



SEVEN LOCHS
wetland park



The Seven Lochs Design Guide

for Green Infrastructure and Placemaking
within and around the Wetland Park

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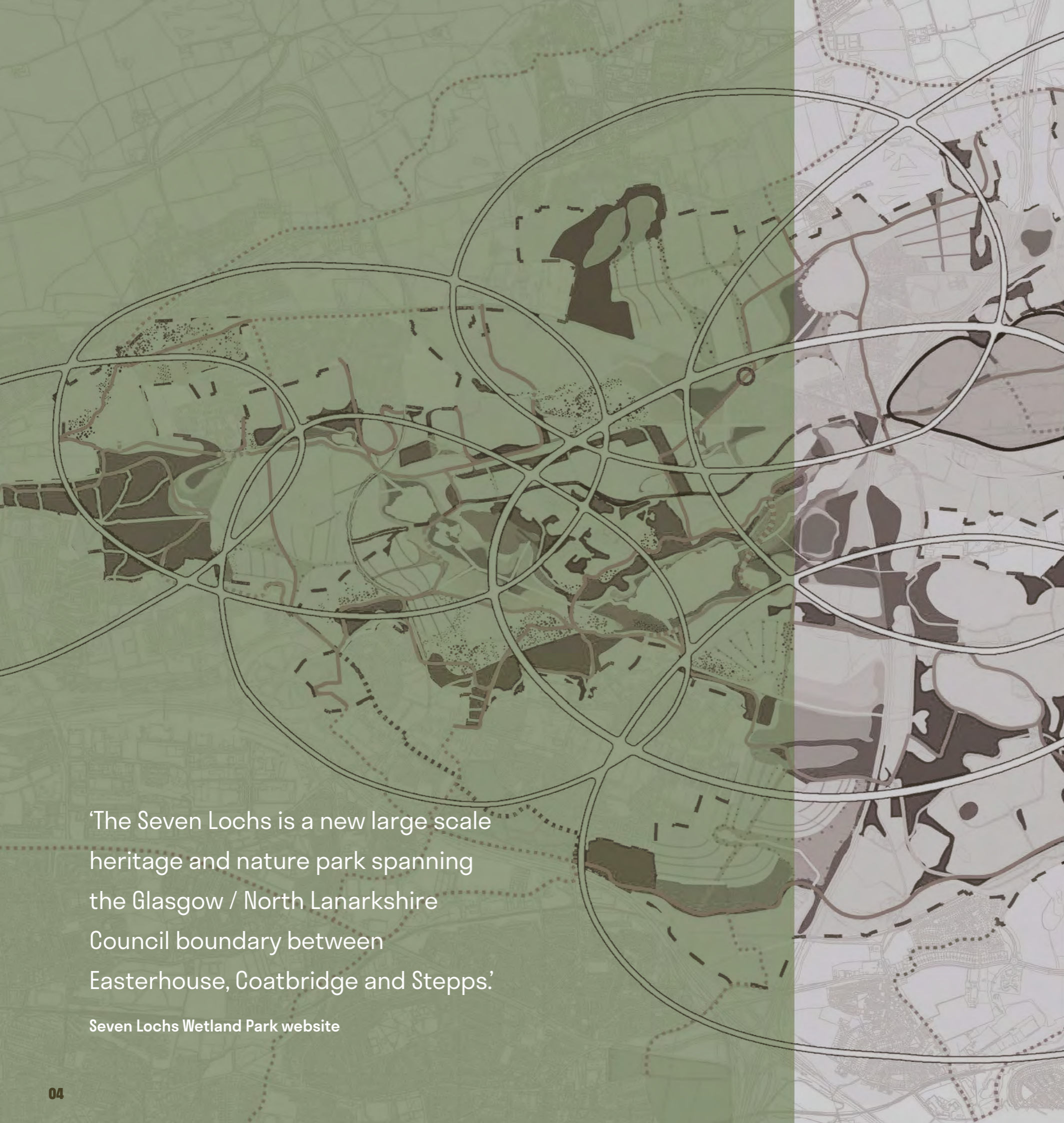
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‘The Seven Lochs is a new large scale heritage and nature park spanning the Glasgow / North Lanarkshire Council boundary between Easterhouse, Coatbridge and Stepps.’

Seven Lochs Wetland Park website

Foreword: Delivering the Vision

The Seven Lochs Partnership is committed to creating the Seven Lochs Green Network – a high quality, multi-functional network of open spaces and green corridors that connects communities in Glasgow and North Lanarkshire to the Seven Lochs Wetland Park. This Design Guide has been developed to help planners, designers, and developers working in the Seven Lochs area ensure that green infrastructure in new developments contributes to that Green Network.

Good quality green infrastructure is an essential element of our towns and cities. To address the climate and ecological emergencies we currently face our green infrastructure must be designed and managed to deliver multiple benefits for people and nature. The Seven Lochs Wetland Park is recognised and celebrated for its rich heritage and nature, so it’s even more important that new green infrastructure in and around the park is integrated into the existing landscape and makes connections to the park’s habitats and nature.

Both Glasgow City and North Lanarkshire Councils are taking a placemaking approach to new development. Successful placemaking creates places that people want to be in – places to live, to work, to play, to visit and to enjoy. It’s also a collaborative process, and we hope this Design Guide will encourage planners, designers, and developers to work with us to make Seven Lochs a great place for people and nature.

Councillor Ruairi Kelly
Chair of Seven Lochs Partnership
Glasgow City Council

Councillor Michael McPake
Vice-chair of Seven Lochs Partnership
North Lanarkshire Council

Purpose of the Guide

- To deliver quality and common standards across the Seven Lochs Wetland Park with regards to Green Infrastructure and Placemaking.
- To address existing development issues and avoid future conflicts.
- To maximise the multiple benefits to people and biodiversity from existing and new Green Infrastructure.
- To assist in the development of proposals and demonstrate their added values to the local area.
- To create development that contributes to the foundations for a strong green network throughout the Seven Lochs Wetland Park, which is resilient in the long term and well established for future generations.

Introduction

At over 16 sq km, the Seven Lochs Wetland Park is Scotland's largest urban heritage and nature park. The Vision for the Seven Lochs Wetland Park is of a new park of national significance, sustaining and enhancing a high quality, innovative wetland environment that will:

- Protect and enhance biodiversity and heritage
- Promote health and well-being
- Contribute to environmental, economic and social regeneration.

This Guide, produced by Collective Architecture for the Seven Lochs Partnership, provides a clear, 'how to' guide for developers, designers and decision-makers working in and around the Park. The purpose of the Guide, outlined here, presents a refreshed approach towards development that ensures new (or evolving) proposals integrate successfully with the Park and positively contribute to its enhancement.

The Guide is set out into three main Parts. Part A outlines a series of nine Design Principles that establish the key priorities. These are followed by Part B, which provides some examples, good and bad, of existing development within the Park. Finally, Part C Core Guidance outlines how to approach new design and development at varying scales within and around the Park.

With this Guide, the Partnership looks forward to working with developers, communities and partners to enable good choices to be made towards realising the vision and ambition for the Park for the benefit of residents, visitors and habitats. alike.

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) Draft for consultation



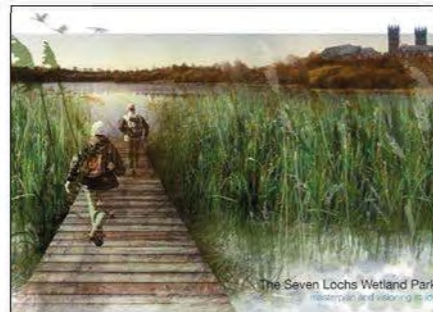
Scotland's fourth National Planning Framework, sets out how the Government's approach to planning and development will help to achieve a net zero, sustainable Scotland by 2045.

Currently in draft form, the National Planning Framework sets out a vision for how Scotland's places will change in the future. It reflects priorities across Scottish Government portfolios and brings together a wide range of plans, programmes and policies. It explains how we will work together to build sustainable, liveable, productive and distinctive places

Link to document here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotland-2045-fourth-national-planning-framework-draft/>

The Seven Lochs Wetland Park Masterplan and Vision Study



This document sets out proposals for the creation of the Wetland Park of National and International Significance. It sets out a clear Vision and identity for the Park, defines its physical extent and proposes well defined phases of work for the creation and on-going development of the Park.

The strategy for development within the Wetland Park focuses on an Integrating Green Infrastructure approach. This is a design technique that responds to the natural topography of the site, existing habitats and habitat connectivity, access networks, and existing hydrological elements to identify opportunities to incorporate green infrastructure with multiple functions.

Link to document here:

<https://issuu.com/>

Glasgow's Open Space Strategy



This strategy sets out a long term vision for Glasgow's open spaces to ensure that they meeting the City's needs in the years to come.

It also provides an over-arching framework to guide the development and implementation of supporting strategies and action plans. Informed by this Framework, a Local Biodiversity Actions Plan has been produced and is underway to inform the production of Food Growing Strategy and Sports Pitch Strategy.

Link to document here:

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/openspacestrategy>

Policy and Context

The Seven Lochs Project will establish a more connected, multi-functional green network in the area spanning the Glasgow City and North Lanarkshire Council boundary between Easterhouse, Coatbridge and Stepps. The Seven Lochs Wetland Park, sits at the heart of this area.

The Wetland Park therefore sits across two Local Authorities - Glasgow City Council and North Lanarkshire Council - and is overseen and managed by the Seven Lochs Partnership. The Park is also of major significance, so national policy also applies.

A number of key policy documents outlined overleaf, including the forthcoming Scottish Government National Planning Framework (NPF4), indicate that new development must secure positive effects for biodiversity as outlined in the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. These policy documents also promote the creation of high quality, multi-functional and locally distinctive green networks through the creation of new, and the regeneration of exiting, greenspace and public realm. For example, Glasgow City Council's Open Space Strategy is supported by the recently adopted food growing strategy.

Any new development in the Wetland Park must align with local and national policy documents, with which this Guide seeks to provide support and guidance. They should also consider 'Building with Nature' as a key national Standard. Importantly, this Guide is set in the context of providing nature based solutions to address the climate, and wider ecological, emergency.

Part A - Design Principles

Good design can create and safeguard an ecologically cohesive network of green and blue infrastructure that functions well, is healthy and is resilient to future change (including climate change).



Designing development alongside nature

Integrating within the Wetland Park

Making places which are multi-functional and adaptable

Enhancing the Wetland Park through character and connectivity

Design Principles:

This section of the Design Guide sets out the Key Principles required for any new development within and around the Wetland Park as follows:

1. Retain and enhance existing assets
2. Make water visible and useable
3. Soften boundaries and thresholds
4. Utilise open spaces as Park thresholds
5. Prioritise biodiversity and climate resilience
6. Design for future adaptation
7. Strengthen and enhance landscape characters
8. Provide legible and attractive connections
9. Demonstrate and explain a Wetland Park identity

Design site layouts around existing habitats and landforms and maintain shelter belts, wetlands, water bodies and conveyance routes in their undisturbed form wherever possible.

Principle 1

Retain and enhance existing habitats and assets

The Wetland Park features various specific biodiversity objectives, including the preservation and enhancement of specific habitats and species. The Park also contains a rich history that should be integrated and celebrated.

Site layouts should be designed around existing habitats and landforms and maintain shelter belts, wetlands, water bodies and conveyance routes in their undisturbed form wherever possible.

Open spaces should be designed to enhance habitats, resilience and climate adaptation, and increase carbon capture capability through the inclusion of woodlands and meadows.

The Wetland Park's assets of habitats and waterscapes are resources which should be retained and enhanced wherever possible, including within development sites.

In line with the Glasgow City Council's City Development Plan, new development 'should not further fragment habitats, networks or isolate habitats or species, but should enhance them' (Policy CDP7).

Rainwater management is integral to the wetland park habitat, and to the ongoing sustainable use of developable land.

Principle 2

Make water visible and useable

Water management is integral to the Wetland Park habitat, and to the ongoing sustainable use of developable land.

Development should design water management to be multifunctional and visually attractive with high ecological and amenity value.

The design should contribute to the Wetland Park landscape through rainwater management features which are visible, naturalistic, accessible, provide amenity value, and encourage biodiversity as broadly as possible; helping protecting communities and biodiversity from climate change and extreme weather events.

Water routes and retention areas should be visible wherever possible by avoiding culverts, and will contribute positively to an attractive and diverse landscape which people will want to experience. Riparian buffer zones should be designed into all watercourses included in, or affected by the development.

The boundaries between the Wetland Park habitats, and development sites should be permeable thresholds. These are crucial to ensure these different environments are well integrated and can be mutually beneficial.

Principle 3

Soften boundaries and thresholds

The boundaries between the Wetland Park habitats, and development sites should be permeable thresholds which enable connectivity. These connections should be visual and enable ease of movement in and out of the Park by both humans and ecosystems. These porous boundaries are crucial to ensure these different environments are well integrated and can be mutually beneficial.

The design of development sites should pay particular attention to their edges, ensuring that habitats, native species, active travel routes and water management features continue uninterrupted across development boundaries as far as possible.

The design of development sites should minimise any barriers for both ecosystems and communities crossing these thresholds.

Where barriers are required, these should be as unobtrusive as possible, both visually and for habitat connectivity.

Development sites should also be designed to minimise the impact of existing or new roads, prioritising local movement and active travel routes wherever possible, and particularly at thresholds with the body of the Wetland Park.

In any development, locate public buildings, parks or open spaces at the threshold to the park so that they address both residential areas and the park itself.

Principle 4

Utilise open spaces and public buildings as Park thresholds

In any development, locate public buildings, parks or open spaces at the threshold to the park so that they address both residential areas and the Wetland Park itself.

Public buildings or open spaces and parks should feature key active travel routes next to them which lead into the Park.

Any buildings, structures and open space should also be designed to be inclusive and accessible to all.

Open spaces can indicate thresholds into the Park by extending habitat corridors and including amenity spaces which are designed to reflect the Wetland Park identity.

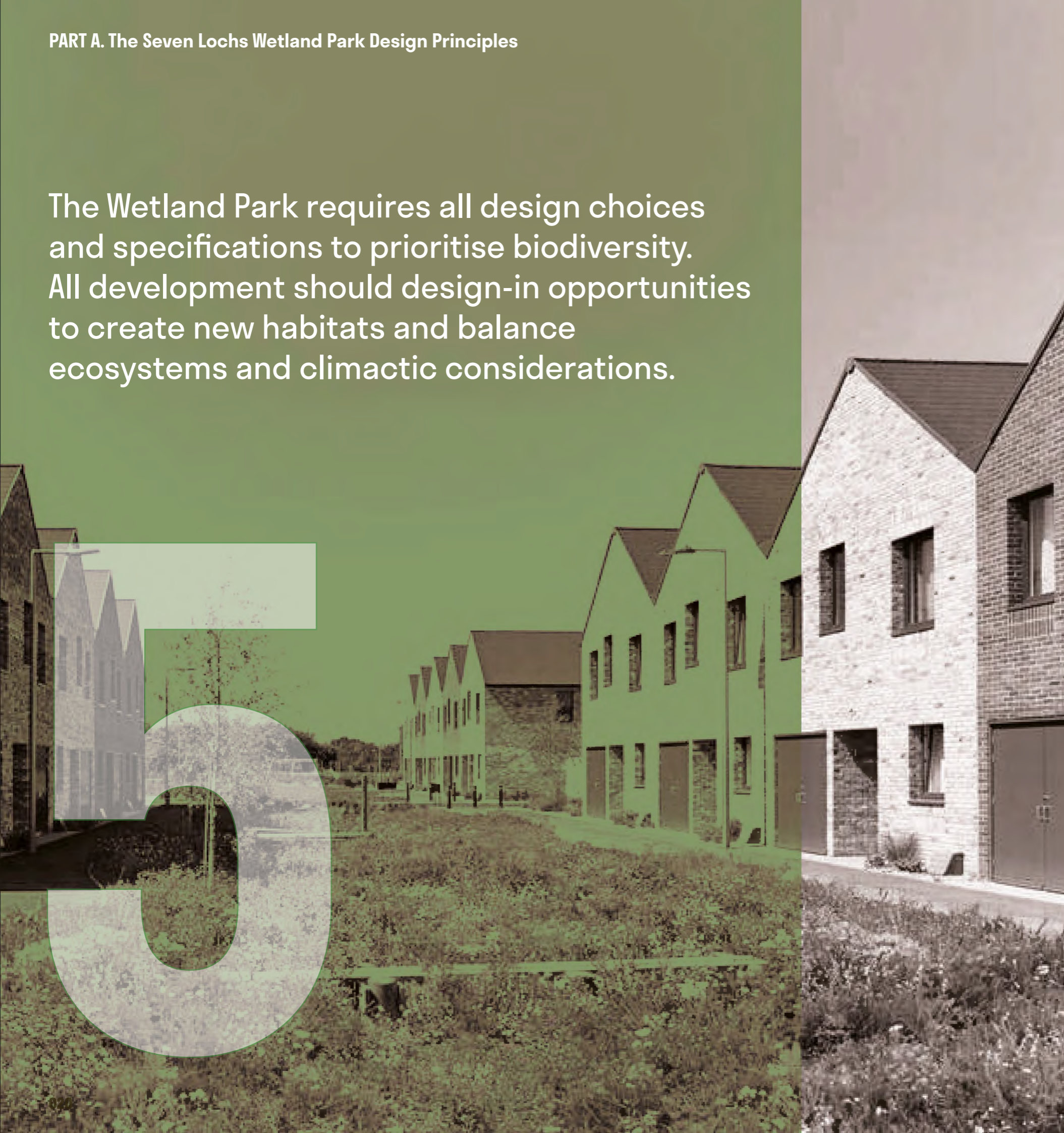
This might include for example, naturalistic playable landscapes incorporated into open space design instead of play equipment; and semi-natural space made suitable for relaxation, socialising, and / or physical activity through design which prioritises multi-functionality, safety, and diversity.

The Wetland Park requires all design choices and specifications to prioritise biodiversity. All development should design-in opportunities to create new habitats and balance ecosystems and climactic considerations.

Principle 5

Prioritise biodiversity and climate resilience in all design choices and specifications

The Wetland Park requires all design choices and specifications to prioritise biodiversity. All development should design-in opportunities to create new habitats and balance ecosystems and climactic considerations.



Housing within the Wetland Park can promote a greener and more sustainable lifestyle through designing-in future access to open spaces which can be used productively by the community.

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Principle 6

Design for future adaption and resilience

Design all developments to ensure all residents (existing and new) in and around the Wetland Park have access to space which can be easily transformed by the community into to growing space, either in private gardens, communal open spaces or community gardens.

Such spaces must be designed for ease of transformation into productive spaces by residents. Developments should raise awareness of this opportunity to residents.

These shared spaces should include legible and useable access, embed inclusive design for people with disabilities and engender use by those of all ages. This approach to design and green infrastructure will not only provide health and well-being benefits through improved access, but also create vibrant, visually attractive places for all.

The Wetland Park includes a variety of landscape characters. The design of any developments should be attentive to the surrounding park character and strengthen it wherever possible, also providing a unique identity and attractiveness to developments themselves.

Principle 7

Strengthen and distinguish landscape characters

The Wetland Park includes a variety of landscape characters. The design of any developments should be attentive to the surrounding Park character and strengthen it wherever possible, also providing a unique identity and attractiveness to developments themselves.

Continue this character into the development through a variety of means including:

- working with topography, site levels and landforms to inform sympathetic design of site layouts
- extending existing habitats including woodland, wetland, and meadow into the development by using similar native planting species,
- and paying attention to heritage and existing settlement forms or agricultural landscape heritage to inform site layouts and building types.

This should be done particularly at development edges, or parts of the site that are highly visible from the surrounding landscape.

It is also important to maximise visual connections, preserving and connecting to any notable landscape features through access routes.

All developments should maximise active travel connections into the Wetland Park through well considered site layouts which link through to key nodes in the Wetland Park and/or surrounding destinations.

Principle 8

Provide legible and attractive connections

The Wetland Park provides a unique opportunity for communities to gain health and wellbeing benefits from living next to, or within the Park. All developments should maximise this opportunity by providing connection through to active travel connections into the Wetland Park. This can be achieved through well considered site layouts which link through to key nodes in the Wetland Park and/or surrounding destinations.

Development sites should include active travel routes which traverse the site and reach neighbouring sites or other parts of the park. Circular active travel loops through the development site should correspond and connect to linear routes through good quality connections.

All developments should identify a node(s) of natural value within in the Park in their nearby vicinity and provide good quality accessible paths to reach these. Such nodes could be a loch side with access, a forest path, a lookout point with views into the landscape, a boardwalk over a wetland, a wildflower meadow, or similar. These pathways to reach these nodes should be significantly located within the site layout and easy to access, ensuring they will be inviting to use and encourage residents from across the development site to utilise them.

All developments should communicate the identity of the Wetland Park and its assets including providing residents with understanding of the uniqueness and sensitivity of the park and the decisions made to sustain this.



Principle 9

Demonstrate and explain a Wetland Park identity

All developments should communicate the identity of the Wetland Park and its assets including providing residents and visitors with understanding of the uniqueness and sensitivity of the park and the decisions made to sustain this; such as why SuDS features are included, what grassland habitats provide; and how such habitats contribute to the health and wellbeing of all, human, and non-human.

This can be achieved through appropriate design of development branding, as well as information provided to residents and visitors through well-designed, robust and accessible wayfinding.

The identity of the Wetland Park should also be visible through the presence of street trees and other vegetated areas wherever possible; and more specifically through choices of planting, landscaping, and materials for surfaces, and buildings and other structures.

This design guide sets out some of these recommendations. All designed elements of development in the Park should be informed by an aim to contribute positively and visibly to this overall vision and identity to ensure the Park is an asset for everyone.

Part B - Design Opportunities



Opportunities in the Wetland Park

Housing and associated development within the Wetland Park can benefit from the unique setting and growing biodiversity of the area.

The addition of new housing, or improvements to existing housing stock can also contribute to the success of the Wetland Park through consideration of which design features of homes and gardens could host green infrastructure.

The pages overleaf illustrate where existing development within the Wetland Park has worked well and where some problems could be readily avoided in future.

Examples from around the Seven Lochs Wetland Park



Houses with clear, car-free frontages overlooking the Park.

Example shown is Skipness Road, Gartoosh.



Clear sweeping views across the Wetland Park from development to connect homes with Parkland and landscape beyond.



Active travel routes connecting through to the Park past active frontages.



Natural play/exercise area and pathways bounding new development connected by links to new housing development and existing routes in the Park.

Example shown is



Boardwalk passing through the landscape that makes clear and positive connections between new and existing housing sites.

Example shown is the development of Skipness Road, Gartoosh.

What works well

Various design opportunities to be considered in and around the design of a housing site are provided here.

Incorporating these opportunities into the design will enable the housing development to contribute and benefit from its location within the Wetland Park.

Easy to avoid



Missed opportunity for houses to respond to water bodies.

Development edges can be softer with planted boundaries which can continue as habitat corridors into the park.



Missed opportunity for house plans to be oriented towards the Wetland Park.

Edge plot elevations could instead feature larger windows and planting to capture views over the Park and to the street or open spaces.



Part C - Core Guidance



Designing in the Wetland Park

This section sets out some Core Guidance that designers and developers should apply to any new development within the Wetland Park. It demonstrates how the design of any new development can integrate with Wetland Park using the 4 key themes aligned to the Part A Design Principles as follows:

- Designing new development alongside nature
- Integrating within the Wetland Park
- Making places which are multi-functional and adaptable
- Enhancing character and connectivity

Designing new Development alongside Nature

Apply Design Principle 1

Retain and enhance existing assets

Design site layouts around existing habitats and landforms. These should maintain shelter belts, wetlands, water bodies and conveyance routes in their undisturbed form wherever possible and integrate with new routes and development.



Apply Design Principle 2

Make water visible and useable

Existing waterbodies and rainwater management features such as SuDS ponds and swales are integral to the wetland park habitat, and to the ongoing sustainable use of developable land. These should be visible, naturalistic, accessible, provide amenity value, and encourage biodiversity.

When designing new development within the Seven Lochs Wetland Park, it is critical that this is considered alongside nature and existing assets. This includes water bodies, shelter belts, habitats and landforms.

This section of the Core Guidance sets out how site layouts within new development should be designed with nature in mind. It also outlines guidance on the character of any new landscape, features and specifications that should be employed to ensure these integrate and align with the Wetland Park.

All this will ensure that new development is integrated into the Wetland Park in a way that enhances the setting and provides characterful links and access routes between them.

Site Layouts

| | |
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| <p>Incorporating water into development: Ensure that the incorporation of water on site, such as wetlands, conveyance routes, filter strips, retention basins and ponds provide interesting and pleasant places, where people will want to spend time.</p> | <p>A wetland habitat provides diverse opportunities for amenity use, including encouraging people to walk and cycle in the area and providing a pleasant location where people may wish to spend time in nature or play.</p> |
| <p>Existing habitats: Retain existing habitats and incorporate them into the landscape design</p> | <p>For example existing woodland and meadows are important resources for recreation, biodiversity and visual value.</p> |
| <p>Water bodies as Landmarks: Utilise water bodies as key landmarks around which development sites are planned.</p> | <p>Water bodies provide amenity value which can be maximised when site layouts including streets and block layouts are designed to maximise views and access to water bodies or wetlands.</p> |
| <p>Visibility: Make surface water management systems visible wherever possible, to express and explain the process of water management in the wetland park, and to add visual interest, and habitat opportunity.</p> | <p>Create visual amenity by incorporating a variety of SuDS and wetland solutions to form different habitat types and create visual interest.</p> |
| <p>Access to Waterbodies: Consider whether development sites can increase or enhance access to existing waterbodies.</p> | <p>These assets can be made accessible if access is improved, including through new development sites which have the opportunity to integrate new path networks for both residents and park users.</p> |
| <p>Existing features: Development sites must take an holistic approach which considers existing topography, hydrology and landscape.</p> | <p>It is vital that site layouts work with existing natural features to develop an approach to development which complements and enhances positive features.</p> |

Designing new Development alongside Nature

| Character | |
|--|--|
| SUDs and Wetlands: All design of SuDS and wetland should achieve a naturalistic appearance, except where a contemporary 'designed landscape' appearance is required in specific public realm areas. | Such designed areas should be kept to a minimum as they limit the habitat potential of SuDS and are less in keeping with the character of the wetland park. |
| Trees and Hedgerows: These should be retained wherever possible. | They provide vital habitat corridors for wildlife, and can enhance active travel routes on site where these routes follow lines of existing trees and hedgerows. |
| Grassland and Meadows: Areas of grassland and meadow should be retained for their habitat potential. | All new amenity grassland should include significant areas of species rich grassland to compliment the existing grassland areas. |

| Specification | |
|--|--|
| Habitat areas: Ensure that new or enhanced habitat areas are formed through robust landscaping specifications. | This will ensure resilience and self-sustainability. |
| Water Bodies: Include riparian planting around water bodies to enhance the visual amenity of the area. | However, also ensure that some open vistas across water bodies and wetland areas are maintained for diversity and views across the site. |
| Structures: Minimise the visual impact of structures associated with SuDS, such as access paths, hatches and chambers. | Greater aquatic diversity will ensure that wetland habitats are resilient and reduce maintenance requirements. |
| Sloped areas: Sow slopes of SuDS and wetlands with species rich native seed mixes. | This will build on the Wetland Park's biodiversity and be visually appealing for residents and visitors. |
| Aquatic diversity: Ensure that aquatic species are protected through the appropriate specification of SuDS planting which reduces pollutants. | Greater aquatic diversity will ensure that wetland habitats are resilient and reduce maintenance requirements. |

| Maintenance | |
|--|--|
| Water Management Installations: Ensure the design of water management is easy to understand for those charged with maintaining it, and that the design is simple and is understandable for those using it for recreation. | To achieve this, avoid culverted water wherever possible. Ensure access and egress points to water bodies are clear and visible. |

What to do



Design site layouts with new routes that connect to existing landscapes and path networks to enhance links within the Park and provide wider access.



Use existing water bodies and other landscape features (trees, waterways, meadows) as key landmarks around which development sites are planned.



Connect people with new and existing water bodies using landscape features that allow residents and visitors to engage with wetlands and habitats.



Design and specify naturalised landscape features rather than 'hard engineering' to ensure these integrate with the existing landscape.

What to avoid

Site layouts that 'turn their back' on existing water bodies or landscape features - or don't integrate with them.

SuDS designs which rely on heavily engineered solutions or which include un-natural forms, such as steeply sloping sides.

Leaving engineered or technical / maintenance SuDS components to remain visible; such as chambers and access hatches.

Use land forming to hide these from view, and or planting to screen these.

The use of fencing / barriers to separate SuDS from the surrounding landscape.

This can instead be achieved by utilising existing landforms to create SuDS areas, and avoiding steep embankments into the areas.

Appropriately designed signage can also be used to inform people of the presence of water in the landscape. Where fencing must be used, this should allow views through.

Avoid low-ecological value amenity grass; always ensure greenspaces incorporate grassland which complements and expands nearby habitats.

Grasslands of high ecological value will provide diverse habitats for a variety of species and therefore wildlife can be accommodated within development sites by expanding these habitats into the site. These will also provide greater visual amenity than mown-turf amenity grass areas.

Integrating with the Wetland Park

Apply Design Principle 3

Soften Boundaries and Thresholds

The boundaries between the Wetland Park habitats, and development sites should be permeable thresholds. These are crucial to ensure these different environments are well integrated and can be mutually beneficial.



Apply Design Principle 4

Utilise Open Spaces and Public Buildings as Park Thresholds

In any development, locate public buildings, parks or open spaces at the threshold to the park so that they address both residential areas and the Wetland Park itself.

When designing new development within the Seven Lochs Wetland Park, it is critical that proposals are integrated within it.

This section of the Core Guidance sets out how new developments should be designed with this in mind. It outlines how gateways, edges and amenities can integrate with the existing landscape with guidance on the character of any new landscape, features and specifications.

This will ensure they integrate and align with the Wetland Park in a way that enhances the setting and reinforces its character.

Site Layouts

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Linking Greenspaces: All greenspaces in the development must be interlinked, and must be well-connected to the Wetland Park outwith the development site.</p> | <p>Links can be created by designing in paths, drainage corridors, tree belts and continuous corridors of vegetation. These links, and the greenspaces which are linked together, will be multifunctional by providing habitat and amenity value.</p> |
| <p>Orientation of Housing: Ensure that housing within the site is oriented to look out into the surrounding Wetland Park at all opportunities.</p> | <p>Design front gardens, entrances and pathways overlooking the Park. Also provide windows and doorways to frontages and gable ends to maximise views and provide overlooking.</p> |
| <p>Amenity: Ensure that any amenity provided in open spaces is well positioned to encourage transition into the Wetland Park.</p> | <p>This can be achieved through the positioning of seating or play and recreation areas.</p> |
| <p>Active travel connections: Provide multiple active travel connections from the development site into the surrounding park.</p> | <p>Suitable for use by pedestrians, cyclists etc.</p> |
| <p>Boundaries: All boundaries should be porous to allow habitat connectivity. Use hedgerows, trees and planted areas to form boundaries.</p> | <p>This will encourage habitat connections and soften the edge between development and the park. Increased greening of these development edges will also provide amenity value by enhancing the look and feel of the development and improve the landscape value for residents and users of the Park nearby.</p> |
| <p>Gateways: Open spaces, parks or public buildings located near to, or within the Wetland Park, have the opportunity to act as welcoming gateways into and out of the park.</p> | <p>These Gateways into and out of the Park offer opportunities for greater navigation and way-finding.</p> |

Integrating with the Wetland Park

| Character | |
|--|---|
| <p>Highly Visible Edge Plots: Elevations offer opportunities to integrate the development into the park and provide identity.</p> | <p>Edge plot elevations to incorporate windows overlooking the wetland park. Elevation materials to facilitate climbing plants on boundary plot elevations and walls to provide a 'stepping stone habitat' among habitat corridors.</p> |
| <p>Landscaped Buffers: Surround development sites with a buffer or threshold zone of soft landscape which helps to blend the development into the wetland park.</p> | <p>Ensure this edge is varied and reaches into both the development site and park at various locations.</p> |
| <p>Topography and Recreation: Consider the topography and land forms of the site first and foremost to influence the design of play and recreation spaces.</p> | <p>Naturalistic materials are preferred.</p> |

| Specification | |
|--|---|
| <p>Fences and Planting: Where additional boundary structures are required, such as post and wire fences, these should be planted over for visual amenity and to enable habitat networks to be enhanced.</p> | <p>Wooden lap fence is not acceptable.</p> |
| <p>Furniture and Play Equipment: Ensure that any public realm furniture or play equipment in parks and open spaces are of a high design quality which support the character of the Wetland Park.</p> | <p>Specify naturalistic play equipment, or play landscapes instead of equipment wherever possible. A design code for furniture is not provided, but it should be durable, contemporary and suitable for a semi-natural landscape, avoiding both urban forms and pastiche or heritage forms.</p> |
| <p>Habitats and Planting: Connect to the areas of habitat close to the development, such as water bodies, woodland or sites of particular importance (SSSIs).</p> | <p>Achieve this with specification of planting which enhances these habitats as ecological corridors.</p> |

What to do



Introduce 'soft' features and edges, which allow greater integration of new and existing landscapes and habitats.



Highly visible edge plots. Elevations offer opportunities to integrate the development into the park and provide identity.



Consider the topography and land forms of the site first and foremost to influence the design of play and recreation spaces. Specify naturalistic play equipment, or play landscapes instead of equipment wherever possible.



Connect to areas of habitat close to the development, such as water bodies. Also, surround development sites with a buffer or threshold zone of soft landscape.

What to avoid

Placing roads between development sites and the Wetland Park. Roads will create definitive barriers (both visually and perceptually) between development sites and the Park.

Residents will feel integrated with the park when their route into the Park does not cross roads.

'Hard' boundary features such as wooden lap fencing, particularly at boundaries to the park, or areas visible from the Wetland Park.

It provides visual disruption and creates barriers to habitat connectivity. Hard edges detract from the character of the Wetland Park landscape.

Avoid abrupt edges and distinction between new development and the Wetland Park landscape.

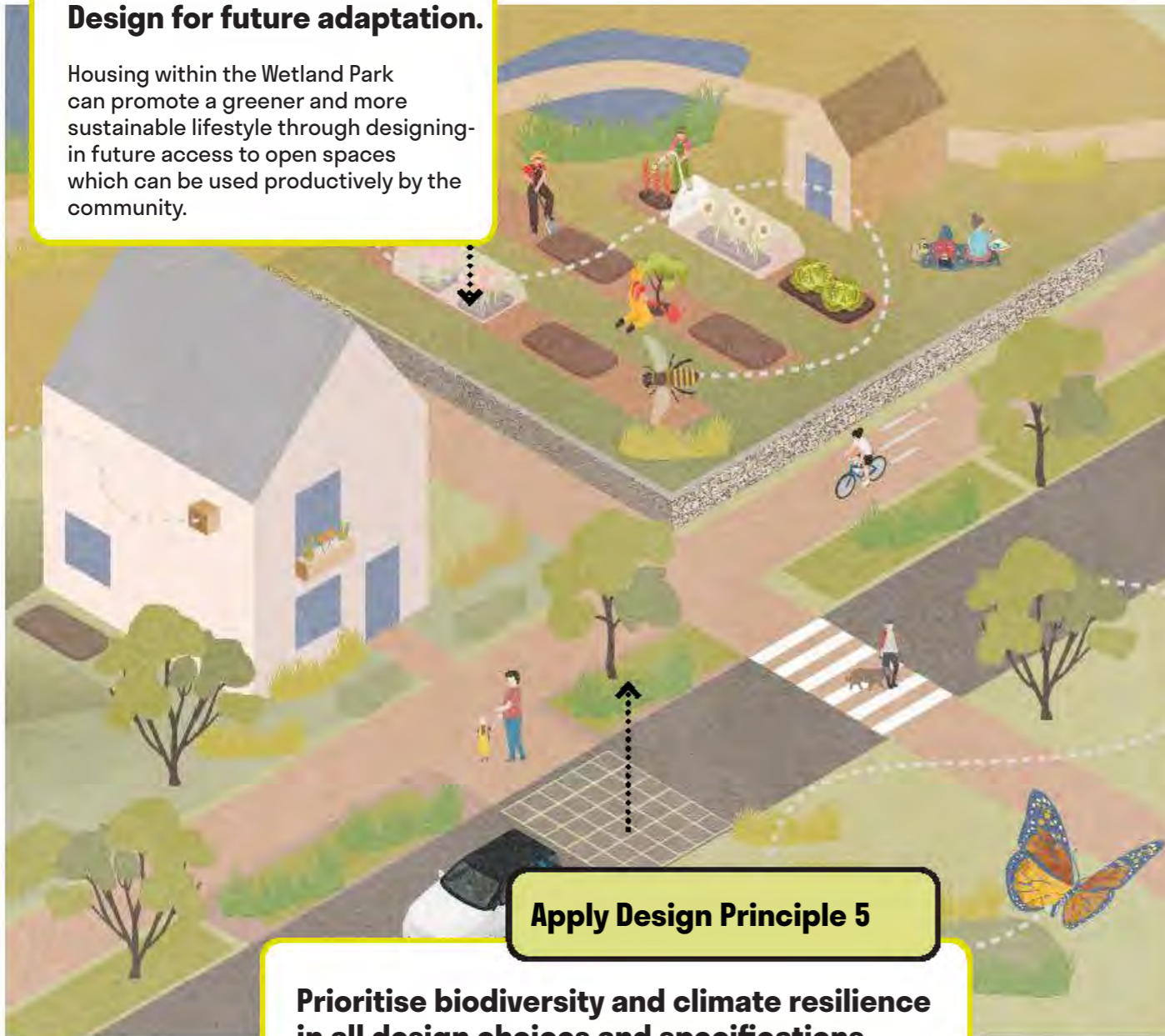
This prevents the integration of new development with the existing landscape and instead presents them as dis-connected places.

Making places which are multi-functional and adaptable

Apply Design Principle 6

Design for future adaptation.

Housing within the Wetland Park can promote a greener and more sustainable lifestyle through designing-in future access to open spaces which can be used productively by the community.



Apply Design Principle 5

Prioritise biodiversity and climate resilience in all design choices and specifications.

The Wetland Park requires all design choices and specifications to prioritise biodiversity. All development should design-in opportunities to create new habitats and balance ecosystems and climactic considerations.

When designing new development within the Wetland Park, it is critical that proposals are multi-functional and adaptable.

This section of the Core Guidance sets out how site layouts can be arranged to embrace open spaces, link these together and promote social interaction.

This will encourage full use of the public realm across all seasons, and foster a strong connection between the community and the wider habitat.

Site Layouts

| | |
|---|---|
| Multi-functionality: Ensure the multi-functionality of all green spaces. | Recreation areas, for example, can double as controlled flood zones. |
| Overlooking: Ensure that open spaces are overlooked by housing. | This helps to ensure that open spaces will be well used and cared for. |
| Community Gardens: Design locations within the site where community gardens or allotments can be developed. | These must be well connected within the site and be located in visible and accessible locations which encourage inclusion of the community beyond the immediate nearby dwellings. |
| Space for Recreation: Design green spaces on site which can also function as informal recreation areas. | Design these areas to be an appropriate size for sports, with suitable site levels, drainage and access. |
| Making connections: Link together green spaces to form a multi-functional green network. | Create links via the inclusion of paths, drainage corridors and vegetation or trees. |
| Trees: Provide at least 25% tree cover | Tree provision contributes towards climate resilience. |
| Location of open spaces: Ensure that open spaces are well positioned for ease of access and can benefit from good climatic conditions, such as sun exposure, shade and shelter from winds. | Well-positioned open space within the development site will encourage full use of the space throughout the seasons and future adaptation by the community to meet needs. |

Making places which are multi-functional and adaptable

| Character | |
|--|--|
| Surfaces: Minimise the extent of paved areas | Use permeable paving to increase habitat opportunity and flood resilience. |
| Retention: Where retaining structures are required to enable a change in level, use retaining structures which will over time be incorporated into the landscape by nature. | For example, crib or gabion walls will provide more opportunity for biodiversity to thrive, as they feature crevices which provide habitats. |
| Gathering Space: Green spaces should provide suitable spaces for social activities. | Including gathering spaces which have seating and/or play areas will increase the usability of these areas and encourage community ownership and adaptation to their own needs. |
| Extent of Vegetation: Maximise areas of vegetation within the development site. | This enhances the amenity value of the development site and improves carbon sequestration. |
| Street Trees: Incorporate street trees on all streets within the proposal, particularly at key nodes within the site. | This will help climate resilience including rainwater and heat absorption, and will introduce habitat corridors through the site, as well as providing high amenity value and identity to the development. |

| Specification | |
|---|--|
| Tree species: Specify tree species which are appropriate to the local context and any specific conditions on site, such as wetlands areas or particularly exposed areas. | Appropriate local species will help enhance habitat potential of new trees on the site, as well as relate visually to the existing context. Ensure all tree specifications are appropriate to the location on site in terms of size and shading. |
| Stormwater: Route stormwater for use elsewhere (e.g. community gardens) | Re-routing of storm water can enhance wetland areas on site through carefully designed conveyance routes. Particular areas such as community gardens may also be enhanced by routing rainfall into these areas for controlled use. |
| Ground Surface Materials: Use pale coloured surface materials for paths and hard landscaping | This reduces heat absorption and contributes to a naturalistic parkland character. |
| Traffic calming: Include traffic calming measures. | Utilise street trees and planted areas instead of infrastructure for traffic calming/ traffic barriers such as bollards. Include vegetated filter strips alongside hard surfaces. |
| Verges and Roundabouts: Street/ road and roundabout verges must incorporate SUDS, and be planted with species rich, pollinator mixes of grass/ wildflower, trees and shrubs. | These are areas where the need for multi-functionality is critical to act as surface water management, pollution filters and habitats, as well as providing visual amenity. |
| Diversity of Species: Ensure that a diversity of species is incorporated. | This minimises risks of disease and maximises habitat potential and visual amenity, particularly in Autumn. |

What to do



Design locations into the site where community gardens or allotments can be developed. Also consider how stormwater can be routed to these spaces.



Incorporate street trees on all streets within the proposal, with increased incorporation at all key nodes within the site.



Maximise areas of vegetation on the development site. This enhances the amenity value of the site and improves carbon sequestration.



Greenspaces should provide suitable spaces for social activities.

What to avoid

Placing roads between development sites and the Wetland Park. Roads create definitive barriers (both visually and perceptual) between development sites and the Park.

Residents will feel more integrated with the Park when their route into this does not cross roads.

Mono-functional open spaces.

Single use spaces prevent a range of activities taking place. They also discourage the opportunity for residents and visitors to interact with one another.

Over-lighting habitat areas or areas of biodiversity sensitivity.

Over-use of lighting (street lighting / feature lighting) may disrupt sensitive ecosystems.

Enhancing character and connectivity

Apply Design Principle 9

Demonstrate and explain a Wetland Park identity

All developments should communicate the identity of the Wetland Park and its assets, including providing residents with understanding of the uniqueness and sensitivity of the area and the decisions made to sustain this.



Apply Design Principle 8

Provide legible and attractive connections

All developments should maximise active travel connections into the Wetland Park through well considered site layouts which link through to key nodes and/or surrounding destinations.

Apply Design Principle 7

Strengthen and distinguish landscape characters

The Wetland Park includes a variety of landscape characters. The design of any developments should be attentive to the surrounding Park character and strengthen it wherever possible, also providing a unique identity and attractiveness to developments themselves.

It is critical that any new development is integrated into the Park through their site specific character and connectivity.

This section of the Core Guidance sets out how new development should reinforce the existing character of the environment and ensuring communities are well aware of their connection to it.

This includes access and connections, along with maintaining views and vistas that embrace the peri-urban character of the area.

Site Layouts

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Peri-urban Character: Ensure that all development has a character appropriate to the peri-urban (and at times semi-rural) character of the Wetland Park area.</p> | <p>Site layouts can be influenced by semi-rural landscape characters across the Wetland Park; such as developing site forms in pockets similar to steading settlements, or by drawing upon examples from the area which integrate into woodlands or shelter belts.</p> |
| <p>Views and Vistas: Design site layouts to maximise views and vistas into the surrounding landscape.</p> | <p>This can include views from public areas of the site and main pedestrian routes.</p> |
| <p>Active Travel Routes: Prioritise pedestrians/ active travel where these routes cross roads.</p> | <p>This will enhance walking and cycling within and around the Park and neighbourhoods.</p> |
| <p>Working with the Topography: Mitigate visual disruption of new development in the landscape by integrating with the topography, orienting site layouts to suit.</p> | <p>Ensure slopes between development and the surrounding Park are gently graded as far as possible. Any abrupt level changes should be well planted to minimise a negative impact on the landscape character.</p> |
| <p>Nodes: All developments should identify a node(s) of natural value within the park in their vicinity and provide good quality accessible paths to reach these.</p> | <p>Such nodes could be a lochside with access, a forest path, a lookout point with views into the landscape, a boardwalk over a wetland, a wildflower meadow, or similar. These pathways to reach these nodes should be significantly located within the site layout and easy to access, ensuring they will be inviting to use and encourage residents from across the development site to utilise them.</p> |
| <p>Access points: Boundaries should incorporate well-positioned access points.</p> | <p>This will enable ease of access and movement between residential areas and the Wetland Park.</p> |

Enhancing character and connectivity

| Character | |
|---|--|
| <p>Landmarks and Focal Points: Identify existing landmarks or focal points in the Wetland Park and ensure that the design of development sites responds to these features</p> | <p>Water bodies, valuable woodlands and historic buildings provide visual interest, identity and character. These can be embedded into new development through the orientation of the buildings on site and enhanced through connecting routes wherever possible.</p> |
| <p>Hedgerows and Treebelts: Continue nearby hedgerows and tree belts into the development site to enhance the landscape character and provide visual buffers between Park and development.</p> | <p>Ensure that any landscape screening is not so dense as to interrupt all views across the landscape. Screening should be done proportionately and with appropriate breaks or gaps to suit the orientation of the development and views from routes and access paths and vistas through the site.</p> |
| <p>Reuse of existing buildings: Consider the reuse of redundant agricultural buildings.</p> | <p>Any existing buildings should be incorporated into the development, or provide inspiration to site layouts, in a way that mimics steading arrangements with pedestrian shared surfaces between buildings.</p> |
| <p>Landscape Character: Identify areas of the development site which are high priority in terms of landscape character.</p> | <p>Ensure that these key locations incorporate habitat diversity and some public realm space which makes them unique and distinctive. Including wetland species and visible surface water in these key location will enable these spaces to mirror the Wetland Park character of the surrounding area.</p> |

| Specification | |
|---|--|
| <p>Native Species: Ensure that the landscape character of the Park is enhanced through the appropriate specification of native species of wildflower mixes, trees, shrubs and plants.</p> | <p>Species chosen should be not only native, but also identified as particularly appropriate to the specific conditions of the Wetland Park.</p> |
| <p>Way-finding: All new paths into the Wetland Park from the development site should incorporate well designed wayfinding which informs people of the nearby assets of the Wetland Park.</p> | <p>Wayfinding design should be robust and should complement the natural aesthetic of the park.</p> |
| <p>Resident information: Include information about the Wetland Park and surface water management in information for residents and visitors.</p> | <p>For example, information regarding how residents' gardens and shared green spaces contribute to the habitat of the park when they are well managed.</p> |
| <p>Porosity of Surfaces: Make surface porosity a visible feature – this helps with naturalistic character.</p> | <p>Choose permeable surfaces which enhances greening and naturalistic park character, such as grasscrete instead of pavers.</p> |

What to do



Ensure that all development has a character appropriate to the peri-urban character of the Wetland Park area.



Incorporate wayfinding into all new paths into the Wetland Park.



Identify areas of the development site which are high priority in terms of landscape character. Incorporate habitat diversity and some public realm space into these locations.



Identify a node(s) of natural value within the Park and provide good quality accessible paths to reach these.

What to avoid

Development that 'turns its back' on the Wetland Park and landscape features.

Connecting and 'opening up' to the Wetland Park will allow local residents and visitors to better engage with it to enhance their sense of belonging, health and well-being.

Any new buildings or landscapes that are overly 'urban' or 'suburban' in character.

New development and landscape that reflects the peri-urban and natural characteristics of the Wetland Park will integrate and better connect with the area's unique identity.

Key actions:

This summary from Part C Core Guidance outlines key actions required to meet the design requirements and principles for the Seven Lochs Wetland Park.



1 Design site layouts with new routes that connect to existing landscapes and path networks to enhance links within the Park and provide wider access.



2 Use existing water bodies and other landscape features (trees, waterways, meadows) as key landmarks around which development sites are planned.



3 Connect people with new and existing water bodies using landscape features that allow residents and visitors to engage with wetlands and habitats.



4 Design and specify naturalised landscape features rather than 'hard engineering' to ensure these integrate with the existing landscape.



5 Introduce 'soft' features and edges, which allow greater integration of new and existing landscapes and habitats.



6 Highly visible edge plots. Elevations offer opportunities to integrate the development into the park and provide identity.



7 Consider the topography and land forms of the site to influence the design of play and recreation spaces. Specify naturalistic play equipment, or play landscapes instead of equipment.



8 Connect to areas of habitat close to the development, such as water bodies. Also, surround development sites with a buffer or threshold zone of soft landscape.



9 Design locations into the site where community gardens or allotments can be developed. Also consider how stormwater can be routed to these spaces.



10 Incorporate street trees on all streets within the proposal, with increased incorporation at all key nodes within the site.



11 Maximise areas of vegetation on the development site to enhance amenity and improves carbon sequestration.



12 Greenspaces should provide suitable spaces for social activities.



13 Ensure that all development has a character appropriate to the peri-urban character of the Wetland Park area.



14 Incorporate wayfinding into all new paths into the Wetland Park.



15 Identify areas of the site which are high priority in terms of landscape character. Incorporate habitat diversity and some public realm space into these locations.



16 Identify a node(s) of natural value within the Park and provide good quality accessible paths to reach these.



Conclusion

Thank you for engaging with the Seven Lochs Design Guide.

We hope it is helpful in providing you with the necessary information to progress place-appropriate new development and initiatives within and around the Wetland Park.

To conclude, a summary of key actions required from the Core Guidance is outlined overleaf.

Should you wish to discuss any of the contents of the Guide or raise any questions please do not hesitate to contact the team at the Seven Lochs Partnership as follows:

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Many thanks

The Seven Lochs Partnership