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Front cover:

Image left Smugestum graffiti, St. Peter's Seminary, photograph - Smugestum
Image right St. Peters Seminary, present, photograph - Chris Hughes

1. Introduction

NVA has been funded by the Public Art Fund of the National Lottery through the Scottish Arts Council, to develop a commission plan for the former Kilmahew estate and St Peter's Seminary. It is an extraordinary place that demands an extraordinary response. Our intention is to repopulate and reevaluate both the grounds and the remains of the buildings it hosts. Finding value in the unmediated work that has emerged across the site over the last decades, including the ruin of what was once St Peter's Seminary; the plan builds on multiple manifestations of creativity rather than attempting to return the scheme to a set of functions for which it is no longer suited or relevant.

Landscapes can be read or interpreted in vastly different ways. We intend to find means to collectively delve into the grounds' and the buildings' past and disinter things that are relevant to their current evolution. The landscape offers the source material and the physical context for creative intervention, which in turn acts as the focus and stimulus for further actions and dialogue. The process of investigation, speculation and creative response becomes an end in its own right.

The underlying premise is to explore if public spaces can advance social change. Can the experience of a landscape be so profound, other or different, that it changes people's lives and inspires them to change society? We intend to extend the site beyond a classic rural idyll, to a place where people can proactively get involved in finding out.

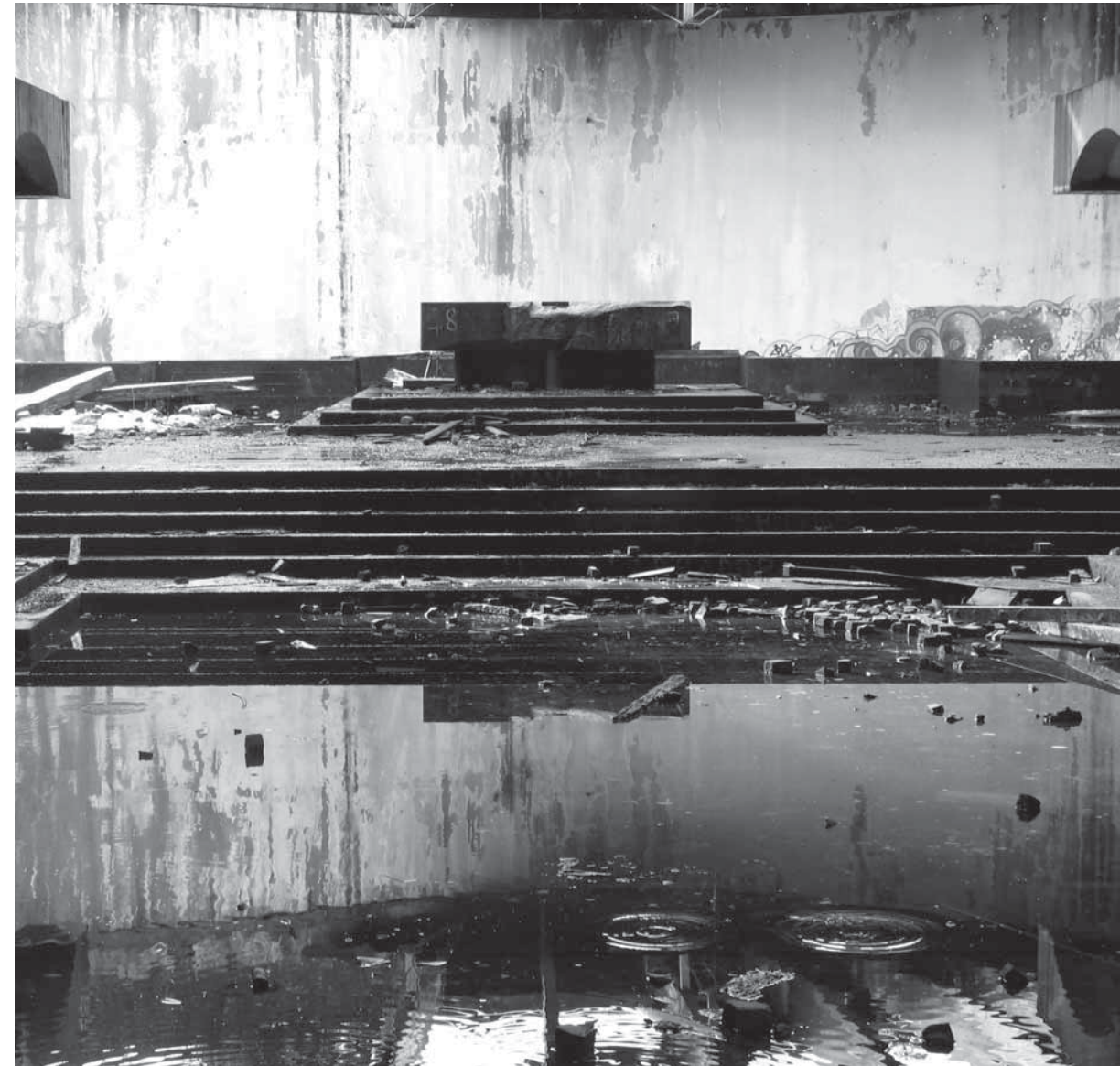
The Kilmahew / St Peter's commission plan sets the building within the wider landscape as a total artwork and makes it the fundamental source and starting point for all future interventions. It is a powerful vision for a singular integration of the built and un-built environment that will generate a new form of creative landscape for the twenty-first century.

Contrary to common practice, there will be no attempt to freeze time: what will unfold is a work without a final conclusion. Using a procedural model, each action generates the next idea or intervention. The result will be a landscape in flux. Embracing the layered legacy of the site, we wish to create a place that allows people to participate in making their own narratives. The plan comprises a bold scheme of actions that will form a basis for critical discourse, opinion and the accrual of knowledge concerning vital areas of cultural expression and ideology.

The plan radically aims to exploit the site in its current state and seeks to patiently restore elements within it over time. A successful scheme will archive, critique and maintain what has been a significant twentieth-century ruin through a sensitive process of partial restoration and reclamation.

The refurbished buildings and recharged natural landscape will become a fulcrum for the development and testing of far-reaching future strategic priorities in the fields of landscape architecture, land art, land management, health and climate change studies. Kilmahew / St Peter's aims to lead as well as inform public realm debate in areas of relevance to a matrix of national and governmental bodies.

It is time to make a bold appraisal of post-war British architecture and to position the period's remarkable optimism and sense of certainty within a significantly changed political and environmental context. Challenging public art, commissioned in a stunning rural setting, working with an engaged public, press and partners has the capacity to place the development onto a world stage. It offers an unparalleled opportunity to go beyond traditional conservation solutions to release new ways of thinking around a highly complex and contested site.

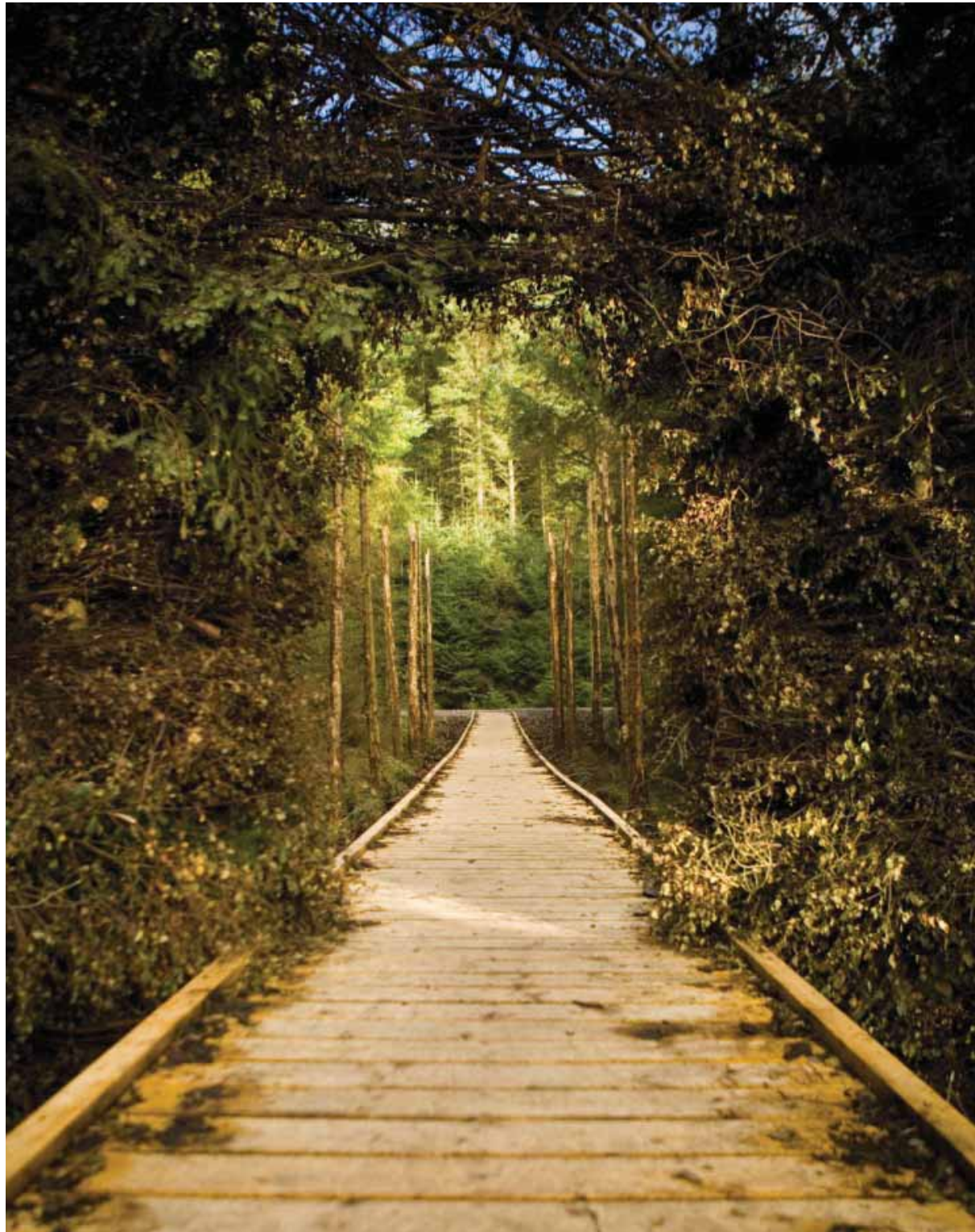


St Peters ruined altar, present, photograph - James Johnson

"The ruin appears to point to a deep and vanished past whose relics merely haunt the present revealing a fading utopian inheritance that barely hangs onto its potential for collective aspiration."

Brian Dillon, Decline and Fall, Frieze Magazine Essay

2. The Beginning



NVA Half Life, Creag Mhos, photograph - Euan Myles

*'Imagination needs a precise geography
A splinter of woodland strangled but still breathing
A border crossing into another country
Unexpected encounters when you can't see far
.... You think differently in different places'*

Robert Macfarlane

Almost every part of what we consider the natural world has been impacted on by human activity. We are in fact all reshaping it by our casual day-to-day actions and decisions.

Conscious interventions in the landscape tend to be driven by specific, singular purposes: acts for the public good are realised to improve access, protect biodiversity, to establish or to improve human habitat, to offer sites for recreation or to maintain historic continuity through restoration and management.

The problem is that a landscape is an infinitely complex construct of overlapping and interacting factors. It is formed by the natural elements (rock, soil, climate, flora and fauna), the cultural elements (human interventions, intentional and unintentional changes), spatial and visual conditions (enclosures/open areas) and the perceptions and values projected onto it by the viewer.

It is limiting to disentangle one strand from this tapestry of elements, processes and ideas and to then act on this single basis. This is, however, the most common approach in land and building management. In practice most interventions are approached with a closely defined brief. As a consequence they can only have a predetermined set of outcomes.

What to do then with a site, Kilmahew / St Peter's, that has seemingly been abandoned, left open to the elements for over a quarter of a century? What to do with the remnants and residues of centuries of different ownership, manipulation, landscape and building interventions? What can be unearthed, rediscovered, delved out and dug up, or torn apart? How do you decide what's worth keeping and what is not? What has meaning, what kind of meaning is that, and for whom?

The notion of the unfinished act positions the artist, designer or anyone else who intervenes and responds to the site in the role of a witness to change. The issues affecting a society and how it expresses itself in physical terms shift over time. Thus the ethos that could create the most well-known building in the grounds - St Peter's Seminary - as a building of the future now appears almost otherworldly, given the current fragility of a world in which religious, financial and environmental insecurity prevail.



St Peters ruined seminary interior - present, photograph - James Johnson



Old Kilmahew rock garden, photograph courtesy of Michael Wilson

With this commission plan we aim to break with historic patterns of control (private / national / institutional / commercial) and accept that a shift to long-term public ownership led by charitable aims will lead to new questions being asked and new solutions found. Artist-led decisions that manifest themselves will release previously undocumented ways of reconfiguring what a particular landscape might become in the twenty-first century.

A plurality of visions can be brought into play, moving beyond what we might expect to find in a rural Scottish setting, which may choose to confirm and integrate the presence of a user or provoke and alienate. We intend that the quality of the questioning and the ensuing exchanges enhance the landscape's sense of 'otherness', of not fitting in, a feeling that already separates it from the many leisure-driven, conserved or restored landscapes that exist across Scotland and the UK.

3. Site History & Contextualisation

Location & Topography

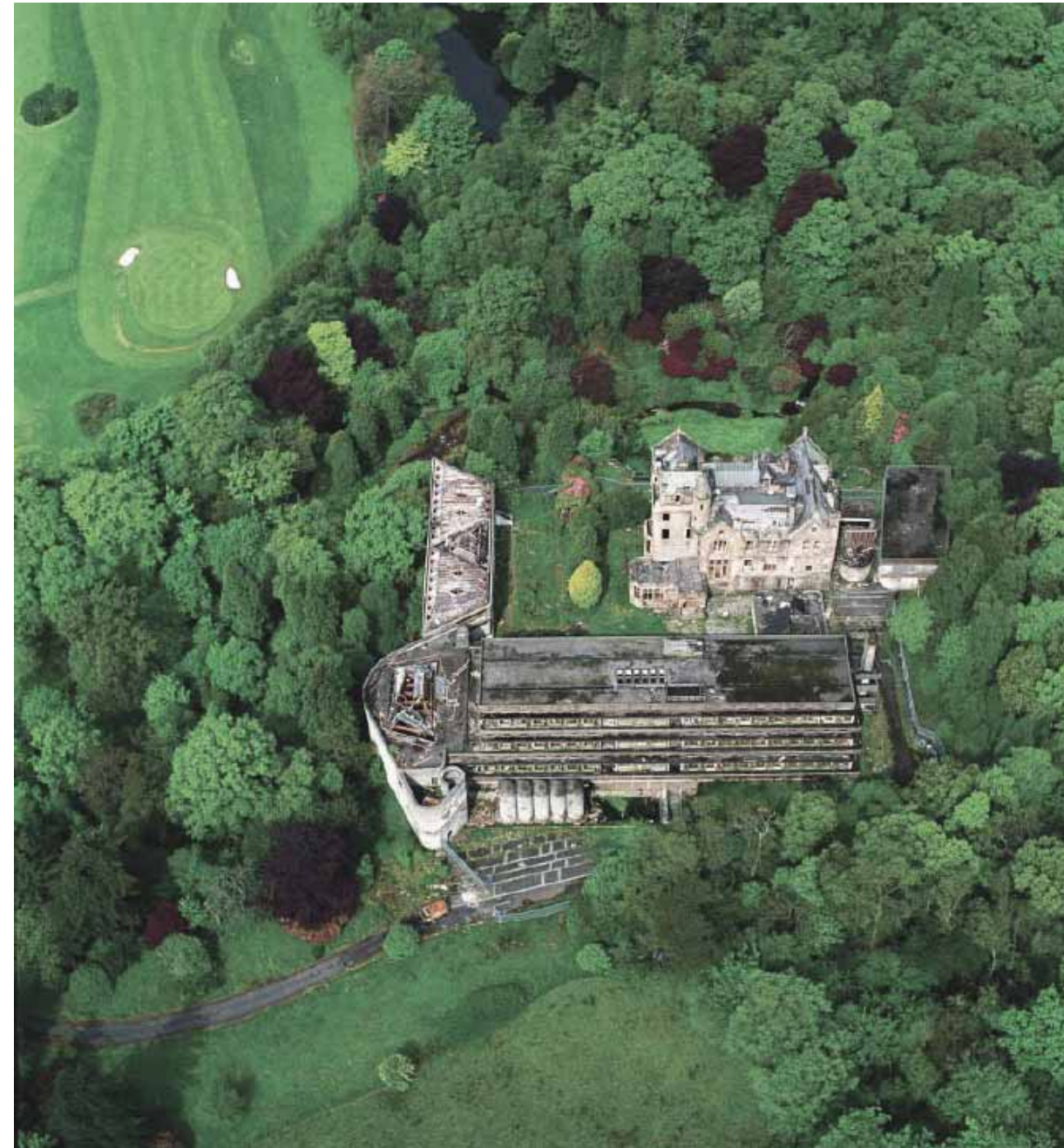
Kilmahew estate is situated approximately twenty miles north-west of Glasgow, to the north-east of Cardross village in Argyll and Bute. It borders Cardross Golf Course to the west while Carman Road runs up to rough moorland along the site's eastern boundary. Located within one of Scotland's Green Belt areas, the site covers approximately 40 hectares and is predominantly wooded.

Rising from the Clyde estuary, the estate sits on elevated ground, located between the lower improved and inhabited land (to the west around Cardross) and hill farmland to the east, towards Renton. The estate is focused around two burns, Kilmahew Burn and Wallacetown Burn, which converge in the southern part of the site. Within the context of the broader topography, the site demonstrates an intricate sculpting of landform. The 'glens' associated with the two burns are strongly defined and in places enclosed by steep slopes, cliffs and semi-ancient trees.

History

'Kilmahew' as a place name is shown on early maps of the area. The name is derived from 'the chapel of St Mahew' (or Mochta) that is said to have existed since earliest Christian times. In the thirteenth century, the land around Kilmahew was recorded as being owned by John Napier. It is thought that the current Kilmahew Castle was built in the fifteenth or sixteenth century, with later phases having been added in the late-eighteenth to early-nineteenth century. Eighteenth-century maps suggest the presence of a residence in the triangular area between the two burns.

The estate was sold by the Napier family in the early nineteenth century and was later bought by James Burns, one of the founders of the Cunard shipping line. Between 1865 and 1868 Burn's son commissioned the design and construction of a new mansion house. Extensive improvements and expansion of the estate were undertaken in this period. This included the planting of surrounding farmland as parkland, the construction of roads, bridges, lodges, stables and a large kitchen garden with glasshouses.



Aerial shot of former estate, also showing Kilmahew house before it was demolished



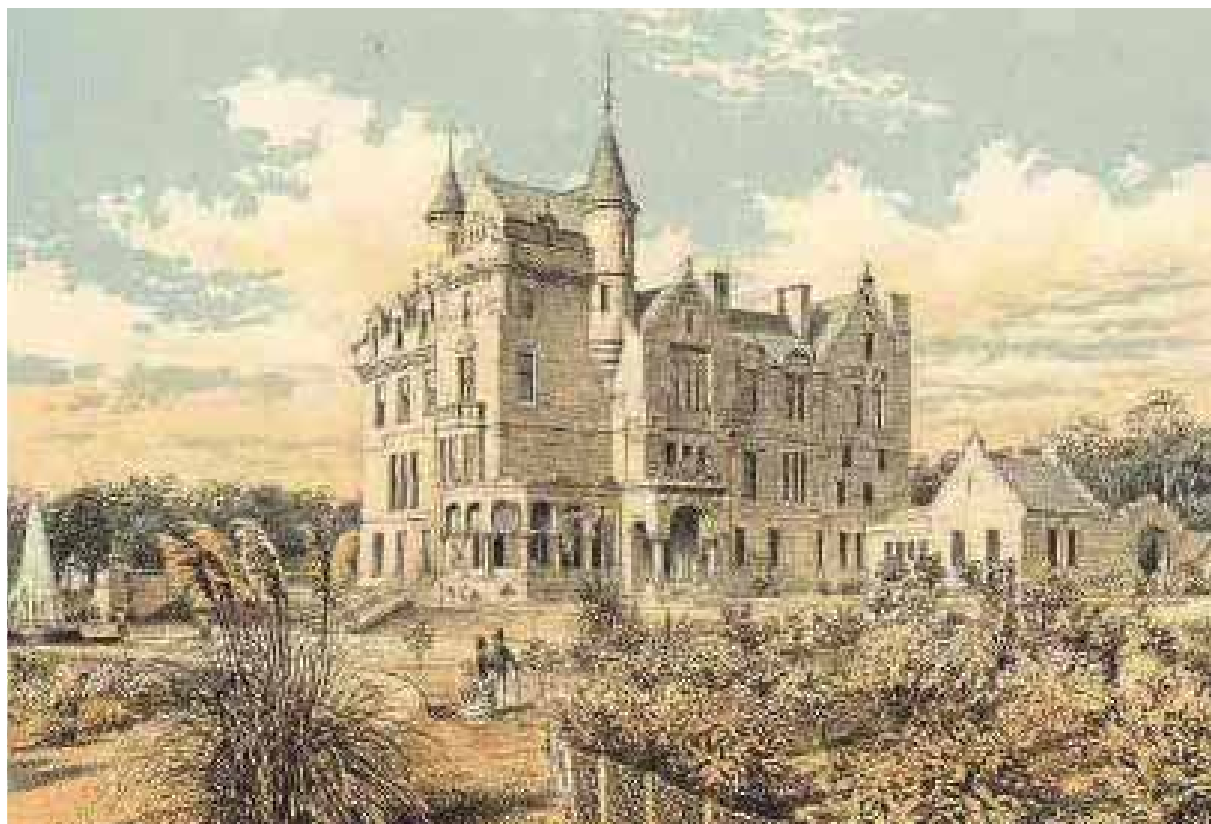
Generals Roy's Map c. 1750's

The emerging designed landscape incorporated a network of footpaths and footbridges. This enabled the exploration of the wooded glens and existing features such as the ruins of Kilmahew Castle as well as new ones such as the artificial lake and curling pond. The planting at this time incorporated many exotic, non-native species apparently collected via links with the Cunard shipping line. The family opened the grounds regularly to visitors.

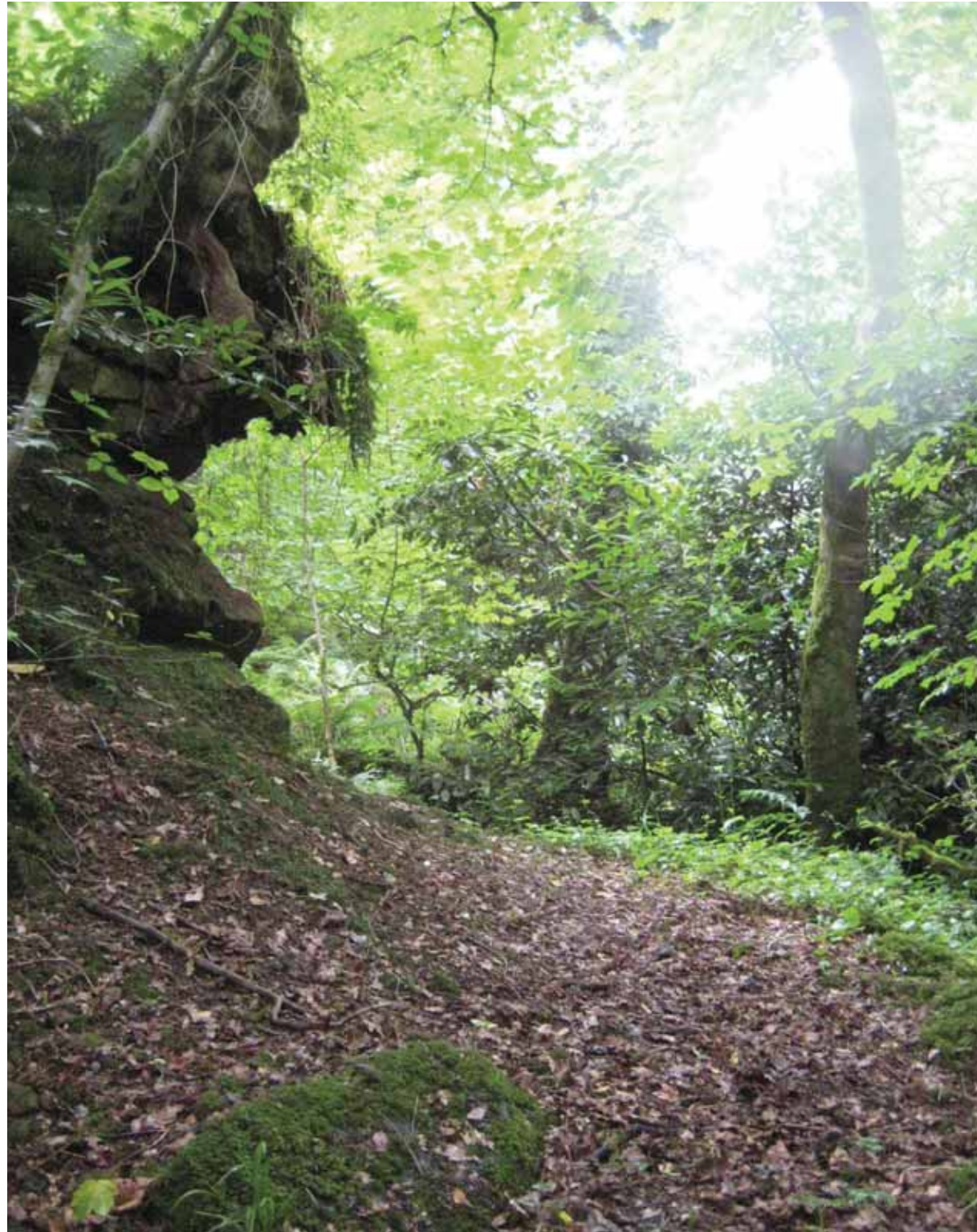
The estate was put up for sale in 1919, and further modernisation of the site was subsequently undertaken by the new owner, Claud Allan. The Archdiocese of Glasgow acquired the estate in 1948 and Kilmahew House was subsequently brought into use for theological students. The architects Gillespie Kidd and Coia were approached in 1953 to consider an extension to Kilmahew House. This evolved into the design of a new set of buildings wrapped around the existing house. Construction started in 1961 and the seminary opened in 1966.

The seminary was only occupied for 13 years, finally closing in 1980. It was subsequently used for five years in the 1980s as a drug rehabilitation centre. The buildings then fell into a derelict state. Kilmahew House was demolished in 1995 after having suffered from two fires. In 1993 the Secretary of State listed the seminary as being of special architectural importance, Category A.

Since then there have been a number of failed attempts to find a planned solution for the estate. In 2009, developers Urban Splash put forward a proposal for the conversion of parts of the seminary and woodlands to commercial residential use which did not attract funding. The opportunity to expand the creative and innovative public proposals tabled by NVA, including an international architectural design competition, now offers real hope for the future.



Kilmahew House, the Seat of John Burns, *The Book of Dumbartonshire*, 1879



Kilmahew Gorge, photograph - Gerrie van Noord

Circulation

The main access and circulation network for the site, as laid out in the late-nineteenth century, is still in evidence. The approaches are from the west and south-east, with the routes converging prior to crossing Kilmahew Burn. These main routes were marked at the entry points by gatehouses / lodges. The western approach lodge is now in a ruined state and the southern approach lodge has recently been demolished.

The wider path network is now mostly impassable. The original paths are traceable; however in many cases they have been overgrown and cannot be followed. The stone bridges for the main access routes are intact, although parapets and portions of the structures are missing. The metal pedestrian bridges have essentially all collapsed and are beyond repair. Movement through the woodland areas is also made difficult due to the dense growth of *Rhododendron ponticum*.

Woodland Assessment

The core areas of woodland essentially pre-date the designed landscape interventions of the late nineteenth-century. The remaining areas of woodland were planted as part of the Victorian designed landscape. There has been a long-standing continuity of woodland cover throughout the core of the site.

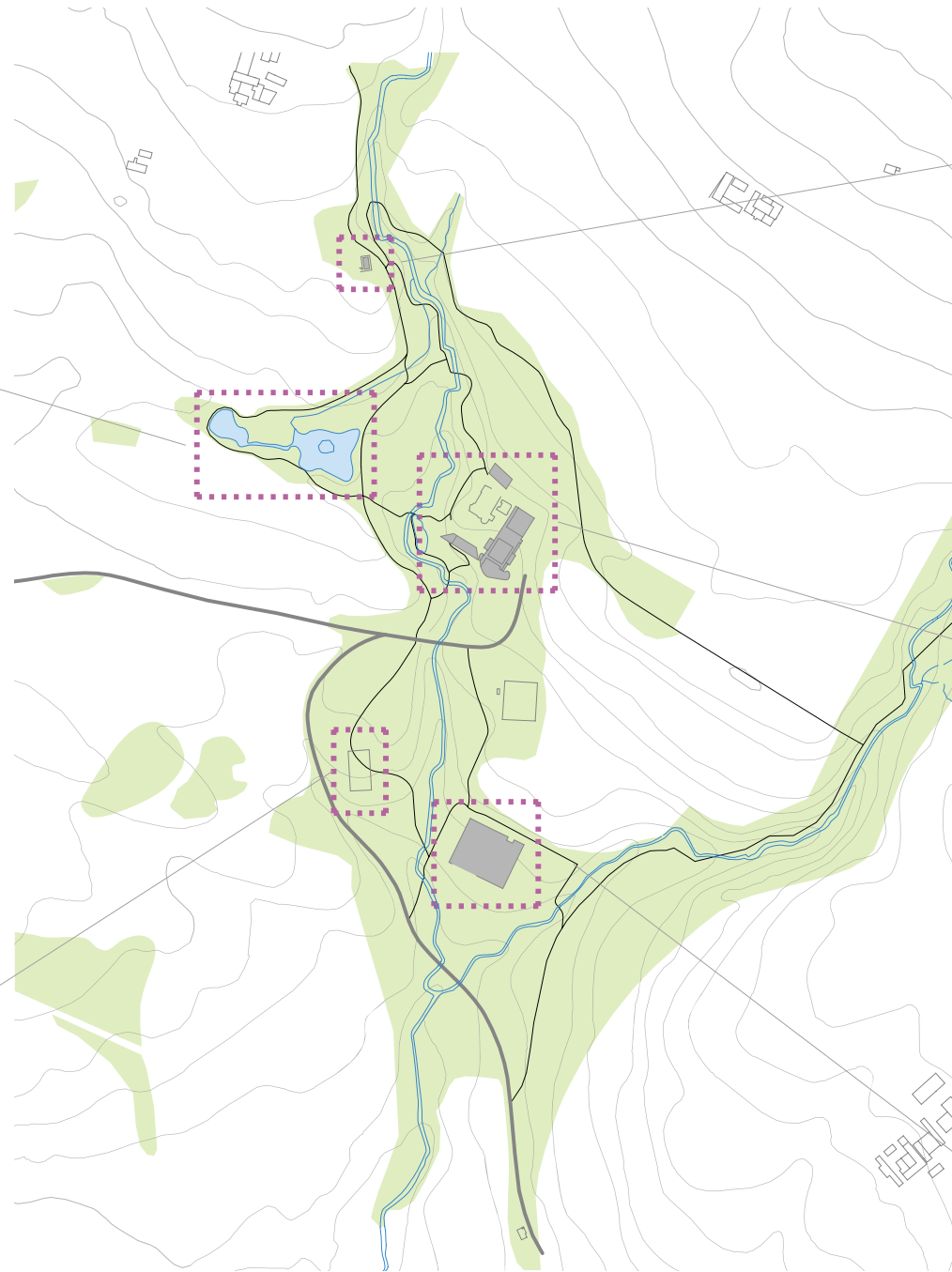
A preliminary assessment notes that 'The canopy is even-aged high forest, dominated by tall straight stems with virtually no lateral branching ... Older, larger or, in foresters' terminology, over-mature trees with more natural growth forms are fairly scarce.' The area surrounding Wallacetown Burn is designated as a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation.

Built Elements

Intriguingly, the site hosts ruins from the medieval period, the nineteenth century and twentieth century. The oldest built feature is the ruin of Kilmahew Castle, which is of medieval origin, although it was modified at later stages and now recognised as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It is notable that all the nineteenth-century structures are now demolished or in ruins. The most intact features are the stone bridges, the swan pond and walled garden. The main features from the post-war period are the seminary buildings, which are in a derelict state.



Swan Pond



Kilmaheo Castle



Seminary Exterior

A waterfall 'Spottie's linn', deep within the park, is named after the burial site of a much-loved horse owned by an eighteenth-century inhabitant at Kilmaheo. A documented story tells of the existence of a discreet windowless stable, the interior of which was completely covered, from floor to walls to ceiling, with mirrors, endlessly reflecting the animal and owner in a perpetual weave of images.

Former Stables



Walled Garden

A Contested Site

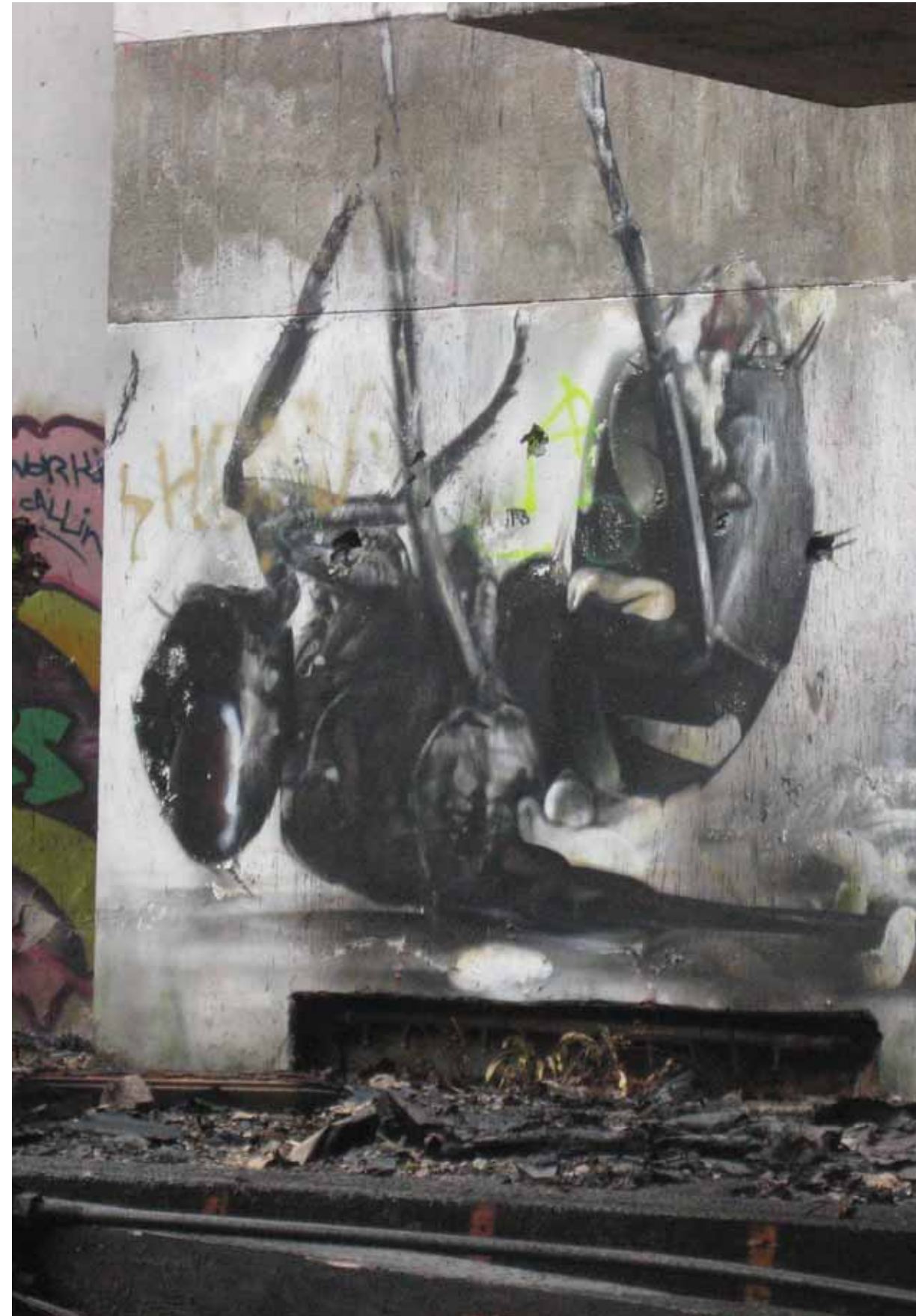
A variety of people with radically divergent interests and backgrounds have felt ownership over the site or declared an interest in its future over the years. The third Marquis of Bute came to lecture at Cardross in the mid-nineteenth century on the lost manorial home of his ancient forebear Robert the Bruce. Now the search has been taken up by the Strathleven Artisans from Renton, who re-enact legends related to Bruce. These mythologies sustain the Artisans' existence, fuel their passions and allow the partial manipulation of buried histories.

In recent years planning options for the buildings have come and gone with saddening regularity, even following the buildings being registered on the World Monument Fund list of 100 most endangered buildings. In 2009, Historic Scotland commissioned Avanti Architects to produce a landmark conservation plan for the buildings, which has been a powerful aid to the current proposals. Simultaneously new generations of artists and architects continue to 're-discover' the site, celebrating its status as an abandoned masterpiece. The gradual ruination has been a source of fascination and creative inspiration. In contrast, some local people would be happy to see it demolished and to erase its existence and gradual decline from collective memory.

The spaces within the buildings have been the setting for powerful graffiti art (Smugestum), outsider art (Wombatt tv) and alienated juvenile tagging. It has been source material for notable contemporary artworks (Toby Paterson and Alex Hartley). It has hosted illegal parties, many photography shoots and has twice been the film-set and subject (in the early 1970s and 2009) for *Space and Light*, Murray Grigor's elegiac record of the loss of a working religious community set in the remarkable interior spaces of the seminary. It has been vandalised beyond recognition in places and intentionally set on fire many times. All that remains is the concrete hulk of the original scheme. Yet, through the pervading sense of desolation, the numinous power of the building's interiors, the great cantilever of the teaching block and the deep carve of the gorges still shine through.

'Ruined, decayed and devalued sites that continue to crumble and deteriorate, vilified as despondent realms; spaces of waste and blight on the landscape, support a plethora of non-human life forms, as well as offering aesthetic, somatic and historical experiences at variance to the often over coded, themed spaces of urban renewal. Spaces within which counter-aesthetics and alternative memories might emerge.'

Tim Edensor



Graffiti by Smugestum, interior St Peter's Seminary, photograph - Chris Hughes



Local memorial, Carman Muir, photograph - Rolf Roscher

Local Setting

The communities of Renton and Cardross are separated only by a short distance geographically, but their social demographic characteristics are very different. The population of Renton is classified as among the 20% most deprived in Scotland while that of Cardross is more affluent.

Renton is situated in the Vale of Leven, just south of Alexandria and around two miles north of Dumbarton. The village was built around the development of the textile industry in the eighteenth century. The decline of the industrial base in the twentieth century created a community with high levels of unemployment, and what is now described as social deprivation. The focus of policy in the village in recent years has been on social and economic regeneration. Very strong community-led trusts and initiatives have been instrumental in improving the physical and social fabrics of the area. Part of this regeneration process has been a large-scale building programme that has included new schools and other public buildings and a housing development. The potential to integrate new methods of energy generation and conservation into future developments is significant.

At a distance of only around two miles from Renton, separated by the Carman Moor, is the village of Cardross. Both villages are situated in the Parish of Cardross, so have strong historic links to the churches of the area. Cardross as a village developed in the seventeenth century around the church. The village remained a kirkton settlement, largely rural and residential in character until the twentieth century. During the latter half of the 1900s the village became increasingly popular as a commuter settlement because of its high quality road and rail connections with Glasgow. It now has conservation area status and has an active community that keenly seeks opportunities to enhance and improve its environs.

The two villages are also separated by the administrative boundary between Argyll and Bute (Cardross) and West Dunbartonshire (Renton) that dissects the Carman Muir. However, there is still a strong feeling among local residents of both communities that they are connected to 'Dunbartonshire', and, more specifically, the Parish of Cardross.

These strong communities and the proximity of the villages to Kilmahew / St Peter's represents an opportunity for local people to work together towards developing particular elements of a high quality resource which matches their different, but parallel, objectives. NVA is working closely with these forward looking communities, bringing them together to develop a tailored participation programme that will generate a range of benefits.

4. The Plan's Baseline

Purpose or meaning is not necessarily synonymous with the notion of achieving a 'goal'.

The Kilmahew / St Peter's site already demonstrates an accumulation of sometimes conflicting 'conceptions' of a landscape that has been successively reshaped over time. The world has changed radically since it was first inhabited.

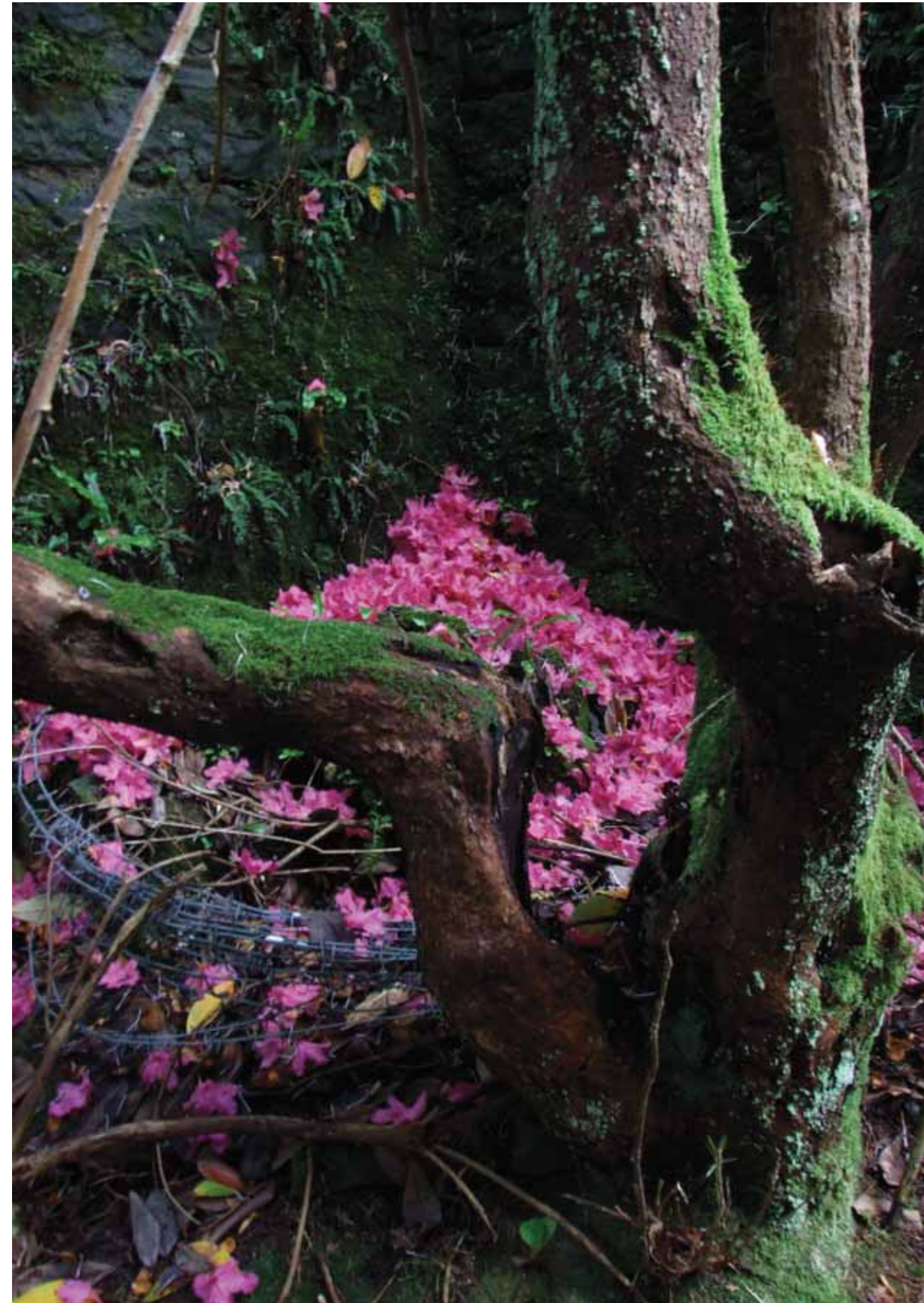
natural woodland - grazing enclosures - castle keep - droving path - farmed fields - private estate - religious establishment - addiction centre - abandoned park - productive landscape

The meanings attached to it by diverse groups of people and the broad variety of responses it evokes offer a rich and powerful starting point for live heritage research and documentation. Expressing this plurality, preliminary commissions will be realised using a series of actions described as ways of doing. These interventions act to redefine and refocus the landscape and to generate dialogue and further creative responses.

There can be no predetermined brief. The focus is on the continual examination of a particular 'locus' and a creative response to that specific place. This singularity sets the agenda for each creative decision and commissioned work.

This approach aims to promote a new model for knowledge exchange, drawing on trans-disciplinary academic research. It will build a resource that can be both studied externally with partnering institutions, through dedicated social media networks and can most importantly be used to teach experientially within the landscape. Keeping Kilmahew / St Peter's unattached from one dominant faculty will give it the lightness and flexibility to respond to the unseen issues and philosophical discourses that will arise around the nature of landscape and its uses in the future.

What makes the site so powerful is the juxtaposition of a radical twentieth century building and a bucolic Victorian designed landscape. There is a perceptible clash of cultures as a seemingly typical urban architectural statement lays itself out with such dramatic intent within the older 'naturalised' forms of the estate. The resulting tension is exciting, thought-provoking and capable of raising strong emotions.



Retaining wall Kilmahew House, photograph - Rolf Roscher



Insel Hombroich, photograph - Rolf Roscher

The articulation and expansion of the site history from past into present therefore defines a unique agenda.

This includes:

- Introducing a sense of uncertainty that demands interaction with the setting. Rather than clearly outlining and defining how people should engage with and relate to the site, the emphasis will be on allowing people to explore different options and to come up with their own use of and response to the site;
- This will result in creating a place that gives people the space to think for themselves and to make their own micro-narratives within a wider scheme. This may in some cases lead to confusion about how to act, but can also lead to a broad range of possible responses that are less likely to occur within a more prescribed framework;
- Realising a sequence of actions and dialogues that are based on an equality of difference. An acknowledgement that disagreement, opposing choices and friction are part of a democratic system of interaction with and management of the site, its land and its buildings;
- All actions and interventions are based on the same basic premise that shows a consistency of ideas and approach, focusing on the incremental introduction of a limited palette of recurring elements, thus allowing for a range of nuances to occur over time.



Architectural detail - St Peter's Seminary

Nothing in the world can exist independently of all the other things in the world - a reversal of the cultural estrangement of much contemporary art practice.

The underlying challenge is to try and redefine what a public landscape can be in the twenty-first century and to generate a new form of landscape and / or landscape typology. We think this agenda can be pursued through an open creative process. What this means in precise physical terms cannot be defined at the start of the project. What is certain is that it will require:

- Continuous acts of investigation and articulation that can involve everyone: from artists, academics, landscape designers and architects to purposeful visitors, walkers, runners as well as chance passers by, changing engagement from a passive role to that of a more committed agent.
- The acceptance that each idea and action will generate a range of responses; by harnessing these responses they in turn can generate the basis for the next series of interventions. This notion of generative action becoming a core embedded element.
- The acceptance that a state of permanent instability is integral to the site. What is relevant today may be less relevant in ten years. The conflict between varying patterns of historical control demonstrate that what now seems a minor worry may tomorrow become a major concern.
- Therefore we need to work with the acceptance that everything that occurs on the site may be temporal and will be part of a series of unfinished acts.

A core principle for Kilmahew is to create an environment that will consciously be perceived to be distinct or other from wider society and people's day-to-day lives. This less certain definition of territory will stimulate people to step out of their set routines, modes of thinking and acting, exploring and having the time to unravel different modes of behaviour.

As a consequence the plan will also be focused on shifting people's relationship with the landscape from one of being – a passive observer or detached consumer – to having an active physical, sensory and/or intellectual engagement. All of the actions and interventions – be they artistic, architectural or other – will be invited, devised and ultimately delivered to contribute to this shift.

A final desire is that through what happens the seeds are sown for people to carry elements with them and to realise similar activities, animations and actions elsewhere. This could be within the 'forgotten' upland landscape just beyond the boundaries Kilmahew / St Peter's within the nearby communities, or much further removed, closer to or embedded within their usual surroundings.

'A pre-requisite for an art that manifests a counter-consciousness is that the separation between the artist and audience is closed, that they become mutually engaged, to the point where the audience become the rationale both in the making and reception of the work.'

Stephen Willats

Actions are discussed in terms of a series of 'verbs', which will only become relevant through the ways in which they are made manifest. These active 'verbs' are useful to distinguish the intention of the work from the 'reflective' experience of land and environmental art of the past half-century or so, and will clearly separate what happens here from many other carefully managed estates, gardens and sculpture parks. Too often they unconsciously impose set parameters that curtail people's thinking and movement: we know exactly what we are going to get when we visit them. Here people have to commit to the experience of the less expected, requiring either effort or focus, which will then open up to other possibilities.



Duisberg Nord, photograph - Rolf Roscher



Staff and students of St Peter's College seen in 1968

“A cumulative process of exchange and dialogue leading to the possibility of individual and collective epiphany that extends the sense of self. A form of work that is dependent on a direct physical and perceptual interaction with the viewer.”

Tim Ingold

Living Heritage

Building on the idea that we want to encourage people to make their own choices and decisions, an important factor will be capturing people's responses to what they encounter, both in terms of future interventions and in archiving past and present connections. This starts with a social history reflecting the contested nature of the site: memories that can vary from love to loathing, from nostalgia to humour, from anger to reflection, from resignation to excitement.

We have already begun to record an incredible range of stories: from novice priests who lived on the site as young men, village residents who remember the first gardener of the twentieth century to accounts of which storms downed which trees and when. The thoughts and ideas of graffiti artists who have turned the decaying walls of the St Peter's Seminary into vast canvasses. We have also heard from locals, who came as children to steal apples from the orchards in the 1930s, and from architects who have fought to save this seminal building. Living heritage, all releasing different images of the site, different reasons to care, to have an opinion, resulting in a complex, tangled mass of meanings and perspectives.

The collection of people's personal responses and documentation over time will create a valuable resource for future commissions, remembering and unearthing what is there now – including the estate's history – as a living archive. This may take the form of imagined histories using the source material as well as more explicit social, environmental or politically focused work.

This can include:

- Capturing (remembered) histories from local residents;
- Gathering historically published documents and ephemera related to the site;
- Building the basis of a resource and point of reference for future use – both physically and electronically;

Those who are invited and commissioned to develop work, projects and actions that fall under any of the following action headers - moving, doing, learning, thinking, generating - will be explicitly asked to integrate modes of capturing responses in the commissioned work.

The value of the proposed system of open exchanges is that it should extend the current tendency to communicate details of ordinary existence to other peers through the myriad of available forums and social networks. It is the desire to create carefully curated collective moments built out of personal experiences; to value individual input within a wider artistic schema.

A. Moving

Varied modes of movement to and around Kilmahew / St Peter's provide a vital first way of access, to fully engage with the estate's location, its size, its natural and landscaped elements and the past architectural interventions that it harbours. Moving itself can be divided into two separate strands: getting there and arriving, and moving around the actual site.

Getting there / arriving:

Although not far from Glasgow and smaller towns and villages near Loch Lomond and the Clyde, the journey to the site with people leaving their day-to-day surroundings and activities behind, can become an integral part of establishing the site's 'otherness'.

The main modes of transport that people are likely to use to get to Kilmahew – car, bus and train – take people to nearby locations from which a final stage in the journey is to be undertaken on foot, or by bike.

People will be encouraged to travel to Lomond Shores by bus or to Cardross or Renton by train. Alternatively, when they arrive by car, they will be required to leave it at a dedicated off-site parking area, potentially the disused sandstone quarry on Carman Muir.

There is potential for a weekend electric shuttle bus to bring people to the site entrance, which could be run as a social enterprise from Renton. This will be of particular benefit to families with younger children or the less mobile.

From Renton, Lomond Shores and Cardross it is possible to walk through the wider landscape to the site, by re-activating historically established routes and rights-of-way. From each of these possible points of 'arrival', a distinct experience brings visitors onto the site. These routes of arrival can be interpreted or modified, both physically and actively through regularly planned guided walks.

Most built attractions allow cars to enter the visited landscape as a matter of course. In rejecting the central position of the car, the programme will make an important statement of intent that will equally alienate and entice different sections of society. If the getting there is harder, it will potentially make the arrival feel more worthwhile.



NVA white bikes - Glasgow 2010, photograph - Neale Smith



Kilmahew landscape - view from gorge up to main access bridge, photograph - James Johnson

Once there:

With well-established but overgrown tracks and trails that are part of the original designed landscape, any future spatial intervention cannot but respond to them. The existing form of the landscape and an understanding of the layering of hundreds of years of human activity will influence the unearthing of old and initiation of new routes.

Different speeds of movement can be led and stimulated by deliberate design decisions. We propose that varied routes are developed which through their form, and the manipulation of spaces around them, enable and encourage shifting rates of movement.

Some activities are best undertaken on one's own: for example, approaching the seminary buildings from the main gorge, physically tracing the trajectory of the burn, would require the provision of waders and a daily decision if the water level and flow-rate makes the journey possible. Boots are placed in a lock-up that is left open or closed depending on conditions. Minimal instructions allow the user to kit up and negotiate the increasingly steep sided gorge. Entering the permanently green and canopied world allows appreciation of the depth and height of the woods and exposes the geological fault lines running from west to east across the region.



Kilmahew landscape, photograph - James Johnson



Alaskan path, photograph - Rolf Roscher

Walking:

When we walk our rate of movement is slow, we can watch our every step, which allows us to notice the very immediate and intricate qualities of the space around us. In addition to being able to walk clearly defined routes, access and movement through seemingly inaccessible parts of the woodlands can be enabled with a 'light touch'. Instructions that help establish this 'light touch' may not be permanent or physical, but are intended to open up the possibility of moving through isolated and silent places.

The existing - and now partially covered - routes through the landscape were composed to subtly enhance a person's spatial and visual experience. These routes can be re-activated and redefined by gentle as well as transgressive interventions. The experience of walking through the landscape can thus evoke strong sensory, conscious and subconscious responses, including disorientation, exposure, enclosure, surprise or delight.

This will ask for 'self-determination' of the visitor, and enhance the exploratory nature of the experience. Given the relatively isolated location of the iconic seminary buildings, it is considered vital that the public experience of them should go beyond an 'external view'. The experience of the buildings should be woven into the wider movement through the landscape.

A main path running parallel with the lower levels of the main gorge follows the earliest defined public walking route (from Kilmahew Castle to Cardross village), through a quiet section of the old estate to the heart of the site. From this route, under road bridge, a vertical ascent offers a dramatic first experience of the buildings. The curved outer wall of the chapel and the teaching block cantilevered high over the retaining walls of the old baronial house. This is the first signature moment in a series of vantage points within an architectural promenade that reveals the soul of the built form. This echoes both Corbusier's intention of design, defining a set of codified walk-through sculptural spaces and the Catholic churches' long-standing use of promenade as a key part of ritual activity.

Running:

'In the late 1970s a combination of losing my father and the enthusiastic consumption of hallucinogenic drugs left me serially detached from a serviceable reality. In many ways the intense physicality of my creative direction has been about the slow process of coming back from those shores ever since. The act of running, of grounding your daily reality and having the world endlessly imprinted into your body has been a form of salvation.

It has led to the desire to create work with a physical immediacy that has allowed many people to feel similarly transformed. It allows this through focusing on the sensual specificity of the ground beneath your feet. While NVA's large-scale environmental animations such as 'The Path' in Glen Lyon or 'The Storr' on the Isle of Skye played with an intentionally spectacularised form, the walked or run narrative is often distilled into an intensely personal involvement for the viewer.

It can be both about the individual and their capacity to overcome pain or about the way we see the world as we move through it. Runs express themselves through internal or externally driven thought patterns depending on mood, intensity, weather and distance.'
Angus Farquhar

We propose to establish a continual series or patterns of runs. At known regular times a mass run circumscribing Kilmahew / St Peter's will take place.

This route and the spatial sequence through which it unfolds can be manipulated to generate certain conditions that contribute to the experience of running through the landscape. We will archive the thoughts and perceptions of those who run and re-run the same route over time, building a unique record of how interior and exterior worlds collide through the directness of the action within the landscape.



The rhythm of a run and concentration on surface and surroundings creates space for a different level of thinking to occur at times.



Kilmahew ruined glass house in walled garden - present, photograph - Angus Farquhar



Cafe - Insel Hombroich, photograph - Rolf Roscher

B. Doing

Doing focuses on direct activity and work on and with land. It defines a productive foundation to Kilmahew. This can also link to other strands, by creating collective programmes to open up existing routes for increased movement around the site, as well as growing and harvesting vegetables, gathering, cutting, digging etc. This is importantly a new terrain in which to commission artists, whose practice is throwing new light or extending knowledge of traditional rural activities such as food production and woodland management.

Growing (supported):

We propose to use the former walled garden of Kilmahew House, with further land brought into productive use on the adjacent open meadow. The walled garden space would offer a new indoor working space which could host cooking, a café and crèche facilities. The commissioned activities would focus on raising skills and involving those who may not have previously been involved in growing alongside more experienced practitioners. We will promote innovation and experimental techniques over the creation of a pastiche of a nineteenth-century kitchen garden. The model allows the potential for local ownership and governance integrated with the creative interventions of artists.

Linked to the action of growing and to create a social focal point will be the periodic provision of free food as an understated generous act for key occasions or at set times of day. A core goal is to establish a dynamic and fluid 'milieu' of people who will be involved and who can build their own skill set over time.

This will 'seed' satellite activity beyond the garden and inspire and support growing and production elsewhere in the region, with the potential for school run farmer's market stalls in nearby towns and community growing projects in neighbouring villages. The growing activity in Kilmahew can act as a hub and centre of gravity for this broader network.



Duisberg Nord, photograph - Rolf Roscher

Growing – (independent):

We propose that an area of the site is sub-divided and offered to groups or individual artists selected on the basis of a submitted 'proposal'. The use and control of a 'plot' would be time-limited (to 1 - 3 years); to ensure that there is a regular and active change.

The focus is again 'productive' but with an open attitude as to how individuals and groups could develop and / or manipulate their spaces. This generates a changing patchwork of interventions that can include members of surrounding communities, individuals and groups from other places – both nationally and internationally.

Here, the 'feedback' or response from the participants becomes manifest in the physical 'plot'. The recording of the outcomes of this process and the resource that this creates offers the basis for the generation of other creative work.

A further strand will be giving people the chance to work for an hour or two in the garden in return for a lunch, with the daily provision of a meal made with ingredients grown locally in the summer.

The Winstanley Modern Diggers (WMD)

A secret society has been established as a first act to further the aims of a fully productive landscape. A seventeenth-century political activist, Gerrard Winstanley was one of the founders of the English group known as the True Levellers for their beliefs based upon a form of Christian pre-communism, and as the Diggers for their actions, because they took over public lands and dug them over to plant crops. WMD will be creating a free garden in the district, which will provide the food for an annual meal organised locally in honour of Winstanley and his visionary teachings.



Garden Festival 2008, Chaumont Sur Loire



Garden Festival 2008, Chaumont Sur Loire

Building;

Built interventions are elements in the composition of the landscape. Using the seminary design as primary source material we wish to dedicate a specific building programme into the landscape.

The aim is to gradually populate the landscape with a remarkable range of structures, with the gradual transformation of the seminary at its heart. A selection of respites, sheds, offices, sculptural and work spaces will be developed that promote innovative use of materials and design. The option for movement between interior and exterior space is of particular relevance given the level of rainfall in the west of Scotland and will contribute to shifts in perceptions as views are contained, framed and then expanded in succession.

We aim to initiate summer master classes with world-class architects introducing a range of newly built forms, looking to design innovation, low energy consumption and environmental efficiency. The work can offer temporary solutions and aesthetically driven experiments as well as practical and permanent structures for daily use and short stay by staff, intentional visitors and the public. This allows the position between the public and the surroundings to gradually deepen through offering a range of possible interactions: from the quick respite to the relaxed meal, from the day-long activity to the short break, right the way through to permanent living.

We can imagine some being formal, with controlled access and others occupying the semi-legal status of the bothy requiring to be found by word of mouth.



Juvel Landscape Hotel, JSA Architects



James Turrell, Sky Space

C. Thinking

As an action, this is perhaps implicit in all others, yet we can explicitly create moments for intentional thought in a landscape setting - or in relation to a particular natural element or feature. This will be achieved through the design and manipulation of spaces and through artist / design commissions that create pauses / modified environments / positioning that encourage a movement in thought and / or questioning of what has been done and why.

This can take many forms:

- Spaces that encourage contemplation: that calm and refocus the senses and in which people are given the opportunity to withdraw from physical activity and movement. Environments where they can sense the relationship between external phenomena and internal perception, which is enhanced by cutting out other 'noise' through a certain level of isolation.
- Spaces that discretely unsettle and generate an uncertainty or ambiguity requiring an intellectual openness. This can include strategies that place the individual in direct and focused engagement with the unexpected, including the intentional presentation of ruin and entropy and the intentional re-colonisation of nature into the built form.
- Spaces that directly present a challenging / transgressive situation: that provoke and that may lead people to question why they felt challenged. This can involve the placement and juxtaposition of 'dead' elements within the living landscape, or the disembodiment and reconfiguration of urban architectural motifs from the modernist era appearing in isolation within the wider naturalised setting.



James Turrell, Deer Shelter Yorkshire Sculpture Park

D. Learning

Learning and knowledge exchange are at the centre of many of the actions highlighted so far.

It is the combination of natural and introduced elements, both temporal and permanent that will form the core subject matter of a trans-disciplinary academic programme, using links already established with universities from across the UK. A fluid roster of national and international partners will be invited to initiate research papers with the aim of building a permanent and expanding record of the site's history and progression. These will be drawn from fields such as environmental and fine art, architecture, landscape architecture, social anthropology, ecology, geography, history, contemporary literature, Scottish studies and philosophy. An array of approaches can open up new angles and lines of enquiry, which can fuel creative work and through an open-air peripatetic lecture programme can involve the wider public.

The capturing of what is there and of future responses to actions and interventions on site will provide resource material and could lead to the creation of a physical library as well as a net-based resource.

Converting existing building interiors or realising new structures would offer breaks and pauses in people's journeys, allowing them to take time to read or interpret a particular work or line of enquiry.

From the innovative splitting up and management of the walled garden, through to the gradual transformation of the woodland there is the potential to involve and build up teams of volunteers, trainees and apprenticeships. Each practical step will have been undertaken with an authentic sense of social purpose beyond the quicker completion of a revamp into a 'perfected' visitor attraction. As a continual work-in-progress, aspects of the seminary consolidation would also offer targeted training and re-skilling packages within any professional contract of works. The work will take longer but the benefits will be wider.

We also wish to initiate winter master classes in landscape animation. NVA have developed a highly specific methodology to allow audiences to enter relatively remote locations at night. When the senses are sharpened by darkness, there is tremendous creative potential to use small-scale installation, lighting and sound technologies to shift perceptions of natural phenomena and key features seen along an animated route.

NVA have pioneered a peripatetic practice in which performative work is completed by the actions of a participating audience. The act of intentional movement is used to focus meaning and ways of articulating relationships and viewing phenomena within a given environment.

The ideas or philosophy behind a piece are published from an early stage of development, thus an extraordinary, sometimes physically challenging, provocative or intensified set of moments can be shared by all who choose to engage with the work from beginning to end. This represents the opposite of the individual artist doing something 'remarkable' or placing work within a natural context and then transposing documentation of the event or intervention into a gallery setting.

Art about the landscape is by its very nature often neutralised when it attempts to overcome the difficulties of representation in internal spaces, as typified by the recent 'Radical Nature' exhibition at the Barbican, London (2009).



NVA, The Storr: Unfolding Landscape, Isle of Skye 2005, photograph - Alan McAteer



Kielder observatory, photograph - Rolf Roscher

With over five kilometres of paths there is the opportunity to work over many years to reveal unseen aspects of the site. We would like to extend our methodology of mediated community integration and detailed technical / environmental planning to new generations of emerging artists. This will be achieved through a prestigious bi-annual presentation mentoring a group of exceptional students in a supported creative environment. Each student will be nominated by a partnering UK institution or through open competition.

We will promote:

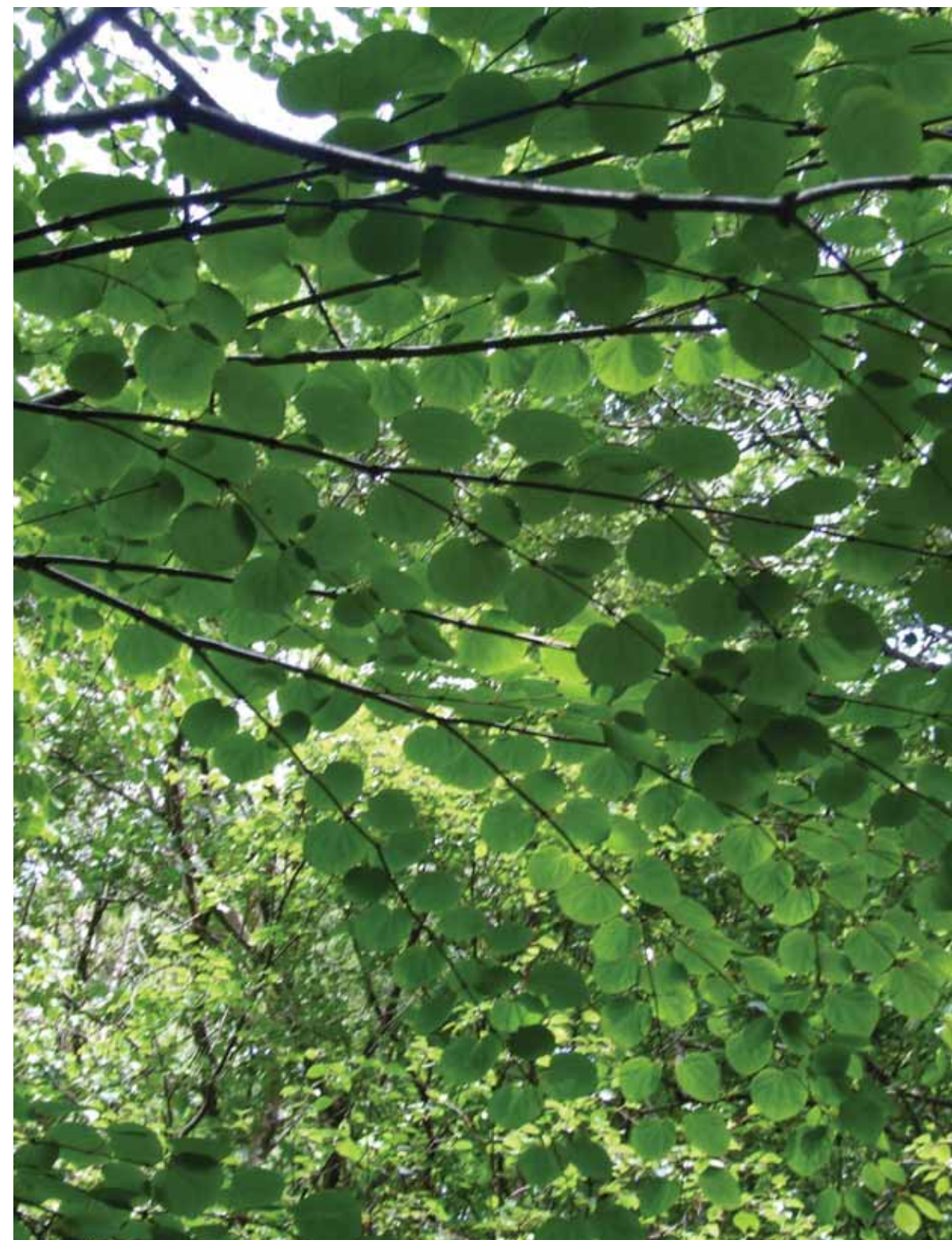
- Practical learning schemes that are focused on particular skills that integrate elements used in innovative landscape management, as well as the productive sowing and growing of fruit and vegetables.
- Experiential learning and embodied learning: with walking and running already being integral modes of movement to and around the site.
- Courses, workshops and conferences on site-related subjects - landscape architecture, architecture, art in the landscape, widen the learning methodologies that can be introduced.

E. Generating

An underlying principle behind all of the proposed actions and interventions is the potential to use people's responses to what they encounter in the grounds, with these influencing the next series of commissions. These new actions can be subtly altered versions of what went before, or they can initiate entirely new ideas and directions for future projects.

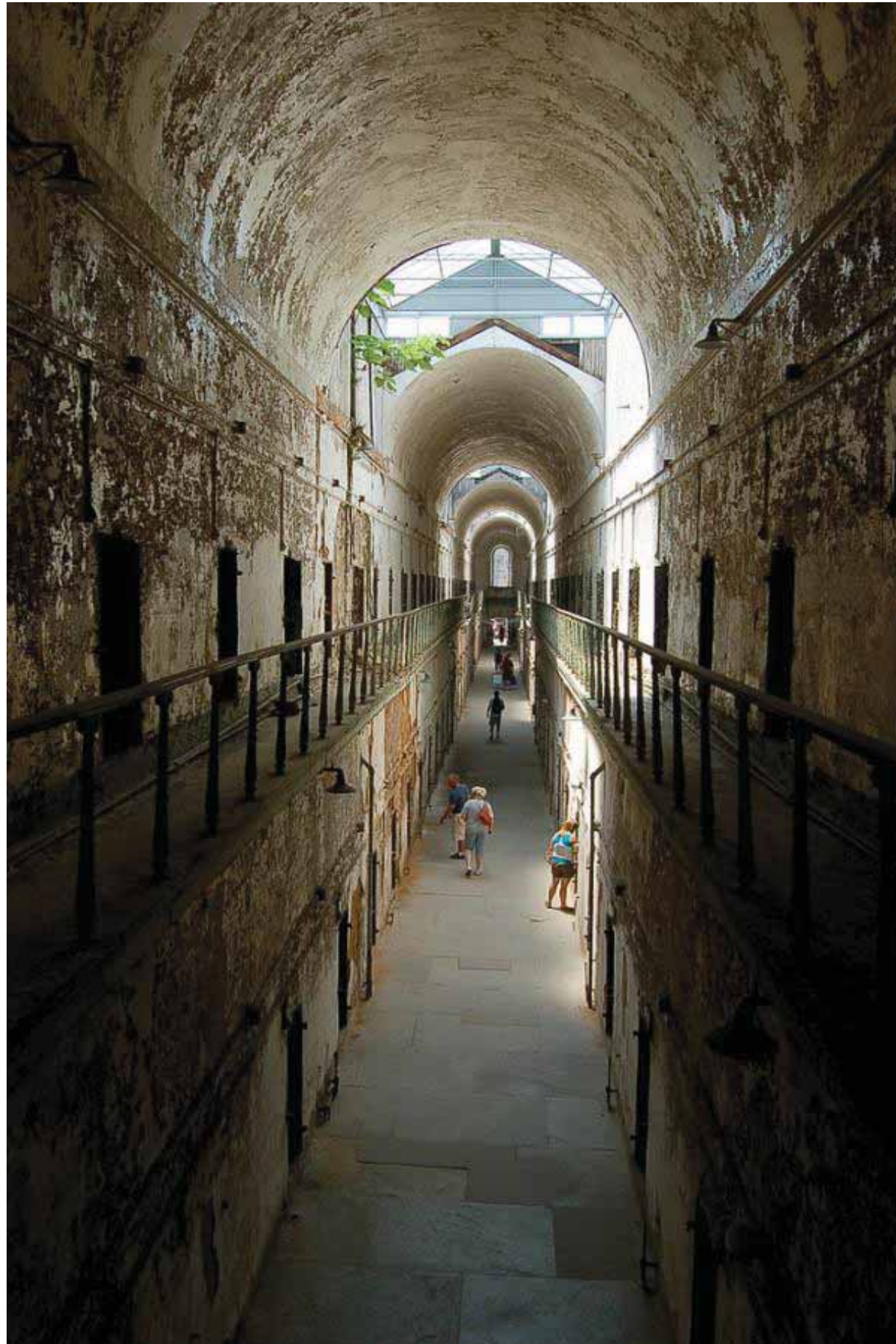
Key to making this generative process a driving force in itself will require a willingness to be discursive: not only from those who participate, act and intervene in response to the site and the activity they engage in, but also by those who are commissioned to develop the framework for such actions and interventions.

As a result commissions may take place on site or may take place in surrounding areas. The impact of the creative idea may have immediate effect or be planned for fruition fifty years hence.



Kilmahew, Japanese Katsura trees – an early twentieth century addition to the designed landscape, photograph - Rolf Roscher

5. Rationale for Restoration



Eastern State Penitentiary, Philadelphia

Kilmahew / St Peter's is a location which is known across the world. It continues to provoke intense emotions and divergent opinions, beguiling and alienating in equal measure. Local and national partnership negotiations around Kilmahew / St Peter's have been dynamic and demanding. It is an important debate, which can only progress on the basis of detailed discussion and coherent analysis of what it takes to realise such an ambitious 'change of use' in the middle of a global economic downturn.

The primary aim is to bring the building to life as part of a walked narrative within the wider historic landscape. It will display the full scope of the original structural design of the building, with the vision of sustaining a singular and unparalleled focal point on the site. The transformation could be comparable to the magnificent transformation of the Duisberg Nord steelworks, its partial restoration and imaginative landscape modification placing it among Germany's foremost contemporary public art environments and drawing visitors from across the world.

The balance between the tensions of decay and growth offers something remarkable and rarely explored in a British setting, where we are often trapped by our relationship to the past.

Phased capital spending, over 3 to 5 financial years, allows for prudent management of the site enabling a series of steps to be taken, from an initial consolidation to fuller conservation, restoration, reconfiguration and maintenance of chosen elements through a competitive design process. This also indicates that a consortium of funders can contribute smaller sums over a longer period, thus spreading risk and ensuring tight fiscal control during the build period.



Parque da Juventude, Sao Paulo

“The late twentieth-century creative re-use of crumbling and decayed buildings as source material and temporary live space for presentations has a dual purpose. On the one hand such buildings carry vestiges of a lost world: of full employment, security, cohesiveness, and a sense of previous ideological certainty. On the other they can be host to dramatic scenes of as yet undefined potential: places where unfettered artistic imagination and production can thrive with an edge and rawness that cannot be replicated in traditional galleries, theatres and concert halls.

Abandoned buildings trapped by their broken relationship with the past are paradoxically being used to free a new generation of cultural operators and artists. It is the power of making something out of nothing, of creating value outwith normal commercial parameters.”

Tim Edensor



NY State Pavilion World's fair 1964-5, Queens New York, architect - Philip Johnson and Richard Foster



Fairground, Tripoli, architect - Oscar Niemeyer



Matadero, Madrid, architects - Arturo Franco Díaz



Neues Museum, Berlin, architects - Chipperfield

Timeline for Kilmahew / St Peter's 2010 - 2012

General

- Progress appropriate ownership / management structures (based on final funding position re buildings / partners).
- Fundraise for establishing partnership / management structures and implementation of the commission plan.

Buildings

- Detailed costing assessment / proposal of current condition and work required to partially restore, convert and maintain St Peter's seminary buildings
- Pursue public and private funding options to deliver a sequential redevelopment of the wider estate through a competitive design process - including key heritage elements within the historic landscape, the first phase of proscribed actions.
- Further develop a suitable community engagement strategy, management and maintenance programme with local and national partners which will ensure sustainability and protect the investment in the heritage asset in the long-term.



Paddington Reservoir Gardens, Sydney

Capturing	Moving	Doing	Learning	Thinking	Living
<p>Organise activities on and about the site, and capturing responses through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • visits by small groups of people; • round table discussions; • ongoing activities with nearby local communities. <p>Commission artists / designers / landscape architects / architects to devise mechanism to capture data: audiovisual electronic.</p> <p>Disseminate outputs.</p>	<p>Establish which existing paths can be cleared, for what purpose and how;</p> <p>Preparation outline of new routes and paths; commission small-scale initial interventions related to this.</p>	<p>Start with regular, but low-key activities around the site, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • growing (supported / unsupported) • walking / running <p>Develop long-term framework for open submission interventions.</p>	<p>Establish links with education and academic establishments.</p> <p>Develop outline summer and winter schools .</p> <p>Develop frameworks for skill-based learning projects.</p>	<p>Outline a series of commissions for various spaces that accommodate different modes of thinking, allowing for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ephemeral / temporal structures • more long-term structures • possibly permanent structures <p>that alternately accommodate peaceful contemplation.</p>	<p>Explore options for permanent programme management structures in seminary buildings /walled garden. (implementation plan)</p> <p>Develop commission plans for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • short- term, temporary structures • long-term structures for temporary stay • permanent structures for common facilities

What our approach for Kilmahew / St Peter's does not aim to do....

With many nineteenth century parks and estates having been painstakingly restored and opened up to the public for educational and leisure purposes, one could assume that something similar could happen at Kilmahew / St Peter's.

However, our approach is a conscious effort to step away from existing models of public art commissioning and park management. Therefore, it is useful to state what Kilmahew will explicitly NOT strive to be:

- A contemporary, updated version of a sculpture park or, worse, a woodland trail. Although such enterprises have made a contribution to the development of artistic practice and to engaging different audiences with art in varied exterior settings, we think the time has come to step away from this model, and to challenge both artists and audiences to explore different ways of working and engagement. This does not mean that the commissions will shun physical interventions in the landscape. However, if and when they do occur they will be one of many possible manifestations of interventions, structures and additions to what is already there as subject and inspiration.
- A restored nineteenth-century garden or park. Although most landscape interventions date back to this period, a restoration of and return to what exactly existed before is explicitly to be avoided. Although certain heritage elements may be unearthed, and brought back to life, a resuscitation showing how the entire site was designed in the past seems an increasingly strange aspiration.
- A leisure attraction. Although elements of what will be made available may come across as having a relaxed 'lack of focus', the commission plan is explicitly thought through as a broad-ranging project, in which the active as well as the quietly contemplative are embedded, and the clearly guided action is present as much as the solitary explorative one.



Graffiti Kilmahew main bridge parapet, photograph - Johnny Bute

6. Points of Reference

Examples - temporal / unfinished work / buildings

The Center for Land Use Interpretation (CLUI) is a US-based research and education organisation interested in understanding the nature and extent of human interaction with the earth's surface, and in finding new meanings in the intentional and incidental forms that we individually and collectively create. CLUI exists to stimulate discussion, thought, and general interest in the contemporary landscape. The Center attempts to emphasise the multiplicity of points of view regarding the utilisation of terrestrial and geographic resources.

Robert Smitson, Woodshed
Robert Smitson's partially burned woodshed, now a mound of dirt in a wooded area on the Kent State University Campus, Ohio.

Earthworks are a form of land art mostly made of in-situ earthen material. Most iconic examples date from the late 1960s and early 1970s. Many of them have been left to mutate by erosion, human destruction, and temporal restructuring. This makes them in a sense alive and interacting with the dynamic world, gaining new meanings beyond those originally intended.

(Source: <http://www.clui.org>)

Chesapeake Bay Hydraulic Model

Covering eight acres, The Army Corps of Engineers' Chesapeake Bay Hydraulic Model was a hand-made landscape in miniature, built to mimic the massive estuary in Matapeake, Maryland (US). Though conceived in the 1960s and shut down in the 1980s, this engineering marvel had an operational existence of only three years, during which time it generated mountains of data - to be covered in the same dust as the model itself. The site was entirely destroyed in 2006.

(Source: <http://www.clui.org>)

Dixie Square Mall, Harvey, Illinois.

From the outside the general form of the mall appears intact and all of the rambling mega-structure is still standing. The shape of the structure is more difficult to discern than it once was, as a new forest of trees is well established in the parking lot, plazas, and alcoves around the outside of the building, breaking through asphalt, and overgrowing out of planters.

(Source: <http://www.clui.org>)



Robert Smitson's Woodshed, Kent State University Campus, Ohio



Chesapeake Bay Hydraulic Model



Dixie Square Hall, Harvey Illinois

Architecture / landscape architecture practices that incorporate trial and research and temporality

Ecoshack

A 5-acre design lab created as an informal place where architects, designers and artists can test ideas and interact with like-minded people based in Joshua Tree, CA. The focus of activities is on off-the-grid design, alternative culture and communal lifestyles.

(Source: <http://ecoshack.com>)

Ghost Architectural Laboratory

The Ghost Architectural Laboratory is a research facility and education initiative that promotes the transfer of architectural knowledge through project-based learning, relating to issues of landscape, material culture and community.

The programme takes place on the coast of Nova Scotia, atop the stone ruins of a 400-year-old village. Projects are seen as instruments to interpret cultural ecology and build current research with an emphasis on the wooden shipbuilding traditions of the area.

(Source: <http://www.mlsarchitects.ca/ghost/>)

An institute of investigative living

A-Z West is located on twenty-five acres in the California high desert next to Joshua Tree National Park. Since the autumn of 1999 the cabin and grounds, originally inhabited and built on in the 1940s and 1950s, have been undergoing an ongoing conversion into testing grounds for 'A-Z designs for living'. The area and its history represent a very poignant clash of human idealism, the harshness of the climate and the vast distances that it places in between people.

(Source: <http://www.zittel.org/>)

High Desert Test Sites

A series of experimental art sites located along a stretch of desert communities including Pioneer Town, Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree, 29 Palms and Wonder Valley. These sites provide alternative space for experimental works by both emerging and established artists. The projects all adhere to a set of aims that include challenging traditional conventions of ownership, property and patronage; inserting art directly into a life, a landscape or a community; creating work that is intended to be created, live and die in the same spot and; contributing to a community in which art can truly make a difference.

(Source: <http://www.highdeserttestsites.com>)



Ghost Architectural Laboratory



Design Lab project, Ecoshack



High Desert Test Sites, Noah Purifoy Site, photo by Guy Lombardo



Stour Valley Arts, Score for a hole in the ground by Jem Finer

UK examples of contexts / work

Tatton Park Biennial

First realised in 2008, the biennial works through a commissioning process that reveals the evolution of the park and aims to generate a greater understanding of exceptional artistic practice within the laboratory of this National Trust property.

With six semi-permanent works, 12 evolving commissions, tours and performances, the first Biennial reflected the historical significance and contemporary relevance of Tatton Park. Heather and Ivan Morison developed a new work that acts as a point of meditation within a structure built from Tatton Park's annually felled trees.

(Source: <http://www.tattonparkbiennial.org>)

King's Wood

A 1500 acre designated forest site in Challock, Kent. Since 1994, Stour Valley Arts has commissioned work to be realised within the forest and artists are invited to spend long periods there. As a consequence they often use natural materials found in the immediate area, and engage with seasonal and growing cycles. All work will eventually become part of the natural forest cycle of decay and regeneration. As well as sculptures marked on the map, visitors may see the 'ghosts' of previous sculptures now being reclaimed by nature.

An example of work commissioned here is Jem Finer's 'Score for a hole in the ground', which uses the rainfall in the forest to create an ever-evolving soundscape.

(Sources: <http://www.stourvalleyarts.org.uk/> and <http://www.scoreforaholeintheground.org/>)



Tatton Park, Heather and Ivan Morison Escape Vehicle No. 4.



The Peeps, Ancoats, Manchester

UK examples of contexts / work

The Peeps

An urban public artwork by Dan Dubowitz set in Ancoats, Manchester, including a tunnel, a bell tower, a toilet, and a space inside a mill closed up since the war. Each have been walled in, lit and have spy holes for people to peep through. There are no maps, guides, trails to follow or interpretation panels for 'The Peeps'. The local community and passers by simply discover the works as they wander the close-knit network of streets.

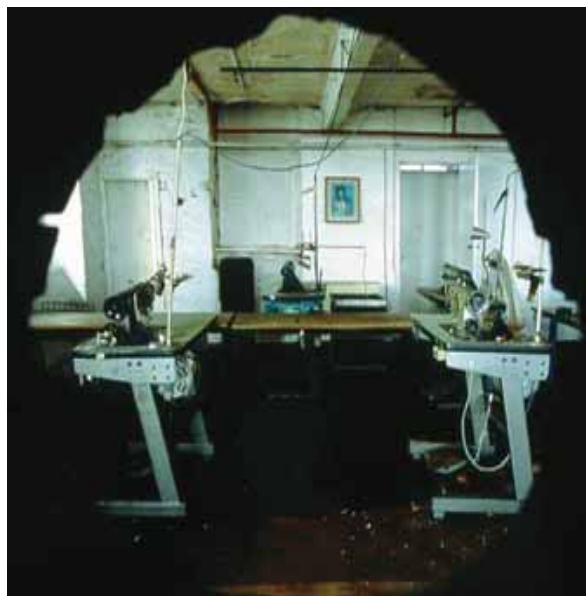
The concept was inspired by the ancient practice of walling up objects in the walls of buildings and is not about being 'complete', but aims to be a work that will always be transforming.

(Source: <http://www.civicworks.net>)

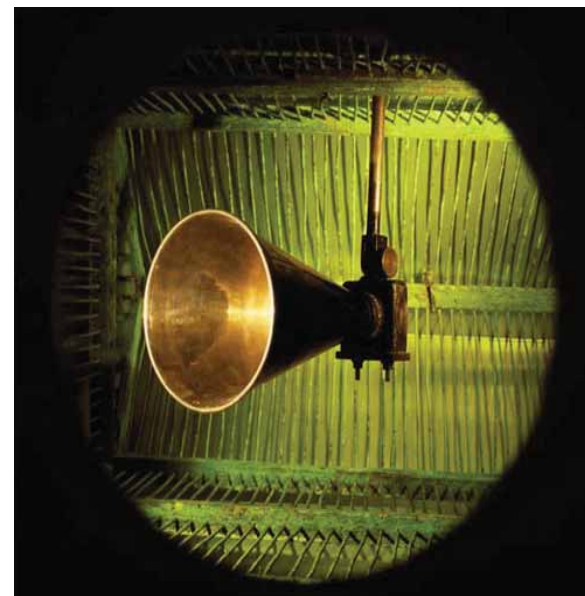
Outlandia

A field station, conceived by London Fieldworks, to accommodate artist residencies, suspended in a copse of Norwegian Spruce and Larch on Forestry Commission land near Ben Nevis. The field station has a distinctive view of a landscape of forest, river and mountains. Outlandia has been inspired by legends of forest outlaws and outsiders, both an off-ground place of imagination and fantasy and a real place of inspiration. The build was conceived as an ecologically sustainable project built with use of local materials and labour with a minimal carbon footprint.

(Source: <http://www.londonfieldworks.com>)



View through a Peep



View through a Peep



Outlandia Glen Nevis, by London Fieldworks

UK examples of contexts / work

Lawson Park

Headquarters of Grizedale Arts, a highly innovative organisation that offers artists' residencies and curates and commissions contemporary art. The listed house was recently restored in collaboration with its owners, the National Trust, to provide a unique resource; to accommodate artists, writers and creative collectives in need of the traditional facilities of the idealised artist retreat - tranquillity and seclusion.

Lawson Park is now a research base for a wide range of people including contemporary artists, craftspeople, curators, cultural theorists, farmers, gardeners, educationalists, regenerators, funding bodies, and local and international community groups.

The old farmland - an area of around 15 acres of pasture and woodland is being improved to provide a working smallholding, producing food and other useful produce.

(Sources: <http://www.lawsonpark.org> and <http://www.grizedale.org>)

Somewhere

A multi-disciplinary creative company, projects include 'What will the harvest be?' a horticultural and social experiment that occupies a 2,000 square metre urban site in East London. The design is informed by the practical requirements of vegetable growing, but its scale and style also evokes the Edwardian heyday of the English civic park, as well as honouring the Landgrabbers 'Triangle Camp'. Rather than people claiming individual plots, the idea is to experiment with treating the garden as one shared resource and to distribute the produce amongst the regular gardeners as well as through an honesty stall on site.

(Sources: <http://www.whatwilltheharvestbe.com> and <http://www.somewhere.org.uk/>)



Lawson Park, Grizedale Arts



'What will the harvest be?', East London



Lawson Park Farm



Night Stations, The Old Man of Coniston



Night Stations, Borderland Constellations

Ephemeral interventions

The Carrlands Project

A research project in North-East Lincolnshire that attempts to aid public appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of landscape through active participation and engagement. There are a series of especially composed audio works with subtle instructions to users and invitation to action, that offer guided orientation at a number of rarely visited places, each with their own unique characteristics, qualities and attractions.

(Source: <http://www.carrlands.org.uk>)

Night Stations

A series of site-responsive light installations set in the nocturnal landscape. Placed mainly in the rural environment, particularly Derbyshire and Cumbria, they are often on a vast scale, inviting the audiences to reconsider their assumptions about the land.

The Night Stations programme has been created by Peak District based artist Charles Monkhouse supported by a team of other professionals and technicians. Night Stations seeks to engage with local communities and land stakeholders, not only to facilitate but also enrich its outcomes with local knowledge and tradition.

(Source: <http://www.nightstations.co.uk>)



Carrlands, North East-Lincolnshire

International examples of contexts / works

Project: Sciezka (Pfad)

For sculpture projects Münster 07, Polish artist Pawel Althamer constructed a path. Starting where a footpath and bicycle trail meet in a municipal recreation area near Lake Aa, the path led, through meadows and fields, out of the city. Just short of one kilometre, however, it abruptly ended in the middle of a field of barley. Surprised that the trail has suddenly ended, visitors had to decide how to react upon this open situation and how to return to the city.

(Source: <http://www.lwl.org>)

The Duisburg-Nord Landscape Park

A massive industrial wasteland, measuring 200 hectares, which has been transformed over a period of more than ten years into a new kind of multifunctional landscape park at the centre of which is a decommissioned metalworks.

Spontaneously grown vegetation sits alongside deliberately designed green spaces and garden areas, all on a ground base combining industrial history, nature, recreation, leisure and culture. As well as hiking and cycling, a number of other sports are catered for. For example a climbing garden has been created in the former ore bunkers and the gasholder has been converted into a diving centre.

(Source: <http://www.landschaftspark.de>)

Insel Hombroich, Germany

A visitor touring the 20 hectare designed landscape will immediately notice its subtle character, in that there are no descriptions or information on the pieces of art seen across the site. Since its inception the ambition has been to make an open-air museum where different landscapes, architecture and art become one.

Nature and art are parallel to each other but also interact. The sculptor Erwin Heerich created 11 asymmetrical brick pavilions to house an eclectic art collection, which by the strange modulation of natural light and the intentional use of unsettling spatial relationships become powerful artworks in their own right.

(Source: <http://www.inselhombroich.de>)



Insel Hombroich, Erwin Heerich pavilion



Project Sciezka, Pawel Althamer



Duisburg Nord

International examples of contexts / works

Wanås Sweden

A combination of art, nature and history on an estate consisting of a medieval castle, an organic farm, a gallery space, and a sculpture park that is open all year round. The focus is on sculpture and installations, most of which are commissioned specifically for the Wanås Foundation.

Wanås operates strict environmental policies using only green electricity, an eco-car on site, printing catalogues, books and postcards on certified recycled paper, and the continual environmental education of staff. The estate offers a discounted entrance fee for those who travel using public transport. Even recent exhibitions have focused on Scandinavian artists, to reduce the carbon footprint of those involved.

(Source: <http://www.wanas.se/>)

Wanås also hosts an organic garden, The Allotment Plot, questioning the ecological soundness of a remote organic garden, the project has seeded other manifestations. Now, with an epicentre in Wanås, small geometrical cultivation plots of 120x120cm will organically spread out from Sweden and ideally to the rest of the world.

(Source: <http://www.theallotmentplot.se/>)

Berlin Sculpture Park

Rather than encouraging 'parachute art' or following the tradition of many open-air museums, Skulpturenpark Berlin_Zentrum, located in the former military zone within the Berlin Wall is interested in sculpture as a process that has the potential to reveal and critique the social and structural contexts provided by the site. It is not interested in placing objects into an already cultivated urban or park landscape. Over the years the location has often been seen as a transitional or liminal space. Since the deconstruction of the Berlin Wall in 1989 the area has remained largely unused and vacant. Artists are invited to create site-specific works which deal with the functional, geographic, historical, and political relationships of the area.

(Source: <http://www.skulpturenpark.org/>)



Berlin Sculpture Park, Social Motions, Katrina Sevic 2007



Wanås Foundation, Allotment Plot

7. NVA Mission Statement



NVA, The Storr, Isle of Skye 2005, photograph - Alan McAteer

NVA is an environmental arts charity founded in Glasgow in 1992.

Our practice is directly engaged in the wider world of urban and rural landscapes. Our approach is a collective one: both in its artistic development and in encouraging audiences to participate physically and creatively in the making of each work, whether it is temporary or permanent. It takes what is 'there' as a starting point for uncovering complex underlying realities, revealing how places shape, and are shaped by, their inhabitants.

NVA champion an emerging form of dialogical public art that aims to galvanise public partners and bridge the gap between political strategy and practical implementation, based around key issues facing our contemporary society.

NVA is an acronym of *nacionale vitae activa*, a Roman phrase describing 'the right to influence public affairs'. This defines a non-gallery based democratisation of presentation, in which generative models of exchange are created to stimulate people to use ideas and methodologies to support their own development and means of expression.

Critically acclaimed contemporary art works and performances, encompassing walked animations in gorges, and on mountainsides, include 'The Path' (Glen Lyon 2000) and 'The Storr: unfolding landscape', (Isle of Skye, 2005). The sense of ownership and memory of these works has been intense and long-lasting for many. The act of taking part releases strong emotional ties: either with the landscape itself or with an aspect of people's individual histories, in a powerful intermingling of the private and public.

Urban initiatives include the White Bike Plan (2010), Glasgow, multiple award-winning 'Hidden Gardens' sanctuary (Tramway, 2003), and international light festivals such as 'Radiance' (Glasgow, 2005). Our focus includes the long-term transformation of St Peter's Seminary and Kilmahew woodlands, (Cardross, 2008 onwards), and SAGE, a major urban food growing scheme, (Clyde Valley 2009 onwards).



NVA, The Hidden Gardens, Glasgow