

The Potential Effects of Built Development on Landscape Character: Keith North East

	Strath	Undulating Ridges	Shallow Elevated Slopes
Landscape Character	<p>Negative/neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some large industrial buildings are located along the strath, but no domestic scaled buildings Housing across the low lying land would detract from the consistent association which the residential development has with higher, more elevated land which contributes to the unity of the existing settlement The low lying land is subject to flooding However, residential development on some of the higher slopes would reflect the existing settlement association with landform 	<p>Negative/neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further development over much of this area would be across slopes which are orientated away from the existing settlement, and are detached from the settlement Expansion is likely to be compromised by the overhead lines which encircle the settlement edge However, there is some localised containment created by subtle landform and the cemetery around the fields immediately adjacent to the settlement 	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relatively enclosed areas of low lying land to the south east of the town lend themselves well to development which would reduce the fragmented character and link into the focus of the existing settlement at Reidhaven Square The quality and character of this landscape is one of generally poor design and neglect, which could be improved by well designed new development
Settlement Form	<p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Settlement form would extend onto low lying land, away from the existing relationship with the higher ground The railway and bonded warehouses create physical barriers making it difficult to fully integrate these low lying areas of land into the town as residential areas 	<p>Negative/neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Settlement across the slopes that are orientated away from the existing settlement would diminish the well defined relationship between the settlement and the slopes facing each other across the River Isla However development adjacent to the settlement edge would maintain the association between the residential parts of the town and the elevated landform 	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The low lying slopes are well contained and related to the existing settlement pattern Well designed development could integrate isolated development at Den Crescent into the settlement
Landscape Setting	<p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This landscape contributes to the setting because of the contrast in character, although it is not of particularly high quality 	<p>Neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area contributes less to landscape setting than other features, such as the river valleys and more dramatic undeveloped slopes 	<p>Neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development in this area would not affect the landscape setting of the town

Sense of Arrival	<p>Neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development in this area would not affect sense of arrival 	<p>Neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cemetery is the key feature on arrival, although the school also reinforces the sense of arrival. Limited development would not affect this, particularly as recent development already breaches the high point on Banff Road 	<p>Neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development in this area would not affect any sense of arrival from a major route
Settlement Edge	<p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the railway creates a very robust settlement edge, which is reinforced by the change of gradient and the presence of the industrial buildings 	<p>Neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the existing settlement edge is not particularly strongly emphasised, and the cemetery or other existing linear features could provide alternative boundary options • the overhead lines limit settlement expansion and options for edge reinforcement 	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well designed development could reduce fragmentation along this settlement edge • Well established tracks could form alternative settlement edges
Views and Visual Features	<p>Neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The area is very open and building would be visible from the minor road to Newmill, but would be generally well contained from more major roads 	<p>Neutral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small stretch of the edge of the settlement at Banff Road is visible from a distance, so visual containment has been slightly compromised, although extending the settlement to the cemetery would not increase the amount of the town which is visible, due to foreshortening of views. 	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development could include planting which would help to screen the substation from the settlement, otherwise low lying land is not highly visible

5.2 Keith North East: Opportunities and Constraints for Development

5.2.1 Preferred Opportunities for Development

Opportunities to extend the settlement within this study area are largely limited to the south east corner within the Shallow Elevated Slopes character area. However, here there is scope to use development positively to reduce the existing fragmentation of the settlement and to enhance the landscape setting of the town, particularly by reducing the visual impact of the existing electricity substation.

Development in this location would be orientated towards the town, and also have good links to Reidhaven Square as well as the high street. It could be contained and sheltered by existing landform and have ready access to a network of footpaths which link into this area.

Development is less appropriate for the remaining character areas. Development along the floor of the Strath would reduce the consistent relationship between the settlement and higher ground. However, there are some opportunities for residential development on the upper slopes contained within the town along the northern edge of the settlement.

In addition, there may be an opportunity to locate a more industrial type development, accessed off the A96, between the filling station on the A96 and the bonded warehouses along the strath floor. Careful landscape design and landform grading would be required to accommodate such a development.

Development across the Undulating Ridges is likely to be largely limited by the overhead wires and pylons which straddle this area. Otherwise, although development would extend the town onto slopes which are largely orientated away from the existing settlement, the fields immediately adjacent to Banff Road are locally contained and would provide an option for expansion, although only eastwards as far as the cemetery.

5.2.2 Long Term Options

Long term options for settlement expansion could most appropriately focus on developing the south eastern corner of the settlement. This area of land is bounded by steep sided river valleys, which reflects some of the existing character of the settlement. It is not widely visible but is well linked to the existing settlement directly to Reidhaven Square.

Expansion of the settlement in this area would require detailed master planning and offers good opportunities to enhance the existing landscape character. Although a pylon line does cross this area, there is more scope for designing open space around the line than there is at the eastern boundary. There is also a possibility of under grounding a short stretch of line, which given the potential size of development may be economically worth while. Expansion in this area would also require substantial screening of the substation.

This is the only strategic option identified for long term settlement expansion for Keith.

INTEGRATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT INTO THE MORAY LANDSCAPE
Keith North East
OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS
 Scale 1:10 000

Landscape Opportunities for Development

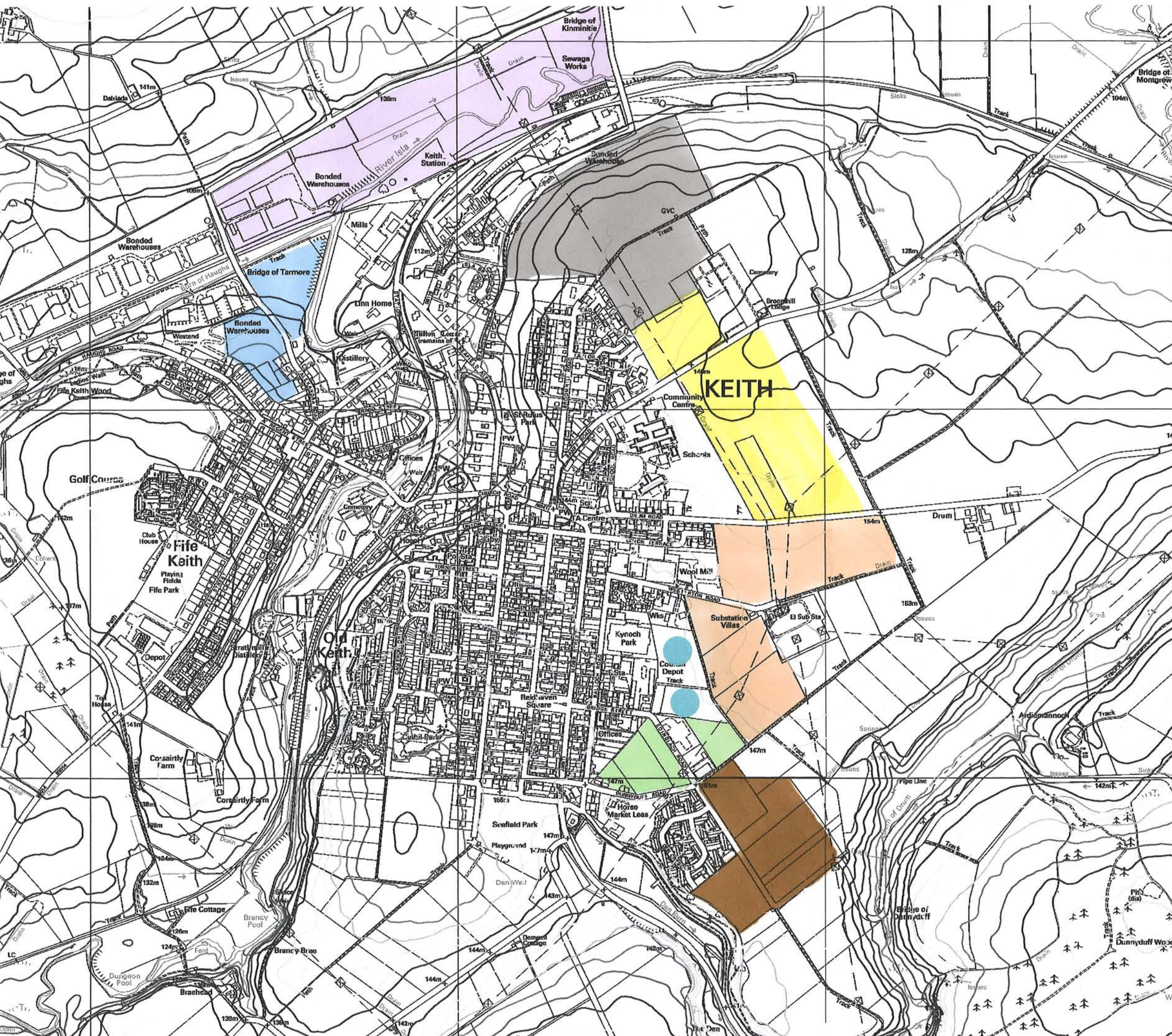
- Opportunities to extend housing within the lowlying contained land, enclosed by gentle ridges which extend out from the south eastern edge of the settlement
 Development here would also assist in integrating the development at Den Crescent into the town
- Modest opportunities to extend settlement were identified along the slightly higher slopes adjacent to the settlement along the northern edge, above the low lying strath. There may be some opportunity for industrial development within the lower parts of this site. It is likely that the level land will be subject to flooding
- Opportunities to extend settlement were identified east of the school and between the settlement and the cemetery, subject to establishing generous planting to enhance the setting of development. There are possible major constraints relating to the overhead wires.

Landscape Constraints on Development

- Development in the strath would break with the characteristic relationship between the residential areas and elevated landforms.
 Development here is also separated from the town by the railway and the industrial buildings located on the northern edge of the town
- Development along these upper ridges and steep slopes would be exposed, highly visible, uncontained and in some areas require considerable earthmoving to create building platforms
- Development in this area is constrained by the visual intrusion of the Electricity Sub Station

Other Opportunities

- This area may be appropriate for future long term expansion of the settlement within a strong landscape framework
- These fields offer potential expansion for the industrial site



5.3 Keith North East: Development Site Recommendations

Some development bid sites were identified where settlement expansion could be accommodated while maintaining the character and existing relationship between the town and its relatively well defined setting. Some bids are most appropriate for industrial development.

This area also offers opportunity for long term expansion within an appropriately designed strategic landscape framework.