



MORAY SPEYSIDE HERITAGE EXPERIENCE

STORIES FROM THE SHADOWS





FROM TRADITION





TO INNOVATION



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INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Moray Growth Deal, the flagship project of the creation of a Cultural Quarter in Elgin will support economic growth and cultural expansion. Set in a reimagined space at Lossie Green and Cooper Park, a dynamic and vibrant area will be created as a year-round attraction for both tourists and Moray residents.

Major refurbishment of the Town Hall will provide a creative industries hub, including a multi-purpose theatre with performance space. A premium, four/five star 100-plus room hotel will address a much-needed and long-acknowledged market gap in the region's tourism infrastructure. Grant Lodge, anchored at a pivotal point within the cultural corridor which links all development work, will be transformed into a fully-accessible visitor attraction of national significance that will showcase the diversity of Moray's rich heritage.

'Stories from the Shadows' will reveal untold stories, celebrate our local identity and encourage further exploration of Moray. Six authentic and intriguing characters from Moray's ancestry will be introduced, with the Real Macbeth and notorious Wolf of Badenoch taking centre stage. Ancestral tourism is a growing and important market for Scotland with over 50 million people across the globe able to lay claim to Scottish ancestry. The local heritage centre within Elgin Library is a short walk from Grant Lodge and will offer visitors the intriguing opportunity to explore their own ancestry. In addition, the region's most famous product - Speyside single malt whisky - will be celebrated with a stunning Slainte-Mhath coffee/bar and viewing platform.

Grant Lodge is Category B listed and was built in 1766 to designs by architect Robert Adam. Gifted by Sir George Cooper to Elgin in 1903, it was formerly in use as a library and later as a heritage centre. Following a fire in 2003 it has lain empty and has sadly fallen into disrepair. Currently on the Buildings at Risk Register, this investment will breathe new life in to one of Elgin's most iconic buildings.





MORAY FOLK

THAT SHAPED THE FOOD AND DRINK INDUSTRY

Interpretation and displays will be developed and refreshed to include details of people from Moray's past.

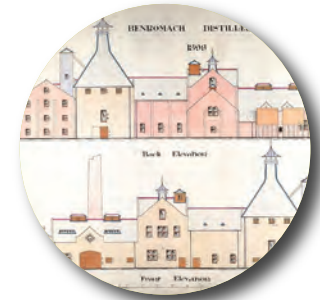


HUGH FALCONER
Distinguished geologist, botanist, palaeontologist who was commissioned to investigate the feasibility of growing tea commercially in India, subsequently making tea available to the masses in Britain.



JOSEPH WALKER
Founder of Walkers, internationally-recognised producers of 'Scotland's finest short bread', cakes and oatcakes since 1898.

CHARLES DOIG
Revolutionised the whisky industry in late 19th C with his distinctive design of a pagoda shaped roof, now recognised as a symbol of Scotch whisky distilling throughout the world.



GEORGE BAXTER
In 1868, 25 year-old George Baxter started his own grocery business and with the help of his wife, Margaret, who made jams and jellies with fruit from the local area, went on to produce some of the UK's finest soups, preserves and condiments.



SIR ALEXANDER GRANT
A biscuit manufacturer who is said to have invented the digestive.



INTERPRETATION

'Stories from the Shadows' will immerse people in the heritage of the region in an engaging, educational and unique way, sparking their imagination, conjuring up scenes from the past, telling untold stories and bringing the heritage to life.

Market intelligence from VisitBritain recognises that culture and heritage is a major draw for overseas visitors and an opportunity to increase visitor numbers and the value of tourism.

Grant Lodge will use state-of-the-art technology and modern interpretive methods to draw visitors into the past through a range of interactive exhibits. Using augmented reality creates a new world of possibilities that can catapult the ordinary into the incredible. The centre will be fully-accessible and inclusive with a lift to all floors. We will work with VisitScotland to ensure we develop an appropriate accessibility guide and staff training.

The development of the centre will include an immersive website, which will allow visitors to plan their visit in advance and create their own bespoke itinerary which focusses on their particular interests, whether food and drink, heritage, ancestry, or a combination of all of these. The itinerary builder will give the visitor information on opening times, prices, travelling times and distances between attractions in order to allow them to maximise the value of their visit and encourage them to stay longer in the area. Staff in the centre can assist visitors to plan, using their local knowledge if required, but the website itself will provide tips for visitors based on choices already made (e.g. if you like this, you may also like).





WELCOME TO THE EXPERIENCE...

ON ARRIVAL

An interactive 3D map of Moray will give an insight into the experience, signposting to heritage sites connected with the six characters, tours and attractions in the area.

The space around the map will be flexible and able to support new exhibits and changing interpretation.

SHOWCASING MORAY'S CHARACTERS

Bringing history to life, the plans provide interpretive material for the six headline characters along with recommendations for initiatives to help attract, engage and retain more visitors.

Interpretation and audience development plans were produced as part of the Discover Moray's Great Places project (part funded by Heritage Lottery Fund, Moray LEADER, Highlands & Islands Enterprise, Business Gateway, Moray Speyside Tourism, FACT/Forres in Bloom and Findhorn Bay Arts).

The outcomes were influenced by a total figure of 14,179 community interactions with the project, both online and in person.

Development of the plans was led by award-winning Interpretation Company Bright White, supported by a team of specialists.

Local people also took part in a photoshoot which captured stunning visual identities for the characters.



The Picts

The Picts or Picti, meaning 'painted people' were by the fourth century AD the predominant people of Northern Scotland. The ancient fort at Burghead is the largest to have been discovered anywhere and so is likely to have been the main power centre.



The Real Macbeth

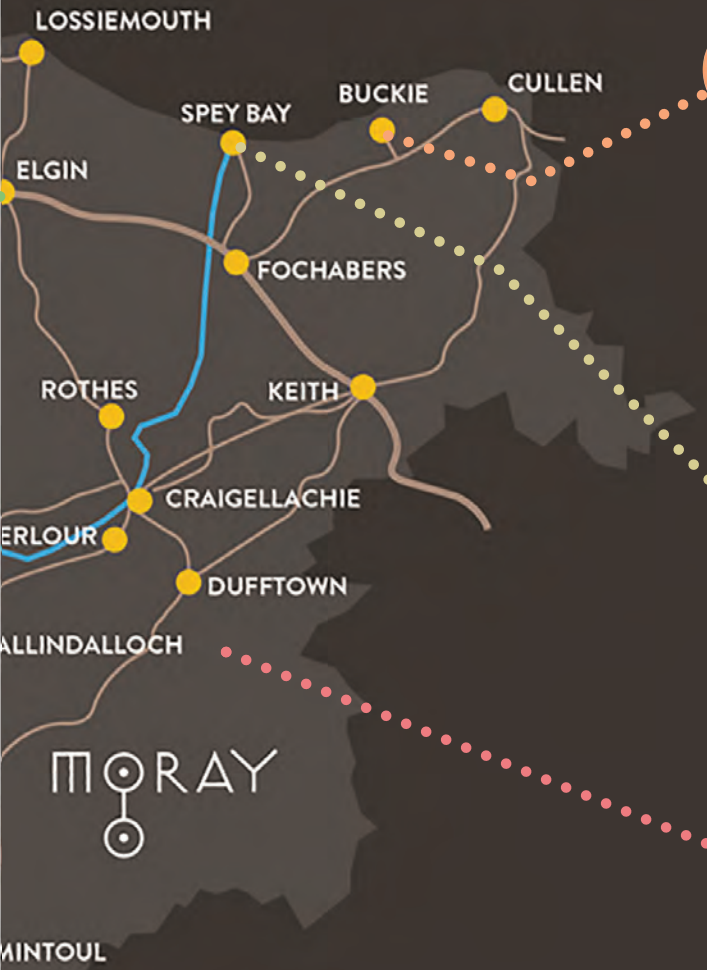
Shakespeare's tragedy tale of Macbeth is the intertwined story of both fact and fiction that was actually coined from the real Scottish Macbeth himself.



The Wolf of Badenoch

Alexander Stewart (The Wolf) resided with his wife Euphemia, Countess of Ross in Lochindorb Castle, but when his wife proved unable to bear a child Alexander dismissed her to make way for his mistress.





The Rioter
 The Rioter stems from a tale dating back to 1847 which encapsulates the notion of tension and discontent within the society of Moray at that time.



Timmer Floaters
 In the 1600s timber felled in the ancient inland forests was transported downriver by men known locally as 'timmer floaters'.



Illicit Stillers
 Once the hub of Scotland's illicit whisky trade - the hills of Moray disguise a previously complex web of activity. The sites of secret whisky bothies are still being discovered today.





ILLCIT
STILLER

*An underground network
To deliver a dram*

*Here's to freedom an' whisky
To the distillery man*

The Cabrach was once the heart of Scotland's illicit whisky trade. Its mountainous terrain and remote location made an ideal environment for covert distilling and smuggling.

Following the Scottish Excise Act in 1644 the whole community became on some level involved in the business of distilling and distributing illicit whisky, evading the authorities on a remarkable scale. Many had relied on their own private whisky stills in order to pay rent and so the ongoing trade affected people from all levels of society, benefiting both tenants and landowners.

The distilling process involved malting barley in water and heating it to form a 'mash'. This was transferred to a pot and boiled to release the alcohol vapour, which would then be cooled in the attached 'worm', a metal tubing submerged in cold water, where it would turn to liquid.

It has been suggested that at one time every farm in the parish contained an illegal still, from where the whisky would be smuggled far and wide. Large quantities were transported by land to the ports of Inverness, Cullen, Banff, Portsoy, Rosehearty, Fraserburgh and Aberdeen, where most of it was sold directly to the people of these towns.

In 1707 The Scottish Excise Board was created as a result of the Treaty of Union, the political union of England and Scotland. The Board was responsible for the policing of excisable liquor, an interference which was widely unpopular. Evading the excisemen, or gaugers as they were known, became a matter of honour and principle as much as a source of income.

Over time the community devised and developed inventive techniques to outwit the gaugers. Cupboards beside kitchen fireplaces would conceal stairs leading to the distillery below, meaning smoke could be drawn up through the chimney without attracting suspicion.

Complex alert routines included optical signalling using fire, smoke and flags. Placing white linen on a peat stack was another clear warning that excisemen were in the area. Stories have passed down through the generations about these warning systems. One such tale is of a man who provided accommodation for the gaugers, when they were finally asleep he would ride out on a white horse, a warning that would be visible for miles around against the dark hills.

As the gauger's searches became more frequent and determined, new locations for the stills were sought and the sites of these secret whisky bothies are still being discovered. Beautiful low walls beside the burns, now overgrown with moss and vegetation, serve as relics to a once thriving yet hidden industry.

Certain logistical requirements dictated their locations. A bothy would ideally have a good view of the road, and a ready supply of running water was vital to the process. Production was at its height during the winter months when water from the burns would be plentiful and cool. The excisemen would struggle to navigate the landscape in harsh conditions, whereas the smugglers knew their way instinctively in and out of the Cabrach. The smoke from the bothies was also presumably harder to spot against a cloudy winter sky.

Old droving routes were often used to transport whisky to the coast. In order to meet the high demand smugglers often had to travel unarmed and in the daylight. Women would wear two-gallon 'belly canteens' disguised as pregnancy bumps. Whisky would be hidden in a coffin or hearse to be transported by a fake funeral procession, the gaugers removing their hats and bowing their heads as it passed.

There are romantic tales of groups of smugglers who went to make fast money as pirates on the Spanish Main, sending chests full of gold and jewels home to the Cabrach.

From 1823 onwards it was possible to be granted a license to distill, this largely dispelled the network of stillers and smugglers that inhabited the lawless landscape of the Cabrach, but whose stubbornness, willpower and ingenuity paved the way for the Speyside brands we know today, lending credence to the claim that the Cabrach is the cradle of single malt whisky.



*Excisemen finding an illicit still.
Image courtesy @Collection of Gairloch Museum*

Potential Illicit Stillier themes:

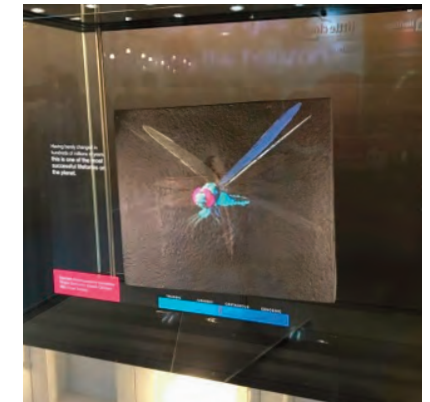
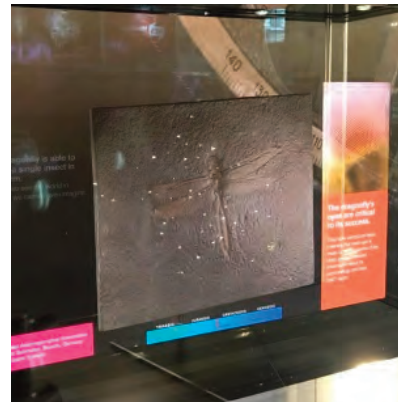
- Who was involved?
- Smuggling routes and methods
- The excise men
- Alert routines and signals
- Links to farming / farmers (barley) and the rivers and burns
- Link to the cask makers and repairers
- Links to the interpretation currently at Tomintoul and Glenlivet Discovery Centre and to be developed Cabrach Heritage Centre

ANCESTRAL TOURISM

Are you related to the Wolf, Macbeth or the Picts? Do you want to walk in their footsteps? Visitors will be encouraged to explore their own ancestry by visiting the heritage centre housed within Elgin Library. VisitScotland recognises that the explosion in DNA-based ancestry and high-profile films and TV shows featuring Scotland, such as *Outlander*, have served to bring Scots ancestry to the fore like never before. An estimated 213,000 trips are made per annum to Scotland by visitors taking part in ancestral research, with a value of £101 million. We will work with VisitScotland to provide ancestral tourism training for staff at the centre so we can deliver an unforgettable experience to ancestral visitors, providing guidance on research points and heritage experiences in Moray.

GALLERY AND EXHIBITION SPACE

A completely flexible space will provide opportunities for special exhibitions to attract different audiences and encourage repeat visits. Creative use of all areas will maximise space and the displays will be regularly refreshed to maintain interest - such as:



VIRTUAL DISPLAYS

Imagine being able to see, touch and interact with objects and displays without them actually being there!

The worlds of digital content and real objects have collided to produce a new and innovative display method which allows people to see items and content virtually. Visitors to the experience will have the chance to interact fully, although the displays are really just an optical illusion.

This creative new way of displaying heritage and information allows flexibility and means that content can be updated and changed regularly to keep the experience fresh and exciting.

STEP INTO THE PICTURE

Light projections allow visitors to step back in time and be part of the heritage. 'Step into the picture' gives people the opportunity to be included in an image/scene from the past, giving them a great experience as well as a photo opportunity and keepsake.

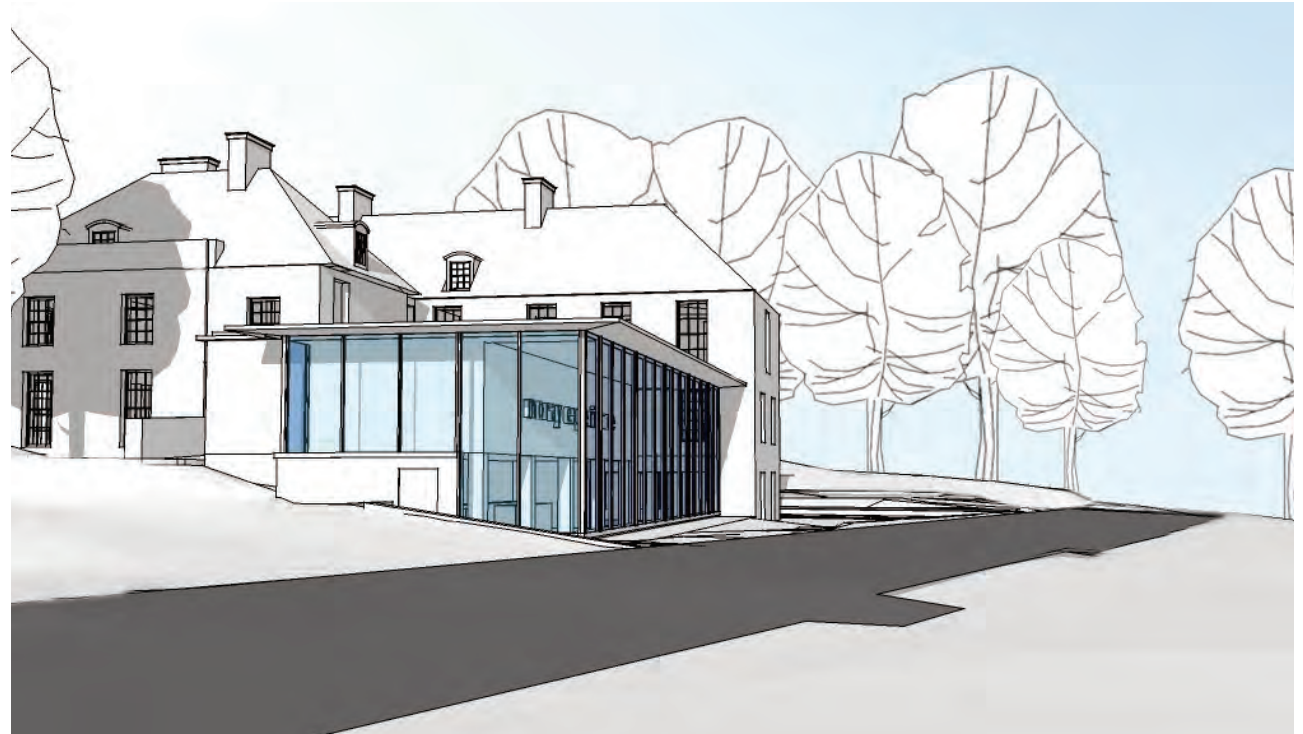
SLAINTE-MHATH COFFEE/BAR & VIEWING PLATFORM

To complement the food and drink experience, working partners can provide a unique tasting experience.

For example visitors can learn about Scotland's national drink from informative and first-hand experienced hosts through a Tour & Tipple Experience (optional). They will guide the visitor through the nosing and tasting of some speciality whiskies, providing an informal introduction to Scotch whisky and in particular the Speyside creations.

This combination of learning about whisky production, cask selection and whisky maturation and discovering the tastes, traditions and stories surrounding production, will culminate with the opportunity to enjoy a dram on the viewing platform, taking in the landscape of Cooper Park and beyond.

Opportunities to showcase and experience the growing gin and beer products from Moray, together with our high quality food offer, will demonstrate the innovation from tradition that underpins the Moray Growth Deal.



THE CONNOISSEUR EXPERIENCE

A premium tasting experience for the ultimate connoisseur – visitors will be offered an opportunity to explore the rich heritage of Moray's iconic brand and discover why whisky has had such a strong presence since the 16-1700s, and how Moray's food and drink offer has developed as a result of this.

WHISKY, GIN AND BEER FOOD PAIRING

For centuries wine has been paired with food to bring out the best taste experience. This type of pairing activity is now a growing trend within the whisky and brewing industries.

Organising a tasting dinner/experience can provide the customer with an alternative to food and wine pairing, for example tapas, to give the customer a bite-size experience.

The experience would be further enhanced by an aficionado, who can give a short introduction/add a bit of a story to each of the dishes, and who can explain why they are being served with the selected whiskies, gin or beer. There will be opportunities for Moray Speyside producers to showcase their products and visitor centres.



THE PREMIUM FOOD & DRINK PROJECTED VISITOR EXPERIENCE IN MORAY SPEYSIDE

Distilleries open to public or available for tours

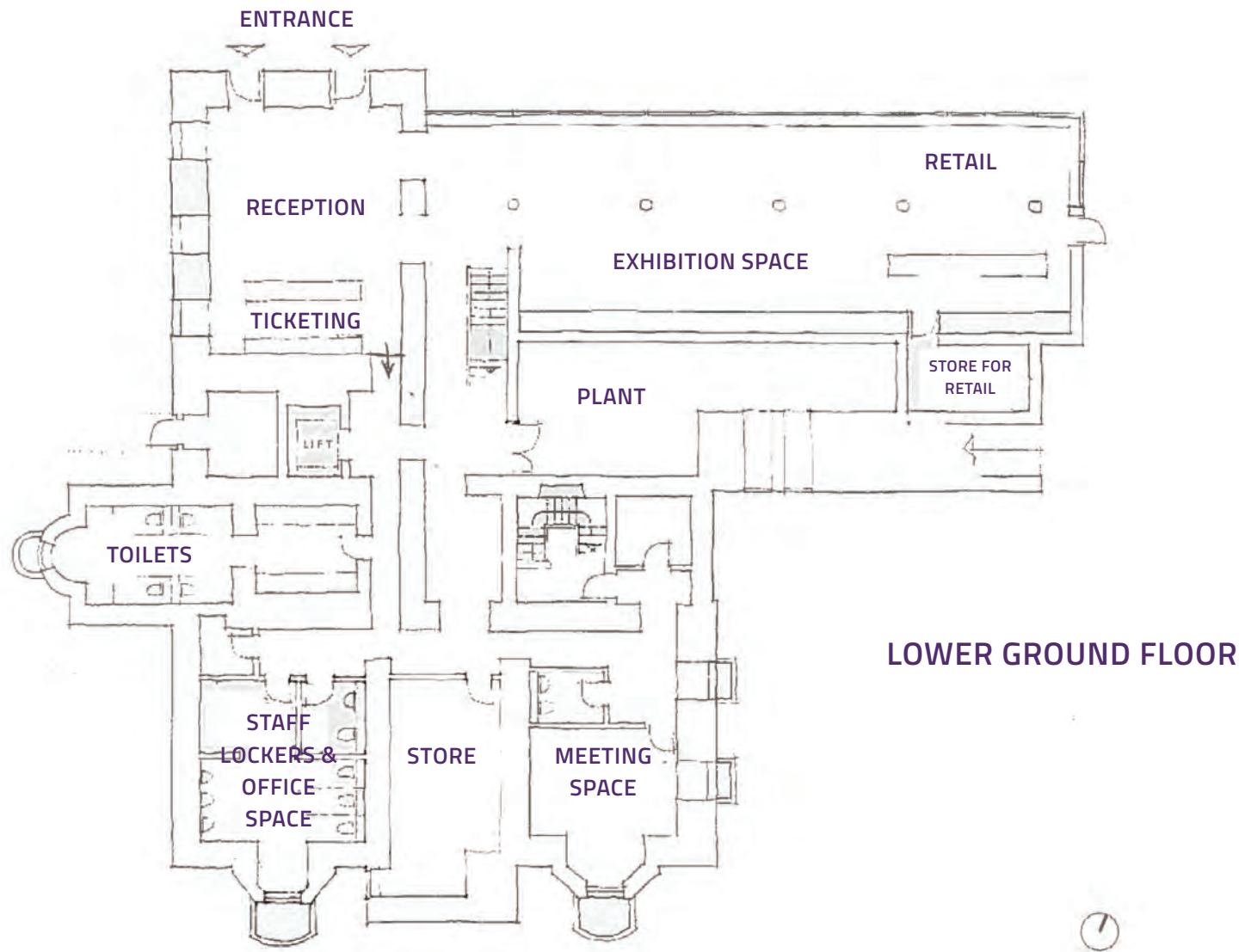
- 1 Aberlour Distillery Tours Available
- 2 Ballindalloch Tours Available on request
- 3 Balvenie Tours Available Monday to Friday
- 4 Benromach Tours Available
- 5 BenRiach Tours Available on request
- 6 Cardhu Tours Available
- 7 Cragganmore Tours Available
- 8 Dallas Dhu Tours Available
- 9 Glenfarclas Tours Available
- 10 Glenfiddich Tours Available
- 11 Glen Moray Tours Available
- 12 Glen Grant Tours Available
- 13 Macallan Tours Available
- 14 Strathisla Tours Available
- 15 The Glenlivet Tours Available April to October

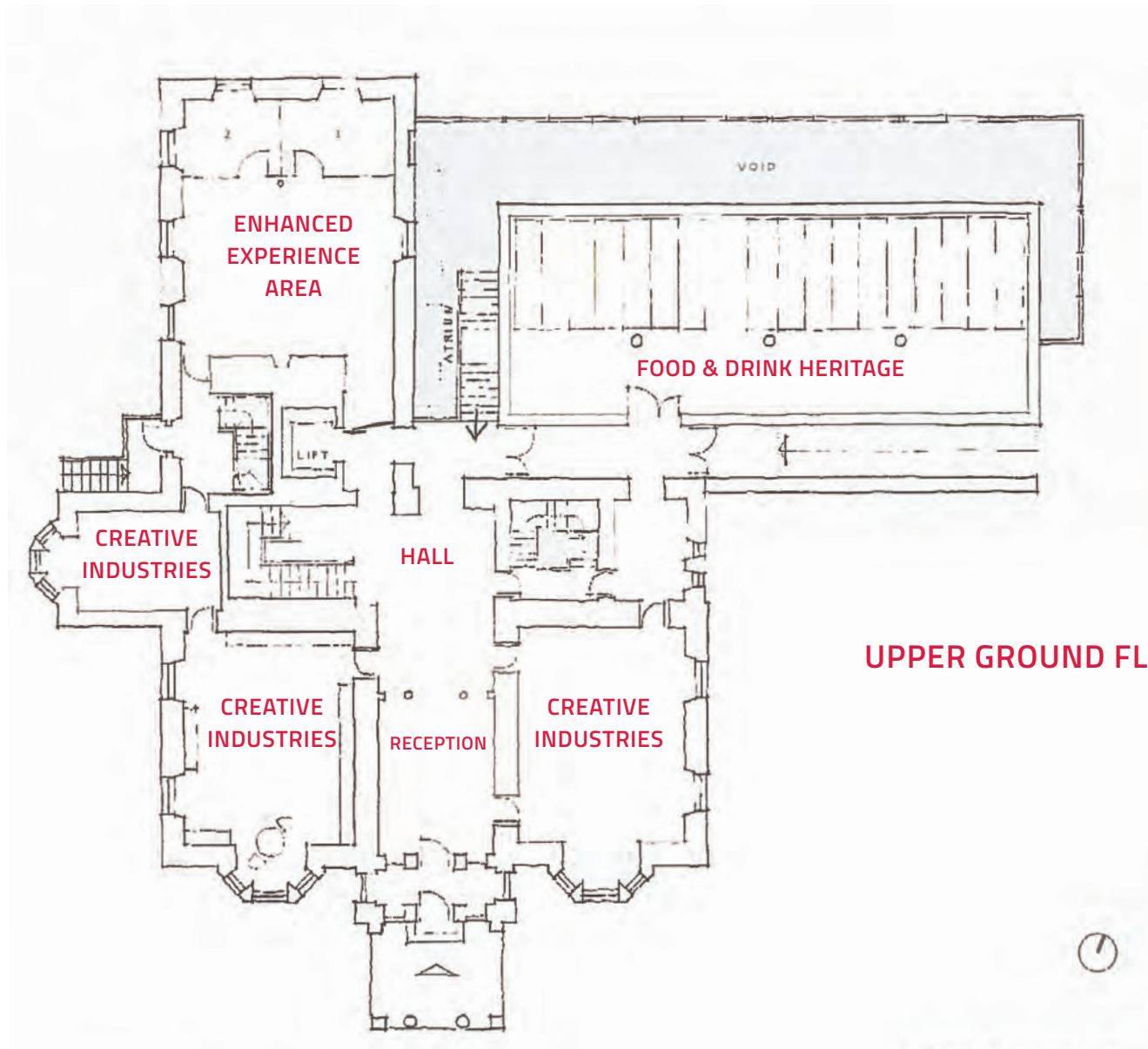
All within 1 hour of Elgin

Stagecoach operates service 36 which serves many of the distilleries above

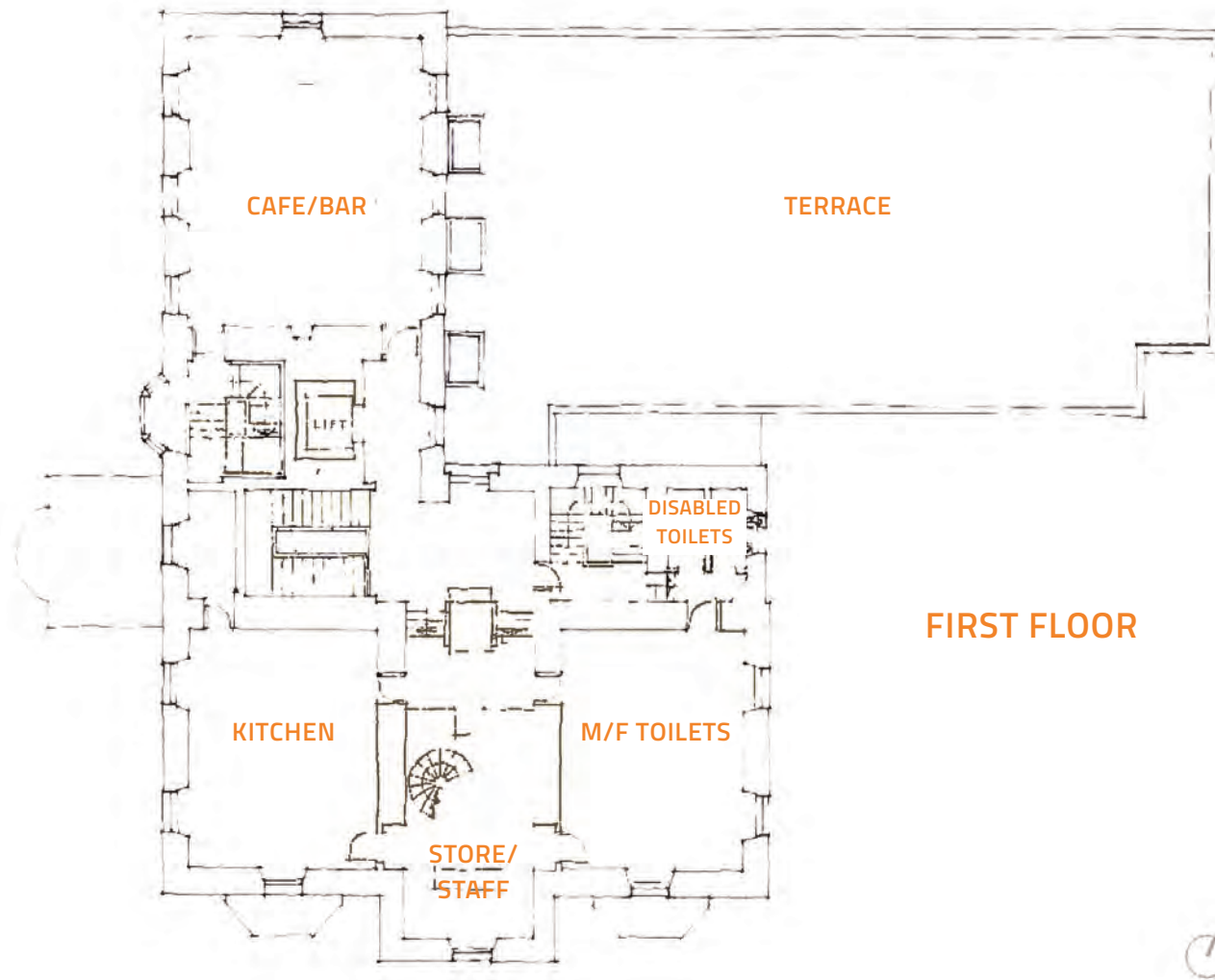


GRANT LODGE FLOOR LEVELS

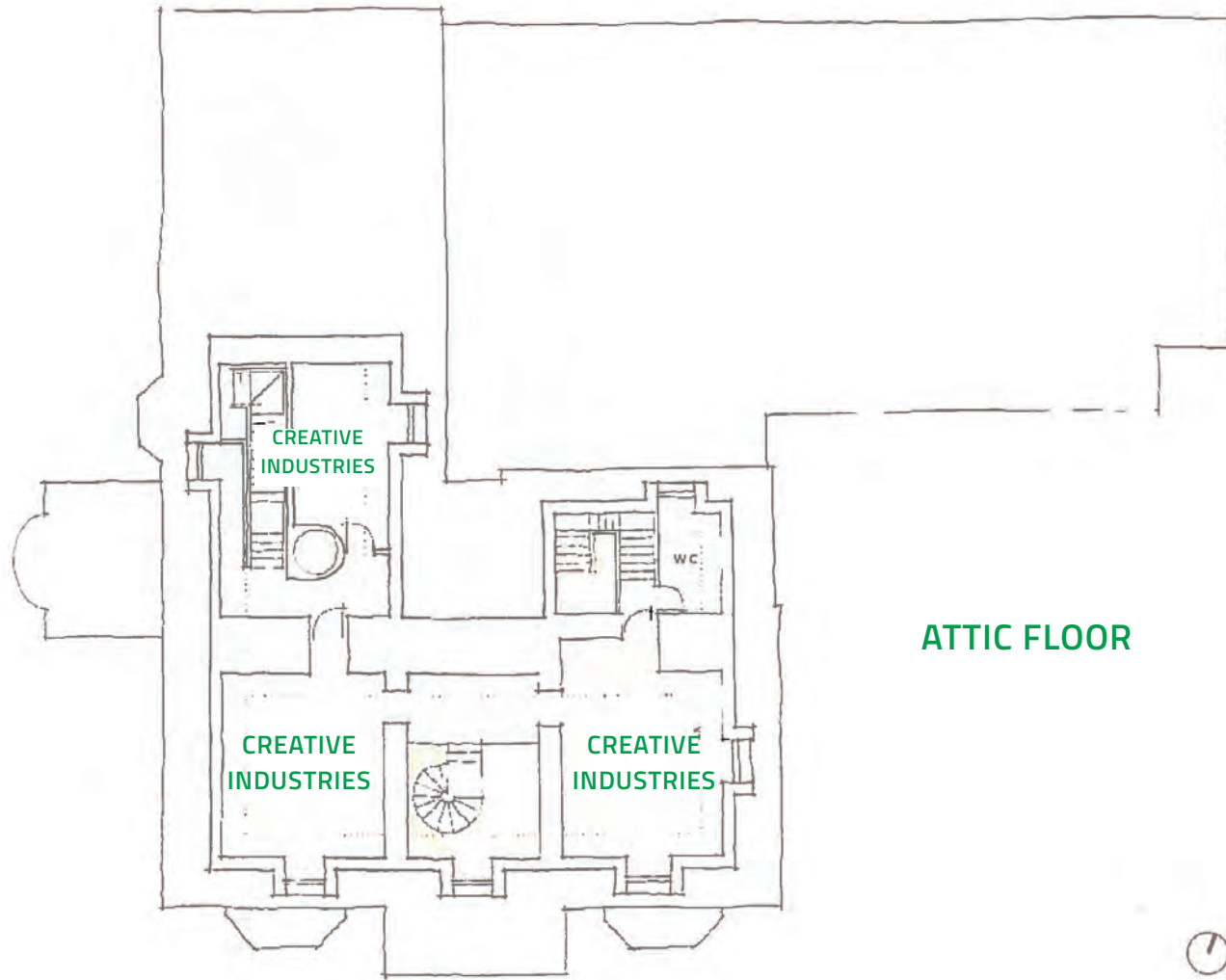




UPPER GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



SIGNPOSTING TO MORAY VISITOR ATTRACTIONS



CASTLES, HISTORIC HOMES & ATTRACTIONS

Ballindalloch Castle, Ballindalloch,
Banffshire

Brodie Castle, National Trust for
Scotland

Burghead Pictish Fort, Burghead

Balvenie Castle, Historic
Scotland, Dufftown

Elgin Cathedral, Historic Scotland

Spynie Palace, Historic Scotland

Drumin Castle, Glenlivet

BREWERIES

Windswept Brewing Company
Lossiemouth

WooHa Brewing Company, Kinloss

Spey Valley Brewery, Keith

Keith Brewery Ltd, Keith



GARDENS, PARKS AND PLAY AREAS

Gordon Castle Walled Garden,
Gordon Castle, Fochabers



VISITOR ATTRACTIONS

Brodie Countryfare, Brodie

Johnstons of Elgin, Elgin, Moray

Baxters Highland Village,
Fochabers

Culbin Forest
about 1.5 miles west of Forres

Roseisle Forest, near Forres

Moray Motor Museum, Elgin

Mither Tongue, Keith

WILDLIFE, NATURE AND NATURAL ATTRACTIONS

WDC Scottish Dolphin Centre, Spey
Bay



MOUNTAIN BIKING

Moray Monster Trails, Fochabers

Glenlivet Mountain Bike Trails, Nr
Tomintoul





PHOTO CREDITS:

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