

# 8 Integrating the scheme with the environment

We will work to create designs that enhance the existing natural environment.

Smithton and Culloden Parks mainly feature mown grass. The introduction of a natural, meandering watercourse will allow us to be creative with these spaces. We can look to recreate the types of habitats that existed before Smithton and Culloden were developed, bringing nature to the doorstep; but respecting the local distinctiveness of the landscape.

Our landscape architects and ecologists will work with the engineering team to ensure that both the public and wildlife gain maximum benefit from these works. We will re-introduce native local plants, which will be grown, or sourced locally wherever possible. Water and wetland creates a wide range of microhabitats, so there will be many more niches that can be exploited by local flora and fauna. These might include ponds, backwaters, marshland, damp grassland and running water.



Eared Willow is common in wet Caledonian forests



Ragged Robin is a native of wet grassland



Native wildflower meadows often need less maintenance



Purple Loosetrife is an attractive waterside plant



Existing trees will be retained where possible



Mature trees are often relics of former parkland landscapes

Culloden Park is within the boundary of the Culloden House historic garden and designed landscape. Although the original character has been heavily altered by modern development, some elements such as mature trees remain. We will consult with Historic Scotland during the design of the scheme and will survey the area prior to the start of construction. The works will also look to reference and reflect local elements, such as historic parkland plans or features such as the 'Brangas Tree'.



The schemes will link with and encourage wider use of existing walking and cycle networks.



Natural play is often low-cost and fit well with the environment.

The creation of new landform will offer an ideal opportunity to create wildflower meadows. These would offer spectacular displays with minimal maintenance, reflecting the traditional methods of farming such as hay meadows. Non-native species, which have a more extended and colourful flowering season, could also be used in more ornamental locations, such as Smithton and Culloden Parks. We will also look to introduce new trees and woodland at appropriate locations. Native species would be used in more naturalistic situations, reflecting the typical trees of the area: Silver Birch, Eared Willow, Alder and Rowan.

The designs will fit in with the wider green space and route network at Smithton and Culloden, which benefits the wider local and national goals of improving 'Green Infrastructure'. More attractive spaces will benefit users of the core path network and local cycle routes, including long-distance National Route 1, which runs along the eastern side of the UK. By encouraging greater numbers of recreational users from a wider area than at present, levels of 'informal surveillance' can be increased. When more people are using paths, the sense of security and safety is often improved.