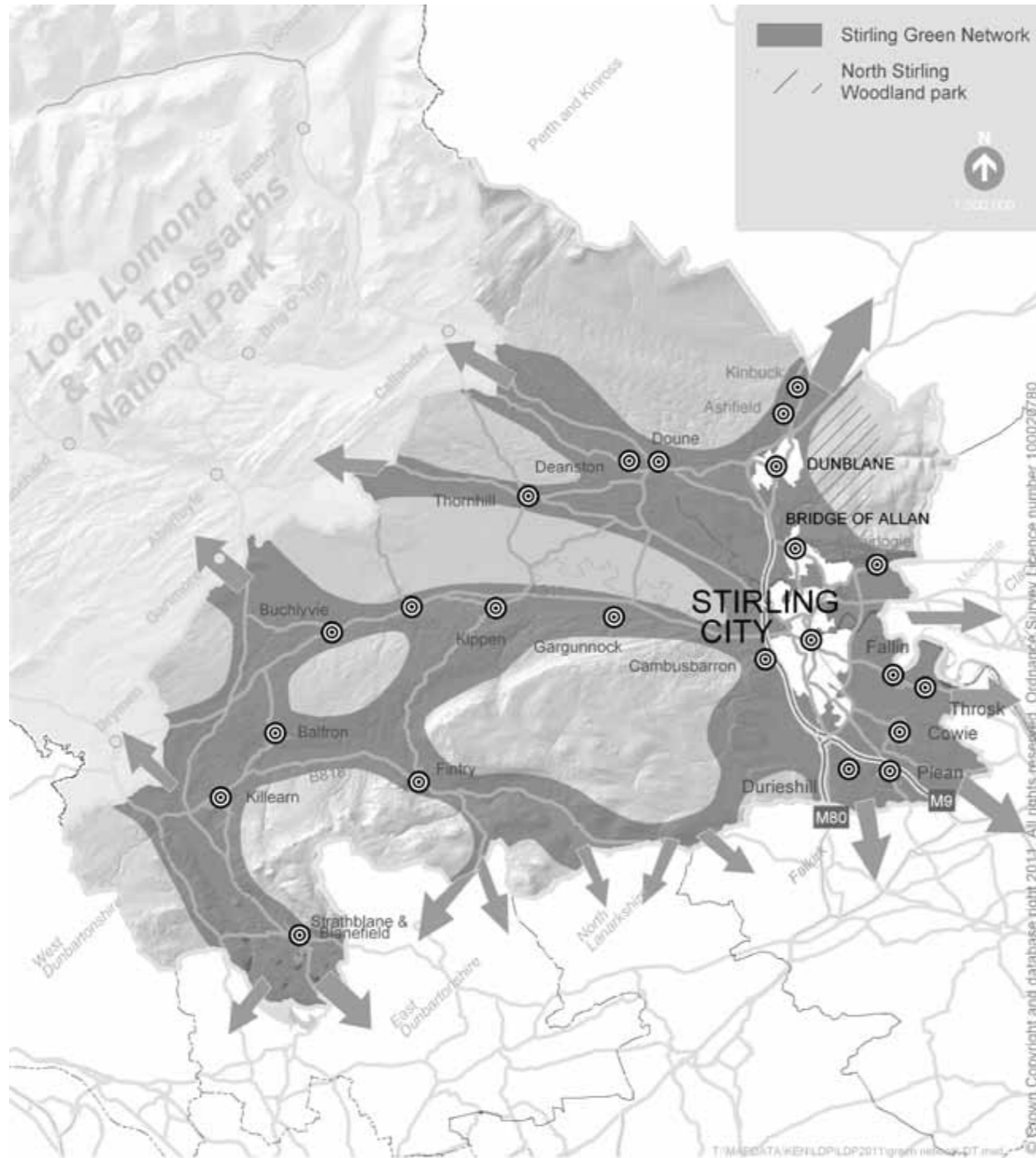
connon/Laigh Hills/180114  
VERSION.2  
JDC Ecology Limited

**3.4.0 Network Appraisal**  
**3.4.1 National Cycle Network -**  
**Cycling Routes Review**

Although there are no current plans for Sustrans to develop a long distance cycling route between Dunblane and Perth, it is likely that, at some stage in the future, this connection will be proposed. The adjacent map is from the Sustrans web site and illustrates the current long distance cycling paths network and Dunblane's relationship to it.



Plan 2 Schematic illustration of Green Network



**3.4.2 Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) Map- Framework**

SG02 - ref 'Draft Supplementary Guidance 02 Green Infrastructure: Green Network & Open Space'

The adjacent image is from the above document and illustrates the broad green network strategy which is being developed by the CSGN and other partnership organisations.

### 3.4.3 Local Green Paths Network Review

Considerable work has already been carried out with regard to developing and mapping alternative and potentially more sustainable routes in and around Dunblane. See the 'Green Travel Map - Dunblane Area', developed and produced by Sustainable Dunblane/Harvey Maps.

From the evidence emerging from the baseline studies, including the review of the travel map, Laigh Hills Park Strategic Landscape Masterplan offers the opportunity to make significant improvements to this path network, in particular by making physical improvements to the primary paths network through the park from north to south.

The destinations which would be better connected locally as a result of path improvement include:

- The Barbush housing area and surrounding housing on the northern extent of Dunblane.
- Dunblane Primary School
- Dunblane High School
- The town centre and associated community facilities.

Strategically, path improvements to the primary park network would allow better connection to the Allan Water green corridor and settlements to the north of Dunblane. The NCN route 756 would also be connected through the park where it crossed the Allan Water via the Faery Bridge providing improved strategic connectivity to the NCN north and west of Laigh Hills Park.

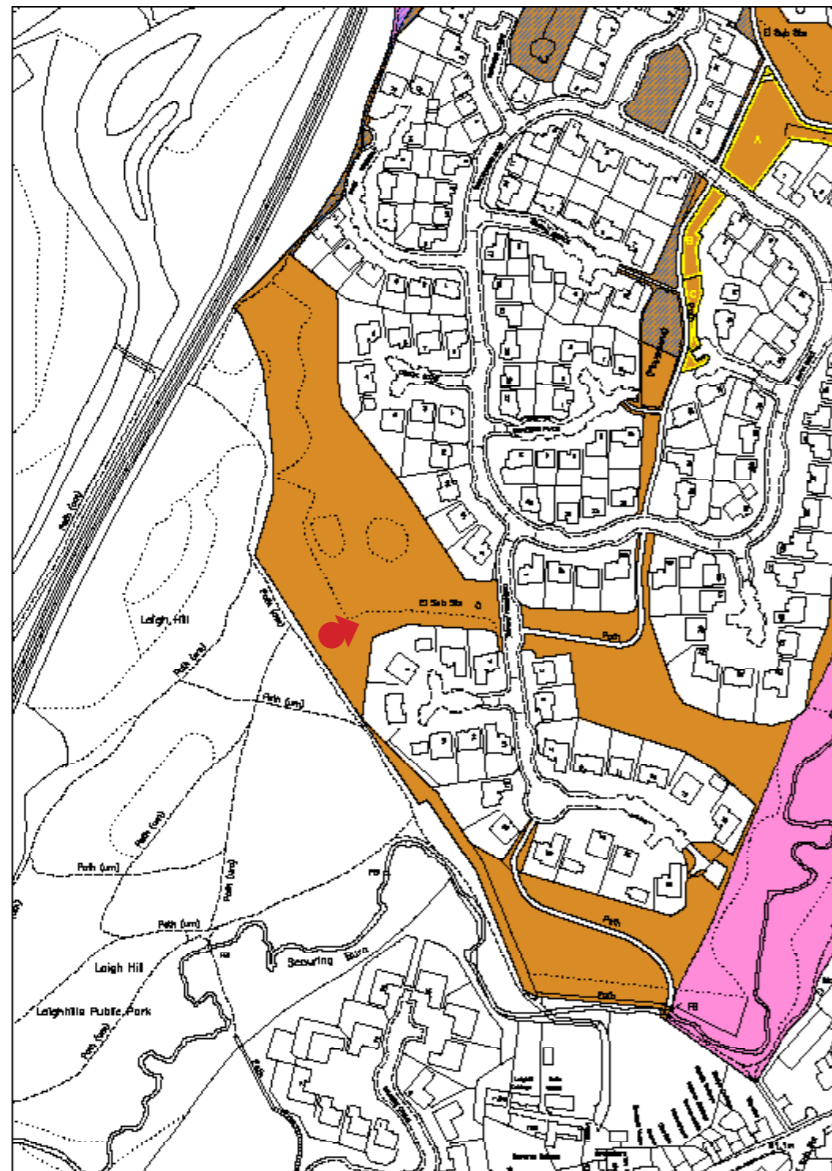


Existing 'informal' path connecting Barbush housing to Laigh Hills park in 2014.



current desire line at present (2014)

Main public path network through Barbush formally ends here at present (2014)



PTH38929 Page 1,2 of 2,2

**3.4.4 Barbush Legal Ownership Plan**

(Publicly accessible open space  
Orange areas outwith Stirling Councils ownership)

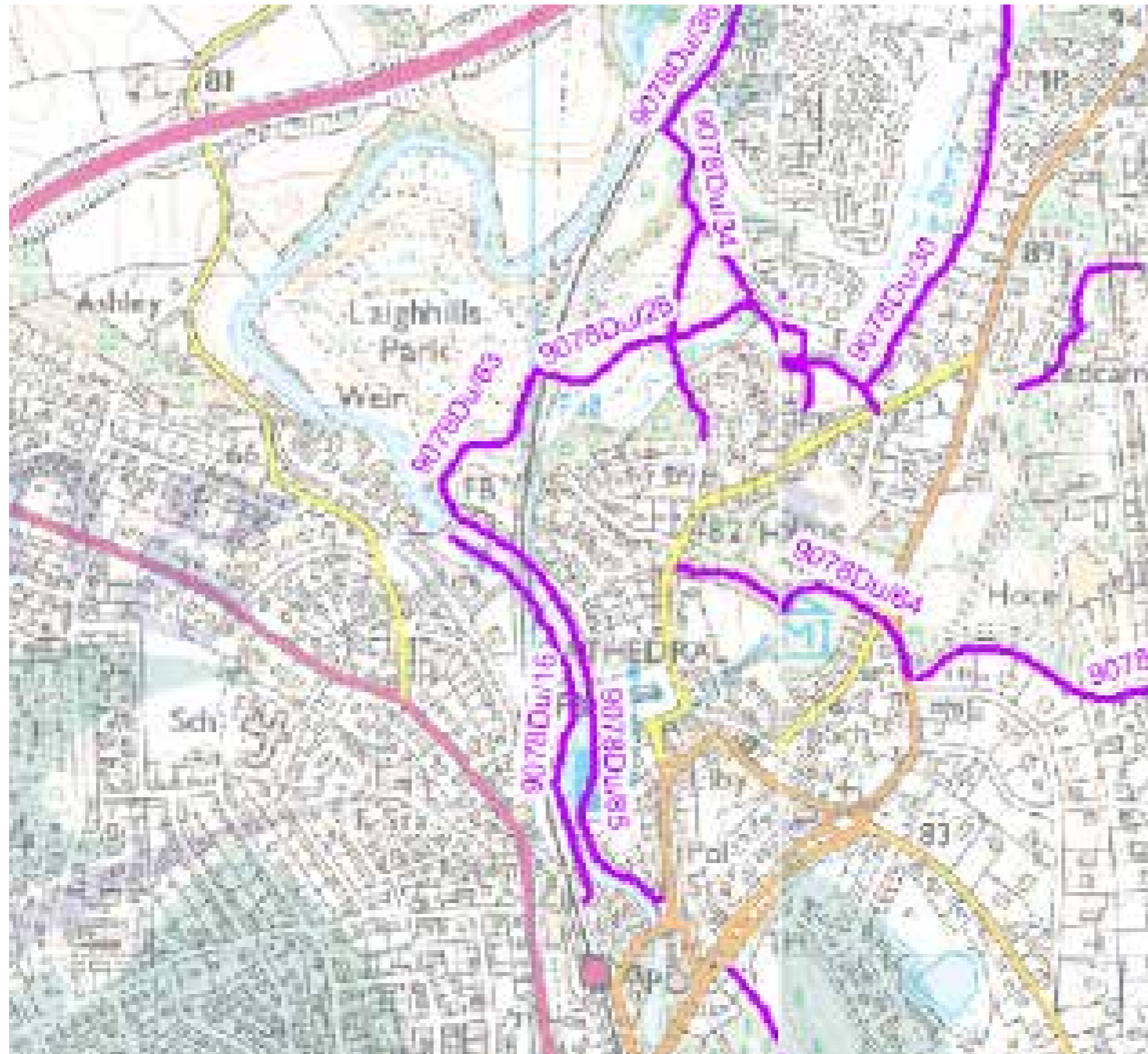
Varying land ownership is a common issue when dealing with landscape masterplanning projects - particularly where improvements to the public movement framework and paths connections are desirable. Although these require political and legal agreements to be developed, opportunities which are physically possible have been considered through the masterplanning process for Laigh Hills Park.

The adjacent graphics illustrate both publicly accessible open space which is privately owned and controlled. This land however offers the physical opportunity for improvements with regard to park and neighbourhood accessibility and improved security. Agreements with both local residents and the Greenbelt Company will be required.

The above does not prevent any of the proposals within the masterplan from being achieved, but offers better solutions where accessibility, security and future maintenance are considered key priorities.



View looking east through semi public open space with gentle gradients and physical connectivity to Barbush paths and open space network.



### 3.4.5 Core Paths Review

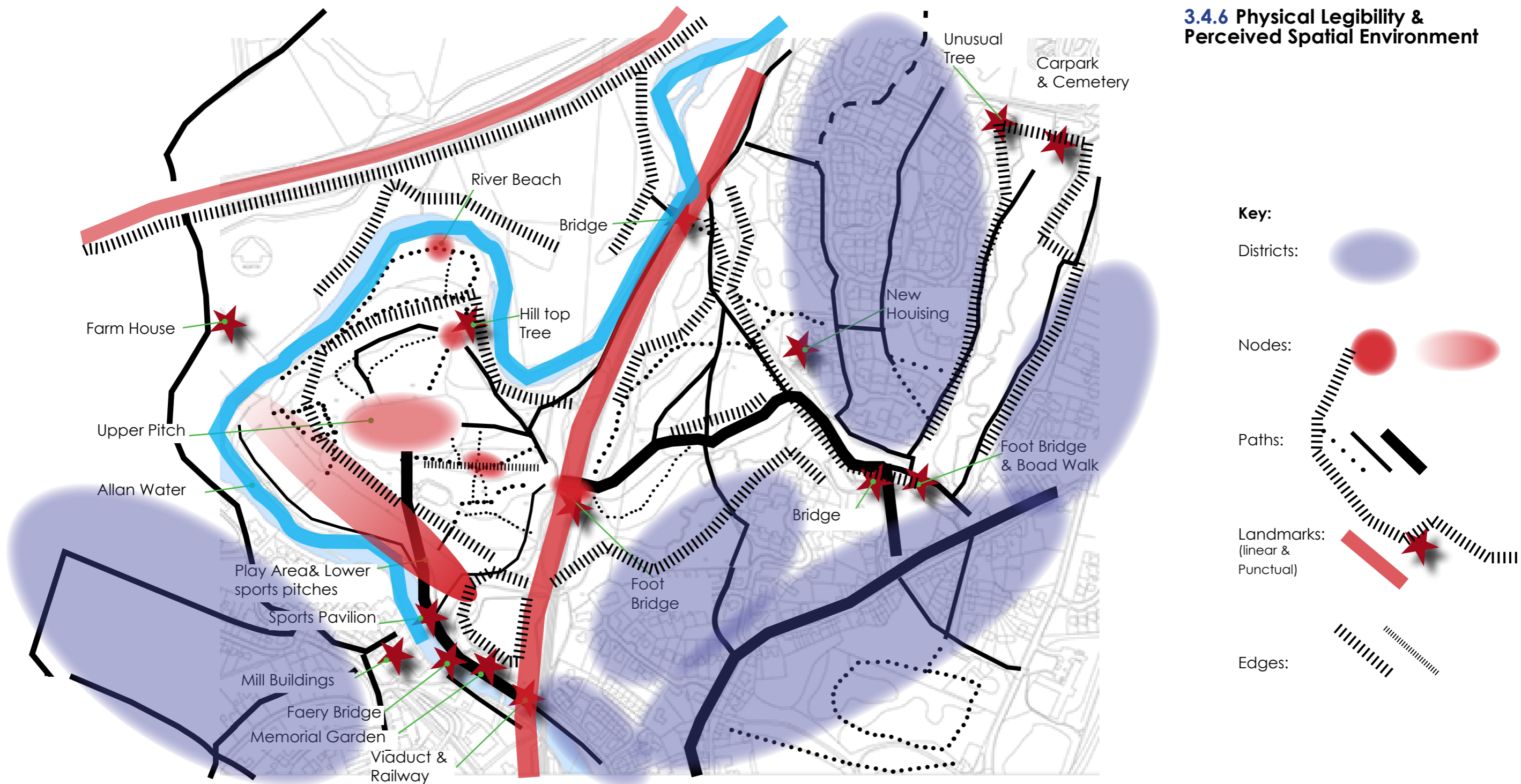
(masterplan area & immediate local connections)

Core paths within the site are not necessarily obvious when entering and trying to find your way through the park.

Where path infrastructure is to be invested in, it is important that the right paths are included. Where more suitable paths are identified as being primary paths, i.e. in response to proposed improvements in accessibility, for example where the existing pedestrian bridge over the railway is recommended for replacement and improvement, the core paths may require to be re-mapped to reflect these enhancements to the core paths network.

Currently a number of the core paths through the site are in a dangerous state of disrepair as highlighted by the engineering review of existing paths - see appendix 2 Millard Consulting Engineers Report - Laigh Hills Park Inspection.

3.4.6 Physical Legibility & Perceived Spatial Environment



**Districts:** Areas within existing environments which are defined with a common vocabulary of elements which form a sense of distinct character

**Nodes:** Strategic points in an environment which people can enter and which form concentrated points of activity eg. crossings, junctions primary public gathering places etc.

**Paths:** Specific routes along which people move through the environment eg. roads, footpaths, cycleways etc.

**Landmarks:** Significant & distinct point or line references within the environment which stand out as visual references such as Spires, towers, monuments, feature or unusual trees etc.

**Edges:** Linear elements which can form visual horizons and which can be more or less penetrable laterally eg. field boundaries, walls shelterbelts

The above study is based on professional & steering group members perception only of the Laigh Hills area. Further work with local people and visitors to the area will strengthen the way people perceive the Parks various areas/environs.

To Ashfield, Kinbuck, Braco

To Ashfield, Kinbuck, Braco

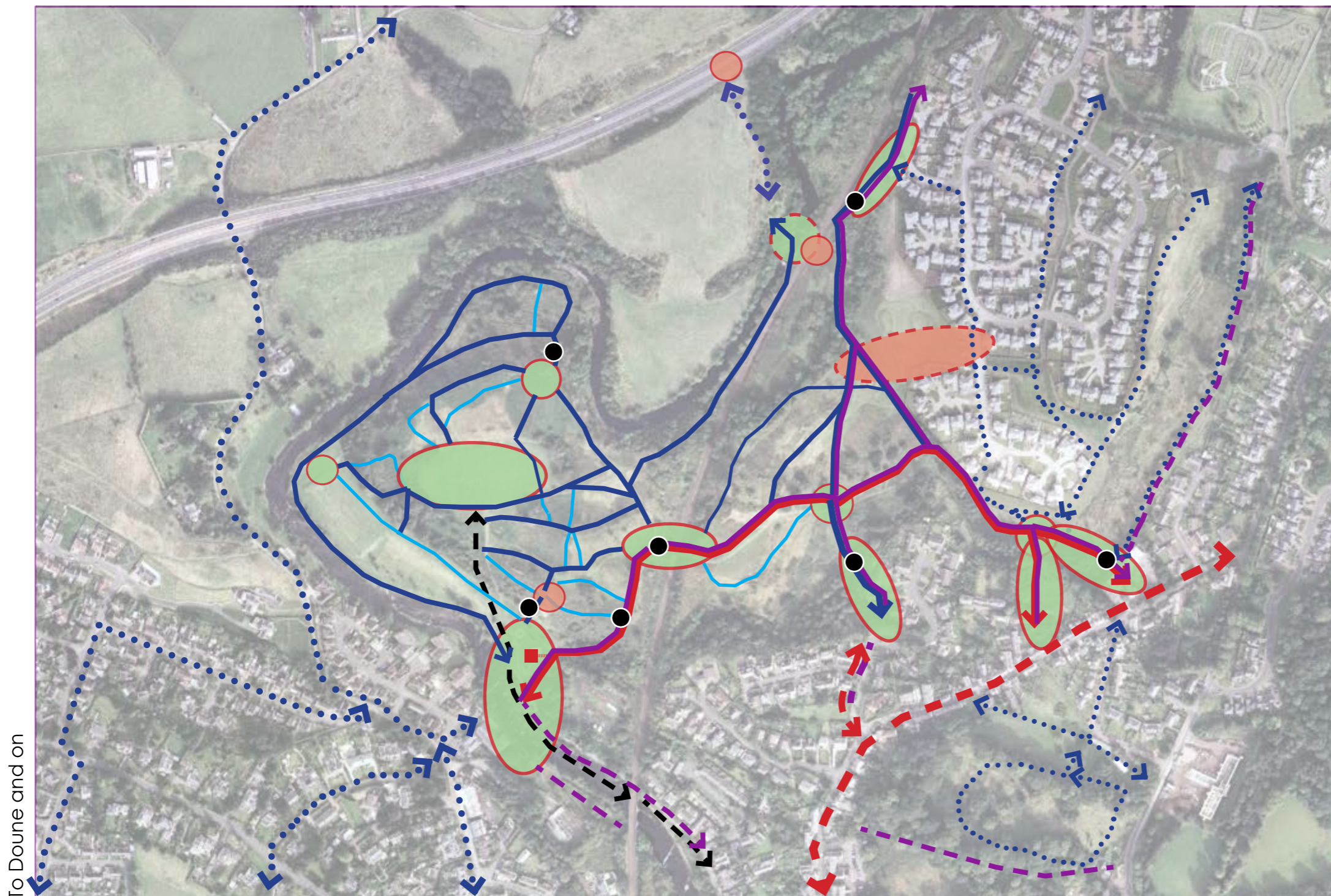
### 3.4.7 Existing Paths, Core Paths & Connectivity Appraisal

Paths, access and connectivity have emerged as both a key need and a key aspiration through the consultation process. This has also emerged from the policy review in terms of equalities, health & well-being and access to the countryside legislation.

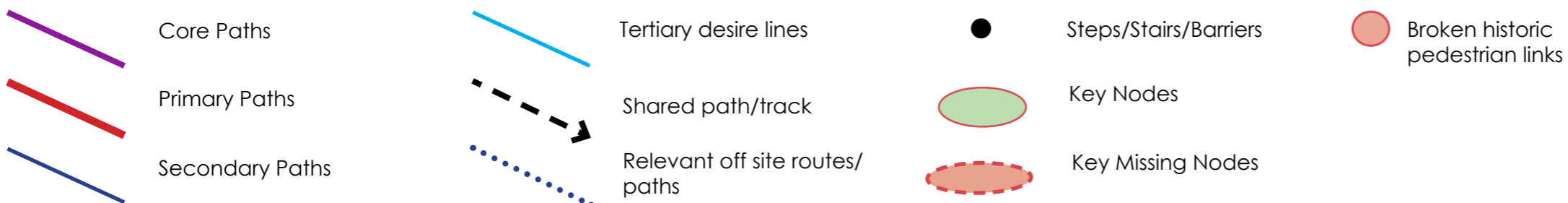
The adjacent sketch is a key stage drawing which was developed in order to better understand the paths hierarchy and to identify weak or missing links and opportunities.

This was a key study for use during the consultation process and as a briefing layout for the park engineering appraisal.

The study was carried out through the use of the aerial photographic record, public consultation, core paths desk review and site observation.

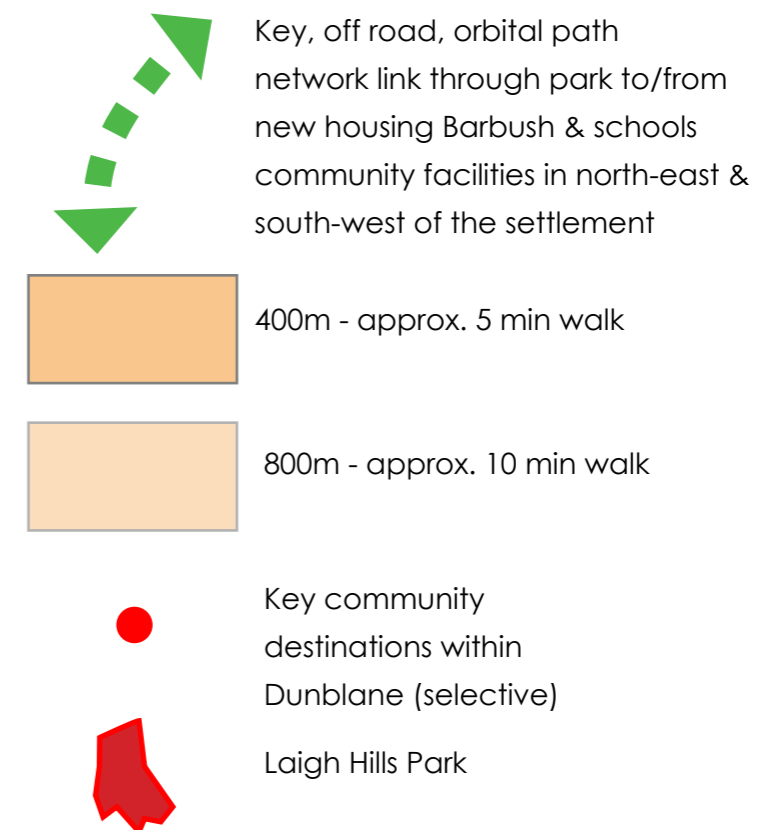


To Doune and on



### 3.4.8 Phase 1 Walking Isochrone & Proximity to the Town Centre

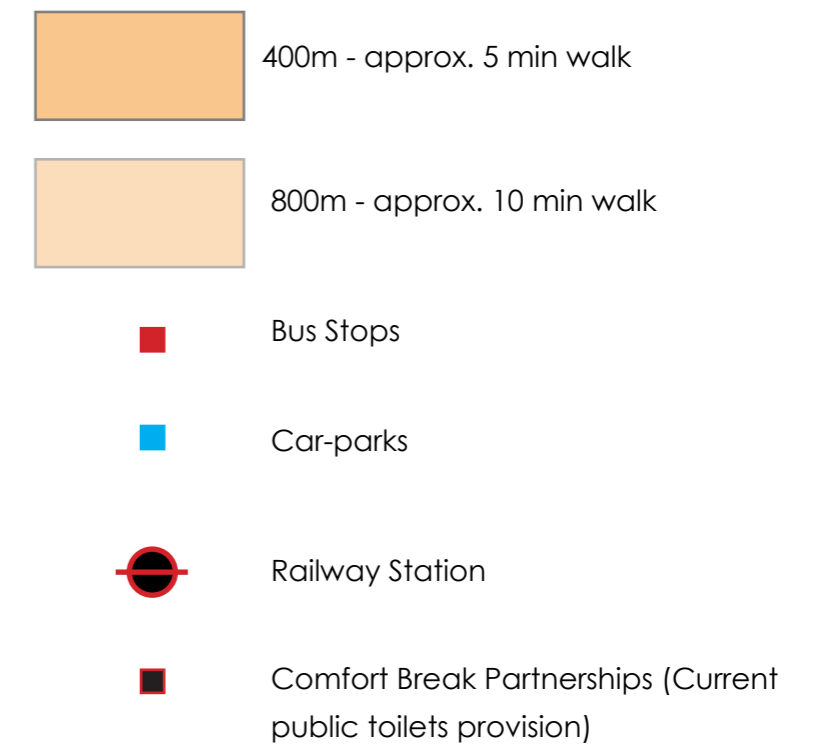
The adjacent study illustrates the walkable scale of the main settlement and it's general proximity to Laigh Hills Park. It shows the general orbital connections through the park which would otherwise form a barrier between connecting residential areas with schools, shops, connecting long distance paths and other community amenities.



**3.4.9 Walking/Cycling Access & Public Transport Connections**  
(including local car parking & publicly accessible toilets-comfort break partners)

The adjacent study illustrates the extent of the main settlement which is within walking distance of the centre of Laigh Hills Park. It also illustrates the public transport and main public car parks which are within a 5 to 10 minute walk of the park.

Laigh Hills Park is clearly within relatively easy walking distance for a significant number of local people or visitors to the area who arrive via public transport.



### 3.5.0 Park Play Appraisal Existing Play Facilities Review



Laigh Hills scores only a band C' in the Open Space Strategy 2012 - with the comment;

*'This generally works well as a play area but scores poorly in terms of accessibility and biodiversity.'*

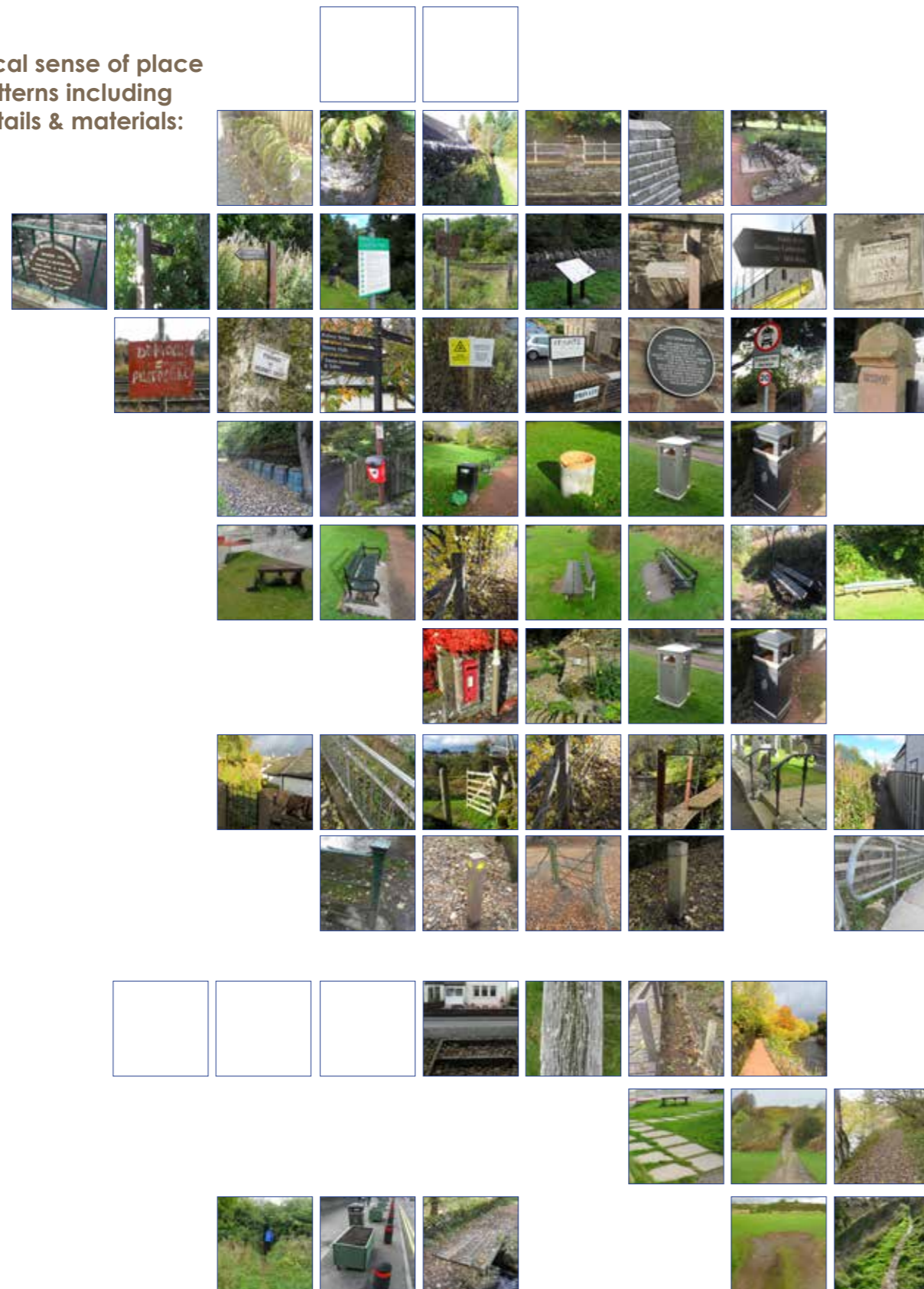
*From our own research however, the whole park is used for play by children, has high levels of biodiversity across the whole site and is set within a generally very walkable community in terms of a 5-10 minute walking distance.*

*There are opportunities for a community orchard and increased biodiversity directly within the play area (depending where the boundaries are set for this component).*

Detailed design proposals should aim to better connect the park's 'natural' play opportunities and work within the natural historical context in terms of the wider natural environments.



Local sense of place patterns including details & materials:



### 3.6.0 Local Place Check Local Place Check - Local Identity & Common Elements Review.

The adjacent images are a collection of site photographs taken to record and clarify the character of the existing 'place' which is Dunblane.

By understanding this evidence, the design team have the opportunity to inform future specification or design of elements which will enhance the existing sense of place rather than inadvertently eroding the local character.

Dunblane has a rich diversity of materials, details, colour and design elements which come together to make it a unique place. There are however, opportunities to better co-ordinate some of the elements in order not to lose this sense of individual character.

Avoiding unnecessary signage and general clutter is a key aim of the masterplan and should be followed through to detail design scale.

Avoiding the use of low quality man-made building materials is also to be recommended.

Specification of materials and their colours should be informed by the understanding of the historical cultural context, so that they further strengthen the local character inherent in the built forms.

**Laigh Hills Park, Strategic Masterplan Consultation**

Dunblane Primary School event

28<sup>th</sup> January 2014

Cohort - P7 Age 63 in total (Plus three teachers) Held in the main school hall and the school dining area.

The consultation was initiated with a short presentation on what Landscape & Urban Design is, and what Connon Design have been tasked to do in terms of preparing a strategic masterplan for the area known as Laigh Hills Park. The main aim of this consultation was made clear to the pupils, who were being asked for their help in order for us to better understand how their age group(s) used the park, and what they see as *needs* and/or *aspirations* for any proposed change in the park.

Graphics including; digital models, plans and photographs were used to communicate the park extents, features and existing facilities together with the wider context. The responses from the children, strongly suggests that they had no difficulty in understanding the extents of the study area described as ‘Laigh Hills Park’.

The following, lists the responses on the day:

How do you currently use the Laigh Hills Park? Comments Received:	What would you like to see change in Laigh Hills Park?
1. I like playing on the slide	1. Better irrigation
2. I like the BMX track	2. Nets on the football goals
3. Too much glass everywhere	3. A shelter
4. (I like) Skate Park	4. No toilets – it needs some
5. I enjoy the skate park	5. Clean bird poo off swings
6. I like the football pitch and it would be better if the goals had a net. It is also muddy most of the time.	6. Knock down the toilets
7. No one uses the toilet	7. Disabled ramp for railway bridge
8. Old sword found behind the toilets (given to the police)	8. Dog treat dispensers
9. Broken Glass	9. Recycle bins
10. Dog Poo – people don’t clean up after their dogs	10. I would like to see more benches in the park
11. People leave alcohol	11. No more glass bottle bins
12. To use play equipment	12. Events
13. Skate park	13. Tree houses
14. Running	14. Complex climbing frames
15. It’s not well looked after	15. Dens
16. No toilets	16. Camping site
17. The river isn’t safe	17. Toilets!
18. I use the Laigh Hills for ...Nothing	18. I would like to see more benches as I always end up sitting on the ground
19. Fishing	19. Clean or get new tunnel slide (dirty – graffiti)
20. Mountain biking	20. Maybe they could bring BBQ back?

## 4.0 Community Consultation

### 4.1.0 Dunblane Primary School Consultation

21. Stone collecting	21. Toilets near to it.
22. To run around on the grass	22. Dens
23. Very big (park)	23. A bit more play ground equipment. Eg roundabout – another slide
24. Play with friends on equipment or trees	24. A shelter for people to go in bad weather
25. Walk dogs	25. Lights on the path
26. Walk	26. More benches
27. Play	27. Shelters for rain
28. Fun	28. Lights
29. Swimming (river)	29. Benches
30. Football	30. Toilets
31. Bird watching	31. Play areas for older kids
32. Good park equipment	32. Star spotting
33. Lots of space to run around and play	33. Bat/bird watching
34. Lot's to do (happy face)	34. An area for camping (with campsite)
35. There is a football pitch that is big and gets used	35. An area just for dogs
36. BMX can go there	36. An area just for dogs
37. It's really fun	37. Tree houses
38. Dogs like it	38. Camping
39. Loads to do	39. Play o slides
40. Places for parents to sit down (or Kids)	40. The Duck Race
41. Walk	41. BBQ with shelter with tables & chairs & candles, matches & toilet
42. Picnics	42. Dens made of trees
43. Go on the swings	43. Camping days – trying to get more people out of doors
44. Walk dogs	44. Sculptures that people can climb on
45. Ply on the equipment	45. Flowers
46. Play with friends	46. More greening eg. Flowers, trees, bushes and ...
47. Have picnics	47. ...benches next to the river
48. Go up the hill and then run down it!	48. Toilets that are a bit nearer (the park)
49. Run around	49. Tree dens or houses
50. Good skate park	50. Assault (course) or tree climbing area
51. Good BMX track	51. BBQ
52. Good play park	52. Kill the weeds / Ferns
53. Good football field	53. Little battle arena (for nerf guns or water guns)
54. Loads to do	54. Water pump that comes from Allan Water. (bit like the one at Kings Park).
55. Play with friends	55. Zip line

56. Walk dogs	56. Tree Zone / Go Ape
57. Play on the things in the park	57. A play mine
58. Fly kites	58. BBQ
59. Play in the park	59. Assault course
60. Skim stones	60. Areal (like for nerf guns and water guns) (team vs Team fights)
61. Paddle in the river	61. Little battle arena! (enough to hold 6 people) (for nerf guns or water guns)
62. Roll down the hill	62. Toilets (put around the park)
63. Jump on tyres at BMX track	63. Toilets! For men and women
64. Picnics	64. Rugby pitch seating areas
65. Not a lot to do	65. Water rafting
66. I enjoy it – so does my dog	66. Rugby pitch
67. Play games/sport	67. Tree house
68. Bike rides	68. Fix BMX track
69. Slides	69. Underground Tunnels (or stuff to crawl around in)
70. Summer – paddle in the river	70. Seats for watching football
71. Swings	71. A new skate park
72. Play on the slide	72. Tree house
73. Use the skate park	73. Rugby pitch
74. Follow up the stream that connects to the river	74. Rugby Pitch
75. Jump around the small grass island in the Victorian pool	75. Tree House
76. Great to play in	76. Benches
77. We use the 'springy thing' slides, skate park football pitch	77. Better BMX track
78. I use the field at the top of the ....	78. Walk through Park to get to Callas. Put lights in at the park.
79. A dog walking trail	79. Nets on the goals.
80. I like getting trapped in the bowl – skate park	80. Play 15-a-side rugby on a pitch!
81. Playing tig	81. Better draining – bottom pitch (football)
82. Water gun fights	82. Rugby pitch fencing
83. Catching fish in the river	83. Seating area
84. Hide and seek	84. Flatter surface lights/flood lights
85. Kick the can, capture the flag	85. Telescope
86. I use the springy thing	86. Nets on football goals
87. I mess around on the slides	87. Better drainage on lower pitch
88. I run around in the bowl (skatepark)	88. Better goal posts as they are rusty
89. Play in the river	89. Flood lights on football pitch

90. Play sports	90. Tree house
91. Football	91. Rugby pitch
92. Cricket	92. Better drainage – bottom pitch
93. Play in the river skimming stones	93. Zipwire
94. FUN	94. Lights
95. Use the – springy, the swings, the slides, play at the river, the skate park (skates)	95. Zip wire
96. Off road biking	96. Tree house
97. Nerf gun battles	97. Lights
98. Quite fun	98. Better draining bottom pitch
99. Dog walking	99. Re-paint slides
100. Use all the play area	100. Lights
101. I play rugby there with my dad	101. Better fences
102. Cross country	102. Climbing
103. Ride my bike	103. fix the BMX track
104. Football	104. More appropriate stuff for us – obstacle course
105. Cross country	105. Make the entrance bigger and safer
106. Park walks	106. Climbing
107. Sight seeing	107. Skate park – clean concrete
108. Cross country	108. We would like clearer water for swimming
109. Play in the park	109. Toilets!
110. Cross country	110. Zip wire!
111. Football	111. Play equipment
112. Slides	112. Hangout Zones teens/kids/us
113. Watch at skatepark	113. Make building into toilets
114. Walk dogs	114. Snack bar
115. Cross country	115. Changing rooms with lockers
116. Play in the park	116. Clean the river/park
117. Ride my bike	117. Camp fire
118. Explore on my scooter	118. WiFi hot spot
119. Boys AND Girls Football	119. Dog bins
120. Cross country	120. Street lights!
121. Skate boarding	121. Cheap/free phone box (20p) a minute
122. Park	122. Fix the potholes on the paths
123. Walks	123. Giant swing
124. Bike	124. BBQ pit/ place
125. Running	125. No mess

126. I play with my BMX and play on the football pitch	126. Graffiti wall
127. Climbing trees	127. Zipwire
128. Meet friends	128. Basket swing
129. Skateboarding	129. Dipping pool
130. Run about	130. Street lamps
131. Building dens	131. Water slide
132. Running	132. Maze
133. Play park	133. Dens
134. Walks	134. Zipline
135. Explore	135. Needs
136. Mess about at the paddling pool	136. Climbing
137. Running	137. A climbing wall
138. Catching tadpoles	138. Toilets
139. Exploring the woodlands	139. Spinning chair
140. Swimming in the river	140. Cycle roundabout
141. Playing in the play park	141. Keep the round the water slide thing that spins round
142. Walking my dog	142. I think you need to fix the zipwire
143. Skateboarding	143. A bit more activities - roundabout
144. Walking	144. Fix BMX track
145. We have - three sets of swings – 2 adults-1 baby	145. Football
146. We have: swings, slides, river, roundabout	146. Walking
147. Sand park good (a bit more sand)	147. Skatepark
148. We have witches hat	148. Walking dogs
149. Dog walking	149. Sledging
150. Too much smashed glass play park and wider park	150. Biking
151. Use play equipment	151. Play in the river
152. Climb trees	152. Rollerblade
153. Dog poo everywhere	153. Picnics
154. Broken glass & alcohol	154. Part in the Laigh Hills where you can build dens
155. Graffiti	155. Replace toilets
156. Dropped litter	156. New toilets
157. Glass everywhere	157. Climbing wall
158. Climb trees	158. Graffiti board or competition
159. Watch birds	159. Water slide for the summer
160. No toilets?	160. Picnic areas/tables

161. Swim in the river	161. Climbing wall
162. Football	162. Public toilets
163. I use it to play on the equipment – but there is always too much mess	163. Climbing wall
164. Camping	164. Public toilets
165. I used to play on the equipment – always too much dirt!	165. No Nettles
166. Not much bins	166. Bike stand
167. Not that clean	167. Toiletes
168. Not looked after	168. Grafitti wall so they don't do graf-fiti on the swings and slide
169. Go for very good sunny walks	169. Graffiti – Artistic or boring
170. Walking dogs	170. Toilets
171. I live in the Callas	171. Zip line
172. Play on the equipment	172. I like the Kings Park basket swing
173. Swings/slides	173. More stuff like climbing frames
174. I use the park for picnics and on sunny days	174. Graffiti – I don't mind the artistic graffiti, but I don't like the random writing. We should have a special wall for graffiti – not on the play equipment.
175. Beer bottles everywhere	175. BBQ
176. People bring alcohol	176. Graffiti wall so people don't do it on the swings or slides. Good and NO bad graffiti (like 'I was here')
177. Easter egg rolling	177. Fix BMX track
178. Swimming	178. More dog bins
179. Running	179. Graffiti wall
180. The turn table	180. Fix the BMX track and leave skate park as it is
181. The slides	181. I would like a trout fishery at the far end of the park
182. The skate park	182. The skate park to be fixed
Running	183. Lights
	184. River to be cleaned
	185. A bigger skate park
	186. Tidy up the entrance by the faery bridge, but that's the only thing I'd change
	187. Add lights
	188. Fix BMX track
	189. BMXing/Skate park
	190. River – Dirty – clean up
	191. Skypark

	192. Would like witches hat make over
	193. Dog park (specific)
	194. Obstacle park a bit like centre parks (skyparks in the air)
	195. Clean up once in a while
	196. Flying fox (down hill)
	197. Glass, plastic paper bins
	198. Monkey Bars
	199. Lights fir night along the paths
	200. Better skate park – no glass
	201. Fix slide - it's great!
	202. Safe lakes to swim in
	203. Better equipment
	204. Toilets
	205. Better looked after
	206. Less dangerous paths and plants
	207. More tables
	208. Clean up after yourself – rules!
	209. Toilets
	210. New equipment
	211. Pick up your pets business!
	212. Should make the football pitch and skate park cleaner
	213. Clean up the equipment
	214. Make it alcohol free
	215. Clean regularly
	216. More dog bins
	217. Less dangerous pathways
	218. Better looked after
	219. Paint things that need painted
	220. Check the park once a week
	221. Safer to swim!
	222. Cleaner toilets
	223. More benches & tables
	224. Less stinging nettles
	225. Get rid of Hog Weed
	226. Make it safer
	227. Toilets
	228. More bins

	229.	Stinging nettles
	230.	No hogweed
	231.	More benches
	232.	More tables
	233.	Clean up all the equipment
	234.	More dog bins
	235.	Less dangerous environment
	236.	New equipment
	237.	Clean the current equipment!
	238.	Picnic benches
	239.	More dog bins
	240.	No Alcohol
	241.	Monthly clean-ups

**Quantitative analysis & observations:**

A total cohort of 62 children took part in the above consultation.

There were a total of 182 comments in response to the question – ‘**How do you currently use the Laigh Hills Park?**’

There were a total of 241 comments to the question – ‘**What would you like to see change in Laigh Hills Park?**’

There were 19 references to walking (including dog walking) in both existing uses and proposed uses.

There were approximately 12 comments noting the existing use, or desire to use the Park for; wild swimming, collecting stones, stone skipping, fishing or paddling. From this study, the waterways are regarded by many in this cohort as having value to this age group.

Dog fouling was a notable concern for the cohort, reflected in the following:  
4 negative comments relating to dog fouling specifically.  
4 comments relating to a dog only area.  
5 comments suggesting more dog litter bins.

It is noted however that a number of children used the park for walking their own dogs and that the park was currently used for dog waking generally.

There were a total of 8 comments received with regard to a problem of smashed glass. And there were 4 comments which expressed concern about the consumption of alcohol in the park. There was a general sense that ‘older kid/teenagers’ were seen as a barrier to use of the park – particularly in the evening and at night.

From the comment expressed about how the whole park is used i.e. the hills, the trees, the waterways the shrubs etc. that the children don’t see the Park as simply the formal play park area or the recreation areas, and that they explore the whole Laigh Hills Park area including wilder areas of undergrowth - den building and natural play. This highlights the conflicts with dog owners allowing their dogs to foul the wilder areas of the park without cleaning up after them. It also illustrates the difficulty of similar anti-social behaviour associated with the consumption of alcohol and

the smashing of glass bottles in similar wilder areas of the park – all of which are used by this age group.

Request for toilets in the park – 20 (toilets were not mentioned by the adults facilitating the consultation in either the presentation or in the introduction to the event)

The existing BMX track or a desire to see a BMX or similar off road cycling facility was noted 13 times. There were 4 comments which reflected the existing use of the park for cycling.

There were approximately 14 references for a need for better maintenance or a desire to see the park ‘cleaned up’.

**Summary:**

The above cohort is not necessarily representative of all of the children in the school. They can however be regarded as generally indicative of typical Primary seven primary school age children who live in and around Dunblane. It should be noted that Dunblane Primary school catchment runs approximately through the geographic centre of Dunblane see attached plan. This highlights one of the dangers in drawing too firm a conclusion from a small cohort size, and from one local primary school only. It is therefore recommended that, where it is deemed necessary and proportionate i.e. in order to strengthen the evidence base where costly core paths infrastructure improvements are recommended, further survey work may be required in other local educational facilities.

Broken glass is commented on as much as dog dirt, or other forms of litter/pollution. Dog dirt pollution is however still an issue and a detractor for many of the children. Teenage anti-social behaviour – mainly drinking alcohol and the associated smashing of glass, appears to be a significant barrier to younger children

enjoying all of the park area.

The range of uses of the Laigh Hills Park by children is significantly greater than we had previously considered up to this stage in the process.

There is a significantly greater need for public toilets as expressed by this cohort, and which was had not been previously considered as necessary for the younger demographic until this stage in the process.

There is evidence for existing use and also interest for enhanced BMX and off road cycling within the Laigh Hills which strengthens the physical evidence from use/need with the BMX track showing signs of some current limited use in the last 6 months.

There are some children who live in the ‘Callas’ – Barbush estate who express an interest in going through the park to either School or to visit, or be visited by other children using the park as a route. It is noted that the park is bisected by two Primary School catchments – Dunblane Primary School and Newton Primary School. Almost all the children (from a show of hands) would not feel safe in the park at night. Paths lighting suggestions however, were not generally supported as being appropriate in all areas of the Laigh Hills, but perhaps more within the more formal areas.

There is a general sense that the whole park area is not as well maintained and cared for as it could be, with evidence of litter, smashed glass, dirty play equipment, dirty water, muddy path and graffiti being highlighted by the cohort.

The park is valued for natural features and wildlife as well as the play park.

Three members of teaching staff suggested that the park could be made better use of for

outdoor learning.

The park is used by Scouting groups and other similar children's organisations for organised wide open space games.

There were a wide range of comments on the general park environment – typical of the type of practical comments most people would generally support for example more benches, a BBQ and picnic facilities, improved paths and access, recycling bins and so on. There is specific information above which can provide valuable reference at a detailed design stage in terms of specific pieces of play equipment which might be considered where replacements are being budgeted for. The need for natural play is significantly catered for across the whole site due to the semi wild nature of the Laigh Hills Park and Scouring Burn area. Consideration should be given therefore to the careful balance between protecting views and retaining appropriate trees and woodland for 'Den' building' and tree climbing etc.

In a general question and answer group forum the children were asked about the restrictions to going through the park to get to from school or to and from each other houses for visits for example. The response was that muddy paths, drinking teenagers and fear of the dark were the main reason for not walking through the park in order to get to/from places.

The above information is not exhaustive and offers the opportunity for further expansion and/or interrogation. It does however achieve its key aim of reaching out to a **typical sample** of local children in order to establish evidence for how *they* see the project and where they see the needs, the opportunities and what their aspiration for improvements in the park might be – both physical and management.

4.2.0 Dunblane High School Consultation

**Laigh Hills Park, Strategic Masterplan Consultation**

Dunblane High School Event

5<sup>th</sup> February 2014

Cohort – Pupil council representatives (42 no.) with representatives from **all** year groups from year one to sixth year.

The consultation was initiated with a short presentation on what Landscape & Urban Design is, and what Connon Design have been tasked to do in terms of preparing a Strategic Landscape Masterplan for the area known as The Laigh Hills Park. The main aim of this consultation was made clear to the pupils, who were being asked for their help in order for us to better understand how their age group(s) use and have used the park, and what they see as *needs* and/or *aspirations* for any proposed change in the park.

Graphics including; digital models, plans and photographs were used to communicate the park extents, features and existing facilities together with the wider context. The responses from the students, strongly suggests that they had no difficulty in understanding the extents of the study area described as ‘The Laigh Hills Park’ from the information presented.

The presentation concluded with an image of the ‘Teen Shelter’ which is currently proposed by Stirling Council (see attached). We were surprised that the general response to this proposal was negative. Some general group discussion followed with the following comments made;

‘The idea of a Teen shelter is a bit patronising’

‘To be honest it will probably be used as a drinking den’

‘We don’t need bluetooth anyway – it’s WIFI that most people use’

‘It will probably be used as a toilet – especially as the existing public toilets are

broken’

‘It shouldn’t be located next to the kids play park – probably up next to the skate park where we mostly spend time’

The following lists the responses made by students on the day in smaller year groups:

How do you currently use the Laigh Hills Park? Comments Received:	What would you like to see change in Laigh Hills Park? Comments Received:
1. I run at the Laighills	1. No Bluetooth Hut thing
2. People use the swings	2. Better footpaths so it’s not muddy to walk through.
3. Walk dogs there	3. Better paths
4. Walk through occasionally – short cut	4. Snack bar/ice cream parlour
5. Sunbathe in Summer	5. Lights along paths
6. Binge drinking (problem – though it’s getting better/less & usually it’s in the summer)	6. Summer events eg Parties & beach Parties
7. To socialise with friends in summer – sun-bathing etc.	7. Wifi
8. Walk my dog	8. More (dog litter) bins
9. Nothing	9. Toilet and Changing facilities
10. Super-duper-awesome-mega slide	10. Fire pits
11. Letting a Hawk loose on the Laigh Hills to kill bunnies. (people have pet rabbits!)	11. Natural swimming facility
12. Swimming	12. Petting Zoo – sloths only!
13. Orienteering	13. Sports area – multi sports pitch
14. Dog walks	14. Bins – lots more!
15. Skate park	15. Lights along path
16. Social gatherings	16. Man-made swimming area
17. Throwing stones into the river	17. New BBQ
18. Swimming - river	18. Fire pits
19. There are Allotments around the edge of the Laigh Hills (my dad used to have one of them)	19. Bins
20. Don’t get rid of the big slides because they are one of the best parts of the Laigh Hills	20. Camping Area
21. I live in Falkirk so I don’t go to the Laigh Hills	21. Fire pit
22. I played there a lot as a kid	22. Improve cycle paths at the Laigh Hills – it would make more people use it.

23. I occasionally use the skatepark, but it is very exposed so when it rains I get soaked!	23. Dedicated BMX/bike area (due to over-crowding of the skate park area)
24. I walk my dog there daily.	24. More picnic tables – type for socialising next to the river.
25. Football pitch used by football team and for leisure – goal posts rusty – no nets needs replacement	25. Teen shelter – provide wifi rather than blue tooth! Would attract more young people to the park.
26. My dad and his friends have an annual cricket competition there most years (I think)	26. Shelter in skate-park because it's highly exposed to open air.
27. People go there to drink (usually the higher part of the park above the slide).	27. More swings/slides
28. Skate Park most frequently used – Also by people from other areas – e.g. Stirling too	28. Improve/expand (skate park)
29. To walk to School	29. Shelter with benches/tables underneath would encourage more people in even in bad weather.
30. Skate park	30. Having a teen shelter, it would be vandalised and a waste of money. Would also be used as a drinking Den.
31. To swim in the summer	31. Build a platform that goes out into the river so that in summer you dip your feet in (only in areas where people swim – see map.
32. The swings/play park	32. 3G astro turf
33. Dog walking	33. Rugby pitch portable goals
34. To walk to School	34. Football nets (for goals)
35. Use it for Skate park	35. Clear Hogweed
36. Too muddy to play football	36. Fence around the pitch
37. To walk your dogs	37. Proper BBQ
38. Use the park for football matches	38. Crazy golf
39. Swim in the river in summer	39. Upgrade the path through the park
40. Nets on the goals	40. Litter bins
41. Mainly use (Laigh Hills) in the summer	41. Crazy golf
42. Football pitch	42. Upgrade path through the park
43. Skate Park	43. Litter bins
44. Swimming	44. Paths cleared to dog walk
45. Park (wide)	45. Better plant maintenance
46. The slide	46. Muddy paths
47. Skate park!!!	47. Teen shelter
48. Football	48. Toilets - fixed

49. Running	49. Upgrade skate park
50. Rugby	50. Upgrade BMX track
51. Football	51. Muddy paths - fix
52. Running	52. Toilets fixed
53. A way to School	53. Lighting – in Skate park & front park
54. I go running at the Laigh Hills	54. Teen shelter – NOT WOOD.
55. It's useful for walking and running in the park	55. Upgrade skate park
56. It's not somewhere I like to go unless I am running.	56. Running trails
57. There are good football grounds, but there is too much broken glass	57. Swimming pool
58. Cycling paths	58. Trampoline
59. Running	59. Ponds
60. Dog walking	60. Bigger Skate Park
61. Bridge	61. Mountain Bike Trail.
62. For dog walking	62. Climbing frame for younger children.
63. Running – (School's use)	63. Running trails
64. Park	64. Climbing frame for younger people.
65. Occasionally I walk my dog there.	65. Sports hut for football
66. I don't really go (there) that much.	66. Ideas from Kings Park
67. People like walking and playing.	67. Flying fox
	68. Tuck shop
	69. Astro turf
	70. More dog bins
	71. More benches
	72. Better/more swings
	73. Better sand pit, diggars, trampolines
	74. Designated swimming/paddling area

**Quantitative analysis & observations:**

A total cohort of 42 children took part in the above consultation.

There were a total of 67 comments in response to the question – ‘**How do you currently use the Laigh Hills Park?**’ These comments were a combination of individual and group comments.

There were a total of 74 comments to the question – ‘**What would you like to see change in Laigh Hills Park?**’ These comments

were a combination of individual and group comments.

There were 12 references to the use of, or need to improve the skate park area. Of those 12 comments – 7 were suggestions for improvements to the skate park facility.

There were 2 comments which referred to BMX and 2 for Cycling in the park.

Running or orienteering was referred to 9 times.

Natural swimming was referred to 6 times as either a use or a need (note: last summer had a unusually hot period).

There were 16 references to walking as an existing park use (including dog walking). There were 11 references specifically dog walking by this cohort.

Request for toilets in the park – 3 (toilets were not mentioned by the adults facilitating the consultation in either the presentation or in the introduction to the event)

The existing BMX track or a desire to see a BMX or similar off road cycling facility was noted 3 times. Improved cycling was suggested twice, though it should be noted that references to upgrading paths was not specific to any one mode of use i.e. cycling, walking, running etc..

**Summary:**

The above cohort is not necessarily *representative* of all of the children in the high school. This cohort can however be regarded as generally *indicative* of typical Secondary school age children who live in and around Dunblane. It should be noted that Dunblane High school catchment area is the settlement of Dunblane and the surrounding rural areas including; Ashfield and Kinbuck - see attached

plan.

It is acknowledged that the cohort is relatively small and that, at this stage, the questions are very general in character. It is therefore recommended that, where it is deemed necessary and proportionate i.e. in order to strengthen the evidence base where costly infrastructure improvements are recommended eg. Recreation facilities, extended skate park, BMX facility etc., further survey work may be required within this age group. It is also noted that there is a very wide age, and associated personal developmental range, within this particular demographic and sample.

Generally, this cohort is less interested in ‘play’ and more interested in socialising and more formal sports/recreational use of the park. They typically associate themselves more with the skate park and less with the play area. They are more likely to make use of a ‘general’ park shelter from the weather and less likely to feel categorised and therefore stereotyped and potentially stigmatised by the concept, and associated use of, of a ‘Teen’ Shelter. It should be noted that the term ‘Teen Shelter’ used by the facilitators in the introductory presentation and discussion is likely to have influenced the use of that term through the written responses gathered.

This cohort are more likely to use picnic tables/benches and BBQ provision (though less likely where it is physically associated with the ‘children’s play’ area).

This cohort use *all* of the park, and are more likely to use all of the park where they are regarded as individuals and respected young adults, rather than being pejoratively grouped and segregated as ‘teens’.

The females in this cohort generally seemed less interested in recreational sports facilities, but more interested in walking or jogging in the

park.

There is evidence within this cohort for existing use, and also interest for, enhanced BMX and off road cycling within the Laigh Hills which strengthens the physical evidence for use/need with the park. Some of the individuals within the group claimed to be personally responsible for the current part restoration of the existing BMX track. There was some enthusiasm for this type of feature within the park and linked with the evidence for the use of the skate park facility.

There are some students who live in the ‘Callas’ – Barbush estate who express an interest in going through the park, to either to School or to access the park generally. Rain and muddy paths are commented on as a barrier to use. It is recommended that more targeted quantitative research should be carried out in order to better understand the volume, needs and the likely use of the park as either a local through route or a connecting route to the wider paths and countryside networks.

The above information is not exhaustive and offers the opportunity for further expansion and/or interrogation. It does however achieve its key aim of reaching out to a **typical sample** of local young adults within the local high school age range, in order to establish evidence for how *they* see the project and where they see their respective needs, and opportunities within the park and what their aspiration for improvements in the park might be – both physical and management.

Laigh Hills Public Park  
Dunblane  
Strategic Landscape Masterplan



Connon Design  
Landscape Architecture + Urban Design



We also work with technical specialists -  
Ecologists & Engineers  
(JDC ecology & Millard Consulting)

Commissioned Autumn 2013

**Strategic** Landscape Masterplan

Purpose is to take a step back in order to take two steps forward in a better direction.

This is more likely to:

- A** - Achieve what local people *actually* want to see happen
- B** - Make more prudent & wise use of money
- C** - Provide **evidence to attract FUNDING**

The approach we take is different to more traditional approaches to 'Masterplanning'

Design is about:

- People
- Place

Problem solving in the built & natural environment (Context)

We now need to talk with YOU

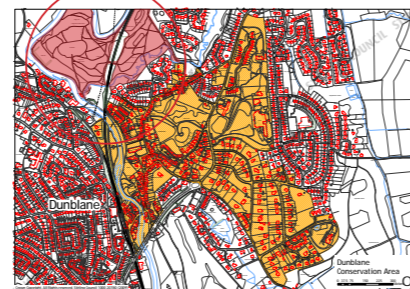
**LOCAL PEOPLE**

Master planning as a process rather than a product.  
Place-making as a key Scottish Government Policy Objective.  
Some Key elements of a masterplan (amongst other things):

Safe & Secure /Well connected  
Aspirational  
Sustainable/Resource efficient  
Adaptable  
Distinctive  
Inclusive & Accessible  
A master approach



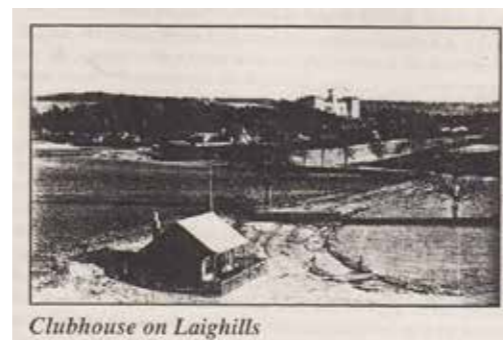
Aerial Photograph Review



Planning Context Review  
Conservation Area  
TPO's - none present



Core-paths Framework Review  
Local Development Plan - Settlements - date



Clubhouse on Laighills

Thank You

Any Questions Please?

[www.surveymonkey.com/s/JLKQTR9](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JLKQTR9)

Connon Design

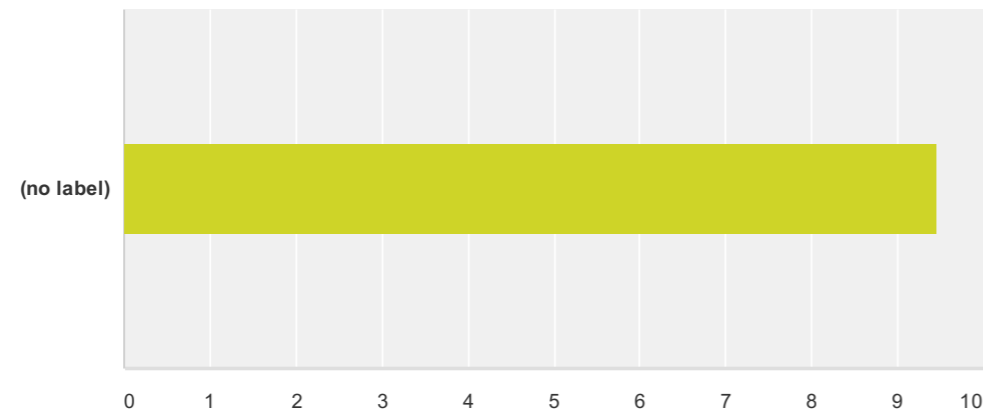
Connon Design

Connon Design

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q1 On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you prioritise the Laigh Hills Park in terms of its importance as local parkland? (1 being less important & 10 being more important)**

Answered: 361 Skipped: 0

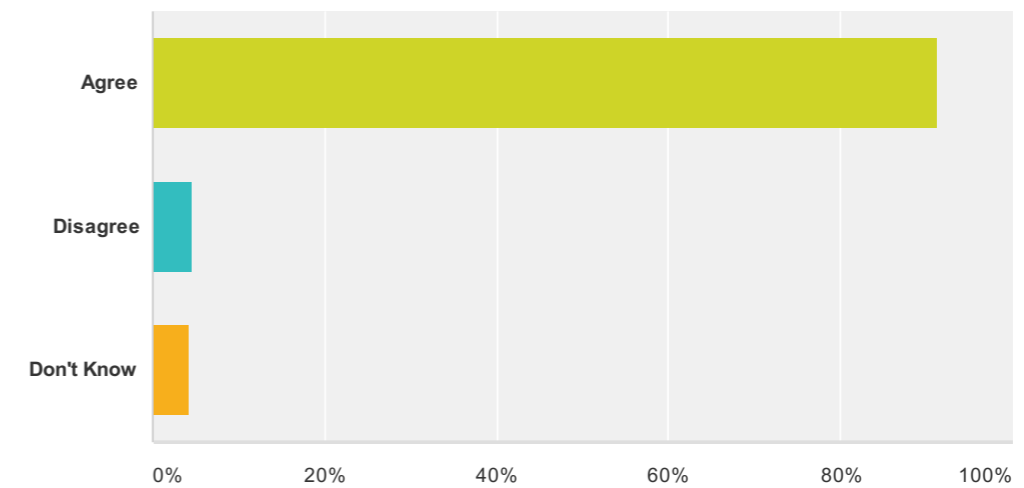


	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	Total	Average Rating
(no label)	0%	0%	0.28%	0.28%	0.28%	1.39%	2.49%	11.36%	13.57%	70.36%	361	9.46
	0	0	1	1	1	5	9	41	49	254		

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q2 Do you think that there is a need to improve the Laigh Hills Park facilities, for example; park seating, play equipment, paths, bridges, BMX track or other (please specify below).**

Answered: 355 Skipped: 6

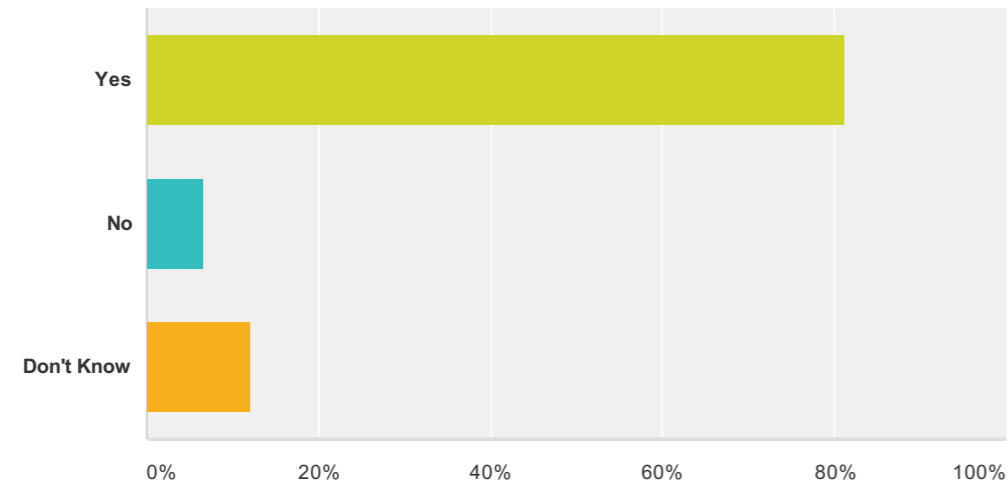


Answer Choices	Responses
Agree	91.27% 324
Disagree	4.51% 16
Don't Know	4.23% 15
<b>Total</b>	<b>355</b>

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q3 Would revived activities such as a Highland games and improved Park facilities such as improved paths within Laigh Hills Park encourage more people to visit Dunblane?**

Answered: 358 Skipped: 3

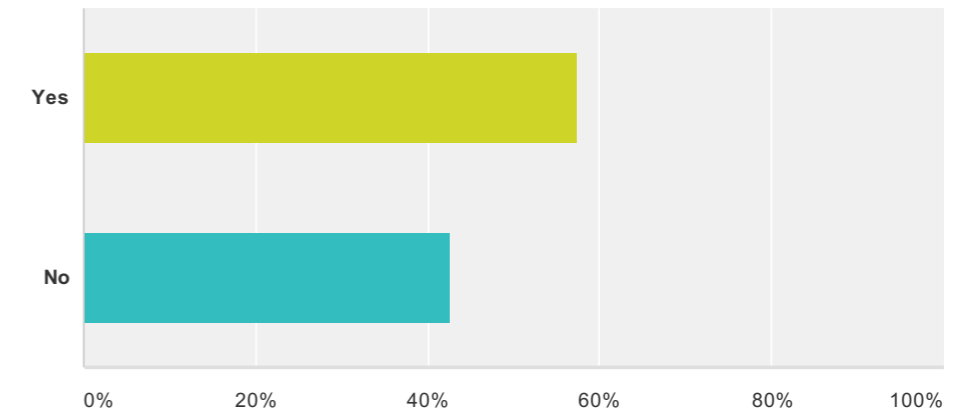


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Yes	81.28%	291
No	6.70%	24
Don't Know	12.01%	43
<b>Total</b>		<b>358</b>

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q4 Are you answering these questions on behalf of yourself, or on behalf of someone else? For example a partially sighted person or perhaps a very young person. If so, what is your relationship?**

Answered: 336 Skipped: 25

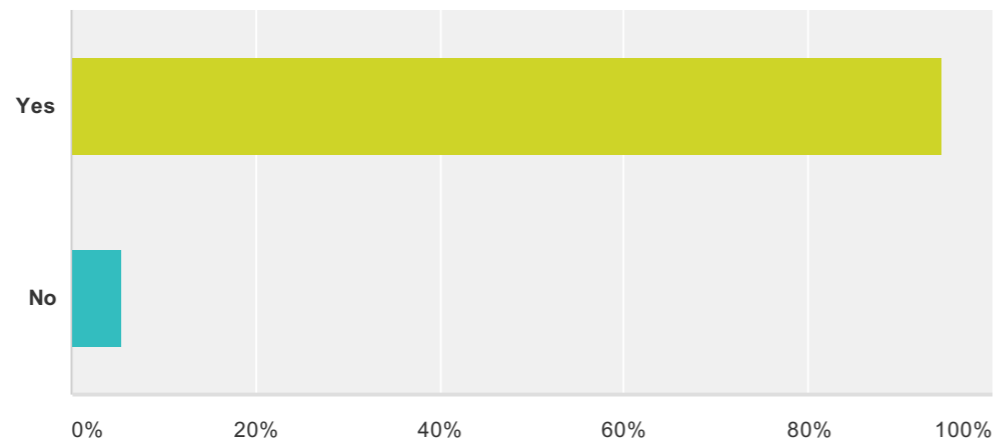


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Yes	57.44%	193
No	42.56%	143
<b>Total</b>		<b>336</b>

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q5 Do you live in Dunblane or in the surrounding area? If outside the settlement, then please specify where.**

Answered: 352 Skipped: 9

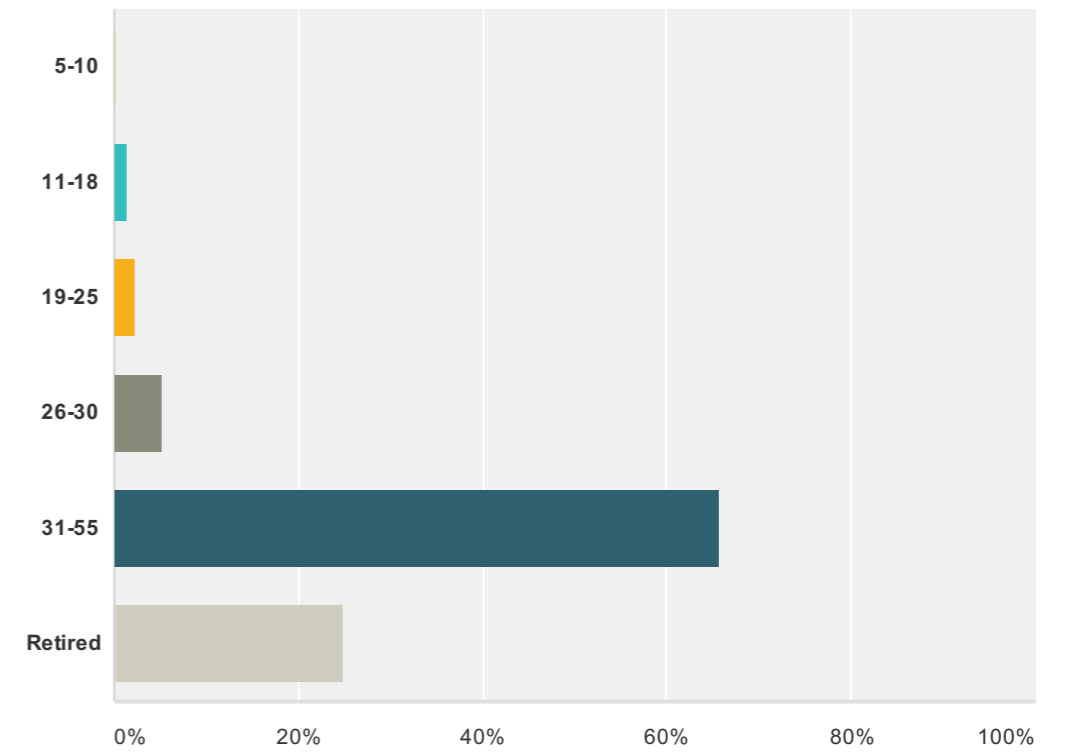


Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	94.60%
No	5.40%
<b>Total</b>	

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q6 What is your age group?**

Answered: 342 Skipped: 19

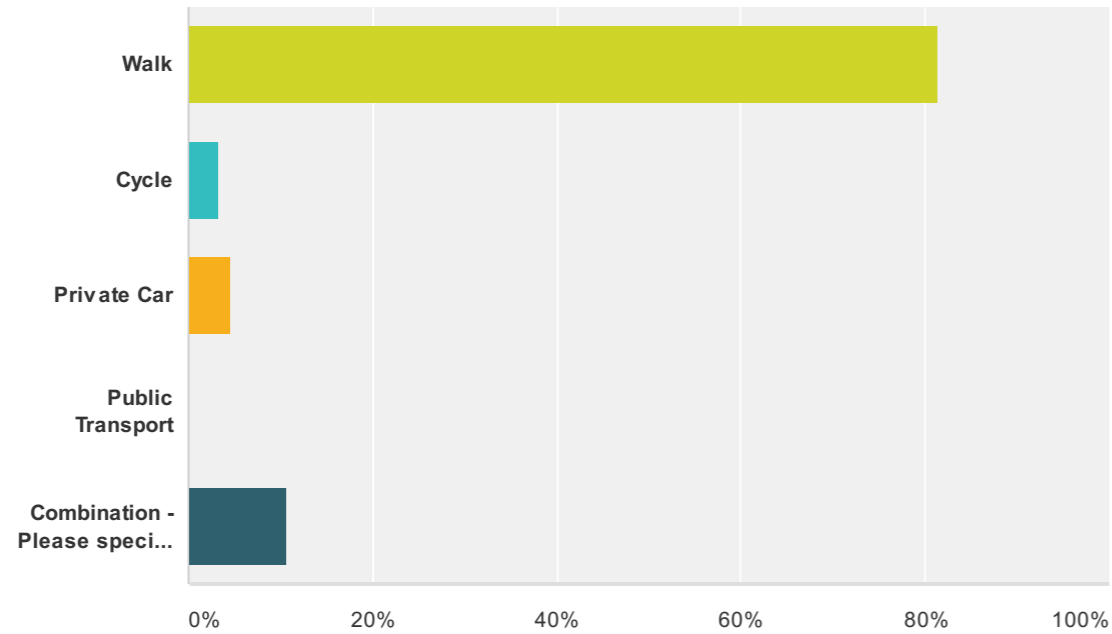


Answer Choices	Responses
5-10	0.29%
11-18	1.46%
19-25	2.34%
26-30	5.26%
31-55	65.79%
Retired	24.85%
<b>Total</b>	

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q7 How do you normally travel to, or through the Laigh Hills Park?**

Answered: 355 Skipped: 6

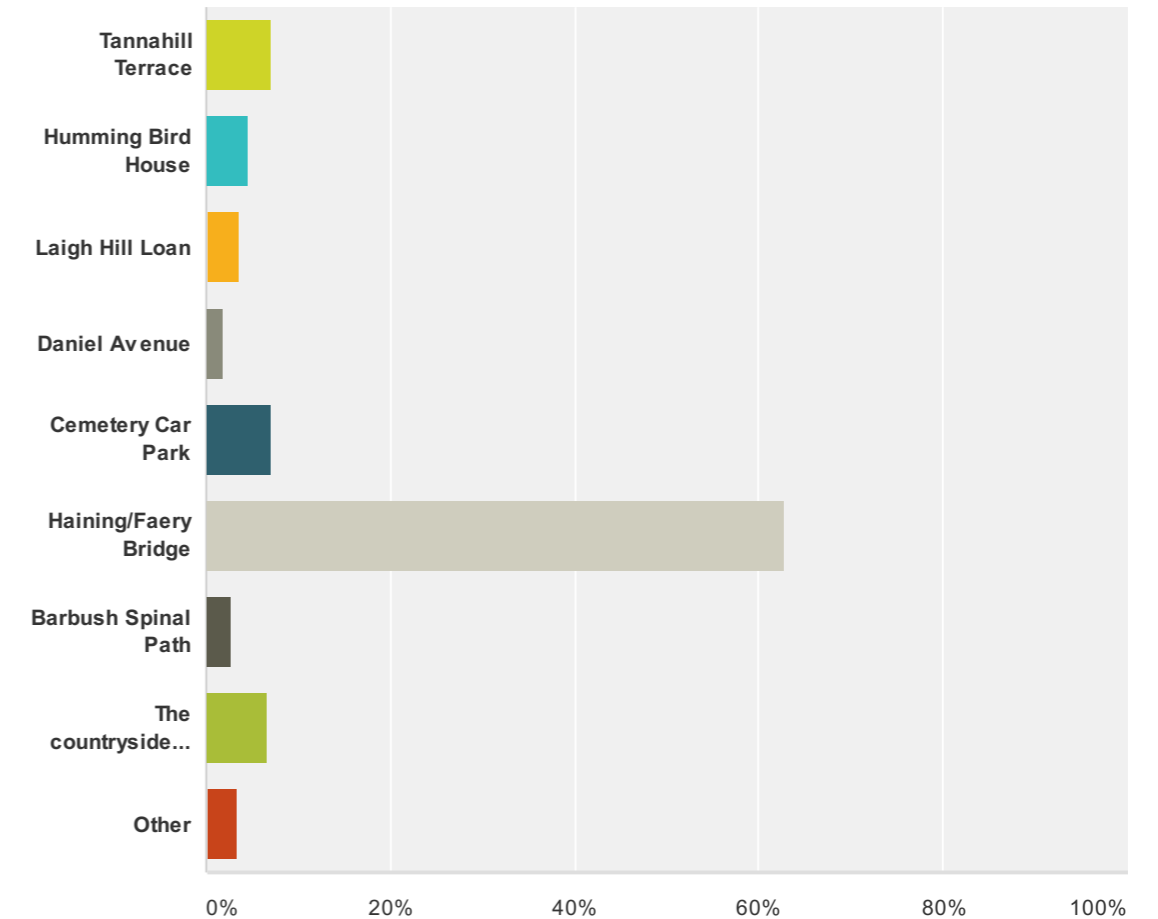


Answer Choices	Responses
Walk	81.41%
Cycle	3.38%
Private Car	4.51%
Public Transport	0%
Combination - Please specify below	10.70%
<b>Total</b>	

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q8 Which park entrance/exit do you normally use most and why?**

Answered: 356 Skipped: 5

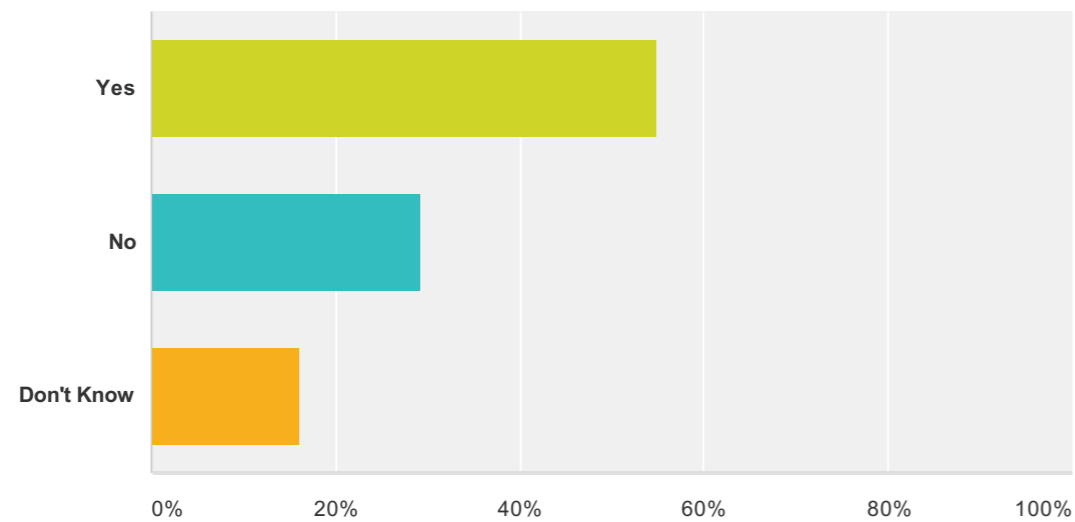


Answer Choices	Responses
Tannahill Terrace	7.02%
Humming Bird House	4.49%
Laigh Hill Loan	3.65%
Daniel Avenue	1.97%
Cemetery Car Park	7.02%
Haining/Faery Bridge	62.92%
Barbush Spinal Path	2.81%
The countryside path between Barbush/Cala houses and the railway/Pont Crescent	6.74%
Other	3.37%

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q9 Would you use the Laigh Hills Park as a route to local schools/amenities/surrounding paths network, if a path without the need for steps was an option? eg. The steps to the Foot Bridge which connects the park across the railway?**

Answered: 348 Skipped: 13



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	54.89%
No	29.31%
Don't Know	16.09%
<b>Total Respondents: 348</b>	

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q10 What do you most value Laigh Hills Park for?**

Answered: 322 Skipped: 39

- walking 'off road'
- Open space and pleasant surroundings
- Open space and wildlife
- Open space for walking - unspoilt
- Recreation, lovely area, fine views
- Open space, semi natural environment.
- walking and it's nature experience
- open space, walking, plant life
- there is a lot of greenspace there
- Open space, with no hope of house building taking place
- The environment and freedom
- Greenspace and for young children going to be by the river
- Play opportunities - various
- Exercise (walking) fresh air views
- Open Greenspace, within walking distance with views and 'wild' feel
- The natural unspoilt layout
- It is and will remain a large attractive open space
- Availability of walks near to centre of Dunblane, excellent play park for grand children. Route to the high street, Cathedral
- Mixing of all socio-economic groups & all ages of Dunblane residents
- Wonderful open space close to town. Variety of habitats
- Wide views - lovely river
- Quiet; walking route link paths.
- An easy walk into the 'countryside' yet so close to Dunblane town.
- local walks
- Free space peace and quiet
- Open space for children to enjoy on foot and on bikes.
- Open parkland/space
- The availability of a good parkland in the centre of town for dog walking, childrens play and the sporting facilities.
- wildlife and wild plants and water
- keeping a green space in the town
- Safe area for kids
- Play park for grandchildren, wilder part for walking the dog, often both together.
- walking / sitting on the few benches / taking children to the swings area
- Taking the children
- Proximity of a park land area for walking, recreation, encouraging grandchildren to value countryside. Birdwatching, playpark and general play.
- Open common space - kids park
- Walking to dog and wildlife.
- Running, walking the dog, enjoying the sun in summer and taking kids to the park
- easy walking and wildlife
- A nice open varied space for walking.
- open area to walk/play, as walking route to town centre, riverside path
- A relaxed walking route from home to town
- Walking, football and play area
- Recreational green area - walking, views, enjoying nature
- Greenspace, birdlife on the river, plant life along riverside and through the park.
- Dog walking - fresh air, enjoying seasonal changes.
- The natural open space. Wild space (not a formal park)
- Peace and tranquility. Dog loves walking there.
- Rough, Wild Walking and fresh air
- The open space , beauty of habitat, wildlife

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q11 Please list your top three changes or improvements you would make to the Laigh Hills Park**

Answered: 302 Skipped: 59

**Q10 What Top three Improvements or Changes?**

Scouring Burn Path - including a new level from cemetery include the path from Pont crescent to Ashfield Managing it as a "natural area"

Have a plan/mission of what is wanted Follow it through do it stepwise

Improve paths, more dog bins

Path - from Daniel Avenue Path - by Burn from Steel Bridge to Tannahill improved safety at point above river

Level access bridge 'All weather' path improvement Managed environment

eradicating hog weed Positively managing it's important habitats Improve the existing paths, especially the worst paths

railway crossing eroded footpaths, especially the river cleaning/maintenance Lowering Scouring

The play facilities are rubbish paths are bad shelter of some basic sort

Toilets Sign Posts More allotments

paths bridges Toilets

Toilets Activities for young children Smooth Paths

Cycle paths outdoor gyms to attract not just young kids Tennis/outdoor badminton nets

Upgrade paths that are eroding toilets provide a roof for shelter - doesn't need walls

Gravel paths to improve year round access. Improve toilet facilities with some shelter Improve path to connect with Ashfield

Toilets/changing facilities disabled access and parking A shelter (at the fitba pitch)

Provide large area for allotments. Improve path network and surfaces, seating and landscaped areas

Improve below Dunblane Cathedral - path, bank, R.Allan Improve route to Ashfield

Improvements to paths. Toilets

Paths Toilets Victorian Paddling Pool

Better paths for walking, making the railway crossing cyclable and making the link paths to the bridge suitable for non- mountain bike cycling.

Removal of steps to footbridge (over railway) Interpretation / acknowledge panoramic views Improved paths

Replace dangerous broken fences near Ramoyle, improve paths and burn maintenance,

Improve/update play equipment. Leave paths as they are. Would be good to be able to cross railway without steps.

Improve play equipment and seating

Remove the eyesore "skatepark" (ned drinking zone) Update and rejuvenate the play equipment Sort out the football pitches so they can be used for football safely.

Prevent further erosion of rights of way by scouring burn and hard core/whins the paths

Maintenance, paths, singnings

Improve signage Remove dilapidated buildings General tidy up of such a great facility

Reduce antisocial behaviour, especially glass litter. Remove hogweed. Some improvement to peripheral paths (drainage), but still retaining wild nature.

Paths to be maintained - there are some areas that become very waterlogged, more benches to enjoy the views, re-grassing the area by the swings that has been spoiled by machinery tracks when the skate park was built

1. More shelter, benches and seating Toilets

Toilets Covered pavilion/shelter Improved waterside paths

Upgraded kids park, water features kids, more seating and picnic tables

1. Improvements to paths, especially the river walk (which would increase ability to park at Mill Row and walk to Laighhills) 2. Improve the stock fencing along the railway line so is safe for dogs. 3. Removal of hog weed as it's unsafe and means a whole part of the park can not be walked in summer

Improved paths, upgrading play park and facilities

just to keep it maintained

More paths more signage more attractions for older children

toilets, café, better paths

1. Wild life area designation 2. Main paths suitable for "active" wheeled travel - bikes, buggies etc 3. Signage and seating upgrades

Provision of toilet facilities Removal of litter/glass from area Better maintenance of play area

upgrade all the accesses with appropriate signs added stop it being a dog's toilet & meeting place for drinkers Develop one or two spots as destinations for visitors

Better biodiversity (it has reduced in recent years) Maintenance of Paths, but not tarmac them all.

Repair timber bridge at Faery Bridge entrance Maintain the wildflower meadows - high priority Add some dog agility items eg jumps, tunnels (not a high Priority) Safeguard existing wildlife value

Repair the path running along the river (NNW slopes) Repair the paths leading towards the rail bridge - partly washed away by the river (scouring burn) Repair the path on Laigh Hills from Tanahill Crescent

Improve paths especially from lower to upper levels ore play equipment eg trampolining BBQ / Picnic Area

Path upgrades Benches upgrading of more seating Decent signage for visitors

Better paths Improvements More bins Toilets

Improve paths - deteriorating more varied vegetation

Improve paths Eradicate Hogweed Maintenance of views

Sporting facilities improvements (changing area for football pitches, etc) Listen to teenagers to see what facilities they would wish

Better football field drainage Toilets

IRRIGATION FOR PITCHES, MORE SEATING AND PAVILION/ TOILETS RESTORATION UPGRADE,

Toilets Play facilities Drain football pitches

1 Pitches 2 Pavillion 3 Amenities

cycle path walking path

IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVE LOCAL AWARENESS IMPROVE FACILITIES WITHIN PARK

Pathways

Play park improvement better maintained paths more connecting paths to areas of Dunblane

Improved sports pitch Changing facilities for sport toilet

1. A simple working toilet 2. Some strategic directional signposts(not large). 3.Redirect path where it floods - can be danger for kids

Dogs on leads except in specific clearly marked areas.

Improve flooding paths Improve eroded areas

A new bridge without steps across the railway and all weather surfaced multi use path/cycleway to link all Dunblane to the Laighills.

Improve path currently closed (near memorial) Improve football facilities children's play area

None

less dog fouling improved paths along river ongoing work to eradicate hogweed

Management plan. Path repairs. Cycle/wheelchair access over railway.

Vegetation control

The path running by the burn needs re-building. A MTB route would be an asset too. Otherwise keep it simple and not over groomed.

4G Football pitch, better changing rooms, floodlights over pitches and permanent goals

All weather access/through path suitable for prams, buggies and cycles. Refurbish seating in key places. Highlight/information on history/heritage subtly - geology, farming, quarry, paddling pool, curling pond, spa house, golf course, football, railway construction, Glasgow day trippers, wildlife etc

Better habitat management Better demarcation of different use areas Better paths

Footpath improvement. Closer car parking Toilet facilities

Can't think of any though doubtless there are others with more experience in this area

Police patrol to stop youths "taking over" from early evening! Broken glass needs to be picked up!

Paths Cafe/ food Water facilities for summer

Improved lighting for evening walking improved access along further reaches of river

Improve paths

Stop being used as dog toilet

Clear up rubbish.

Pathways, signage(about wild flowers etc), play park facilities to be increased

Better maintenance of paths, improved pitch/goals, more wildlife planting

1) build a pod for young people to gather 2) a second (DDA compliant) bridge over the railway to provide more circular walking routes 3) more signage to encourage use

Better drainage on pitches	been flooded Improve drainage in Play areas	4G football pitches pavilion with changing rooms and toilets	Control hogweed improve poor paths positively manage the important habitats
Public toilets	Toilets Football pitches drained Better Access	toilets, good paths, signposting	Control misuse //underage drinking /hanging about Erosion control to make areas accessible again Encourage pet owner responsibility/re poo bags
Reopen path below the Cathedral Improve paths throughout the park and adjoining areas	Paths, Toilets, Events.	Toilets Protect from vandals (broken glass bottles in play equipment) Improve facilities so that the schools can use it for outdoor teaching.	Upgrade steps over railway line.
Hard core paths in places instead of mud Leaving it alone	management plan for wildlife	1. Improvement to the football pitches in terms of drainage 2. The paths in order to obtain a dry route through the park. The pavilion area to remove graffiti and enhance the facility to house a community club which could be used all year round.	Footpaths and access generally. Improve sports pitches. Signing and interpretation boards.
1. An organized litter pick up twice yearly 2. Hogweed 3. Drainage	1. Repair of the parts beside the burn - down from laigh hill loan, up from the paddling pool + upstream of Humming bird Home 2. Removal of invasive species	Improved drainage or boardwalks at several parts of the paths - restoration of the paddling pool -	Improve paths throughout
1. Litter Prevention Control 2. Bracken Control 3. Paths' Surfaces, particularly from Tannahill Terrace across burn.	Clearer pathways, signposting and seating	Paths, Pitch, Toilets	Pathways Dog mess control general maintenance
Path improvement. Hogweed removal. More bins for rubbish	- provide public toilets - improve play facilities and seating arrangements for parents - improve awareness of park area	Improved paths along river north of open areas. Trees. Bushes.	Home for Dunblane Soccer Club, Club House & Pitches Better paths and Access More local Parking
More seating esp picnic benches more kids play machinery improved paths	Improved walkways Better landscaping Parking provision	Improve the paths underfoot. Do something to improve the football change block. Install CCTV at three key points and take strong action against offenders	Toilets, seats, perhaps open shelters
Completion of half done safety work. I had a life threatening fall on the small concrete bridge over the scouring burn when I crashed into a random post after tripping on another piece of this random posting	More facilities, better football pitches, better access for car parking.	benches facilities to host 'highland games' sign posts	Clean up the walkways. Improve the children's play area. Restore the toilet facilities
Upgrading of paths by the scouring burn that are getting washed away; remove toilet and upgrade changing rooms; remove bmx track tyres	Improve the paths and reinstate steps in steep areas Reinstall Toilets Improve access between both sides of the park - network Rail Should Pay!	Path in Cala side Path repair by river Hogweed eradication	Toilet, less muddy paths,
Reinstatement of washed away paths beside river.	Toilet facilities Encourage more people to come Put Dunblane on the map restarting highland games More Childrens facilities	Improved football pitches. Improved pathways. Improved access to fish Allan Water.	Remove the skate park, police it at nights in clement weather to discourage youth drinking, improve paths
1. improved paths (e.g. better drainage & better surface) 2. wild flower planting/garden to encourage more biodiversity 3. seating and picnic tables	Paved paths	Better paths (but not tarmac surfaced), better drainage, signage (not interpretation boards)	Maintain and mark paths + routes Increase Biodiversity Increase cycle facilities
Seating. Condition of paths. Better control of dogs, and their doing!	Paths, grass areas, and changing facilities .	Toilets	see above.
Paths habitats Access	Seats, paths, planting	Improve pathways. Handrail on steep paths. Drainage.	more litter/dog waste bins easier car parking access improvement to worn away paths
some repairs to the main path along the scouring burn to the cemetery enhance wildlife	The bridge over the railway has been a boorocks since it was built, no use to prams or the elderly. Paths have fallen into disrepair through neglect.	A properly drained and re-surfaced up per Laighhills pitch; new football goals on wheels; refurbished pavilion as this is currently an eyesore	Paths, bridges and views information
Control of Hogweed in Laighhills & access Ensure controls to keep out wheeled vehicles Ensure it is not developed and ruined 'do not pave paradise'	1. Improve the path from Barbush to the railway footbridge to enable cycling. 2. Improve the railway footbridge to make it cycleable 3. Improve the path from the railway footbridge to the Faery Bridge to enable cycling	More flowers/ plants. Better sign posts. Benches	Less dog dirt - its a public dog toilet just now More control over youngsters drinking Better lighting at night
Make sure paths are better maintained - although this does not mean hard surfacing! Planting wild flower meadow, restoring the paddling pool	improved footpaths improved vehicular access to allow more events to take place summer cafe/toilets	Better paths. Cycle Route. More Seats.	New toilet, improved path at entrance from Ramoyle end where the burn has eroded the path, improve children's play facilities
Improvement to football Pitches and pavillion Improved Paths Bike Paths	Drainage improvements to the football pitches	The paths are shocking, almost inaccessible with a pram. Redevelop the area to the right just over the small bridge ie, opposite the changing facilities where the small waterfall is. This was a great area when I was growing up with benches and paddling. Reopen the toilets	Update playpark, more seating with a rain shelter, 3G football pitch with lighting
1. Dunblane needs a state of the art play facility. 2. Toilet facilities	1) Remove divisory impact of rail line. Either put track in tunnel or (less good) remove bridge steps by making a horizontal bridge. 2) Put toilets in place 3) Put cafe near play park (eg Macrosty park in Crieff)	1. Better marked and maintained paths 2. Cycle paths 3. Encouraging less broken glass / litter / do mess	Toilet facilities then seating then picnic
Mud free Pathways Better Access pathways for walkers Iradication of Giant Hogweed	improved paths more steps on steep paths less litter	Repair paths re place seating and cut unwanted vegetation and seed wild flowers	Eliminate dog fouling Improved facilities maintenance Events
Non muddy pathway Remove Giant Hogweed Better integration of River into the Park	remove litter	foot paths benches	Better paths, more dog soil bins and the bushes to be cut back from paths more often so u can walk on the paths.
Shore up Allan Water Clean it up completely eradicate JHW Plant lots of Native trees	paths paths and paths	Improved paths within the park Eradication of giant hogweed at river's edge. Making bridge across railway more accessible for all especially disabled and parents with prams etc.	Improved paths, more clearly marked with proper drain/river crossings and steps where required A decent public toilet Improved drainage for sports fields
Improved Paths Renovate area down by the river that has	Improve the top football pitch. knock down old toilet block. improve the footpaths		Paths, litter and dog mess
	Better footpaths No dog fouling Drainage		BMX track More seating More pathways
			Paths and benches for sure.
			1. Toilets 2. More play equipment 3. Paths cleared and

maintained.	Paths. Signage. Toilet facilities	Public toilets. Refurbished changing rooms. Cafe shack	spraying
Paths available to walk on in winter. Dam cleared. Clean toilets.	Upgrade path network marked routes with fixed map better policing	Paths. Litter. Things for pre-schoolers	Improved footpaths, cycle paths better sports facilities
Better paths, more play equipment. Organised events.	1. Dog poo a real problem! Child has got on shoes on our last couple of visits. 2. Shame that part of footpath by river is inaccessible. 3. The youth club building down by river is very unkempt and gives a bad impression.	Toilets open more Better paths No steps on railway bridge	More play park facilities eg play areas, seating Better pathways. Toilets
Path between bottom and top football pitches needs sorting. General upgrade of paths and swing park	Events such as highland games Area in park enclosed so no dogs etc can get in Toilets	General upkeep of play equipment Stop it becoming an underage drinking spot More family friendly events held there in the summer months (ie make the most of the big beautiful space)	Toilets play equip and seating
None.	Football pitches Pathways Children's play area	Improve paths and play area	More picnic benches, seats and play equipment, the toilets is a must in the summer months for the children as well as adults to use
It has to be at the start....toilets...changing rooms... lighting...dogs on leads...	More play equipment Increased active use of facilities	Open /upgrade toilets Add more sand toys for children to play with Make a smaller slide and climbing frame for smaller children	Paths around scourin burn, path connecting children's play park to railway bridge
Toilets and drinking water better pathways around the back (near railway tracks) More options in the play park	Toilets smoother path for kids bikes etc	Upgrade playing facilities, upgrade the paths, repair the weir/repair the Victorian pool.	1) Maintenance and development of paths. 2) BBQ areas 3) More bio diversity
Toilet facilities, seating, bike facilities	Antisocial behaviour /safe toilet facilities/ improvement walkways (particularly the ones at height or near river to improve safety	Park seats, improved footpaths	Park equipment, cycle/bmx track, wildlife areas
There are many needed. A team of qualified specialists needs to attain how best to manage and capitalise on this unloved gem.	Take action against litter and dog fouling. Improve facilities such as barbecue pits, a renovated paddling pool and improved pathways.	I like it just the way it is	Toilet facilities football pitch improvement play equipment
Improved paths. Improved seating. Cafe in pavilion.	Better footpaths. Restore the paddling pool more play equipment	Bring back Highland games. Toilet facilities Better paths for wheelchair access	Improvement to toilets (being open) new and improved park equipment
Upgraded paths Upgrade play equipment. Better benches	More picnic areas with more bins. New play equipment Better maintenance of the park area ie picking up glass etc that is left by others.	More dog bins BMX track Better drainage for football pitches	New play equipment Events at the park More dog waste bins
Make the slides bit more safe as at the moment you need two adults to feel safe one at the top and one helping them back up	More dog bins Improvements to river banks which seem to be in trouble More benches	Better play equipment Better pathways More seating for picnic areas	Fence off park as too many dog walkers use it as a toilet. also dogs can run in from off play equipment. more benches and seating water park like the park in crieff forest schools resources
Toilets Improved facilities for younger children Better / less steep paths	Highland games Benches Pathways	Repair the riverside paths. Improve the childrens play area More seating.	Updated and maintained toilet facilities Current changing rooms is an eyesore Improved play facilities for children
Better football field AstroTurf to allow multiple sports Safe swimming area for kids aged 10-16 Designed with kids that age in mind. Too much emphasis on toddlers. Give teenagers a safe and fun place too.	Some path work where there are ditches/holes. More events Sculptures/play sculptures for people to explore around the parkland	Upgrade play equipment, hole on footbridge over burn beside faery bridge. Repair of path by river.	Upgrade bridge into park at Haining entrance, refurbish sports pavilions, path erosion
Improvements to the slides, maintained paths throughout	Upgrade play park Improve path network Tidy water area	Better playing facilities, better toilets, better seating	Improved play equipment. Improve pitches. Maintain paths
Amenities toilets repairs	Fix the paths that run around the back of the park by the river, tidy the waterfall section on right as you enter the park, add more fun equipment inc. a flying fox & circle net swing, etc. and keep it cleaned regularly, plus add a toilets that are perhaps locked after hours? x	Staffing, Better paths, designated areas for dog walkers	Improved paths Sustaining nature.
Paths need to be maintained as most are now eroded and some are dangerous in wet/wintery weather. Restoring the Paddling pool at the Faery Brig. Restoring the old mill weir as it was once a safe place to swim as it formed a natural pool. Resurrecting the Highland Games. Restoring the public toilets. Cutting back all the weeds and trees on the river and burn banks so that we can see and enjoy the beauty of them.	Renovate play equipment Repair small bridge at Haining/Faery Bridge entrance Open changing rooms	TOILETS!!!!!! river side management - river banks have not been looked after, hog weed etc paths need renewed. play park	Path maintenance, seat provision
More enclosed spaces for young children (so they don't run off) More play things and more wild areas	Access paths from faery bridge; better play equipment; more bins at picnic area	Lights Improved paths Seating	Replacement of seats, clearer paths
Something to make the park feel a bit safer - not sure what though	Better foot paths, one or two play things for small toddlers, some more benches	Structured paths Nature trail Nice seared area for picnics	Improved play area. Improved paths. More seats and picnic tables near the river
Safer and more usable environment for young children to play/enjoy parkland	1. Not to allow dogs in the children's area - several times I have experienced or seen large dogs with their owners far away jump up on very small children. Plus there is a lot of dogs mess. 2. Better foot paths to the different areas. Mostly because it is impossible to take a normal pram or pushchair over the current paths which are just dirt and stone.	Improved pathways, not concrete but pebbles or similar. Public toilet, graffiti removed from former sport pavilion	Toilets. Seating
Changing rooms up grade Clean up dog mess/litter Better pathways		Toilets More picnic benches Cafe/ice cream stall	More bins, public conveniences & new benches.
More benches and pathways and general tidy up		Park facilities Lighting	Seating. Flower beds. Toilets
		Toilets, paved walkways and regular community activities.	Toilets, paths and dog clean up equipment (I am a dog walker and hate to see others leave dog mess)
		Changing facilities for football A good football pitch A crackdown on dog mess	Improved paths, entrances, and toilets.
		Restrict access to dogs in certain areas, the dog fouling is dreadful. Reinforcement of riverbank in certain areas so more paths don't disappear into the river. Hogweed	No
			Play equipment, pathways, toilets

Tidy it up. Provide more seating, there used to be lots 20 years ago. Plants more bulbs.

Hedges/undergrowth better controlled. Better paths for buggys

Maps or better signage of the walks available, the old toilet block needs removing and a new one built.

More play activities More events BBQ areas Better toilets

Completely sort the changing facilities, and introduce some public conveniences for day-use.

1. Some new play equipment 2. Ungraded the equipment that is already there 3. Improve some of the paths as the ones round the back behind the top football pitches can be dangerous near the water.

More flower arrangements in the summer, improvement to changing room facilities for football etc

More poo bins/ litter bins to encourage people to keep it clean. Clean safe play equipment Maybe signposts with the footpaths marked or suggested walking routes

Cycle paths to access wider area Wild life areas - natural habitats to encourage indigenous life Picnic area around play park with toilet facilities

Better paths. Improved seating. More dog poo bins

Less litter, vandalism and poor upkeep of the area.

Paths for cycling and walking, events example highland games like it was years ago! Seating. toilet facilities and a summer shop.

Improved football facilities, improved cycling & skate park facilities, more weather resistant paths

Play area paths picnic areas.

More bins, more seating, more lighting at night.

Better mapped paths with some access to people with disabilities. Better play equipment and learning opportunities so that it can be used as a resource by families, schools and organisations. Develop toilets, changing rooms etc so that events can be held there.

Better drainage for football pitches, drier paths, footpath directional signs ie to Ashfield etc

Better paths Improved play facilities Some sort of fencing for the river

Better paths, more walks and better facilities.....

Paths. Drainage on opposite side of the railway from the swings. Better lighting through the main walkways beyond the haining

Toilets, improved hillside path, more seating.

Paths. Lighting. Youth pod.

Play Park facilities for pre-schoolers Toilets Ban consumption of alcohol and smoking in the play park

Maintain the paths.

Sports facilities Seating Picnic areas

Get rid of the pink plants that are taking over

Parking access, cafe facilities, a shelter for when it rains

Public toilets. Maintenance and upgrading of paths. Grass cutting and generally keeping the place looking tidy and clean.

Better paths for walking. Upkeep of play equipment Toilets

security paths map

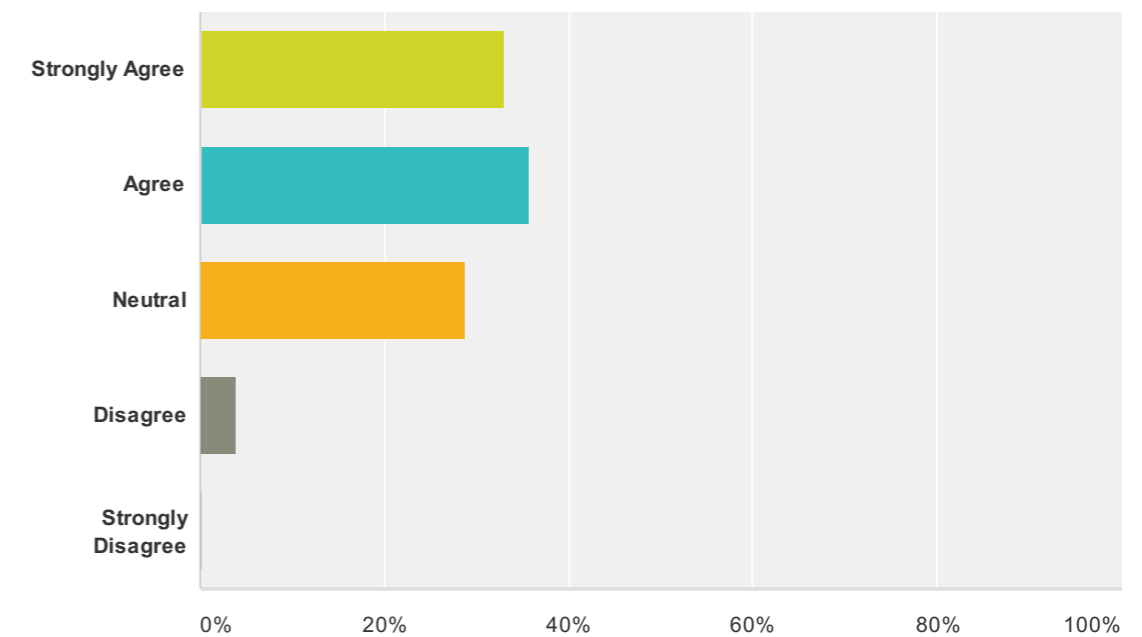
Skatepark, skatepark, skatepark.

Water play area. Improved paths and connectivity beyond. Improved public facilities.

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q12 Do you generally agree or disagree, that the following facilities should be restored or enhanced? Access gateways**

Answered: 351 Skipped: 10

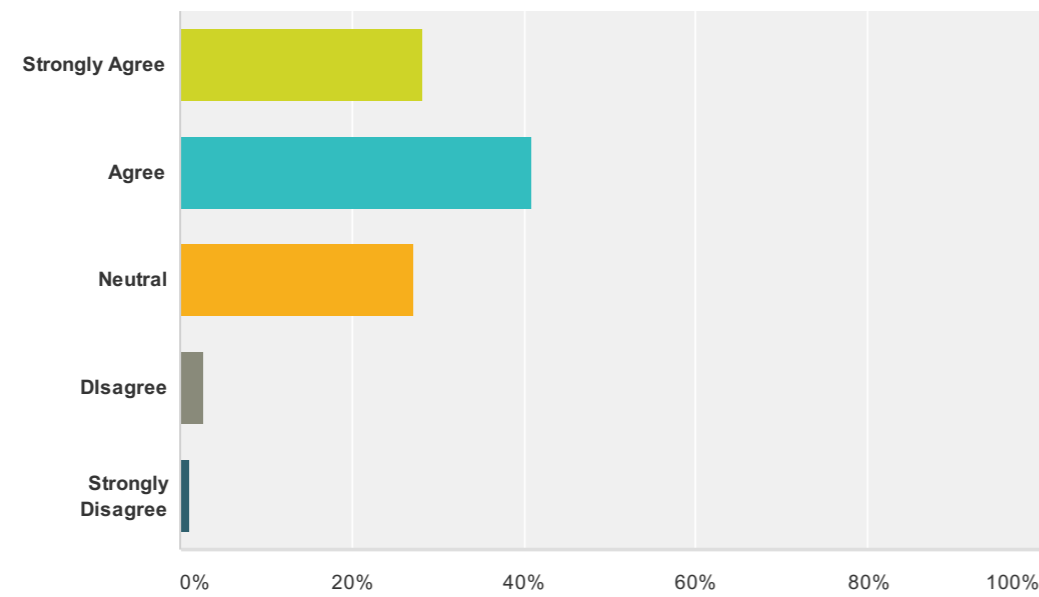


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Agree	33.05%
Agree	35.61%
Neutral	28.77%
Disagree	3.99%
Strongly Disagree	0.28%
<b>Total Respondents: 351</b>	

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q13 Do you generally agree or disagree, that the following facilities should be restored or enhanced? Outdoor teaching/learning**

Answered: 355 Skipped: 6

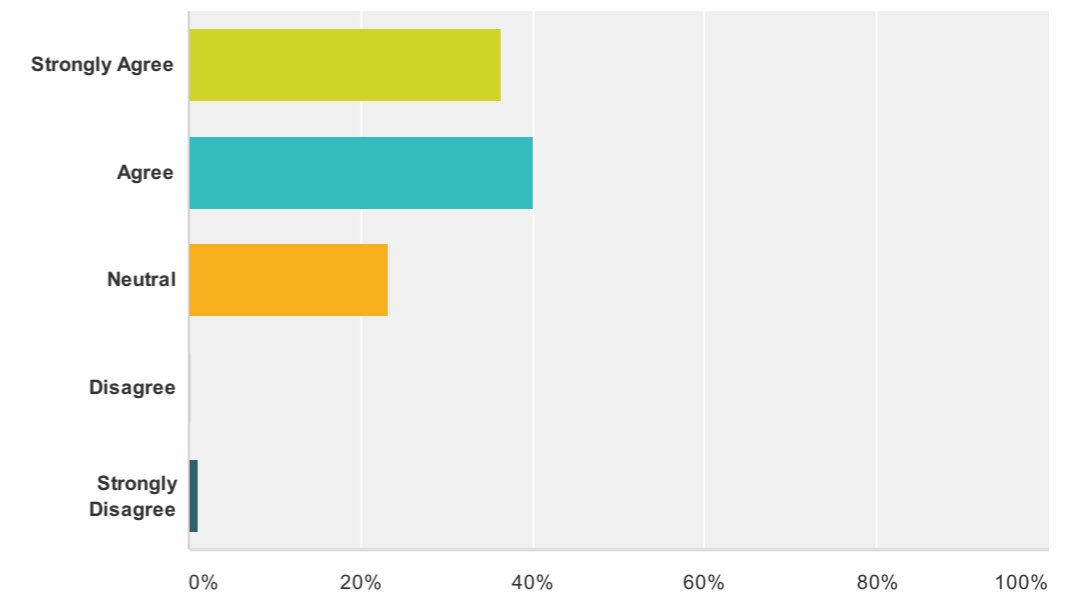


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Agree	28.17% 100
Agree	40.85% 145
Neutral	27.04% 96
Disagree	2.82% 10
Strongly Disagree	1.13% 4
<b>Total Respondents: 355</b>	

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q14 Do you generally agree or disagree, that the following facilities should be restored or enhanced? Further improved sports pitch drainage**

Answered: 355 Skipped: 6

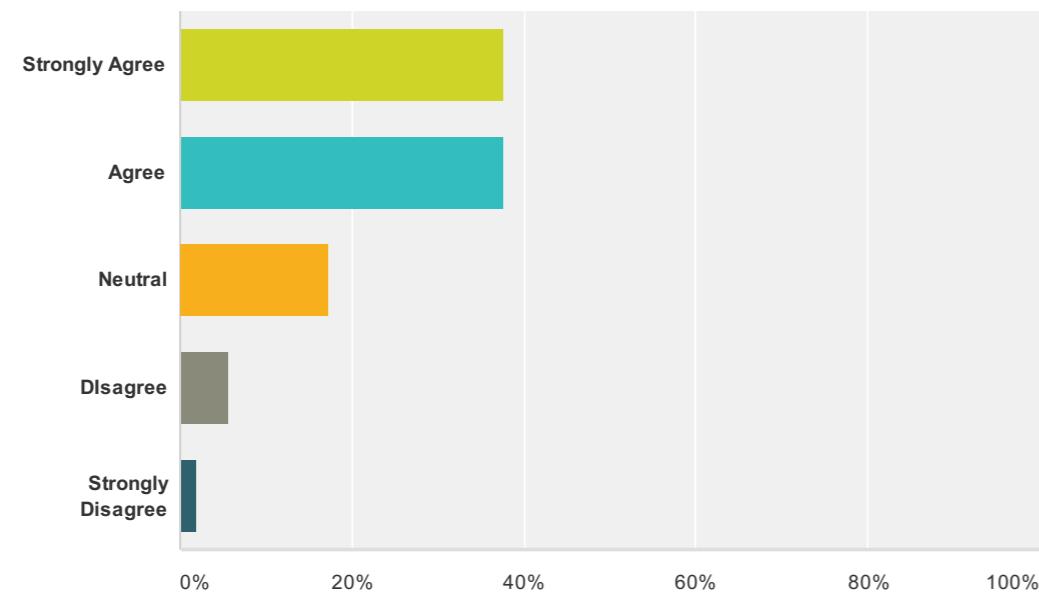


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Agree	36.34% 129
Agree	40% 142
Neutral	23.10% 82
Disagree	0.28% 1
Strongly Disagree	1.13% 4
<b>Total Respondents: 355</b>	

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q15 Do you generally agree or disagree, that the following facilities should be restored or enhanced? More local events e.g. Highland Games**

Answered: 356 Skipped: 5

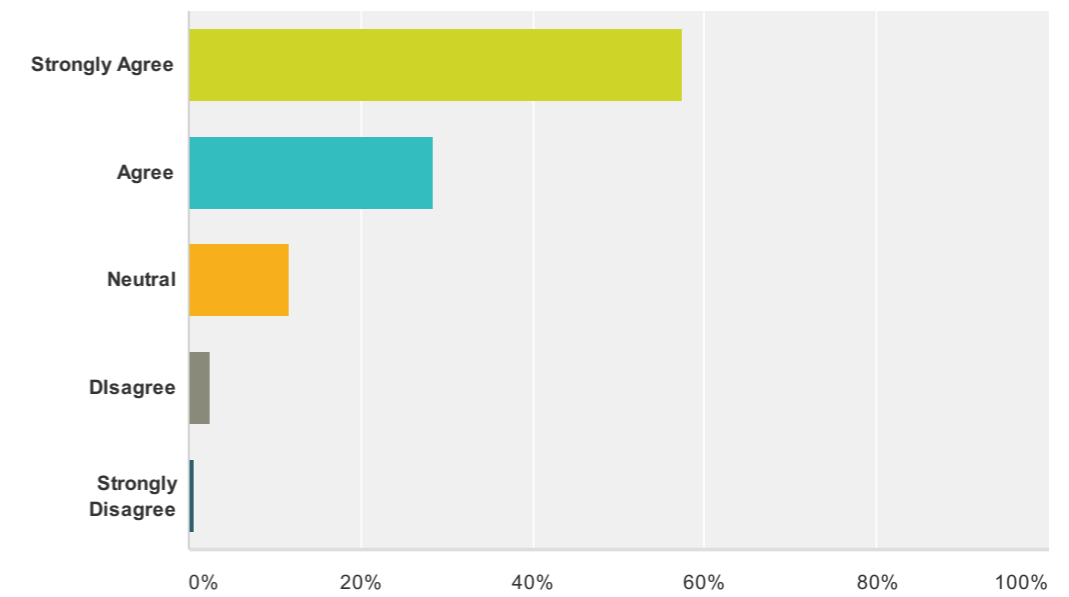


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Agree	37.64% 134
Agree	37.64% 134
Neutral	17.42% 62
Disagree	5.62% 20
Strongly Disagree	1.97% 7
<b>Total Respondents: 356</b>	

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q16 Do you generally agree or disagree, that the following facilities should be restored or enhanced? Measures to limit anti-social behaviour**

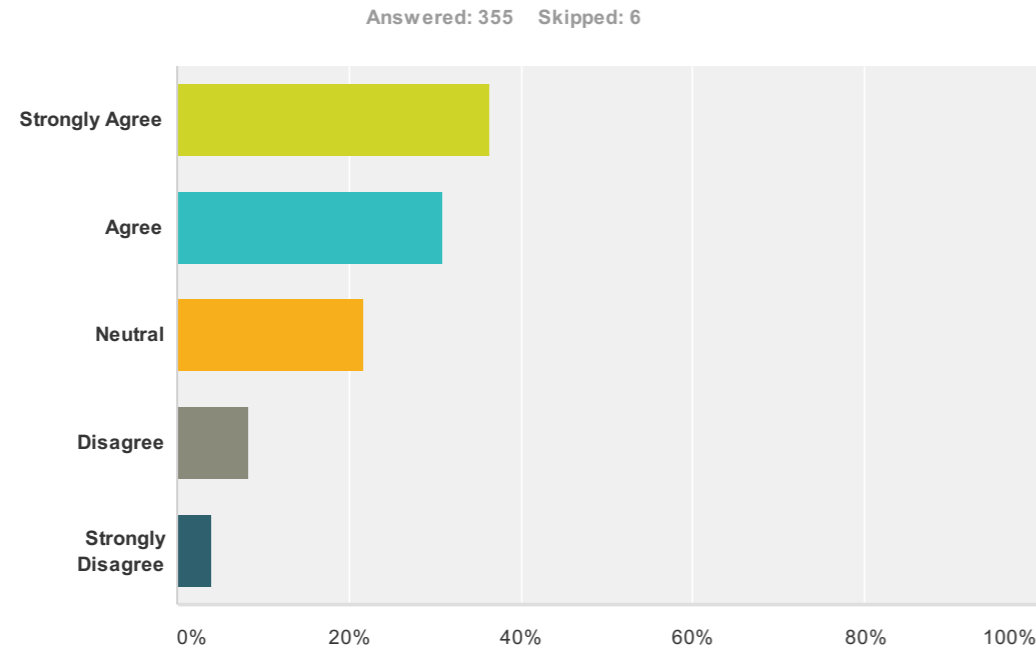
Answered: 360 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Agree	57.50% 207
Agree	28.33% 102
Neutral	11.67% 42
Disagree	2.50% 9
Strongly Disagree	0.56% 2
<b>Total Respondents: 360</b>	

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

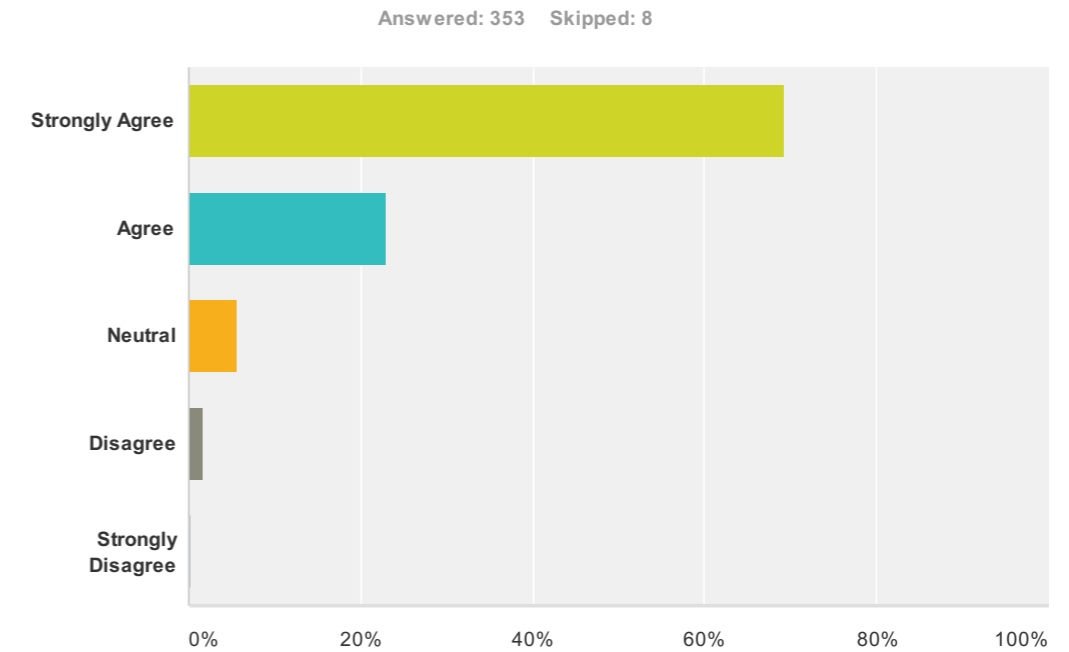
**Q17 Do you generally agree or disagree, that the following facilities should be restored or enhanced? Victorian Paddling Pool**



Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Agree	36.34% 129
Agree	30.99% 110
Neutral	21.69% 77
Disagree	8.45% 30
Strongly Disagree	3.94% 14
<b>Total Respondents: 355</b>	

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

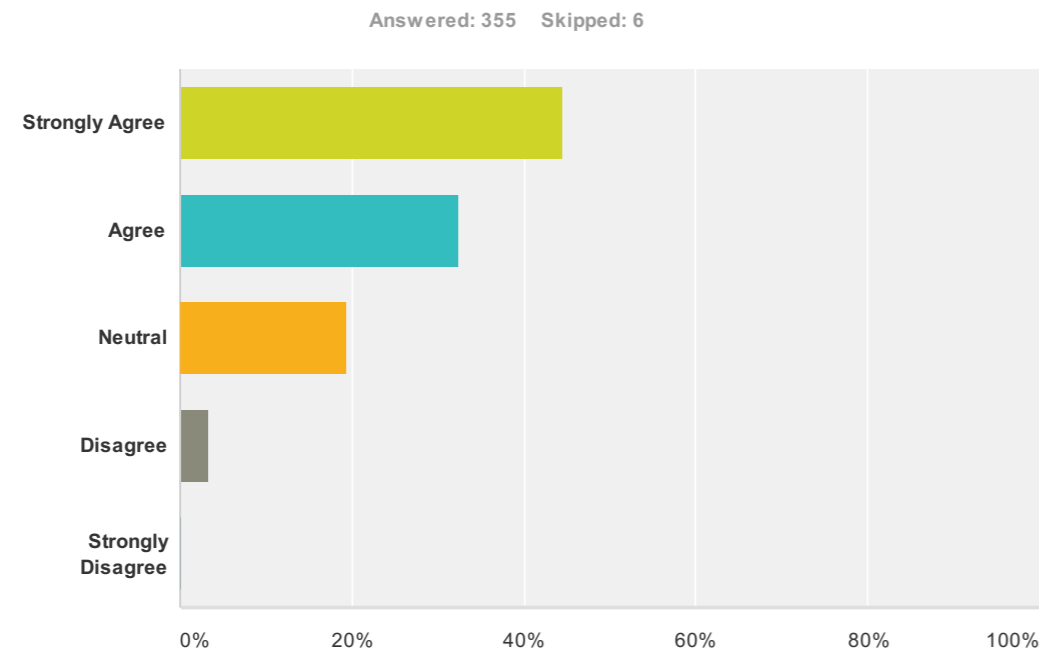
**Q18 Do you generally agree or disagree, that the following facilities should be restored or enhanced? Park Paths**



Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Agree	69.41% 245
Agree	22.95% 81
Neutral	5.67% 20
Disagree	1.70% 6
Strongly Disagree	0.28% 1
<b>Total Respondents: 353</b>	

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

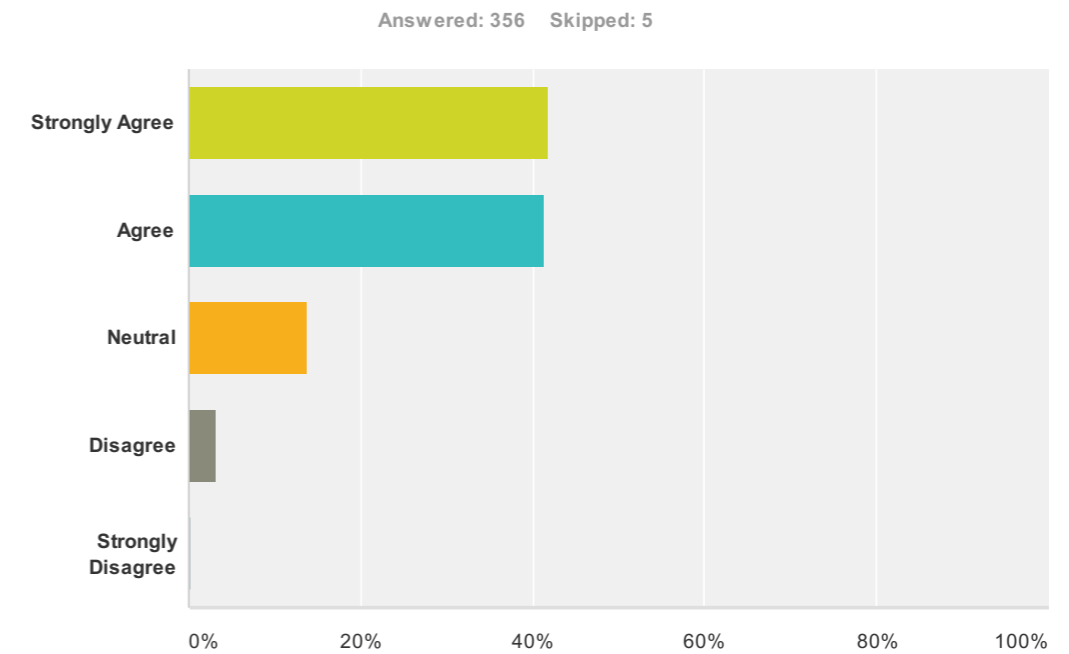
**Q19 Do you generally agree or disagree, that the following facilities should be restored or enhanced? Pavilion/Changing Rooms**



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Strongly Agree	44.51%	158
Agree	32.39%	115
Neutral	19.44%	69
Disagree	3.38%	12
Strongly Disagree	0.28%	1
<b>Total Respondents: 355</b>		

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q20 Do you generally agree or disagree, that the following facilities should be restored or enhanced? Play Equipment**

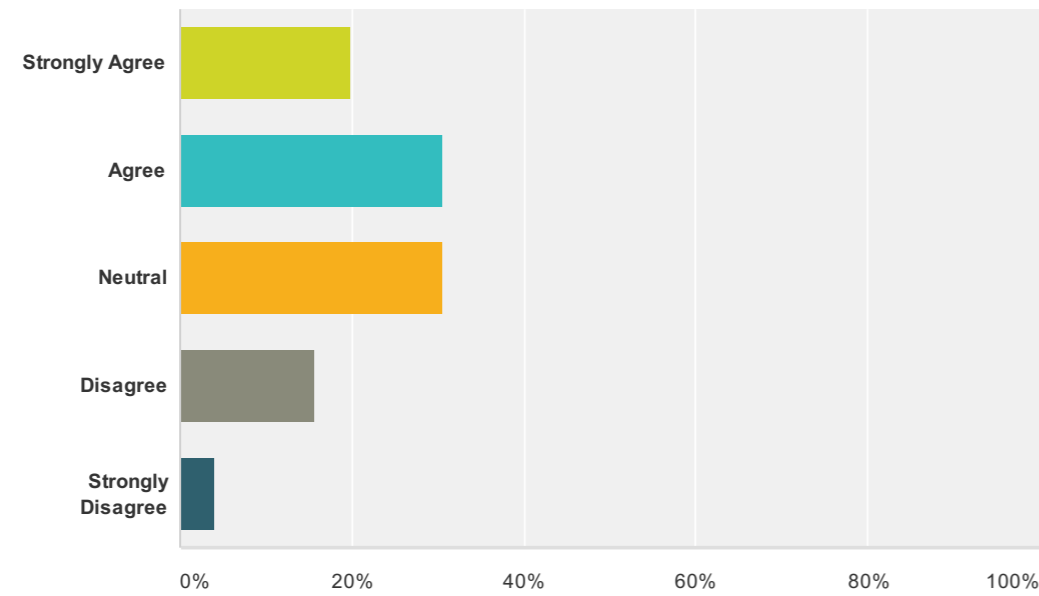


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Strongly Agree	41.85%	149
Agree	41.29%	147
Neutral	13.76%	49
Disagree	3.09%	11
Strongly Disagree	0.28%	1
<b>Total Respondents: 356</b>		

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q21 Do you generally agree or disagree, that the following facilities should be restored or enhanced? BBQ Area/facilities**

Answered: 358 Skipped: 3

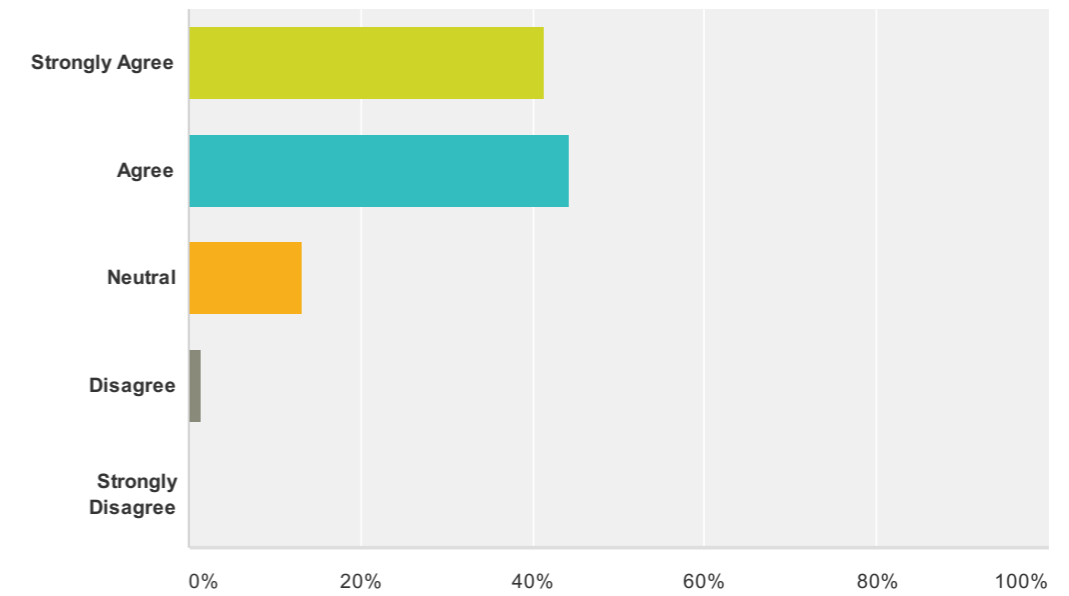


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Agree	19.83% 71
Agree	30.45% 109
Neutral	30.45% 109
Disagree	15.64% 56
Strongly Disagree	3.91% 14
<b>Total Respondents: 358</b>	

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q22 Do you generally agree or disagree, that the following facilities should be restored or enhanced? Seating**

Answered: 355 Skipped: 6

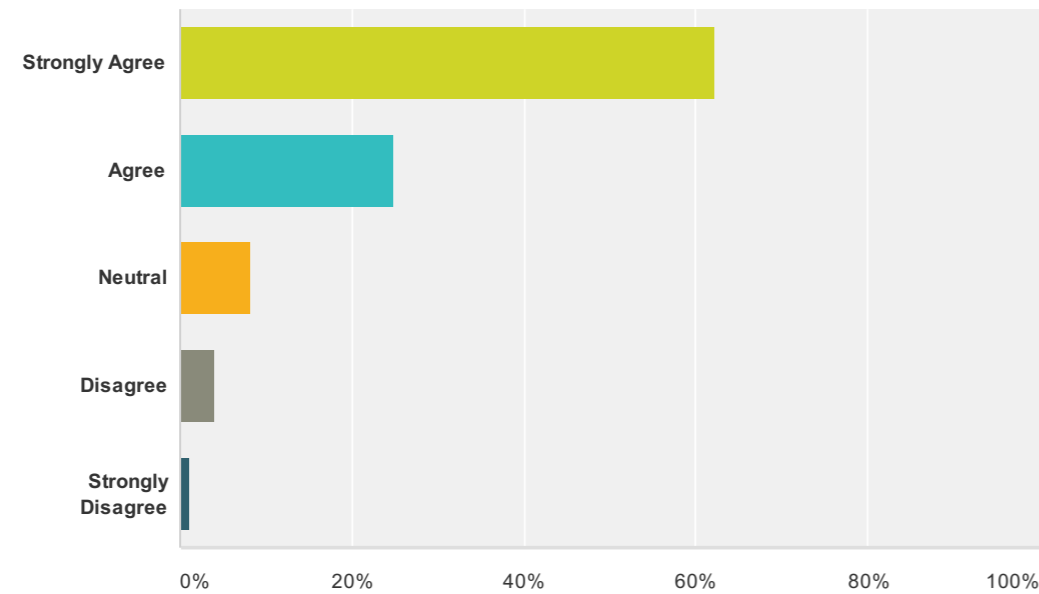


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Agree	41.41% 147
Agree	44.23% 157
Neutral	13.24% 47
Disagree	1.41% 5
Strongly Disagree	0% 0
<b>Total Respondents: 355</b>	

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q23 Do you generally agree or disagree, that the following facilities should be restored or enhanced? Toilets**

Answered: 357 Skipped: 4

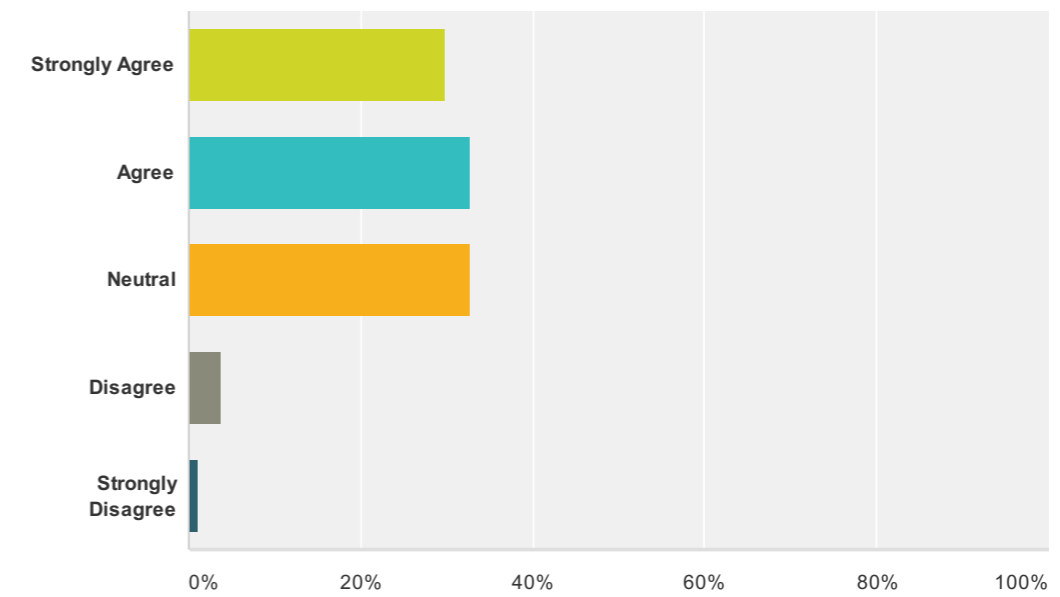


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Agree	62.18% 222
Agree	24.93% 89
Neutral	8.12% 29
Disagree	3.92% 14
Strongly Disagree	1.12% 4
<b>Total Respondents: 357</b>	

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q24 Do you generally agree or disagree, that the following facilities should be restored or enhanced? Long distance views to the surrounding countryside**

Answered: 354 Skipped: 7

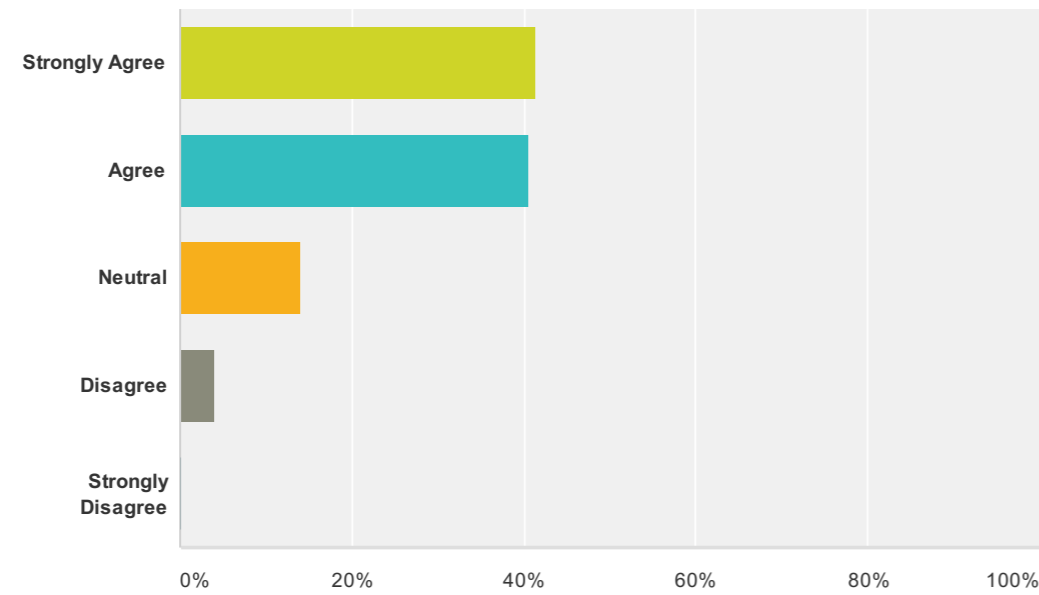


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Agree	29.94% 106
Agree	32.77% 116
Neutral	32.77% 116
Disagree	3.67% 13
Strongly Disagree	1.13% 4
<b>Total Respondents: 354</b>	

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q25 Do you generally agree or disagree, that the following facilities should be restored or enhanced? Wildlife Habitats including ponds**

Answered: 356 Skipped: 5

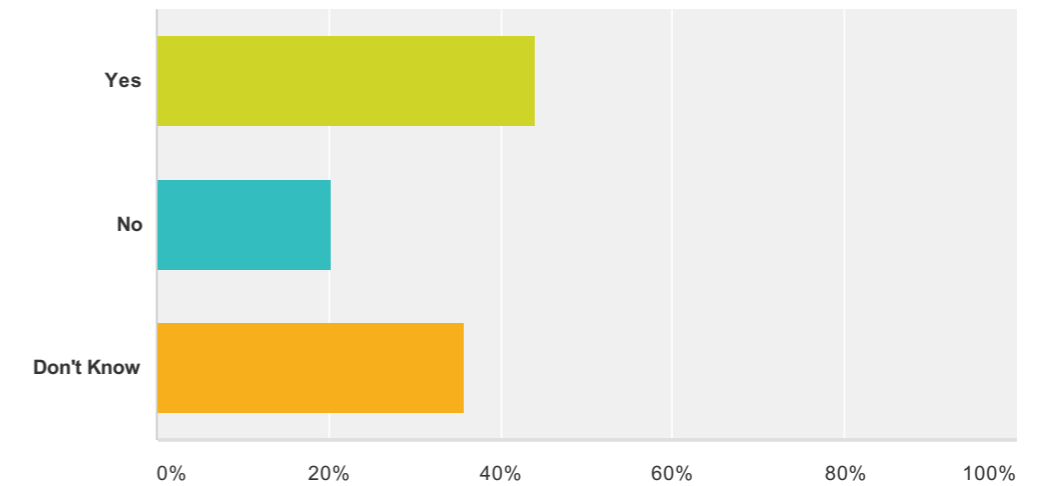


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Strongly Agree	41.29%	147
Agree	40.45%	144
Neutral	14.04%	50
Disagree	3.93%	14
Strongly Disagree	0.28%	1
<b>Total Respondents: 356</b>		

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q26 Should a feasibility study into micro hydro power generation on the Scouring Burn be included in the masterplan?**

Answered: 352 Skipped: 9



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Yes	44.03%	155
No	20.17%	71
Don't Know	35.80%	126
<b>Total</b>		<b>352</b>

Laigh Hills Parklands - Strategic Masterplan Questionnaire

**Q27 If you have any other comments/suggestions or ideas to improve the Park, please tell us in the box below. If you would be interested in volunteering to help with further survey work with regard to surveying the numbers of people using the parks paths and other facilities, then please include your contact details in the box below. Thank you for your Participation**

Answered: 78 Skipped: 283

Community Wide Consultation - Summary Open Day:

LAIGH HILLS PARK – Public Consultation – Dunblane – 08/02/2014

38 people attended the initial presentation

Circa 50 people attended in total on the day.

11am- 12noon: Set up and informal chat with residents

- First curling pond in Scotland (NW section)
- There used to be an old water well on the site – it was really popular, especially as a tourist attraction – ‘the water hoose’ or ‘the hoose’
- There used to be a direct route that was really well used – a key route from the ‘Callas’ area to the town, popular with locals going into shop (approx. 3 – 4 generations ago) People living here now, 20 yrs + weren’t aware of this route. On from this – future improvements would include:
  - Improved paths
  - Signage
  - Level passage through
  - lighting

12 noon - PRESENTATION

OPEN FLOOR Q & A

WHEELED VEHICLES – COUNCIL

- Ruins grass in wet weather
- Path has been created left of the park area
- This appeared after the creation of the skate park
- Evidence of erosion
- The cutting vehicles are ruining areas – why necessary as grass was cut previously without any damage!
- Need an access for maintenance that will not ruin it
- ~~~ path is no longer obvious
- Need limited access so that the park is not a victim of its own success
- Where is the main core path?

Course of river (Allan water) changed dramatically over the past 15 years ago – erosion – has changed path – it used to be by the river (below the eroded section).

OUTER CONNECTIVITY

- (Circa) 30 yrs ago tunnel was removed
- Wrong material was brought on site to create crossing (rumour) but a lot of people thought this to be true.
- A lot of paths have suffered erosion due to rainwater run off

- River to Ashfield – Important – eroding beyond safe levels
- Paths that lead OUT of the park are of importance!

## NEW PROPOSED CONNECTIVITY

- A proposed route for school children – side of hill
- Calla / Ramoyle – ‘Scurry’ Burn – Faery Bridge
- Mud / glass / light
- The Council had endorsed this as a ‘SAFE ROUTE TO SCHOOL’ a few years ago!

## NORTHERN RAILWAY CROSSING

- 100 yrs ago it was safer with steam trains
- Not necessary now in terms of modern trains
- This is a historic crossing point – but why do people still use it?
  - o Road connection?
  - o Anglers?
  - o Bird watchers to watch sand martins

## LEAVE THE PARK TO NATURE? – LOSE THE VIEWS?

- New trees next to the skate park - once established views would be lost somewhat.
- There is a popular circular route taken by some locals everyday – the hill top is a major part of this route – views & orchids!
- Signage to this route – but how big would they be as all the languages would have to be on it!!
- There are 2 hills – one hill near where the curling pond was has great views but these are secondary to the other hill which has panoramic views
- Sensitivity is required when upgrading the paths
- Improve path to Ashfield
- Orchids need noting and protecting!
- HOGWEED - non-native, invasive

Council are currently clearing 1m back from foot path yet 3m back from the river – to accommodate anglers!

- Liked the idea of discreet signage

## TEEN SHELTER

- Worries people – especially in the summer
- They need a place to drink – PC advises this is not such a bad option in their view.
- Teens wanted shelter to be inclusive – ie not a ‘Teen’ Shelter.

## BBQ AREA

- Try to control the teens then!
- Have problem with tourists burning the grass – agreed.
- Tables with slate – liked

OLD PADDLING POOL – reinstate it? Would a sensitive refurbish of the pool encourage use?

- Make it trash proof! [Park warden/Educate/Police]
- [wooden bench V metal argument]
- Wooden bench used to be up there.
- Needs to be (furniture) secured so people aren’t able to throw it down the hill!
- Children / teens that come to the park aren’t all from Dunblane – the train tickets are lying beside the bottles of drink and rubbish!

## TEEN SHELTER (& TOILETS)

- Evitable problem

What are the reasons for proposing a teen shelter?

- Desire to go somewhere when it is raining
- Kings Park Stirling does not have a teen shelter and it does well!

DONNA: youth services were involved in the teen shelter. They had funding available for this demographic.

ALAN (Booth): Without engaging with people, they gave these kids the responsibility of spending money, they had a weak to respond. The youth voted – some 2 years ago.

- £20,000 now to spend. Originally was to be a container for youth services to be placed next to old toilets. End of the month deadline now to purchase.
- Lady suggested converting the toilets instead as a place, her two teenage sons would love it! 19-20 yr olds would have somewhere to have a drink, she reckons they would use it responsibly.

DONNA: There is still flexibility on where to place it. She will find out what the target age group where that youth services worked with.

- Survey done on the shelter – not good! – vandal magnet
- Where are they going? Toilets.
- Has to be on a solid surface – bolted into place.
- Will it get in the way of developing the toilets? It seems silly to be attracting people to a shelter then to not have public convenience facility!
- If we get new toilets, they would not be on the site – are we going to demolish toilets to place teen shelter? These seems ridiculous if all the plumbing etc is already in place!

Community Council Secretary: a management plan will prevent these errors from taking place in the future.

[This is an inherited situation – if the money were to go elsewhere (people said ‘yes!’) – toilets are a real need]

- We should take on board the young people's decision and respect the time they put into this. We should take on board their opinions and not look like we are ignoring the work and effort they have put into this project.

- Toilets should be refurbished as this would be economical and it is advantageous to have them next to the children's play park.  
[funding for public toilets is not there though]

[Semi-remote location – breaks the rules for not needing public toilets in towns – we need toilets – site specific need]

## VIEWS

- As we may lose views due to the growth of trees, so we should take photographs now to show generations to come.
- 1950's was so open compared to now – grazing.  
[management plan could retain the views?]

## LINKING

- Loss of path to Ashfield
- Opportunity
- Quarry underpass saved – opportunity to make good access & retain river corridor
- Opportunity of funding through making paths accessible for all?
- 'Scurry Burn' path used to be tarmac, inaccessible at the moment.

## WE LOVE OUR PARK

- We love our park and use it everyday
- It attracts many visitors to Dunblane
- CAR PARK – whole town a car park!
- Main things needing done to our park to make it better:  
Benches / path improvement / eradicate hogweed

[Funding- NHS idea]

## ALLAN WATER

- Why can't money be spent here?!
- It's our heritage!
- Walls needs maintained!!
- Mike Robins – collapsed path - waiting for a meeting
- Used to be a lovely path from High Street going into the garden, no longer accessible, it was an attraction in itself!
- This matter needs a community push for path restoration.

[make all views known, now is the time.]

## TEENAGE POD!

- The problem children were at school 2-3 yrs ago – these kids have grown up and moved on!

## PADDLING POOL

- Doesn't flow properly through it as it enters and leaves at a tangent therefore sediment builds up.
- Will not work.
- Hydrology studies needed  
[Hydrology study will be carried if there is demand enough for the paddling pool]
- Particularly beautiful area here
- Herons love it, always here.

## DDT

- Design is done by the consultants / council doesn't have the money / funding is required / up to us, the community, to facilitate the process of prioritising and fundraising.
- Can the research be made available?
- Yes – on DDT website and library.

## VIEWPOINTS FROM PEOPLE AFTER THE PRESENTATION

## NATURAL HISTORY

- Don't want excessive tidying up
- Paths need tending to
- More trees
- Wet area with frog spawn could be deeper
- Wildflower meadow?

- Knew about today through the Wire
- Uses entrance at the Cemetery entrance – very muddy
- Crossing works well as it is
- Great walk to Ashfield
- Local people with knowledge: SW TRUST members, Stirling
- Local ornithology group

## JOHN ARMITAGE

- In the last two years the amount of water on certain paths can reach 4-5 feet!
- Enjoys walking along river, but hard to do that now, should be reinstated
- Many springs on site – see drawings
- Put a bridge over frog spawn

## MID 30'S MARRIED GUY WITH 2 YOUNG BOYS

- Interpretation boards should be subtle
- Ashfield walk / circuit is great!
- Skate park works really well – well used and is sympathetic to its context
- West of the railway is well used, not formalised, walkways need improved sympathetically with natural surface, block work and decking
- Giant hogweed big problem
- Watched guys kayaking along the river, was great to see, was jealous!
- Reuse the pavilion
- Crossing works fine as it is
- Sledging is great in south west end of park
- Signs showing entrances not a problem, like that they are not there, not formalised.

## AUSTRALIAN COUPLE

- The drainage is a major problem
- Hadn't visited park for 18 months after losing their dog and couldn't believe the change over that time! Path destruction.
- Drainage has changed – ever since Barbush Estate was built drainage hasn't been the same
- Swamp like now
- Giant hogweed is awful
- Cinder paths would be great
- Focus on increase habitat
- Good plantings – hard standing needed
- Ramoyle particularly bad

Biodiversity Officer employed coming in from Spring onwards, Guy Harewood.

## FOOTBALL COACHES & CHAIRPERSON OF THE SOCCER CLUB

- 240 boys playing in home club
- Drainage, drainage, drainage – especially upper pitch.
- Moles
- The dream is to have a 4G pitch but a 3G will do!!! (???)
- Signage needs to be tidier
- Need a natural barrier along lower pitch as ball keeps getting kicked into the

river!

- Connection out with the park is fantastic – signs needed to show this

## DDT

- Create events within the park that encourage natural crafts, make and do – make a kite and fly it, for eg.

## SWT members

- The Bridge next to the, no closed, railway level crossing is currently used for access to the North Bank of Allan Water – fishermen/anglers/Dog walkers and Naturalists/Wildlife watchers – especially as a viewpoint to watch the 'sand martin' population. Could be a good circular route back to the Auchinlay road (though private land with horses).

## Uses Review Summary:

### Historic Uses and/or Formally proposed Uses:

- Golf
- Curling
- Football
- Shinty
- Bowling
- Putting
- Quoiting
- Badminton
- Croquet
- Animal Grazing (sheep Pasture)
- Fishing
- Leisure views
- Strategic defence
- Riverside walks
- General outdoor leisure and recreation
- Highland Games
- Sand and Gravel extraction

### Current Uses review:

- Children's Playground + Natural Play
- Wild Swimming + paddling
- Sports – Football
- Orienteering/cross country running
- Walking
- Dog walking
- Wildlife watching
- Foraging
- BMX (& Cycling)
- Skateboarding
- Fishing
- Leisure/Historic Views
- Access to local path connections (alternative non vehicular routes) to/from schools
- Education (Scouts/Guides/Schools/Nurseries)

### Potentials Uses:

Increase habitat – wetland  
 Better managed existing habitats – ecology to advise (native grass lands and less invasive native weeds & enriched woodlands where appropriate)  
 Energy – micro hydro  
 Cultural Events – Highland Games/Fireworks/Bonfire night  
 Increased use as an alternative non vehicular commuting/safer route to schools etc.  
 Historic interpretation and tourist destination within Dunblane  
 BMX / off road bike track or a Pump Track  
 Picnic ? BBQ area provision

## Constraints & Opportunities Summary:

### Constraints:

1. Steep slopes - topography
2. Allan Water & Scouring Burn (flood plains)
3. Existing buildings/development around entrances
4. Ecology & Habitat (particularly Otters, Voles & Bats – but also other issues)
5. Trees/woodland
6. Access – there is no disabled parking with in the park.
7. Existing railway cutting
8. Existing services – above and below ground.

### Issues:

1. Limited funding available - support access to funding sources
2. Semi remote site (edge of main settlement) on peninsula
3. Play area improvements?
4. Currently limited scope for management of habitats within park
5. Anecdotally – flooding to upper (and lower) pitches.
6. Sports pavilion in poor state of repair.
7. Derelict Public Toilets.
8. Derelict seating.
9. High quality historic walls in poor state of repair.
10. Some paths eroded due to flooding.
11. No paths lighting.
12. Poor natural surveillance in some areas
13. Well used park for dog walkers – dog litter bins?
14. Derelict BMX track
14. Hard to find the park from the City centre (Visitors/Tourists)
15. Giant hogweed eradication.
16. Derelict paddling pond adjacent to formal play area
17. Replacement of main vehicular access bridge required.
18. Anti social behaviour - various types

### Opportunities:

1. Hills/topography
2. Power production
3. Productive uses such as community orchards/fruit growing
4. Views to significantly wider landscape context
5. Historic & geographical interpretation
6. Improved paths network
7. Make it easier to find your way to & around the place including some targeted signage
8. Derelict Public Toilets
9. Derelict/poor condition seating/litterbins
10. Repair historic field boundary walls
11. Improved and structured approach to management of landscape for emerging aims of the master plan – i.e. Increased use/events
12. Improved entrance and connections to the park including key strategic connections e.g. Formalise Barbush desire paths through existing shelterbelt.
13. Improve Scouring Burns flood plain
14. Enriched Habitat creation within the above floodplain/wetlands area
15. Enrichment woodland planting as part of a management plan
16. Natural play – paddling pond - gravity fed fountains?

Laighills Park Masterplan Stakeholder Register: V5 08.10.13								
Stirling Group	Organisation	Directorate / Department	Contact Name	Contact	Why have they been identified?	Notified	Confirmed attendance?	People attending
<b>ECONOMIC &amp; BUSINESS STAKEHOLDERS</b>								
	Stirling Council	Economy Sport and Tourism, Employment & Youth Services, Viewforth, Stirling, FK8 2ET			acting on behalf of Raymond Groome			Iain Smith Property Liason Executive Stirling Council
	Scottish Enterprise	Regional Support Team, Apex House, 99 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5HD						
	Dunblane New Golf Course Ltd	Perth Road, Dunblane, Perthshire, FK15 0LJ			Club Secretary			
<b>ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITY</b>								
	Dunblane Centre	Stirling Road, Dunblane, FK15 9EY						
	Historic Scotland	Longmore House, Salisbury Place, Edinburgh EH9 1SH			Statutory obligation			
	Scottish Natural Heritage				Statutory obligation			
	Greenspace Scotland							
	Butterfly Conservation	Ballan House, Allan Park, Stirling						
	Bumblebee Conservation Trust	School of Biological & Environmental Sciences, University of Stirling FK9 4LA						
	Keep Scotland Beautiful	Strathallan House, Castleview Business Park, Stirling, FK9 4TZ			Co-ordinate Green Flag awards, Beautiful Scotland awards and other community engagement programmes			
	Scottish Wildlife Trust	Stirling Branch						
	Forestry Commission Scotland	Perth & Argyll Conservancy			Woodland Park			
	RSPB HQ Scotland	Dunedin House, 25 Ravelston Terrace, Edinburgh EH4 3TP						
	Stirling Council	Tourism Department						
	Stirling Local History Society							
	Stirling Archaeology Society							
	Stirling Council	Stirling Archives			Source of historical/ social information			
	Smith Museum							
<b>STATUTORY &amp; OTHER PUBLIC SECTOR</b>								
	Stirling Council	Environment - Head of Service			To general support from within Stirling Council and ensure the proposals are feasible			
	Stirling Council	Assets & Support Management			To general support from within Stirling Council and ensure the proposals are feasible			
	Stirling Council	Access Officer			To general support from within Stirling Council and ensure the proposals are feasible			
	Stirling Council	Biodiversity and Ranger Co-ordinator			To general support from within Stirling Council and ensure the proposals are feasible			
	Stirling Council	Youth Team			To general support from within Stirling Council and ensure the proposals are feasible			
	Stirling Council	Planning			To general support from within Stirling Council and ensure the proposals are feasible			
	Stirling Council	Planning Services, Viewforth, Stirling FK8 2ET			Conservation			Catherine Malley Planning Officer Conservation Team Stirling Council
	Stirling Council	Bridge and Flood Maintenance			To general support from within Stirling Council and ensure the proposals are feasible			
	Active Stirling	Sport/Health			To ensure local provision is made for sports and activities that are in demand in the area			
	Active Stirling	Sport/Health			To ensure local provision is made for sports and activities that are in demand in the area			
	Police Scotland	Community Police Dunblane Team			To ensure all proposals minimise crime and potential safety issues			Randolphfield

	Police Scotland	Police Scotland Architectural Liaison			To ensure all proposals minimise crime and potential safety issues					<b>Randolphfield</b>
	The Scottish Disability Equality Forum				To ensure the park is accessible in accordance with DDA regulation					
	Stirling Area Access Panel				To ensure the park is accessible in accordance with DDA regulation					<b>Robert Dick Chairperson Stirling Area Access Panel</b>
	Fire Scotland - Fire & Rescue Service	Alloa Fire Station			To ensure convenient access is provided for in case of emergencies					
	Scottish Ambulance Service	East Central Division, 76 Wash School Road, Dundee DD3 8PQ			To ensure convenient access is provided for in case of emergencies					
	Forth Valley NHS									
	Stirling Environment - Portfolio Holder	Councillor			To generate political support for the scheme					
	Stirling Councillors	Councillor			To generate political support for the scheme					
	Stirling Councillors	Councillor			To generate political support for the scheme					
	Stirling Councillors	Councillor			To generate political support for the scheme					
	Stirling Councillors	Councillor			To generate political support for the scheme					
<b>Community</b>										
	Dunblane Community Council	Chair			Local knowledge of the park and involvement in all aspects of improvement & strategies					
	Dunblane Development Trust	Representative			Local knowledge of the park and involvement in all aspects of improvement & strategies					
	MP	22 Viewfield Street, Stirling FK8 1UA			To generate political support for the scheme					
	MSP	Unit 4, Townhead Institute, 39 Drysdale Street, Alloa, FK10 1LY			To generate political support for the scheme					
	Dunblane Soccer Club	Nominated Representatives								
	Dunblane Primary School	Headteacher								
	Dunblane High School	Headteacher								
	Dunblane Allotment Association				Allotment site located near main access point to Laighills Park					
	Scouts/ Cubs/ Beavers	Dunblane								
	Guides/Brownies	Dunblane								
	Forth Valley Environmental Link	Earlsgate House 35 St Ninians Rd, Stirling FK8 2HE			Forth Valley Food Links and Forth Valley Orchard Group					
	Parent and toddler groups in Dunblane	Contact Early Childhood Co-ordination Officer			occasional user of park/play area					
	TCV, Allan Park, Stirling									
	Buglife - The Invertebrate Conservation Trust	Balallan House, 24 Allan Park, Stirling FK8 1QG								
	Butterfly Conservation	As Buglife								
	Scottish Ramblers Associations	Kingfisher House, Auld Mart Business Park, Milnathort, Kinross KY13 9DA			01786 841178					
	Dunblane & Bridge of Allan Rotary Club									
	Stirling Round Table									
	Stirling Council Libraries Service	Stirling Council, Viewforth, Stirling FK8 2ET								
	Central Scotland Forest Trust	Hillhouseridge, Shotts Kirk Road, Shotts, ML7 4JS								
	Forth Valley Orienteers									
	Stirling Bike Club									
<b>Steering Group</b>										
	Dunblane Community Council	Chair								

Dunblane Community Council	Secretary						
Dunblane Development Trust	Representative						
Dunblane Development Trust	Representative						
Stirling Council	Land Services Manager						
Stirling Council	Land Services Team Leader						
Stirling Council	Land Services, Team Leader						
Stirling Council	Land Services, Assistant Project Officer						
Stirling Council	Land Services, Biodiversity						



Laigh Hills Park, Dunblane  
Strategic Landscape Masterplan  
Booklet 3  
Technical Appendix 5 & 6



# Technical Appendix

## Contents:

**5.0 Budget Cost Estimate**

**6.0 Funding Strategy & Grant Funding Opportunities**



**The RENNIE PARTNERSHIP**

**STIRLING COUNCIL**

**LAIGH HILLS PARK, DUNBLANE  
STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN**

**APPENDIX 5  
BUDGET COST ESTIMATE**

**The Rennie Partnership  
Chartered Quantity Surveyors  
22 Locksley Crescent  
Cumbernauld  
Glasgow G67 4EL  
Tel: 01236 727706  
E-mail: [renniepartnership@btconnect.com](mailto:renniepartnership@btconnect.com)**

**STIRLING COUNCIL  
LAIGH HILLS PARK, DUNBLANE  
STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN**

**BUDGET COST ESTIMATE - 30th APRIL 2014**

The following cost estimate is based on Cannon Design drawings 4410.001 Rev B and 4410.002 Rev B.

Whilst every effort has been made to provide accurate areas and costs the lack of detailed information, specification and the small scale of the drawings (1:2000) available at this time means that the areas and costs noted below must be regarded as indicative only.

Please also note the exclusions listed at the end of this cost estimate.

**PATHS ETC. (Drawing 4410.002 Rev B)**

**PATH TYPE 1 - 3m wide stone dust vehicular path upgrade (220m)**

Regrade existing path	m2	660	£	1.50	£	990.00
Terram	m2	660	£	1.00	£	660.00
150 type 1 fully compacted and blinded	m2	660	£	7.00	£	4,620.00
Asphalt surfacing with resin bound finish	m2	660	£	35.00	£	23,100.00
Timber edging	m	440	£	5.00	£	2,200.00
Cross drainage channels	nr	15	£	75.00	£	1,125.00

**PATH TYPE 2 - 2m wide sealed surface path (420m)**

Regrade existing path	m2	840	£	1.50	£	1,260.00
Excavate for bench areas	m3	9	£	8.00	£	72.00
Spread and level excavated material on site	m3	9	£	10.00	£	90.00
Terram	m2	870	£	1.00	£	870.00
150 type 1 fully compacted	m2	870	£	7.00	£	6,090.00
50 whin blinding fully compacted	m2	870	£	1.50	£	1,305.00
Sealed surfacing	m2	870	£	20.00	£	17,400.00
Timber edging	m	852	£	5.00	£	4,260.00

**PATH TYPE 3 - Path restoration and retention (225m)**

Regrade existing path	m2	144	£	1.50	£	216.00
Excavate to form new path	m3	131	£	8.00	£	1,048.00
Spread and level excavated material on site	m3	131	£	10.00	£	1,310.00
Allow for work to retain bank					£	25,000.00
300 deep type 1	m3	78	£	40.00	£	3,120.00
Terram	m2	406	£	1.00	£	406.00
150 type 1 fully compacted	m2	406	£	7.00	£	2,842.00
50 whin blinding fully compacted	m2	406	£	1.50	£	609.00
Timber edging	m	450	£	5.00	£	2,250.00
Cross drainage channels	nr	12	£	45.00	£	540.00
Fencing to top of bank	m	145	£	35.00	£	5,075.00

**PATH TYPE 4 - Stone dust paths 1.8m wide (420m)**

Excavate to form new path	m3	151	£	8.00	£	1,208.00
Spread and level excavated material on site	m3	151	£	10.00	£	1,510.00
Terram	m2	840	£	1.00	£	840.00
150 type 1 fully compacted	m2	840	£	7.00	£	5,880.00
50 whin blinding fully compacted	m2	840	£	1.50	£	1,260.00
Timber edging	m	840	£	5.00	£	4,200.00
Cross drainage channels	nr	20	£	50.00	£	1,000.00
Allow for steps and handrails (2 sets on drawing)					£	1,000.00

PATH TYPE 4A - Repair existing stone dust paths 1.8m wide (160m)

Regrade existing path	m2	288	£	1.50	£	432.00
Terram	m2	288	£	1.00	£	288.00
150 type 1 fully compacted	m2	288	£	7.00	£	2,016.00
50 whin blinding fully compacted	m2	288	£	1.50	£	432.00
Timber edging	m	320	£	5.00	£	1,600.00
Cross drainage channels	nr	22	£	45.00	£	990.00
Allow for steps and handrails (2 sets)					£	1,000.00
Allow for repairs to stone walls					£	2,000.00
Allow for replacement of footbridge					£	7,500.00

PATH TYPE 5 - Stone dust paths 1.2m wide (995m)

Excavate to form new path	m3	239	£	8.00	£	1,912.00
Spread and level excavated material on site	m3	239	£	10.00	£	2,390.00
Terram	m2	1194	£	1.00	£	1,194.00
150 type 1 fully compacted	m2	1194	£	7.00	£	8,358.00
50 whin blinding fully compacted	m2	1194	£	1.50	£	1,791.00
Timber edging	m	1990	£	5.00	£	9,950.00
Cross drainage channels	nr	50	£	30.00	£	1,500.00
Allow for steps and - say 3 sets					£	1,500.00
Allow for tree surgery and felling					£	2,500.00
Allow for slope stabilisation as required					£	1,000.00

PATH TYPE 6 - Stone dust path 3m wide (410m)

Excavate to form new path	m3	246	£	8.00	£	1,968.00
Spread and level excavated material on site	m3	246	£	10.00	£	2,460.00
Terram	m2	1230	£	1.00	£	1,230.00
150 type 1 fully compacted	m2	1230	£	7.00	£	8,610.00
50 whin blinding fully compacted	m2	1230	£	1.50	£	1,845.00
Timber edging	m	820	£	5.00	£	4,100.00
Cross drainage channels	nr	20	£	75.00	£	1,500.00

PATH TYPE 7 - Timber boardwalk 1.8m wide (430m)

Allow for tree surgery and felling as required					£	2,500.00
Allow for cutting back vegetation					£	1,500.00
Non-slip timber boardwalk 1.8m wide	m	430	£	180.00	£	77,400.00
Handrail/balustrade to both sides	m	860	£	35.00	£	30,100.00
Allow for pond dipping access deck					£	1,500.00
Allow for repairs to existing stairs					£	500.00
Allow for replacement of existing stair handrail					£	350.00
Allow for rebuilding stone wall					£	2,500.00

PATH TYPE 8 - Timber boardwalk 3m wide (130m)

Allow for tree surgery and felling as required					£	2,500.00
Allow for cutting back vegetation					£	1,000.00
Non-slip timber boardwalk 3m wide	m	130	£	300.00	£	39,000.00
Handrail/balustrade to both sides	m	260	£	35.00	£	9,100.00

PATH TYPE 9 - Access road/path improvements (260m)

Plane existing road surface	m2	780	£	10.00	£	7,800.00
Kerbing to both sides	m	520	£	25.00	£	13,000.00
Two layer surfacing	m2	780	£	25.00	£	19,500.00
Filter drain to one side	m	260	£	15.00	£	3,900.00
Allow for drainage outfalls to river					£	500.00
Uplift and renew slabbed footpath	m2	72	£	35.00	£	2,520.00
Allow for replacement of vehicular bridge over burn					£	25,000.00

NEW ACCESS PATH

Allow for new access path in partnership with Greenbelt management company					£	10,000.00
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SIGNAGE

Allow for entrance signage etc					£	5,000.00
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**SOFT LANDSCAPE ETC. (Drawing 4410.001 Rev B)****LANDSCAPING, PLANTING ETC.**

Maintenance to existing rough/natural grassland - trim and reduce large trees and shrubs	m2	64275	£	2.00	£	128,550.00
Enrichment planting - trim as before and plant whips at 1/5m2	m2	23475	£	3.00	£	70,425.00
Native thicket planting	m2	1575	£	8.00	£	12,600.00
Fencing around thicket planting	m	265	£	10.00	£	2,650.00
Wetland habitat restoration	m2	35050	£	2.00	£	70,100.00
Bulb planting	m2	2000	£	1.50	£	3,000.00
Beech hedging	m	150	£	10.00	£	1,500.00
Orchard planting	m2	5375	£	5.00	£	26,875.00

**PONDS**

Excavate to form ponds	m3	2068	£	10.00	£	20,680.00
Spread and level excavated material on site	m3	2068	£	10.00	£	20,680.00
Puddled clay to base of historic pond only	m2	1075	£	10.00	£	10,750.00
Allow for pond planting	m2	3182	£	3.00	£	9,546.00

**BUILDINGS ETC**

Allow for new toilet block - No details, built in position of existing, connecting to existing drainage					£	65,000.00
Allow for viewpoint - no details but allow for hard paving, walling, benches etc					£	20,000.00
Allow for redesign/alterations to existing off-road/BMX bike track					£	20,000.00

**SITE FURNITURE ETC.**

Benches - as shown on drawing	nr	13	£	450.00	£	5,850.00
Picnic tables - as shown on drawing	nr	7	£	650.00	£	4,550.00
Allow for renewal of play equipment					£	20,000.00
Allow for bird and bat boxes					£	2,500.00
Allow for site and interpretative signage					£	10,000.00

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£ 973,848.00

Contract preliminaries					£	97,500.00
					£	1,071,348.00

Contingencies					£	50,000.00
					£	1,121,348.00

**EXCLUSIONS**

All work and fees in relation to the railway bridge  
All work and fees in relation to the Micro Hydropower  
Any investigative work and costs required for drainage, hydrology and biological studies,  
All work outwith the site to provide disabled parking and parking restrictions  
Professional fees and VAT



# Laigh Hills Park, Dunblane

## Funding Strategy & Grant Funding Opportunities

02nd April

Steve Taylor – Managing Director  
7 Glenpark Avenue, Glasgow, G46 7JE, Scotland

Telephone: +44 (0)141 621 2989  
Fax: +44 (0) 141 620 1126  
Mobile: +44 (0) 7887 630693

Web: [www.ideeas.net](http://www.ideeas.net)  
e-mail: [steve@ideeas.net](mailto:steve@ideeas.net)

## Introduction

The Masterplan can be broken down into a number of separate elements and for funding purposes, it may be useful to try and consider the plan as a set of linked proposals rather than an overall strategic plan. This is because the various funds available will have strict guidelines as to what they can and can't fund. This means that a large number of funding applications will have to be made, with no guarantee of success.

It is worth noting some basic guidelines for attracting funding especially in relation to writing grant applications.

1. Very few grants provide 100% of funds; most expect some match funding to be provided by the applicant. 50% is a typical grant rate, but each fund is different.
2. Funds change over time. What is available today may not be available next year. Priorities change and funds run out. It is worth applying whenever a fund is available rather than thinking it might be possible to apply to that fund in a later year.
3. The funders make the rules. If they say they need something then it must be provided. Many grants have been lost because of small administrative errors. A key point is that work must not start before the funding is approved.
4. The funders also set their own priorities. If they say they support something specific then that is what they will fund. Too many applications are unsuccessful because the applicant felt that their project is good and highlighted its strengths – while they might highlight an excellent project, if it doesn't cover what the funder specifies then the application will be unsuccessful.
5. Timing can be difficult. Often in the rush to meet a deadline an application might be made before all costs are known. Funders are reluctant to fund something if they are not confident that the costs provided are the final costs. So where there is still uncertainty over costs it is better to firm up figures before submitting a funding application.

## The Funding Strategy

It is our recommendation that the funding strategy is clearly defined and agreed at an early stage. It is also our opinion that funding strategies are not easy to follow, simply because writing applications is a time consuming and often thankless task, there are “losers” as well as “winners” which can be off-putting, different members of a steering group or management body might have different priorities and different opinions on how to write funding applications. With this in mind, the strategy described below is suggested as a way forward, although local players should develop and fine tune the strategy to suit their precise situation. The key elements of the proposed funding strategy are:

### ***Setting Up the most appropriate vehicle for managing the process***

We recommend that a charitable “Friends of Laigh Hills Park” type community organisation is set up. It is likely that the existing Dunblane Development Trust might be a suitable vehicle for this purpose and should be considered in the first instance as the potential lead Funding body. Should DDT not wish to take on this role, then it is recommended that a new community driven body with charitable status be set up purely with the purpose of activating the funding strategy and applying for grants. Given the extensive nature of the development proposals and the need to apply for multiple grants, there may be benefits in having more than one body playing this role, largely because some funds restrict applicants to one grant per year or one application every two years. A second, related but more targeted organisation, could work alongside DDT and specialise for example in sports field provision or projects that enhance education. There are disadvantages to setting up an organisation with charitable status, and charity trustees/directors will have responsibilities, but this model provides a community driven, not for profit body to apply for grants. Some grants are only open to registered charities. The charity should be registered with OSCR (who have simplified the process in recent years). As a first step, advice could be sought from Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise who will advise on the different types of charitable status available, the benefits and disbenefits and the responsibilities. It is likely that the trustees will be elected initially by a community meeting and potentially annually at an AGM thereafter.

#### ***Grants, donations, investments, activities and sponsorship***

Funding can come from different sources. The easiest to control is the grant funding element and this should be a priority because the Friends of Laigh Hills Park can prepare and submit applications and watch as funding targets are being met through successful applications. Not every grant application will be successful; the process is time consuming (and often dispiriting as rejection letters arrive) and needs hard work from committed members (who will probably be volunteers). Winning grants is a tough job and consideration could be given to paying experts to write applications. This however, is not universally popular and it will mean giving away valuable funds and very few professionals are prepared to work on a voluntary basis. However, appointing a professional to provide some advice and help with some management, overseeing and perhaps editing of initial applications may be a worthwhile investment. It is worth noting that grants often need match funding, so other avenues will have to be pursued to ensure that enough funding is secured.

Donations can offer valuable assistance. This could come from local businesses, wills or those currently active with the park. However, this is a difficult area for many organisations. How exactly do they get someone to leave funds to the cause in a will!? It is not easy, but there may be local personalities who have potential access to people who might donate funds. One opportunity might arise through housebuilders who may be encouraged through relevant planning permissions to donate to the park restoration as an element of planning gain or planning agreement. Often known as Developer Contributions the process is covered in Scottish Government Planning Circular 1/2010<sup>1</sup>

Some donations could take the form of sponsorship, although this is not a route favoured by all. Could naming rights be sold? Would a local (or national) business be interested in having say the

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/01/27103054/0>

sports pitches named after them? Working with businesses to try to attract sponsorship could form a useful element of the strategy. Could local sporting heroes be contacted for their support?

There are very few investment opportunities as it is unlikely that many of the elements of the park will generate income. However, a micro hydro scheme could possibly be funded as an investment – the organisation who pays for it would receive the income from the Feed in Tariffs and electricity generated. The organisation behind this could easily be a not for profit community group, who may possibly access a low interest loan devised to help increase renewable energy. This option is worth investigating further. Unfortunately other investment opportunities appear limited unless lets on sports pitches could be charged by a private investor. Not all supporters of the park would favour this as it's clearly a step towards a privatised park.

There are many activities that could be carried out to help raise funds. This is where local residents, schools and sports clubs take it upon themselves to help raise money through carrying out sponsored activities, fund days, and general fundraising activities. Plots of the park could be sold and monitored on a large map (e.g. members of the public purchase a sq. m of parkland and are recognised by being named on a permanently available plan of the park). While local fundraising activities are unlikely to generate all the income required they have several advantages; they encourage participation and ownership by the local population, they help to ensure a no-local-stone-unturned approach (in that by involving more people it is likely that most residents will be targeted somehow for a contribution however small), they can involve schoolchildren (and their parents) who are less likely for example, to write grant applications.

Overall, the best approach is likely to involve grants, donations, sponsorship and local activities. In this way many more people can feel that they have contributed which is useful for the longer term acceptance and support for the park and each option will hopefully reinforce the others.

### ***Understanding of Quick wins and a Longer Game***

Sometimes grant funding can be a slow process – for example there is one lottery fund where the final outcome is unlikely to be known until 18 months after the application is first submitted. While the bigger funds will inevitably take time to come through, there may be benefit in applying for some smaller, but quicker grants to help create momentum and retain the enthusiasm of those involved. If each grant win is well publicised locally it will help create a positive spirit and potentially further support. It will also demonstrate that the Friends of Laigh Hills Park or other responsible body are actually working and being active and successful.

### ***Partnership working where appropriate***

There may be opportunities to work with others – for example some funds are only open to local authority applicants. The approach should be to make friends and work with others, rather than trying to go it alone.

### ***Maintain a grant funding schedule***

This is an administrative task which can be tedious, but it helps keep the responsible body active and progressive. It is also a common complaint that boards or voluntary management organisations

accidentally miss grant deadlines because they weren't aware of them. This is not a criticism, keeping tabs on every grant deadline is difficult and time consuming, but if someone is made responsible for it, and a process is established, then fewer deadlines are likely to be missed. The schedule will also highlight priorities, quick wins, elements that might be covered by a grant and responsibilities.

### ***Maintain an aggressive progress reporting structure***

Interest will inevitably wane if the first few grant funding applications are unsuccessful. Pressure would be developed at the outset by setting dates for monthly meetings for the first year and perhaps every 6-8 weeks thereafter to ensure that the funding strategy is being followed and that applications are being submitted. A highly visible funding thermometer (which shows the “mercury rising” as each new financial success is added and which shows a target figure) is suitable in some cases, but in the case of Laigh Hills park, there are probably too many unknowns and too many disparate elements of the overall scheme to make this approach worthwhile.

## **The Strategic Landscape Masterplan**

The Masterplan recommends a large number of activities, investments, proposals and management actions. While it may seem time consuming, the best means to win funding is to break the project down into constituent parts and apply for funds for each of these. The reasons for this will become clear as each specific part is covered below.

It should be noted that at any one time there may be as many as 3000 grants available across the UK. For this reason, the list below is representative rather than exhaustive. This section should be updated and reviewed once precise costs are known and any permission granted. However, the application process can begin when one element is ready to go even if the full development costs are not known. For this reason, the first section to be considered is the micro hydro feasibility study which could, probably started immediately.

### **1 Micro hydro feasibility study**

There is one fund that provides opportunities for supporting renewable energy feasibility studies. Micro Hydro should be a suitable technology to qualify for this grant.

Known as **CARES**, the fund is administered by Local Energy Scotland and is targeted at Community driven schemes. The fund asks “Are you in the early stages of thinking about a community renewable energy project and not sure where to start?”

CARES provides grant funding to help towards the start-up costs of feasibility studies, community consultation and other preparatory costs. Up to £10,000 is available for community groups to fund non-capital aspects of a project.

You may wish to look at what is feasible in your area, learn what other groups have undertaken, or develop a plan for a community benefit income stream from a local CARES loan funded renewable energy project, or from a large-scale commercial development.

These should be early stage activities without which the installations would not be able to go ahead. Before applying for CARES funding we recommend reviewing your ideas with our team and also looking to other sources of funding for early stage community capacity building activity.

Further Information: <http://www.localenergyscotland.org/media/25590/Start-up-Grant-Guidance.pdf>

Grants of up to 100% might be available up to a maximum of £10,000.

This fund stresses that the scheme should be community driven and the application should therefore be the local community council or a properly constituted local community group or trust.

The initial requirement is for a feasibility study, and CARES / Local Energy Scotland offer the best prospect for attracting funds to support a feasibility study.

## 2 Sports Pitch Drainage Improvements

Although the requirement is for drainage improvements, it may be worth extending the focus to the overall management of the sports pitches, and in this way grants could possibly be won which include an element of funds for drainage but also contribute to the longer term well-being, maintenance and management of the pitches.

The starting point should be based on developing a relationship with Sport Scotland who may wish to develop a formal relationship with any club who may wish to use the pitches regularly. Working with SportScotland is key to successful fund raising for pitch improvements and they may well offer a development officer to work with the project to ensure long term continuity.

**The Sport Facilities Fund.** This programme covers the provision or upgrading of all facilities for the general community. In the main, proposals will be led by local authorities, clubs or trusts.

This fund supports developments that are for the public good and will provide opportunities for increased sports participation by the community at local level.

Priority will be given to projects that have established/will establish with the sports programmes and/or initiatives operated by the local authority, national governing body for sport and their associates/partners.

Applicants need to demonstrate that the proposed development is for the public good and will provide equitable opportunities for increased sports participation by the community at local level.

This fund is for capital expenditure only and not for projects that are already underway, or where building contracts are already let.

**Legacy 2014: Sustainable Sport for Communities Fund** is a £1m fund which will help communities to be able to realise their ambitions of owning and running their own sports facilities.

The initial package of support available will focus on clubs and organisations delivering sport and physical activity in their community who wish to:

- take on ownership and operation of existing local facilities
- build and operate new facilities
- make better use of current facilities through capital improvements

Clubs and organisations will initially be invited to apply for a package of support up to a maximum of £25,000 to cover the cost of investigating and progressing their ideas. This could include technical support such as architect and design fees, feasibility studies, community engagement, legal and financial support, mentoring support and assistance with organisational development.

Note: The closing date for expressions of interest is 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2014.

The applicant should be either a local sports club or a specifically formed Laigh Hills Park Amateur Community Sports Club.

**The CashBack for Pitches Fund** has been created from monies recovered under Proceeds of Crime legislation. A total of £2million of CashBack funding has been made available by the Scottish Government to support the delivery of a network of full size third generation synthetic turf pitches for rugby and football in communities across Scotland, focussed on, although not exclusively, where anti-social behaviour, violence and crime particularly affects the life chances of those living in or around these communities, with a clear emphasis on young people (under the age of 19).

Awards are limited to a maximum of 50% of the total eligible project cost, up to a maximum of £300,000.

Applications are invited from, preferably, local authorities, worked up fully in partnership with rugby and football clubs. The partner clubs must be able to demonstrate a track record of investing in and supporting increasing numbers of players and teams at particularly junior and youth levels and be actively engaged with the Scottish FA or Scottish Rugby across the key developmental areas.

**The Barclays Community Sports Awards** is an award to recognise the outstanding achievements of individuals and groups that use sport to benefit communities across the UK. It is a very competitive scheme that only offers small grants so perhaps might not be a priority.

The Maximum award is £5000

Further info: <http://www.barclayscommunitysportsaward.com/> 

The fund supports more than just pitch improvement

- Facilities / Buildings / Places
- Equipment
- Performance sports and athletes
- Coaching
- Training or continuous professional development
- Projects specifically targeted at young people
- Projects specifically targeted at students
- Community sport
- Projects designed to engage people in sport

- Outdoor sport

### 3 Biodiversity and habitat management

The aim here is to attract funds to help meet the costs of Native woodland planting, wetland habitat improvements & 'wild' grass lands management.

The main sources of funding are likely to be through Central Scotland Green Network, The Forestry Commission and Scottish Natura Heritage. The Central Scotland Development Fund 2014-15 is expected to offer a good opportunity but unfortunately the fund is now closed to new applications. It is hoped that this will reopen next year.

The Forestry Commission also offer opportunities for winning funds through several regular schemes. These include:

#### [RP22701 Woodland Improvement Grant - long term forest planning](#)

For preparing a 10-20 year plan of the management of woodlands on a property. This grant is open to new applications during 2014 and is subject to an "on-going approval process".

#### [RP22703 Woodland Improvement Grant - woodland habitats and species](#)

Preparing a management plan and carrying out work that will benefit habitats or species that are a priority under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. This option is open to new applications during the 2014 transitional arrangements provided that the woodland activities take place to bring designated site SSSIs into favourable condition.

#### [RP22704 Woodland Improvement Grant - restructuring regeneration](#)

For even-aged woodland areas that are to be restructured through tree felling and re-planting. This grant is open to new applications during the 2014 transitional arrangements.

#### [RP22705 Woodland Improvement Grant - non-woodland habitats](#)

Preparing a management plan and carrying out work that will benefit priority habitats under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

This option is open the new applications during the 2014 transitional arrangements provided that the woodland activities take place to bring designated site SSSIs into favourable condition.

The Grow wild grant is currently closed but may reopen. It targets youth groups which may offer the project an opportunity to broaden the age group that can play a genuinely active part in the park's development.

Youth groups are invited to apply for grants of £500 to £5000 from Grow Wild to create exciting transformational wild flower sites in their local area. Smaller Young Grow Wild grants are also available of up to £100 for youth groups via Youth Scotland.

Grow Wild is working with Greenspace Scotland and Youth Scotland to provide funding to Scottish groups and communities to use native wildflowers and plants to create a space for everyone to enjoy. It is a nationwide initiative to inspire people and communities to come together to sow, grow and support UK native wild flowers, led by Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and backed by the Big Lottery Fund.

A Grow Wild project might be an unloved area to be reclaimed for the local community. Or perhaps somewhere that's a bit neglected or run-down to be turned into an inspiring space for everyone.

## 4 Community orchard

Forth Environment Link has funded the Central Scotland Green Network Orchard Grant Scheme 2013 / 2014 although its future is currently unknown. It is hoped that a variation of it will reopen in the next year.

The scheme, supported by the CSGN Development Fund 2013, aims to encourage anyone with an interest in orchards – including communities, schools, public agencies and landowners - to plant and manage orchards, use them for learning or celebrations, or use the fruit more productively.

The CSGN Orchard Grant Scheme is open to all groups and individuals in the CSGN area, as long as they can demonstrate wider community involvement in the design, creation and management of the project, and can provide evidence of landowner approval.

Grants of between £100 and £500 are available for designing and creating new orchards, managing traditional or other existing orchards, enhancing orchard biodiversity, and developing orchards as a learning ground.

## 5 Children's play and picnic area improvements.

This is a particularly difficult area to fund and there are two approaches to attracting grants:

- Include it in an overall park upgrade application to the National Lottery or other major funder
- Trawl local and national charities such as the Ernest Cook Foundation, Esmee Fairbairn or others (refer to the Charitable Trust section)

Under current grant funding programmes it is difficult to see many prospects for grants specifically aimed at improving picnic areas. Perhaps this could be an opportunity for sponsorship or private business support.

## 6 Paths, access and some signage

The Paths for All (Scotland) fund offers small grants, up to £1,500, and the current round has a March 2014 deadline, although this will probably reopen for next year. The sum is too small to do anything meaningful at Laigh Hills, but could possibly be applied for under the “quick win” principle. The funds could be used to cover costs of equipment, literature, organising events etc. to deal with new paths and could be a useful starter for a new organisation to help get local residents involved. It may possible provide enough for signage or a significant starting point.

Cycling Scotland have also run a fund called the cycle friendly and sustainable communities fund. Although the latest round is closed, they hope to reopen soon. This may possibly give some funds towards cycle pathways. Grants tend to be small but at the very least Cycle Scotland should be contacted and a relationship established to help understand any future potential cycle path awards.

Further info: <http://www.cyclingscotland.org/our-projects/award-schemes/cycle-friendly-community-project>

Contact should also be made with Sustrans who administer the Community Links Programme. This fund supports the creation of cycling infrastructure and may help fund cycle paths within the park.

## 7 A new toilet & park shelter

This is potentially the most difficult single item to get funding for. In short, not many funders want to provide grants for toilets! But it should be a useful item to be included in an overall park upgrade. For example, Heritage Lottery grant provided to Rouken Glen Park in East Renfrewshire this year included funds to upgrade toilets as part of a pavilion improvement.

## 8 Proposed pedestrian railway bridge over the main line railway

It is unlikely that there will be a specific fund for financing bridges over railway lines. It is recommended that a dialogue is started with Network Rail. Although Network Rail work to a business plan (2014-19) which is approved by the regulator and has little room for discretionary spend, it may be useful to start a dialogue such that a pedestrian bridge might be considered in a future business plan. This would be a long term approach and could possibly mean that a bridge would not be funded until after 2019, which could tie in with a possible proposed electrification programme. The key issue will be to make sure the opportunity is not missed.

The alternative is to include a pedestrian bridge in an overall park enhancement programme as part of a major application. At this stage the costs v benefits are not clear, but initial thoughts are that the benefits might appear small compared to the likely costs.

## 9 Viewpoints and educational interpretation signage.

There are funds for interpretation and signage, but they are limited in scale and scope and not too many funds are open at present. Scottish Natural Heritage have some small funds which may possibly be suitable although most are currently closed. Their key outcome priorities are:

**Outcome 1 - more people experiencing, enjoying and valuing nature and landscapes**

**Outcome 2 - improve the quality and management of Scotland's nature and landscapes**

**Outcome 3 - nature and landscapes making an increased contribution to the Scottish economy**

**Outcome 4 - better places in which to live, work and visit are created**

And any applications would have to demonstrate that it clearly meets one or more of these priorities.

## 10 BMX/Pump track.

There is one obvious fund for supporting a BMX type track, but time is tight. Two rounds remain with closing dates of 1st July 2014 and 1st February 2015.

**The Legacy 2014 Active Places Fund** supports the Scottish Government's legacy ambitions to encourage more people to be active and take part in sport. Physical activity can help people become healthier and fitter. The Fund will do this by providing funding for capital projects which create or improve places in local communities where people can go to get active. Grants of between £10,000 and £100,000 are available for a very wide range of community-led projects such as new bike or skate parks, outdoor adventure facilities, walking routes, or new projects within school estates. (For projects that require funding of less than £10,000 please apply to Awards for All.) In total, £10 million is available until 2015.

Further

info: [http://www.sportscotland.org.uk/sportscotland/Documents/facilities/ActivePlaces/Active\\_Places\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://www.sportscotland.org.uk/sportscotland/Documents/facilities/ActivePlaces/Active_Places_Guidelines.pdf)

Projects will need to demonstrate that they will make a difference in terms of impact on physical activity or sports participation. This might be through creating new facilities, upgrading or improving the accessibility of existing ones, or reducing barriers to activity.

## 11 Removal of non-native invasive species.

There is one fund which may help. This is through the Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP) and is available to rural land managers within limited geographically targeted areas and is for only for specific species listed

at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/SRDP/RuralPriorities/Options/Controlofinvasivenon-nati>

To qualify for funding for invasive non-native plant control, applicants must be located within the specific targeted areas where the plant species has been identified as a particular threat by SNH, SEPA or the FCS. In these areas applications will only be considered if they are part of a collaborative project or plan. The application must either complement an existing plan/project or be part of a new co-ordinated plan/project within an area, catchment-wide or other self-contained area/habitat.

Outside of the SRDP, it is very difficult to attract funding specifically for removing non-native invasive species and a sum should be allowed for and included in an overall park restoration application. However, contact should be made with the River Forth Fisheries Trust who have secured some funds to treat invasive species in riparian environments.

## 12 Local nature reserve

This could be the focus of a major application to a National Lottery Fund or major charitable foundation. Together with the difficult to fund aspects such as the toilet block, an overall park masterplan application could be prepared. As these would ask for substantial funds it is inevitable that they will require significant up front work, will be competitive with many unsuccessful applications and may be a slow time consuming process.

The options fall into two categories; National Lottery and Charitable Trusts

## National Lottery Funding

The National lottery Funds include:

### Community Spaces Scotland

This fund supports communities to become more involved in, and to take responsibility for, their local environment, communal spaces and places.

Minimum award: £10000

Maximum award: £250000

This fund is only available in certain postcode areas: while the postcode of the park is not clear it is known that the nearby FK15 area is not eligible.

### Heritage Lottery Fund

This fund has several strands. The most obvious sounding is the parks for people strand, although it should be noted that this is for existing parks not new parks. In order to be successful we would have to demonstrate that at least part of the area is a current park and that this is not a new creation. This fund also requires partnership working especially with the local authority. If successful, this fund can provide up to a maximum of £5m, such that it should be considered a priority.

The Landscape Partnerships fund is similarly large.

### Rethinking Parks

This is a new programme to find and support parks innovators to develop, implement and spread new approaches to sustaining and making the most of UK public parks.

Over the next two years the fund will back a small number of parks innovators to test and scale new business models to enable public parks to thrive in the 21st century.

As this is UK wide and likely to be very competitive, the opportunity might be limited.

## Our Environment Our Future

This fund aims to invest £30 million in around 25-35 projects across the UK, each of which will support young people (aged 11-24) to improve their local environment. The projects will all be selected and supported by a lead organisation (or partnership of organisations) that will:

- link the projects together as a single coherent portfolio (having worked with us to select them)
- help the projects to scale-up or replicate successful approaches
- Facilitate sharing of best practice and learning between them (and share this more widely).

This is possibly not an ideal fund and will be hugely competitive as its UK wide.

## The Scottish Land Fund

This is targeted at rural communities and Dunblane might qualify as it meets the criteria of having a population of less than 10,000. However, eligibility should be checked with the Big Lottery before progressing an application. The fund is aimed at helping communities purchase land and may provide some initial running costs. This may not be the immediate priority for Laigh Hills.

## The People's Millions

The deadline for this fund is 16<sup>th</sup> May 2014, and community groups can apply for up to £50,000. The overall winners are selected by ITV audiences so project ideas will need to capture the public imagination.

## Invest in Ideas

This is a useful fund as it may release up to £10,000 to assess the feasibility of an idea. Applying for this at an early stage can help appoint specialists to refine costs or project ideas which can then be subject to a larger Lottery application.

## Investing in Communities

This is a major Big Lottery fund with four strands; Growing Community Assets is probably the most appropriate strand for this project. This fund normally seeks to help communities who wish to own the assets, which may include land, and then for the community to become more sustainable through improving their economic, environmental and social future through the ownership and development of the local assets.

## Charitable Foundations

There are well over 1000 charitable foundations that might award grants towards a project of this type and it would not be practical to list them all here. In almost all cases, the applicant must have

charitable status. The aim should be to select perhaps 5-6 likely funds which clearly state in their guidance that they would support the development of a park. Some possible funds worth targeting include:

- The Ashden Trust – UK wide, grants of usually around £10,000 are made towards sustainable regeneration, environment and community arts and sustainable energy.
- The Balcombe Trust – UK wide, approximately four grants offered per year totalling around £100,000 towards environmental projects
- Ernest Cook Trust – around £500,000 per year to give to environmental projects across the UK. Focus on young people and the environment and rural conservation
- The Peter De Haan Trust – looks to fund large scale projects that make a difference at a regional scale, and which increase understanding of nature and wildlife.
- Esmee Fairbairn Foundation – one of the larger and better known trusts which makes around £4million per year available to environmental projects across the UK. One of their strands supports biodiversity and conservation action.
- The Freshfield Foundation – supports work which helps to mitigate climate change and broader environmental work. Usually provides grants in the range £5,000 - £80,000.
- The Gannochy Trust – although this fund favours projects in Perthshire it does sometimes give grants to other areas of Scotland. One priority is care for the natural and man-made environment.
- J Paul Getty Jnr Trust – does not support sport or leisure, but will support gardens, historic landscapes and wilderness projects.
- The Robertson Trust – may help sports projects, health or community arts.
- The Waterloo Foundation – particularly interested in supporting woodland projects that can help mitigate man made climate change.
- Garfield Weston – provide around £1million per year to environmental projects

The above is simply a flavour of the types of charitable trusts available. An application should be made only if the body applying has charitable status. It is also worth gaining detailed information from each fund's website, speaking to the fund administrators by telephone and then developing a strategy based on applying to a small number of funds where the telephone response suggested that the Laigh Hills Park idea fitted exactly with the charity's aims and aspirations.

#### Climate Challenge Fund

This is a Scottish fund which offers grants to community groups which demonstrate that their project will provide a demonstrable and measurable reduction in CO2 emissions, while providing a lasting low carbon legacy. Examples would be projects which establish food growing or reduce food miles (e.g. allotments); projects to conserve energy (energy efficiency education and practical implementation measures) and projects which reduce private car transport (cycling, public transport as a lasting regular alternative to current car miles). At first glance Laigh Hills Park doesn't appear to meet the right criteria, but thought could be given to developing a project within the park which has CO2 reduction as a primary goal. This could be educational, but unfortunately would not cover investment in renewable energy schemes.

# Connon Design

Landscape Architecture + Urban Design

Unit 2.1, 59 Main Street  
The Village  
Cumbernauld  
G67 2RT