

Agenda Item	4
Report No	BSAC/6/18

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Badenoch and Strathspey Area

Date: 22 May 2018

Report Title: Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area Appraisal

Report By: Director of Development and Infrastructure

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report details a *draft* Conservation Area Appraisal for Grantown On Spey, including proposals to extend the current conservation area boundary.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- i. consider the Appraisal and recommendations to extend the current Conservation Area boundary; and
 - ii. approve the draft appraisal for a minimum 6 week public consultation.

3 Background

- 3.1 The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 provides the current legislative framework for Conservation Areas. Under the 1997 Act, The Council has a statutory duty to determine which parts of their area merit Conservation Area status and the Council is required by law to protect Conservation Areas from development which would be detrimental to their character. Note that this duty was not transferred to the Cairngorm National Park Authority, but has been retained by the Council.
- 3.2 The 1997 Act defines a Conservation Area as ‘an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’. The 1997 Act places a statutory duty on the Council to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation, management and enhancement of Conservation Areas, commonly referred to as Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans.
- 3.3 Grantown-on-Spey was designated as a Conservation Area in 1975; this paper is the first formal Appraisal and review undertaken of the Conservation Area since its designation.

4 Purpose of Appraisal

- 4.1 The purpose of the Appraisal is to identify and assess the special architectural and historic interest of Grantown-on-Spey along with those key elements that contribute to its character and appearance. This includes an assessment of the current designated conservation area as well as surrounding areas.
- 4.2 The Appraisal therefore seeks to:
 - define the special interest of the conservation area and identify any issues which threaten the special qualities of the conservation area;
 - identify any potential boundary alterations;
 - provide guidelines to prevent harm and assist the enhancement of the conservation area;
 - provide the Council and CNPA with a valuable tool with which to inform their planning practice and policies; and
 - assist the understanding and management of the Grantown Conservation Area.

5 Developing the Conservation Area Appraisal

- 5.1 The Appraisal has been undertaken on behalf of the Council, and is a Grantown 250 legacy project led by The Grantown Society. It was prepared by a consultant (a chartered conservation architect) and is supported by a project Steering Group consisting of representatives from the Council (including local members), The Grantown Society, CNPA, Grantown and Vicinity Community Council, the Grantown Initiative and Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey (VABS). The CNPA funded the project.
- 5.2 Historical and background information was supplied by the Grantown Society, including evidence of change. This was researched and collated from both primary and secondary sources including maps and photographs.
- 5.3 A community engagement exercise ‘Grantown Towards Tomorrow’ was undertaken by the Grantown Society, with support of Steering Group members, to gather local

thoughts on the conservation area, its buildings, public realm and surrounding environment. This took place from the 30th November – 6th December 2017 with a drop-in exhibition in the Victoria Institute and an online survey.

6 Findings

- 6.1 The Appraisal helps clarify the special interest of the town for all stakeholders so all are aware of what is important and what is worthy of preservation and enhancement. The document will ensure a more consistent and positive approach to the management of change across the Conservation Area.
- 6.2 Grantown-on-Spey remains an area of special interest and the area of significance is currently underrepresented by the present Conservation Area boundary.
- 6.3 *Conservation Area Boundary:* It is proposed to extend the conservation area boundary to encompass parts of the early planned town not previously included as well as the Victorian villas on the peripheries. A map of the current boundary and proposed amendments can be seen in the **appendix**. The Appraisal explains the rationale and sets out the reasoning behind the proposed boundary extensions. The proposed boundary amendments were discussed in detail at the steering group and with Highland Council Planning Officers.
- 6.4 *Key Features:* The integrity of the original plan including The Square (a legacy of the Scottish Enlightenment), open spaces and trees and mix of fine Georgian and Victorian architecture all contribute to its historic and architectural importance.
- 6.5 *Conservation Issues* As with many conservation areas, alongside opportunities to enhance its special qualities, Grantown also faces challenges. The loss of traditional materials and fabric; general maintenance and repair requirements; buildings at risk and vacant properties; loss of original boundaries; modern development; and a public realm that does not reflect the character of the conservation area all require action to address. The Appraisal is the first positive step in this process.

7 Next Steps

- 7.1 Subject to member approval, the draft Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area will be released for a minimum 6 week public consultation. The public consultation will encourage community involvement and will include a public event to be held in Grantown with representatives from the Council, Grantown History Society and other stakeholders present.
- 7.2 The consultation will include press adverts and posting on the Council website. The Appraisal will be circulated to interested parties and key partners/stakeholders including the Community Council.
- 7.3 All comments will be recorded and considered. The final version, to include any alterations to the Conservation Area Boundary, will be presented to the South Planning Applications Committee for formal approval and adoption as Supplementary Guidance. Scottish Ministers will be notified of the revised boundary.

8 Implications

- 8.1 Resource – there is potential for the amended boundary to generate more planning applications, although this is not expected to be significant. Most will likely be householder applications and will therefore be dealt with as part of the Council's planning caseload; the CNPA are unlikely to notice any significant change.
- 8.2 The Appraisal is a draft proposal for public consultation and does not present any legal implications or raise any equality, climate change/carbon clever and/or rural issues for the Council. There are no risks associated with the report.
- 8.3 Gaelic headings will be added throughout.
- 8.4 Committee will be aware that Conservation Area designation places statutory duties on the Local Authority. However, in this case the Appraisal simply reviews, revises and refines an existing designation and therefore there are no new implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

Designation: Director of Development and Infrastructure.

Date: 11 May 2018

Author: Andrew Puls, Conservation Officer

GRANTOWN-ON-SPEY CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL



Draft FOR PUBLIC CONSULATION ONLY.

Please note the following in this draft:

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1.0 INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE AND JUSTIFICATION

1.1 Date and reason for designation

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (Scotland) Act 1997) states that conservation areas “...are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.” Local authorities have a statutory duty to identify and designate such areas. The Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area was designated in mid-1974 by Moray and Nairn Joint County Council prior to Reorganisation under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, after which the town was transferred to the Highland Region on 16th May 1975.

Conservation area status brings the following works under planning control:

- Demolition of unlisted buildings or structures
- Removal of, or work to trees
- Development involving small house alterations and extensions, the installation of satellite dishes, roof alterations, stone cleaning or painting of the exterior.

It is recommended that the successful management of conservation areas can only be achieved with the support of and input from stakeholders, and in particular local residents and property owners.

1.2 Purpose of appraisal

The purpose of this appraisal is to identify and assess the special architectural and historic interest of Grantown-on-Spey (referred to as ‘Grantown’) along with those key elements that contribute to its character and appearance. This includes assessment of the current designated conservation area along with surrounding areas. This process will assist in review of the existing conservation area boundary and justification for any proposed alterations to it.

In addition, the appraisal provides a basis upon which programmes can be developed by, and in association with, The Highland Council (THC) and the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) to protect and enhance the conservation area. It will identify opportunities for enhancement and priorities for future management.

Planning authorities have a duty to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas, although there is no imposed timeframe for doing so. The Act also indicates that planning authorities must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the designated area in making planning decisions that affect the area. A more considered and careful approach is therefore needed in considering development proposals in conservation areas.

This document therefore seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the conservation area and identify any issues which threaten the special qualities of the conservation area
- Identify any potential boundary alterations
- Provide guidelines to prevent harm and assist the enhancement of the conservation area
- Provide THC and CNPA with a valuable tool with which to inform their planning practice and policies for the area
- Assist the understanding and management of the Grantown Conservation Area.

The appraisal conforms to Scottish Government guidance as set out in Planning Advice Note 71: Conservation Area Management (December 2004).

Additional government guidance regarding the management of historic buildings and conservation areas is set out within Scottish Planning Policy (2014), the Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement (2016), Our Place in Time: The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland, Historic Environment Circular 1, and the associated primary and secondary legislation and Historic Environment Scotland's Managing Change series of guidance notes.

The appraisal provides a firm basis on which applications for development within and in the vicinity of the conservation area can be assessed. It should be read in conjunction with the current planning policy frameworks of THC and CNPA.

1.3 Method

The appraisal has been prepared by Sonya Linskaill RIBA RIAS, Chartered Conservation Architect and Consultant in association with The Grantown Society.

The commission has been undertaken on behalf of The Highland Council, and is a Grantown 250 legacy project led by The Grantown Society. It is supported by a project Steering Group consisting of representatives from The Grantown Society, CNPA, THC, Grantown and Vicinity Community Council, the Grantown Initiative, Highland Regional Councillors and Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey (VABS).

The report format is based on that used by the Scottish Civic Trust with their permission, and adapted as required.

Historical and background information has been supplied by the Grantown Society, including evidence of change. This was researched and collated from both primary and secondary sources including maps and photographs.

Site surveys were carried out including a character assessment comprising: setting, views, activity and movement; street pattern and urban grain; historic townscape; spatial relationships; trees and landscaping and negative factors.

In parallel, a community engagement exercise '*Grantown Towards Tomorrow*' was undertaken by The Grantown Society, with support of Steering Group members, to gather local thoughts on the conservation area, its buildings, public realm and surrounding environment. This took place from the 30th November – 6th December 2017 with a drop-in exhibition in the Victoria Institute and an online survey.

2.0 LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE

2.1 Location

The Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area lies at the centre of the small town of Grantown in The Highland Council local authority area, in the district of Strathspey (Strathspey & Badenoch) and historically in the Parish of Cromdale, Inverallan & Advie. Until 1870 Grantown lay within Inverness-shire, and subsequently from 1870 to 1975, was part of Elginshire (also known as the County of Moray). The town is situated north of the River Spey at the northern edge of the Cairngorm mountain range, 34 miles south-east of Inverness by road and 15 miles north-east of Aviemore.

The town is at the centre of a network of roads connecting it to surrounding settlements. By the A939 to the north: Nairn and Forres; and to the south: Tomintoul and beyond to the Deeside towns of Braemar and Ballater. By the A95 north-east to Ballindalloch, Elgin, and Keith; and to the south via Dulnain Bridge and Boat of Garten to the main trunk road, the A9, providing onward connections north to Inverness and south to Aviemore.

2.2 Relationship Wider Strathspey, Geology and Topography

Grantown sits within a mile of the northern bank of the River Spey in the Spey Valley, at a height of approximately 220m above sea level. The town lies within the Cairngorm National Park boundaries (designated 2003). The Cairngorm Mountain range to the south forms a massive plateau containing five of Scotland's highest mountains with Ben Macdhui the highest at 1309m. The lower Hills of Cromdale lie to the south-east.

The geology of the area has afforded natural building materials including heavy slate (locally, and from the Tomintoul area), granite, whinstone and lime. The NSA (1845) notes the abundance in both lime and granite for building.

Much of the surrounding Spey valley area contains timber plantations and natural woodland.

3.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The following description is derived from information provided by The Grantown Society and research undertaken by George Dixon and Bill Sadler.

3.1 The first ‘Grantown’

The Grants first acquired land in Strathspey at Inverallan in 1316 and their holdings progressively increased. The first surviving mention of a Clan Grant was in 1527 and of what was to become Castle Grant, then only a tower house, was in 1536. Within half a mile of the tower house there was a small hamlet, called Grantown, literally ‘the town of Grant’ (fig 1). This became a Burgh of Regality in 1694 and a Regality Cross was erected there when Ludovick Grant’s estates, by a royal charter, became the Regality of Grant. This original hamlet remained minimally inhabited into the second decade of the 19th century.



Fig 1: Roy’s Military Map indicates Castle Grant and the original Grantown c.1750 before the new town was founded. Note the tree plantations at Castle Grant laid out from 1711-12 by Brigadier General Alexander Grant © NLS

3.2 The New Town of Grantown: the first hundred years (1765 – 1865)

The new town of Grantown was founded in 1765 by James Grant of Grant, later known as the “Good Sir James” (1738-1811), who became one of the leading improvers in 18th century Scotland. The great 19th century engineer Joseph Mitchell wrote of Strathspey in the time of Sir James and his son, Francis William Grant (1763-1853):

“Perhaps nowhere else in the Highlands at any period was there so happy, contented, and virtuous a tenantry as during the incumbency of these two proprietors.”

Aided by his tutor William Lorimer (1717-1765) and Lady Jane Grant (1746-1805), his dearly loved wife, James Grant is best remembered as the founder of New Grantown. He also laid out over 200 miles of road, dramatically improved agriculture, introduced industry and was one of the largest planters of trees

in 18th century Britain. He built a new inn at Aviemore, laid out Lewistoun (1769), Skye of Curr (1797) and founded Carrbridge (1809).

In 1766, in a unique ceremony, the Cross of Regality was transferred from the original hamlet to the new town. The following day, Figgat Fair Day, reputedly saw “...the greatest market ever known in Strathspey or indeed [...] any part of the Highlands” (Dixon, 13.12.90). The moving of the cross was an important symbol of continuity of the community and formally marked the succession of the new town as the heart of public life in Strathspey. The new town quite rapidly replaced the original Burgh of Regality, many of its first settlers coming from the old settlement.

The new town was founded during the wave of optimism generated by the first full decade of stability in the Highlands after the final ending of the Jacobite rebellions. James produced handbills to advertise the opportunity and placed notices in the Aberdeen Journal and Edinburgh Press. An extract of an original handbill (April, 1765) stated that the landowner would give:

“...Feus or long Leases, and all proper Encouragement to Manufacturers, Tradesmen, or others, sufficiently recommended and attested, as to Character and Ability, who incline to settle there.”

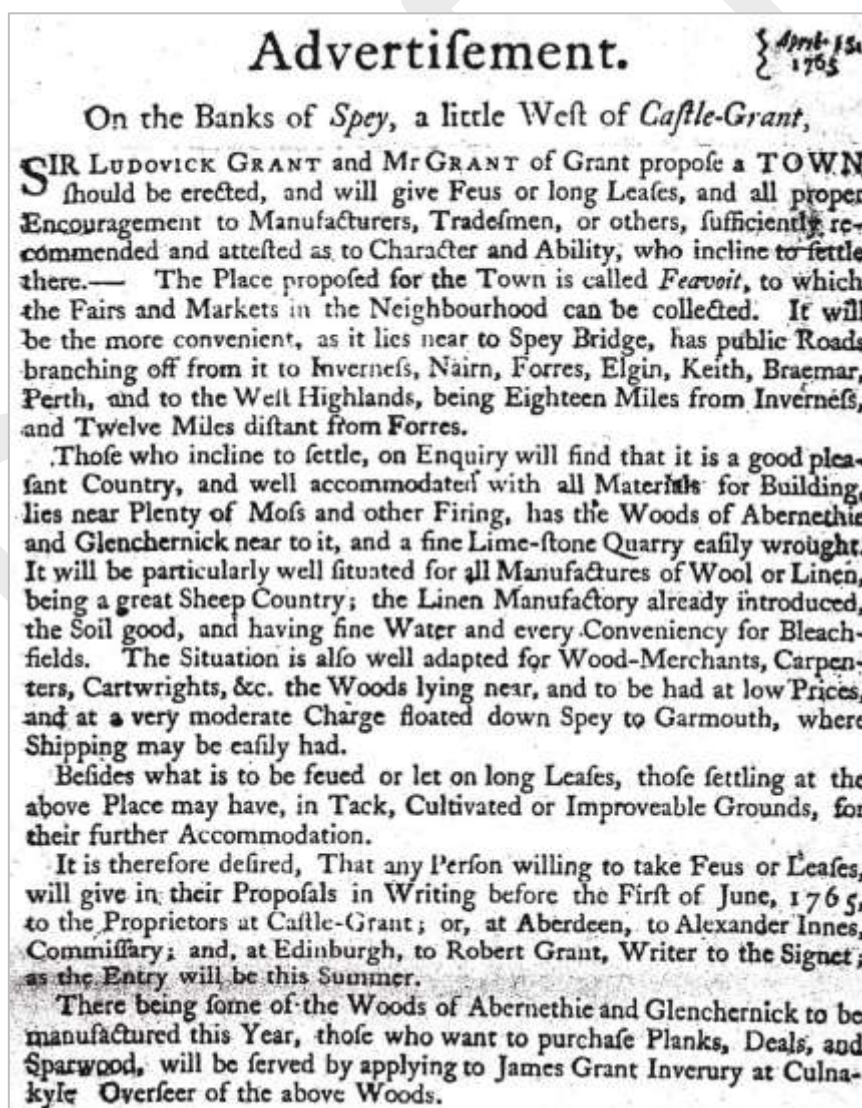


Fig 2: Copy of an original handbill from April 1765. Note James Grant's father Sir Ludovick Grant is given mention as the head of the family although he had little to do with the founding of the new town. © Dixon

After lengthy consideration of market circumstances, further inducement was provided by offering leases of building plots for 190 years and free of annual rent for the first five years. The lots were also made more generous (refer Section 7.3) and there was inducement by offering use of local building materials.

The town was established on a barren heath known as Faevoit, about a mile south of the previous hamlet (fig 1). James laid out Grantown around a large, central square with a newly dug water course at the eastern end. The site was well served by the military road through the Eastern Highlands constructed from Blairgowrie to Fort George (1750s). Part of this Old Military Road still forms an extension of Forest Road through the woods between Grantown and the River Spey (fig 6). John Scott's rock-founded bridge (1754) over the Spey played an important part in the siting of New Grantown. The original aim was that Grantown would be a manufacturing town, and a centre for all local fairs and markets. Farming would also play its part in Grantown's development, with James a recognised land improver and leading member of the Highland Society of Edinburgh. Originally markets were held in the Square (later moved to the Market Stance and then the mart in the West End industrial estate).

A rough sketch design (fig 3) was produced in 1765 by James Grant of Grant clearly illustrating the intended focus of the new town on its rectangular 'market place', with a main street extending both eastward (Castle Road) and westward (High Street). No other plans are known to survive until the one dated 1768 (completed in 1769; fig 4A) drawn after surveys by Alexander Taylor and referred to as 'the clean plan'. The lots were set out at approximately 20-ells wide (an ell being approximately 37½ inches) and known as 'tenements', described as either 'Northside' or 'Southside', with their buildings placed directly along the street frontage. Each tenement frontage would consist of two buildings: one 3-bays wide (approximately 40-foot), the other 2-bays (approximately 20-foot). Access to the rear for carts was through an 8-foot mutual close every second plot. This was achieved by the requirement that each settler refrain from building on 4-feet of one end of his frontage matching the 4-feet space of his neighbour.

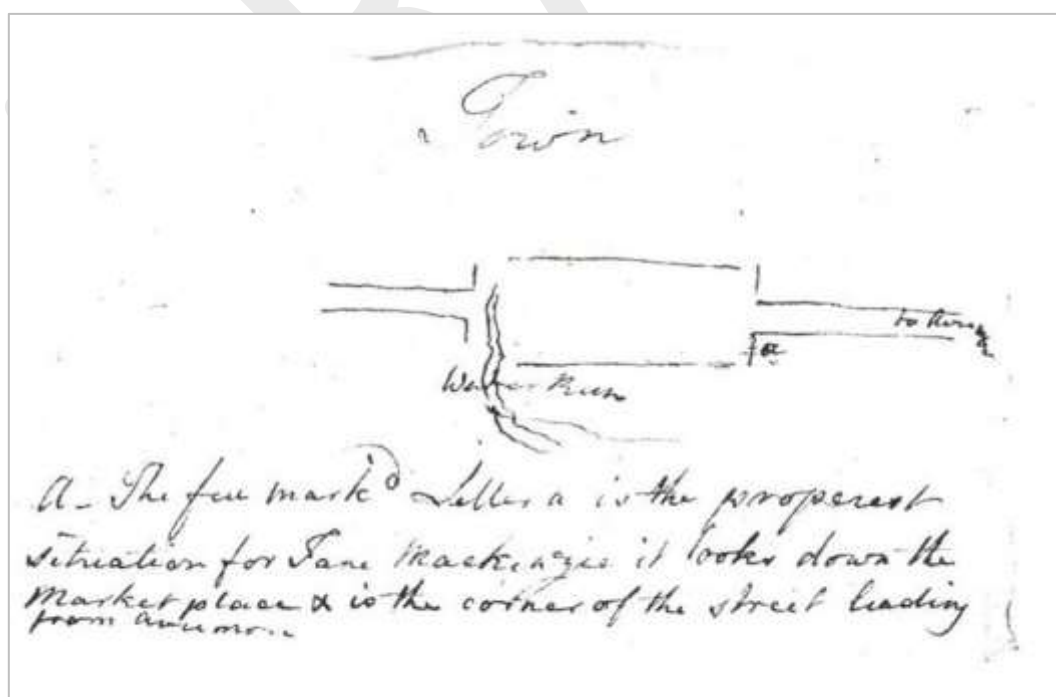


Fig 3: Rough sketch of New Grantown by James Grant of Grant, 1765. (Image courtesy of The Reidhaven Trust)

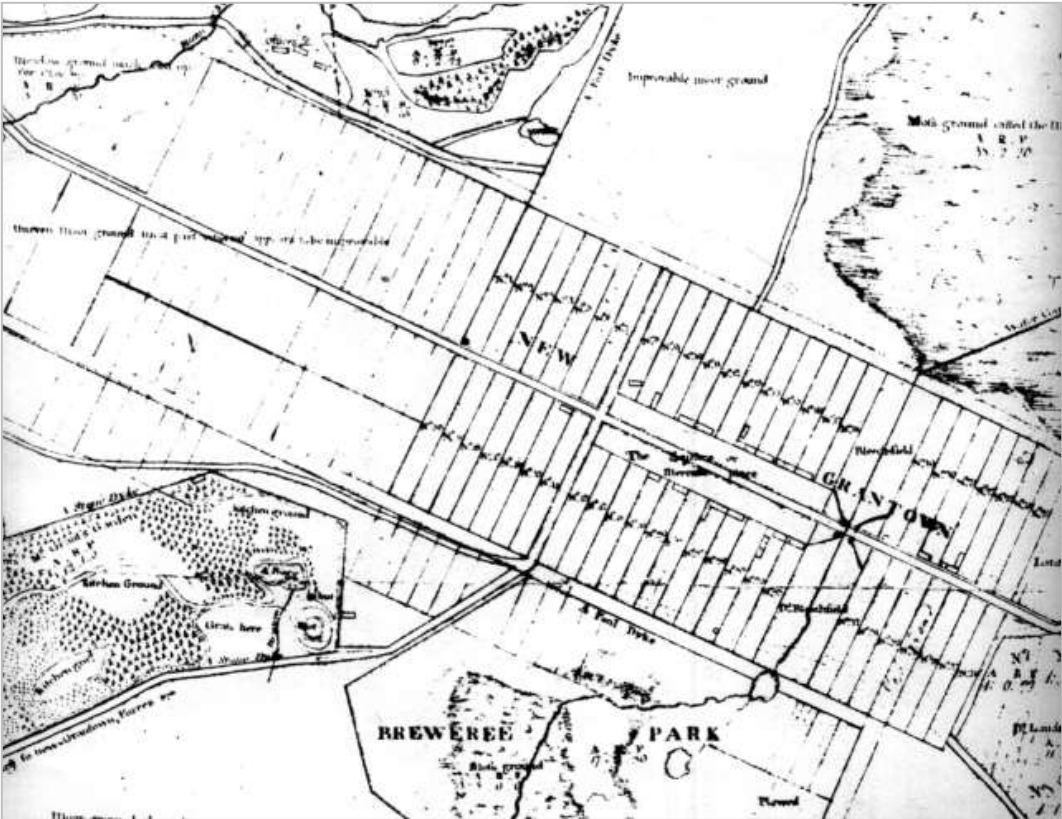


Fig 4A: ‘the clean plan’ dated 1768 by Alexander Taylor (1769). Note the original plan had allowed for 7 lots each side on High Street and Castle Road, although subsequently development continued westward on High Street as far as the Kynlra Burn. The Lady’s Garden Wood is visible to the south-west of the town. (Image courtesy of The Reidhaven Trust)

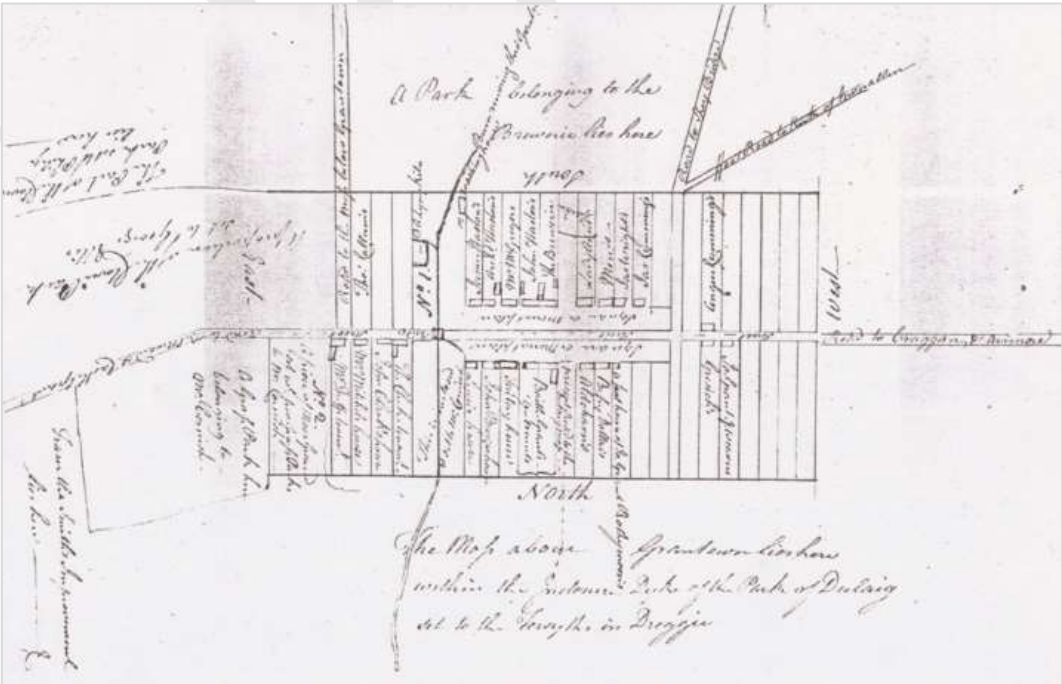


Fig 4B: A sketch plan by James Grant, the Clerk (1778) captures progress, chiefly on the Square and Castle Road. Note this plan is rotated from fig 4A. (Image courtesy of The Reidhaven Trust)

The first building was a linen weaving manufactory (the first urban manufactory in Strathspey) founded on June 28th 1765 on lot no. 10 Northside by John Grant, a weaver from Rothiemurchus. The builder was William Anderson, a Master Mason from Portsoy, who completed the building in time for its occupation by 1st October 1765 (the plot is now the western part of Morlich House). A further 7 lots were let that year, and 16 in total by 1768. By 1776 Grantown was large enough to feature on Taylor & Skinner's map *The Road from Braemar to Fort George*. A sketch plan by James Grant, the Clerk, in 1778 (fig 4B) captures progress, chiefly on the Square and Castle Road.

The new town would provide a revolution in building standards. Its 'modern' houses would replace the traditional earth floored, low turf-walled and thatch-roofed buildings known locally as 'black houses' (vernacular Highland homes distinctive from those commonly so referred to in the Western Isles). New buildings were to be built of stone and lime walls, with slate or pantile roofs (though none of the latter appeared). The lime-harled, and often lime-washed, stone walls with little or no dressed stone except minimally on the skews and around doors and windows, together with their heavy local grey slates, gave Grantown's townscape a plain undecorated sobriety of appearance typical of the Georgian era which is still evident in places today. Early accounts refer to the regularity of the white houses (fig 5). Two-storeyed houses were normally required on the Square, but single-storeyed cottages could be built on the High Street or Castle Road frontages. In either case, wooden floors, plastered walls and ceilings and properly vented chimneys were far removed from the turf homes erected on the Faevoit crofts only a few hundred yards away. Stone boundary walls, a lease requirement, were built around many of the plots marking out the long tenements and still evident today in places. Such early planning regulation revolutionised building in this part of the country and became a model followed by several planners, such as the British Fisheries Society along the West Coast.



Fig 5A: Early photographic image of High Street looking south-west from the Square (c.1860). It shows the original regular 2-storey Georgian buildings on the Southside prior to any Victorian redevelopment. The Black Bull Inn is the white-washed building on the left. (Urquhart courtesy of Dixon)



Fig 5B: Early photographic image of the Square (c.1865) showing the Georgian regularity (excepting the landmark Speyside Orphanage) prior to construction of the Court House in 1868 and redevelopment of the Grant Arms hotel. (Urquhart courtesy of Dixon)

The town's early development is extremely well documented in maps, letters, daybooks, and accounts, now largely held in the National Records of Scotland (GD248), including dates of buildings, and names and occupations of occupiers.

A 1791 draft account of new Grantown by James Grant, (formerly the Clerk, now Factor of Strathspey), includes a final section:

“Sir James has erected & fitted up a Gaol & a Court or Town house – He has improved & brought into Tillage the most of the Moors around the Village & that being done set off the same to the Inhabitants – Every year he lays out a considerable Sum on account of said Village & its inhabitants And has great pleasure to see it in a thriving Situation full of Merchants, Weavers of Linen and Woolen – Stocking Weaving, Smiths, Carpenters, Shoemakers, Taylers, Coopers, Bakers, a School for Boys – A School for Girls & a Physi[c]ian – tho’ only 26 years since the first house was built on this barren moor 25 miles distant from Findhorn, the nearest Seaport. The Number of its Inhabitants is at present above 300 – in a spot that formerly was not fit to main[tain] a Score of Sheep.”

By the close of the century, most of the original lots on both the Northside and Southside were taken up and there was pressure for more land to become available as is recorded in a letter from the Factor to James in May 1796:

“On Saturday last I set off four tenements for building on in Grantown viz two.... and two for Peter Stewart Weaver and Kenneth McIntosh Cooper both in Grantown at the very west end next to the Bridge of Kylindra on the South side of the Road from Grantown to Craggan. James Smith at Bridge of Cur who was a sergeant really or nominally in the 97th I know not which, was at me yesterday for a tenement, he has money & is able to build...”

In an “Abstract History of the Feus in Grantown & the Possessors” written by the Factor in 1807, the typical development of these new lots (later to be named Woodlands Crescent) is described:

Lot 1st Next the Bridge set to Peter Stuart who has built a Stone house theron improved the Lot & is the present possessor

Lot 2nd Set to John Macdonald who has improved the Lot, lives in a black house but has built no Stone house as yet & is the present possessor

The town’s population had grown to 435 by the time of the first official census of 1801, and had almost doubled by 1841 to 814 souls. It continued to grow steadily so that after almost 100 years in 1861 it had 1,334 inhabitants. The early linen and woollen industries faded away and the town developed as a market, service and commercial centre. By 1863 Black’s Directory was able to describe Grantown as:

“ .. clean and airy; the houses are generally neat and well kept, and there are several very tidy residences in the town. There is an excellent Grammar School in it; and a handsome infant school newly erected, beside a hospital for thirty Orphans, on the plan of the Edinburgh Orphans’ Hospital. The National, Caledonian, and the Royal, Banks have each branches here, and there are in the town various pleasant shops, and three very good inns, the “Grant Arms,” the “Black Bull,” and the “New Inn ... There is a Mission Church in the town.”

Key buildings of this period included the two-storeyed house for Lady Anne, which became the third Grammar School building in 1787 and then in 1795 the Speyside Charity School, significant as the first orphanage in the Highlands. Due to structural problems, the original house was largely rebuilt in the early 1820s with an impressive bell and clock tower. After many years in various locations, a new school for boys was constructed in the 1790s on the Hillock to the south of the town (now with later extensions Grantown Primary School). A girls’ school (1861) was built of the east side of Burnfield, later becoming Burnfield House (now the Grantown Museum).

The first branch bank in the hundred mile valley of the Spey was opened in a shop just west of the orphanage in 1829 and was succeeded by the National Bank’s purpose-built building of 1851 on the site of Grantown’s first building, the original linen manufactory across the Square (now Morlich House).

Other important buildings included the local inns: the Grant Arms (1775-6) developed from the earlier brewery, butchery and bakery building (later reconstructed); the New Inn (c.1807-8 by Heathfield’s son-in-law), used as an inn from mid-19th century and known as Dunbar’s Inn and later the Strathspey Hotel; the Black Bull Inn (late 18th century; fig 5A), later rebuilt as part of the Palace Hotel (now the Grandview Nursing Home); and the Garth (1769 for the Clerk of Strathspey), by the late 1770s a subsidised stocking manufactory with 42 employees and by the 1870s the Inverallan manse (now with later extension and alteration the Garth Hotel).

3.3 The next fifty years (1865 – 1914) Victorian Development

By the middle of the 19th century Grantown was becoming recognised as a health resort and was attracting an increasing number of visitors. The Victorian fascination with the Scottish Highlands had been growing for several decades with an increased number of wealthy landowners hosting sporting parties, and of course Queen Victoria's purchase of the Balmoral Estate on Deeside and rebuilding of the castle. Queen Victoria visited Grantown in 1860 and enjoyed her first stay ever in a public inn (the original Grant Arms). The visit was widely published in the national press, and along with the Queen's Journal published in 1868, greatly encouraged visitors. A significant increase in the number of visitors was made possible by the arrival in 1863 of two railway lines, the main line from Perth to Inverness, and the Strathspey branch line from Dufftown to Abernethy (the latter extended to Boat of Garten in 1866, so joining the Highland line). These events heralded a significant development in the town's activities and its physical appearance, as Grantown became a recognised tourist resort in the following years.

The 1st Edition of the Ordnance Survey (1872; surveyed 1868; fig 6) captures the town just prior to its significant Victorian expansion. There is very little building out with the 'original' planned new town area extending from Castle Street in the east to the Kylintra Burn in the west. Exceptions include to the south: the Free Church and manse on Woodside Avenue, the Grammar School, and the cottages on Back Street; and to the north: the first established Church (original Chapel of Ease, 1803-1886). The Free Church School has been built on the end of the lots on the Northside of High Street at its western end (the earlier houses having extended as far as Springfield). Roads parallel to the High Street had begun to develop. To the south, Woodside Avenue and South Street (still unnamed except for Back Street, the road leading from the cattle market stance to Inverallan). To the north, Grant Road is yet to be developed (still a back lane west of the Square). Cross streets were few, Spey Avenue, Chapel Road, Seafield Avenue / Forest Road, Market Road and part of Mossie Road (all not yet named).

The railways brought with them 'the visitors'. At first these early tourists rented rooms in the town or local farmhouses but as their numbers and needs increased, more accommodation was required. Enterprising locals seized the opportunity and built houses in 'the suburbs' specifically to rent out to summer visitors. These houses, or 'villas' as they were described, also served as winter houses for their owners. Many of the houses were built for local merchants and quite a number for builders themselves. Some were built for those who normally lived and worked elsewhere and several too, were built in the name of Grantown ladies. Meanwhile the owners and winter occupiers would move back to their flats above the shops in the High Street, their tenement cottages, or further out of Grantown.

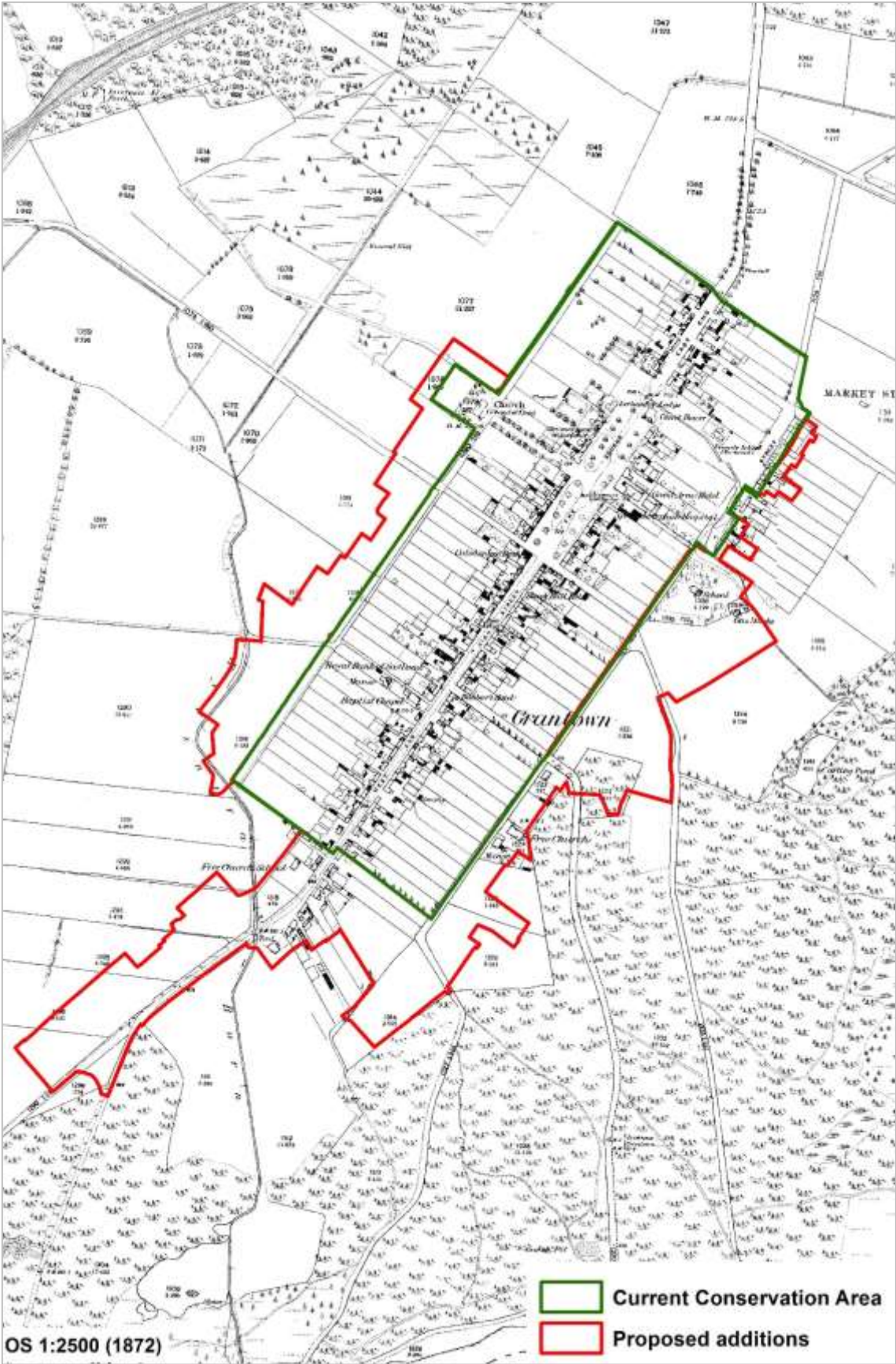


Fig 6 1st Ed. OS 1872 (surveyed 1868)

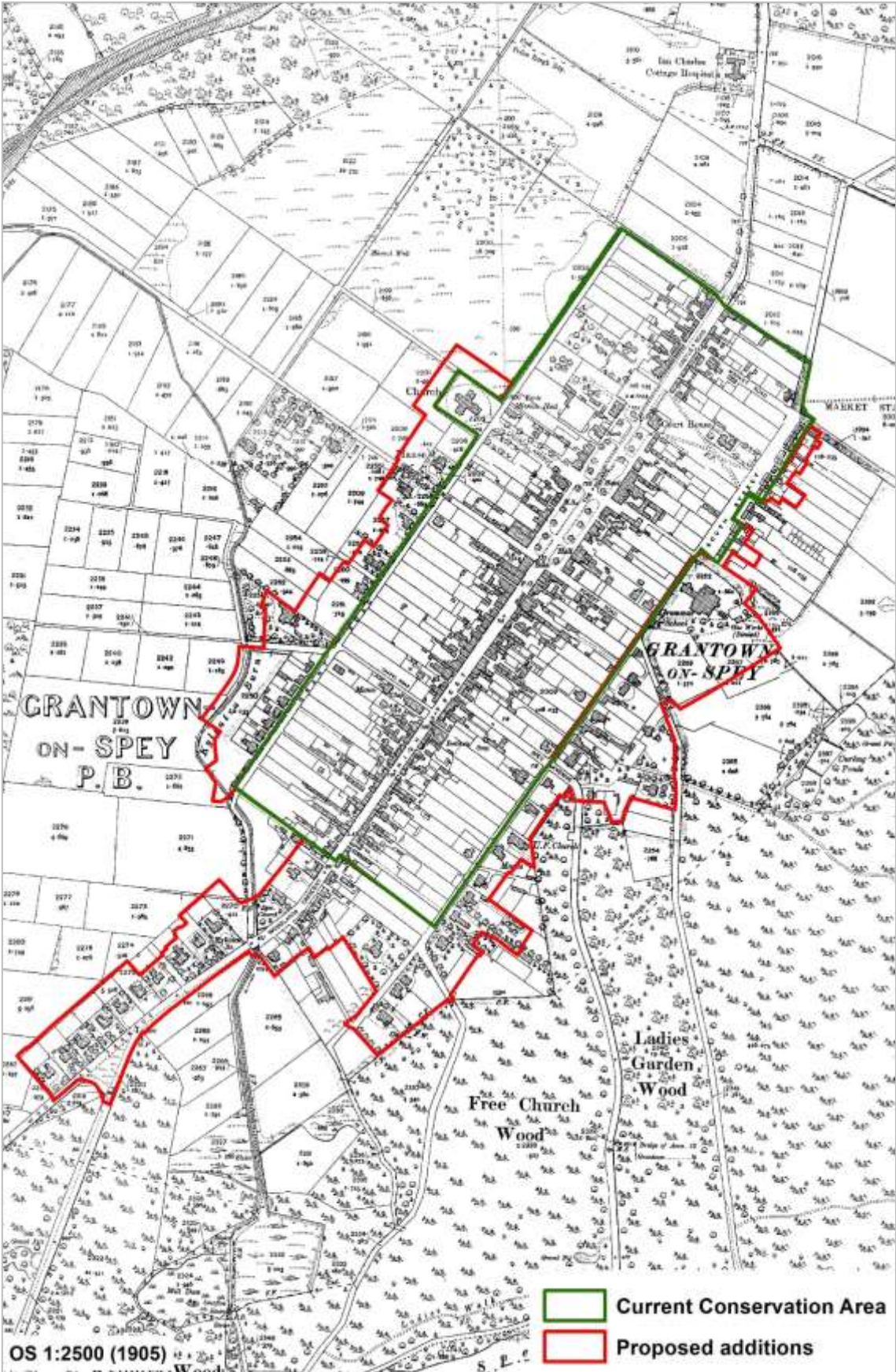


Fig 7: 2nd Ed. OS 1905 (surveyed 1903-4): Captures the town after its Victorian expansion. Note the new ‘suburban’ villas encircling the planned Georgian town and extending toward the railway station.

The villa development principally encircled the original Georgian town on the streets to the north and south of the High Street, and on Woodlands Terrace (1880s-1890s) along the road west to the new Grantown Station. As the original new town leases prohibited subdivision of the tenement lots, the Estate released plots on the previously undeveloped 'lotted' land, which had been set aside for cultivation and could be leased at an additional fee. The first post-railway buildings were the semi-detached houses known as Parkburn on the lot next to the Kyalintra Bridge (replacing an earlier building).

The general pattern of development tended to be Garden Park, Woodside, Woodpark, Woodlands Terrace, Seafield Avenue, and Grant Road. However the order was not regular or fixed, that is there was no plan or coherent feuing pattern developed by the Estate in contrast to the original planned town. Sites were chosen for various reasons: for convenience – existence of roads, nearness to station or (later) to the golf course (founded 1890); the availability of lotted land; or possibly the view. Both from letters written at the time and letting advertisements, the importance placed on the view can be gleaned for example “...overlooking pine woods” and “...commands a magnificent view of the surrounding mountains and pine forests”.

After 1891 the Seafield Estates Management often included in the feu charter a condition that the house built should cost more than a certain amount, as much as £1,000 to ensure a high status was met. The summer rents were not small either, between £12 and £60 per month or even £225 per season. This was at a time when a mason was paid 7d per hour and a carpenter 5d per hour for a 57 hour week (the latter a little over £1 per week). Other special lease or feu conditions generally included a clause covering construction in “...stone and lime covered with slates”, and a time limit for building, “...to be completed in 12 months if not already built”.

In addition to the residential expansion of the town, the original new town witnessed significant change over the second half of the 19th century (fig 7). Several properties were taken down and reconstructed to provide new commercial premises. Within the planned town, rebuilt examples belonging to this period of Victorian affluence include the Royal Bank of Scotland (1864) and the Caledonian Bank (1867); the Seafield Estate Offices (1884); the Victoria Institute (1897/8); and hotels including the Grant Arms (1875 et seq) and the Palace (from 1894). The Courthouse was constructed in 1868 on open ground at the head of Burnfield, interrupting to original extent of the Square. Beyond the new town plots, new properties included the Seafield Memorial Church (1885; Alexander Smith, architect; some elements of the original Chapel of Ease reused in building of the adjacent Mission Hall); the Ian Charles Cottage Hospital (1885); extension of the Grammar School on the Hillock (1876; Marshall McKenzie, and progressively enlarged until 1933).

It was a time of investment and progress. Shops and businesses flourished and by 1881 the town had its own weekly newspaper and two years later a guide book. According to the Valuation Roll of 1882, the number of shops in the town included six general merchants, three general stores, four bakers, three grocers, three drapers, two butchers, and a couple of watchmakers. There was a chemist, a book seller, fishing tackle maker, wine merchant, saddler, painters and plasterers, post office, banks, and a shop run by the Singer Manufacturing Company. The character of the High Street was changing with enlarged shop fronts and new businesses.



Fig 8A: High Street looking west (c.1880s); note the redevelopment of the corner site, for the Caledonian Bank (1867), and No. 13 (1869) with its tall gable fronted design interrupting the original roofscape. (BS)



Fig 8B: a similar view of High Street looking west (c.1890); note redevelopment for the post office (this is the first rebuild, later rebuilt again in c.1900 after a fire), and rebuild of the second house on the left. (BS)

Gas supplies were introduced and a new water supply (1849) brought in, initially in wooden water pipes, and much extended in 1881. By the end of the century Grantown had become a Police Burgh (1898) with its own Town Council. The town was renamed Grantown-on-Spey and a town crest as devised. The 2nd Edition of the Ordnance Survey records this Victorian development of the town surveyed in 1903-4 (published 1905; fig 7).

3.4 The next hundred years (1914-2016)

The First World War marked changes in Grantown's tourist industry but there was still a growing need for local housing, and the introduction of 20th century social housing. One of the earliest and most notable of the experiments by the local council was the steel house in Castle Road East (c.1924). This was part of the first expansion eastward from the planned town with a number of houses set on the south side of the new Castle Road East, and nearby development of plots on Heathfield Road.

After the war, architect Marshall Mackenzie was commissioned to design the town's war memorial. This was constructed in 1922 in a prominent position on the Square in alignment with the parish church at the end of Church Avenue.

On the High Street, trading practices changed, shop fronts were remodelled as plate glass became more widespread, and sometimes upper floors were incorporated to create larger premises (fig 9).



Fig 9: Changes to shop frontage of 54 High Street in the 1930s. (BS)

During the Second World War (1939-1945) many buildings in Grantown were requisitioned to house troops during the years before D-Day (6th June 1944). Grantown, too, had an important REME depot, laid out next to the LMS railway station. With Stirling, it was one of the two military vehicular repair depots for Scotland. Buildings were requisitioned (e.g. the Victoria Institute, the Garth, the Orphanage). This activity also brought new people and economy to the town.

After the war tourism continued to be important, with large numbers of summer visitors and a growth in winter sports in the wider area, Grantown received the accolade of a "town for all seasons". In the mid-1960s the town boasted more bed spaces available than anywhere else in the north-east counties outside Aberdeen, with an increase in bed and breakfast establishments, guest houses and hotels often created through the conversion of the large Victorian villas (e.g. Craiglynn, Holmhill).

However the 1960s were pivotal. Just as the arrival of the railways had marked a new chapter in Grantown's history, so too did the closure of the lines to Grantown in 1965. This coincided with the expansion of nearby Aviemore as a winter sports hub with a new chairlift (1961) and opening of the Aviemore Centre in 1966. Tourism in the town progressively declined as did the number of hotels and guest houses (later adapted for other uses such as housing and a care home).

Demand for new local housing continued after the Second World War. At the west side of town, the Kylindra lotted lands were developed for Council Housing from the late 1940s. Within the original Georgian town, division and development on the original tenement plots took place in a piecemeal basis

generally as single-storey bungalows. This is thought to relate to the transfer of the original land leases to feus in the 1960s, thus removing lease restraints such as a prohibition on subdivision of plots. Many new houses to the rear of tenement plots were constructed prior to designation of the Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area in mid-1974. Changes in the operation of the Seafield Estates occurred from the mid-1950s. As well as the conversion of original property leases to feu charters, the former market place of the Square was transferred to the local authority in 1966, to be held on behalf of the people of Grantown.

Within the original planned town, a number of original and older properties were demolished, perhaps most significantly a section of the lower High Street removed in 1974 despite public protest. This was part of a larger area of the lower High Street which had been designated as a Comprehensive Development Area in 1966 and subject to a Public Enquiry. A small number of other individual sites were redeveloped including the Police Station buildings in 1967, removing at that time the oldest surviving founding year building (formerly the first inn and later first Grammar School in Grantown). On the Square, Grantown's first cinema was constructed within a pend on the Northside and reconstructed twice following fires in the 1930s and 1950s. It reopened in 1959, now housing the British Legion.

In 2003 Grantown became part of the newly designated Cairngorm National Park.

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4.0 CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

4.1 Spatial Analysis

4.1.1 Layout and Activities

The Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area lies at the heart of the town occupying the original new town plan area. This area still forms the town's commercial centre focused on the High Street and the Square. It is a typical traditional town centre with a mix of retail shops and services such as banks, public houses and restaurants. Residential accommodation is provided either above street level shops, or in purpose built housing. The centre is a busy thoroughfare with traffic passing through on several routes north of the Spey.

The principal street layout of the original planned town remains: a large rectangular square at the north-eastern end with the long linear High Street extending south-westward towards the Kylintra Burn; Castle Road forming a continuation of this linear axis north-east of the Square. Side streets intersect the main route: Spey Avenue, Chapel Road, Seafield Avenue / Forest Road, Church Avenue, Burnfield Avenue, and Market Road. However the irregularity of the side streets, the majority of which do not run continuously across High Street or the Square, means that a formal grid plan is not created and the principal linear route, as per the original plan design, is dominant. Furthermore, there are few traditional street-facing buildings on the side streets as this was not the intent of the town plan. In addition to the side streets, there are secondary routes, some extending as pedestrian lanes the full length of the original tenement plots, others only giving access to backland areas. These routes are a historic legacy of the original pends. Running parallel to the principal route is Grant Road / Mossie Road (to the north-west) and Woodside Avenue/South Street to the south-east. These are residential streets which currently bound the conservation area. They have a quiet atmosphere in comparison to the commercial centre; Grantown's primary school occupies a large plot on South Street outside the conservation area boundary.

The site generally appears flat however there is a slight elevation to the north-east. This is most evident moving north-east on Grant Road; similarly on High Street towards the Square and on routes between the Square and South Street.

The built form of High Street, Castle Road and the Square is intact, that is the convention of front-facing buildings constructed to the street line has been predominately maintained, although several of the original buildings on the plots have been redeveloped over time, in particular several of the original Georgian buildings have been replaced by later Victorian buildings (refer Section 3.3). In general the latter are constructed on a grander scale with higher proportions, however the original plot widths (approx. 60-foot) have been largely maintained. There are examples where the original pends between each plot have been built over, such as the former Palace Hotel (from c.1890) and the Grant Arms Hotel (from 1875) where their frontages now occupy more than one plot. A very small number of buildings break the frontage rule and are set back from the street line including the Royal Bank of Scotland (1864, Peddie & Kinnear), the Baptist Church (1851; alts. J Robertson, 1901), and the 1970's redevelopment on lower High Street.

The Square is a unique space, a long rectangle (180 x 700 feet) with buildings set back from the main thoroughfare and building line of the High Street and Castle Road (fig 9). Originally the Square was one large open space, the new town's civic heart and market place; trees were introduced in 1853 (fig 18). The space is now intersected by the main road with narrower access roads in front of the building line either side. In between, the Square is landscaped with grass and trees (refer Section 4.1.2). The main

intersection is Church Avenue, and as the name suggests this leads to the town's Established Church and was one of the first principal side streets to be formalised (refer 1st Ed. OS; fig 6). The war memorial forms a landmark at the point where this street intersects with the Square (fig 10).

The main public buildings are located here including the former Speyside Orphan Hospital (c.1822; now residential), the Court House (1868; now incorporating the public library), the Grant Arms (rebuilt from 1875), the former Seafield Estate offices (1884; now NPA offices), and Morlich House (1851; former National Bank). The building form of these civic and commercial buildings is more varied and their scale larger, the Grant Arms up to 3½-storeys, which illustrates the hierarchy of uses alongside a number of original lower-scale Georgian survivors, and more modest Victorian redevelopment.



Fig 10: the Square (2017) looking east. Note the town's war memorial indicating the intersection of Church Avenue.

At the north-east end of the Square, three original houses survive (refer Section 4.2.2) and evoke the character of the Georgian town. This character is most strongly felt in Castle Road (fig 11) where a significant portion of the street consists of original houses (1780s) in particular on the corner of Burnfield Avenue; on each side of Market Street; and Gladstone House next to the Garth Hotel (the latter dating to 1769 with later remodelling and extensions). The street line on Castle Road is softer than in High Street. Gladstone House and the Garth Hotel have short front gardens (fig 12). On the south side, changes in level have been accommodated and generally houses and pavements are separated from the road with a grass verge. However the building line itself remains consistent except for the later 20th century Police Station buildings which have been stepped back from the earlier building line.



Fig 11: Castle Road (2018) looking south-west. Castle Street retains several late 18th century buildings giving a strong Georgian character.



Fig 12: Castle Road looking north-east in the later 19th century. Note the bridge over the original water course and beyond the building which became the Garth Hotel and Gladstone House both with short front gardens and timber fences.

The High Street stretching from the Square to Spey Avenue is the most urban part of the town. The wide thoroughfare is enclosed either side generally with 2-storey buildings, often with traditional roof dormers, the eaves line varying from that of the low 2-storey Georgian survivors to later Victorian builds. There are few exceptions: the 3½-storey former Palace Hotel, and later turn of the 20th century tenements (fig 13). The hard enclosure is varied by the shop fronts which line the street frontages, and interrupted by pends into the backland courts.



Fig 13: High Street south side looking west from the Square (2017). Note the exceptional storey height of the former Palace Hotel and in the distance two turn of the 20th century tenements. (Compare with fig 5A).



Fig 14: High Street north side looking west from the Square (2017). (Compare with fig 8).

At the western end of High Street, beyond Spey Avenue, the urban enclosure continues, but the scale of buildings returns to the more modest 2-storey or 1½-storey of the earlier town, with the only exception being the landmark turret and gable of the Victoria Institute (now YMCA /Community use).

At the south-west end of High Street the building line is interrupted where the 1970s redevelopment has broken with the planned concept and set the new houses back from the road with short front gardens and trees along the road side (fig 15).



Fig 15: 1970s redevelopment on lower High Street (2018). Note how houses have been set back from the street line with landscaped areas in front.

Across High Street, and just outside the conservation area boundary, the houses on Woodlands Crescent continue the original development as far as the Kyles Burn. The topography required the road to curve slightly to the crossing point of the burn. Two buildings are stepped back slightly and incorporate front gardens (fig 16), however their front boundary walls continue the original High Street line. As the road curves, further front gardens are incorporated. Parkburn is the only house to break with the angle of the street line having been rebuilt around 1865 on the last lot on the Southside.



Fig 16: High Street's transition to Woodlands Crescent. Note the cottage frontage is stepped back although the boundary wall maintains the street line. Note, currently out with the conservation area boundary are the listed 2-storey house with gable end (the last lot to be leased in the original town) and the roofless building which was originally a 20-foot and 40-foot house.

Returning to the east end of the town, at the eastern end of South Street, the conservation area boundary is extended to include the traditional short rows (terraces) of houses, some low single storey cottages, other modest 1½-storey homes. The positioning of the houses and their low aspect creates a village feel in comparison to the scale of High Street and Castle Road (fig 19).

On the parallel streets, later 20th century bungalows have been constructed to the rear of the original tenement lots, the long rectangular plots which extend behind the street fronting buildings (fig 17). The large majority of original lots had remained undivided until later in the 20th century, “...preserved from fragmentation by a clause in the standard new-town lease prohibiting the separate leasing of parts of the plots.” (Dixon, 22.11.90). These houses are generally single storey their frontages addressing the street but set back to varying degrees from the street line, with both front and rear gardens. As a result there is an irregularity to the building pattern, spatially open, predominantly low and subordinate to the earlier traditional properties.

Between the buildings fronting the main street and the later 20th century bungalows, is the ‘backland’ area generally accessed from the original pends. This existed historically as the service area with gardens and allotments beyond. Reference to the 1st and 2nd Edition of the Ordnance Surveys (figs 6 & 7) illustrates development of structures in this area. Some lots included a ‘tenement cottage’ which provided additional accommodation, some of which may have predated the construction of the main street facing building. A number of traditional single storey outbuildings remain, often constructed at right angles to the main building along the plot boundaries, with in some cases modern development inserted in these areas (fig 33).

Beyond the conservation area boundary on the north-west side of Grant Road / Mossie Road, and south-east side of Woodside Avenue/South Street, there are Victorian villas. These houses were set out on new feu lots created after the original planned town. The original town plan design did not provide for parallel streets or subdivision of the original lots. This meant that new Victorian development occurred beyond the original plan on the inner facing side of the service routes at the back of the lots. This created an unusually spacious atmosphere to the town.



Fig 17: Victorian photographic capturing the start of Grantown’s suburbs beyond the end of the original tenement lots. The Free Church and a number of new villas are visible in the distance separated by the long lots © GWW note the new Parkburn building at the far right of the image.

The Victorian plots are varied in size from those of modest proportions to larger one-off plots such as Dunstaffnage and Frogna on Woodside Avenue, and Coppice Hotel on the corner of Grant Road and Mackay Avenue. On Grant Road (west of Mackay Avenue) there is a more regular grouping of detached and semi-detached houses on narrower plots giving the impression of a terraced row with short front gardens. The general siting and aspect of most villas is to face the street, irrespective of their location in respect of sunlight and views.

4.1.2 Open Spaces, Trees and Landscape

The major open space in the town is the Square, a designed public space and original market place of the planned town. Its appearance has changed over time (fig 5B & 18), but the Square today remains an open green public space with grass and trees between the roads.

At the northern end, the original area of the town's water course (fig 18) and adjoining bleach field remains a largely open, undeveloped space, excluding the earlier construction of the Court House (1868), Grantown Museum, and one modern bungalow. There is a small landscaped public garden adjacent to the Garth Hotel (fig 21); and across the main road, Burnfield Avenue provides public parking with landscaped areas (mainly lawns) around, in particular in front of the Grantown Museum where there are some mature trees also.

Within the conservation area, a large part of the central area has limited private green space e.g. the High Street and area immediately behind this. The large tenement plots have over time been developed with hard landscaping provided to create service areas including vehicle access and private car parking. In a number of locations, the hard built form is softened by green space, such as on South Street (fig 19), where the rows of houses are separated by an attractive green verge with mature trees. This is repeated on one side of Castle Road, although there are no trees here.

To the rear of the plots the majority of later 20th century development has been set in gardens generally both front and back. This means the character of Grant Road / Mossie Road, and Woodside Avenue/South Street, is quite distinct from the hard landscaping of the High Street. Similarly the Victorian villas out with the conservation area are set in garden grounds. These gardens, their lawns, trees, planting and boundary hedging, contribute significantly to the green setting and atmosphere of the town beyond the enclosure of the High Street. They also provide a transition between the urbanism of the original town and the woodland and open green space beyond the Victorian villa area.

There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in the conservation area or its immediate boundaries, however mature trees make an important contribution. Arguably the most important are those on the Square, with the probability that some may still be those originally planted in 1853 by the 6th Earl of Seafield. There are a number of substantial oaks and other broad leaf trees, and younger trees replacing losses (fig 20). There are mature trees bounding Church Avenue (fig 25); in front of the rows on South Street (fig 19); and bounding the lane which connects the Square to South Street behind the Grant Arms (Strathspey lodges), and numerous individual mature trees and small tree groups to private gardens both within and immediately out with the conservation area (fig 24).

There are three TPOs beyond the conservation area at Rhuarden Court, Strathspey Drive and part of the Free Church Wood. Unprotected trees of note out with the conservation area boundary, include those in private gardens and along the road side north of Grant Road on Seafield Avenue (fig 28); and adjoining the north side of Seafield Avenue, the trees behind Ravenscourt, Tigh-na-Raon and surrounding the Inverallan Church. In the latter case providing an important buffer to modern development and distinguishing the setting on the listed church.



Fig 18 (top): view of the Square before 1875 with the bridge over the water course in the foreground. Note the first young trees planted in 1853; (centre-left): a view of similar date to above, looking south-east; (centre-right): a similar view after the Grant Arms was rebuilt in 1875; (below): an early 20th century view of the Square with mature trees and clearly defined road / pavements but no vehicles.



Fig 19: Green landscaping, with several mature trees, between the road and pavement on South Street enhances the character of this long terrace of cottages.



Fig 20: There are a number of very large mature broad leaf trees on the Square, such as this oak.



Fig 21: Public garden next to the Garth Hotel, part of the former bleach field.



Fig 22: Private gardens in the area surrounding the conservation area contribute to wider green setting

The majority of green space enclosing the town is woodland which makes a significance contribution to the character of the conservation area and wider town. This includes the smaller Free Church Wood, Lady’s Garden Wood, Kyntra Wood and Station Wood which form a consistent woodland to the south of the town (intersected by main road approaches; refer Section 4.1.3), and the expansive Anagach Wood extending east to Cromdale. To the west is the Beachen Wood, and a little way north of the town, the woodlands of the former Castle Grant estate.

These historic woods were planted from the later 18th century by James Grant and his successors. Some planting had first been undertaken in the early 1700s by James Grant’s great-uncle, Alexander, in the parkland close to Castle Grant (fig 1). Very small-scale planting then became a requirement in some leases, none of which addressed re-forestation. James Grant started large-scale planting from 1763, and in the years that followed large stretches of Strathspey were planted including the hills and riversides around Grantown. James Grant’s son, the 6th Earl of Seafield, was regarded as the largest planter of trees in Great Britain in the 19th century having planted almost 32 million trees by 1847 (Dixon, 18.07.91).

The Lady’s Garden Wood was laid out in the late 18th century for Miss Marion Grant, the elder sister of James Grant, as a planned ornamental garden and parkland with timber tea-house (the Knoll). This ‘garden’ was bounded in the east by the first military road (1754), and on the west side a new stone dyke was erected roughly parallel to this. The outline can be seen on the 1768 plan (fig 4A) and part of the original dyke survives as the boundary wall of the villas on the south side of Woodlands Avenue, in particular the original Highlea plot (now Pineview; fig 23). Built by James Dollas, Stone Dyker, the contract for the dyke (1765) survives including its description and materials (Dixon, 20.01.84). The legacy of this garden is the assorted tree species which can be found in the Lady’s Garden Wood and a section of the Free Church Wood (originally part of the garden until the 1810 new military road was constructed).



Fig 23: Private gardens in the area surrounding the conservation area contribute to wider green setting

There are also a number of recreational spaces out with the conservation area including the play park on Castle Road East, the golf course, the school playing fields, the tennis courts, and Grant Park surrounding the Kylintra Burn. As well as providing social amenities, these are important open green spaces providing a buffer between the built environment of the town and wider countryside and dense woodland. The contribution made by the town's woodlands and recreational green spaces, ensure that the demarcation between urban development and green space is very distinct to the town's approaches.

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Fig 24: Aerial view of Granttown (2018) showing the extensive woodlands to the south of the town and the contribution of recreational open green space around the north-east. Note the presence of trees and garden ground in the plots behind the High Street frontage and in the Victorian suburbs.

4.1.3 Views, Approaches and Landmarks

The relatively flat site of Grantown means that views from the conservation area are limited. The principal view in the conservation area is the long vista on the main thoroughfare. Glimpsed and enclosed views are available at the cross streets.

Views on the parallel streets (Grant Road / Mossie Road, and Woodside Avenue/South Street) can be more open in places with the low bungalows affording glimpsed views to the town centre and out with the town to the surrounding landscape and woodland. Particularly at the south-west end of Woodside Avenue, where the road is elevated above the natural cutting of the Kylintra Burn, here there are open views over the woodland to the north-west of the town.

The slightly elevated ground of the Square and Castle Road, means that distant views open up looking south on Forest Road and Market Road with woodland and the Cromdale Hills beyond.

Mature and dense woodland provides the dominant character of several of the approaches to Grantown and the conservation area. On the A939 (the 'new' military road of 1810; fig 26), the route intersects the original Lady's Garden forming the Lady's Garden Wood to the east, and the Free Church Wood to the west (refer section 4.1.2). The route is tree-lined until its intersection with Woodside Avenue including mature trees in the gardens of the houses on this stretch of Spey Avenue.

Similarly the approach on B9102 traverses the Kylintra and Station Woods arriving at the intersection with Woodlands Terrace. Here there is a green landscaped traffic island which compliments the transition from the woodland and the residential gardens of Woodlands Terrace beyond (fig 27). There is an original railway signal located on the island. Continuing this approach towards the High Street, to the south-east views open over Grant Park. On the north-west side greenery extends with mature front gardens and the Episcopal Church grounds as far as the Waverley Villa before the hard urban environment of the original town predominates.

The approach on Seafield Avenue north of Grant Road is also tree-lined, not from woodland but from trees in private gardens and along the road side which forms an attractive setting (fig 28).

From the north on the Old Military Road, the route has a different character. The trees of the Castle Grant estate grounds give way to an open field north of Heathfield Road; on the other side past the Ian Charles Hospital, low hedging encloses gardens and the play park. The inter-war houses on Castle Road East have short gardens mainly lawn and hedging with fenced boundaries.

As may be expected in a small town there are several landmarks. These consist of major commercial buildings such as the former and current hotels: Grant Arms Hotel, former Palace Hotel, the Garth Hotel and the Ben Mhor Hotel; and other more elaborate buildings such as the former Post Office block called Caledonian House. On the Square there are also Speyside House and the Court House, the war memorial and the new Regality Cross. Beyond High Street and the Square is the Grantown Museum on Burnfield Avenue, and the Inverallan Church at the end of Church Avenue. To the south-west section of High Street there are the former Victoria Institute and Baptist Chapel. The Square itself is a major landmark.



Fig 25: Tree lined approach to the Square of Church Avenue with the town's war memorial in the distance



Fig 26: Approach through attractive mature woodland is typical of Grantown, here looking south on Spey Avenue.



Fig 27: Approach on B9102 at intersection with Woodlands Terrace. The green landscaped traffic island compliments its surroundings. There is an original railway signal.



Fig 28: Approach on Seafeld Avenue. Mature trees in private gardens and on the road side form a very attractive tree-lined approach.

4.2 Buildings and Townscape

4.2.1 Townscape Character

Conservation Area

The townscape character of Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area originates from its street plan and open spaces (refer Section 4.1), its buildings, materials and details. The conservation area has a strong integrity of traditional Scottish building styles spanning from the later 18th century to the end of the Victorian era. As with many town centres in Scotland redevelopment of some building plots has occurred over time. The original continuity of its late Georgian style (simply designed 2-storey buildings; fig 5) has been intermixed with later buildings, often grander in proportion and embellishment, but generally reinforcing the overall scale of the town centre (figs 8 & 14). This later development has introduced an architectural vibrancy to the streetscape, and articulation of the roofscape which was not present in the original Georgian town.

There are a significant number of Georgian survivors, the earliest and most complete are the modest 2-storey properties at Nos. 20-21 the Square (refer section 4.2.2), and others known to have been altered internally for example No.22 the Square and No. 12 the Square. Some date to the turn of the 19th century and exhibit a subtle refinement of design and construction details (e.g. fig 30e). From a townscape perspective these buildings, with other earlier constructions on the Square and Castle Road in particular, continue to reflect the original character of the new town. That character is one of modest sobriety, flat fronted gable ended houses with simple 2 and 3 bay elevations with no architectural adornment.

The first change in character of the Georgian new town came with the ‘redevelopment’ of a number of original lots and replacement of their street-fronting buildings. This appears to have started generally in the second half of the 19th century. A number of bank premises were built including the National Bank (Morlich House, 1851; replacing the first building of the new town), the Royal Bank of Scotland on High Street (1864; replacing an original weaver’s house), and the Caledonian Bank (1867; replacing an earlier 1782 building). Other rebuilding included the major hotels (the Grant Arms, 1875; the Palace Hotel, c.1890s onwards) and Caledonian House which housed the post office (figs 8 & 14). The reason for this rebuilding one would presume was a result of the development of commerce, the arrival of the railway, and increased visitors. The design of these buildings reflected their commercial status: banks, new retailers; and the advance of building styles and production. Storey heights increased, window openings were larger and roofs articulated with dormers and even turrets. However throughout there is a coherence in the traditional palette of building materials and skills, including granite, sandstone, Scots slate and timber windows and doors.

An important element in the character of the town centre are its shopfronts, lining most of the street frontage on High Street between Seafeld Avenue and Spey Avenue, and continuing to a lesser extent on the Square and lower section of High Street. The shopfronts are a mixture of early traditional shops, often simply windows and a central doorway, through to larger plate glass frontages from the Victorian era and 20th century. There are a significant number of modern shopfronts and overall there is no strong continuity of design. Some good traditional shopfronts include the Grantown Dairy (fig 29), former Anne’s Mill Shop (with mosaic entrance platt; fig 31m), The Bookmark (with mosaic entrance platt), and the Bay Leaf Spice (curved glass and slender colonnades to entrance, fig 29).

Behind the street-fronting buildings, and accessed via original pends, are a variety of backland buildings. These range from stone built original single and 1½-storey cottages and other outbuildings, to those

clad traditionally with timber and corrugated iron sheeting. Several are still in residential use or adapted as small commercial premises.

To the rear of several the original plots, post-war bungalows have been constructed. These houses are individually designed, each varying from the next. Their appearance is not in-keeping with the traditional character and they have tended to use different materials, including red and grey concrete roof tiles, reconstituted stone blocks, and modern cement based renders. However, the scale has been kept low, single or 1½-storey, and therefore subordinate to the traditional buildings, and the low density of the development has reduced its potential impact on the surrounding historic environment. Roofs are generally pitched. A number of original stone boundary walls have been maintained, assisting in preserving both original fabric and the character of the earlier town. These later buildings appear to have been constructed prior to conservation area designation and the additional development management which that brings.

Between the original new town and bungalows, several other more recent developments have been inserted, often in different spatial forms so introducing side streets.



Fig 29: Examples of shop fronts with traditional elements: the Granttown Dairy has a single window and entrance typical of the earliest shop fronts, with sign board and blind box above; the Bay Leaf Spice which has large plate glass window with curved glass and slender colonnades to its entrance.

Out with the Conservation Area

Within the conservation area there are a small number of individual Victorian villas constructed on the rear of original plots (refer Section 4.2.2). However, the more significant portion of later Victorian villas lie immediately adjacent to the conservation area, opposite its boundary on South Street / Woodside Avenue and Grant Road / Mossie Road. Their character is different in terms of spatial layout (detached houses in garden grounds) and their architectural design (both composition and detailing) is more elaborate than the earlier Georgian houses. This is reflective of their construction some hundred years or more after the first new town buildings, however the villas are contemporary with several of the 'new' Victorian buildings on redeveloped sites in the town centre. Although more elaborate, there remains considerable coherence with the character of the conservation area due to the continued use of a traditional palette of building materials including granite, sandstone, slate and timber windows and doors.

4.2.2 Key Listed and Unlisted Buildings

The conservation area contains 23 list entries. Each list entry may cover more than one building or address (refer Appendix 1 and map 6.2).

The conservation area also contains a significant number of unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area. These are identified on the Listed & Unlisted Buildings Map as 'positive buildings' (map 6.2). Such buildings may vary but are commonly good examples of relatively unaltered traditional buildings where their style, detailing and building materials contribute to the interest and variety of the conservation area. Notwithstanding those buildings identified through this appraisal, other individual buildings may be of some architectural or historic interest. Unlisted buildings should be considered on a case-by-case basis by planning management. Further advice on criteria for identification and evaluation of unlisted buildings is provided in Appendix 2. It should also be noted that THC operate a list that includes non-statutory assets of local and regional importance via the Historic Environment Record with information added on a case by case basis

A selection of key buildings and building groups which reflect the character, and illustrate the variety of building styles in the conservation area, are listed below.

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Nos. 20, 21, 22 the Square (south side) Category B listed



Surviving group of original new town houses. The middle house (1768) is 3-bay (40 foot) wide with to the left the smaller 2-bay (20 foot) 'half' house (also 1768). No. 22 to the right was gutted internally during the 1970s and rebuilt retaining the external walls. Nos. 20 & 21 remain as examples of the greatest ever improvement in accommodation in this part of the Highlands, turf huts were still being built locally at this time. Thought to be the oldest urban housing still in use in the 100 miles of the Spey Valley.

Nos. 14 & 16, 22 & 24 Castle Road (south side) and Clifton House Category B listed



A number of early houses built in the 1780s (Clifton House is a little later). Nos. 14 & 16 another good example of 20/40-foot frontage. Note the small gable attic window in No. 24 and the unusual 8 over 8 window pattern (possible reinstatement). The irregularity of the ground floor windows at No. 24 reflect its former use as a shop.

Gladstone House, 17 & 19 Castle Road north side Category C listed



Gladstone House was constructed in c.1787 and retains its traditional local slate roof, stone ridges and double entrance doors on the RHS. Adjacent is **The Garth** (unlisted; 1769 with later additions) built for James Grant (later 'Heathfield'), the Clerk of Strathspey. In the late 1770s it was converted to a stocking manufactory. Later in the 1870s the building was the Inverallan Manse for a short period. Later Arts and Crafts alterations and became hotel in 1930s.

Morlich House No. 17 the Square (north side) Category C listed



On the site of the first building of the new town (Lot 10), Morlich House was constructed in 1851. The original lot was set to John Grant, a weaver from Rothiemurchus for a weaving manufactory which commenced in June 1765. The lot, with 2 ruinous buildings, was acquired in 1851 by the National Bank. The refined Classical elevation with moulded eaves course and stepped quoins. In c.1869 alterations made to form a pitched roof (formerly hipped), tall chimney stacks and wallhead dormers. The building was used as a bank until the 1960s.

No. 12 the Square (north side) Category B listed



Possibly dating back to 1767-68, this simple building was constructed by Bessy Dollas, a Duthil shopkeeper, and served as the town’s Grammar School from the mid-1770s until 1787. It was in residential use until converted to the Masonic Lodge c.1955 with considerable internal alterations.

Grant Arms Hotel, the Square (south side) Category C listed



On the site of the first Grant Arms, the inn Queen Victoria stayed in in 1860 (fig 18). Reconstructed in 1875 (7 bays on west side) with substantial additions from c.1900 to the east front (left image shows hotel before new extension). The main elevation is in Scots Baronial style with gabled wallhead dormers and angled bartizans at the corners with bellcast conical fishscale slate roofs, the dressings and carved stone detail of the earlier block in blond sandstone.

“Much the best of the mid-Victorian fishing and shooting hotels linked with great estates was the Scots Baronial Grant Arms at Grantown-on-Spey, Moray ...” (Walker, 2003) The new hotel (not extension) was designed by (Alexander) Marshall Mackenzie (1848-1933) an Aberdeen-based architect, whose work was well known in the northeast of Scotland, his best known work probably Marischal College, Aberdeen (1893 – 1905). He designed several buildings in Grantown including the town's war memorial 1921 and the Grammar School’s extensions in the mid-1870s.

The original buildings (1775-6) started as a linen manufactory before passing to the ‘Brewerie, Baking and Butchermeat company’ in 1776. By 1781 also acting as the principal inn and in 1810 extended to the west. These buildings were completely removed and the rebuild set on a larger footprint in 1875. The east section was known as ‘The Gables’ before redevelopment (by J M Monro).

Speyside House, the Square (south side) Category A Listed



Formerly the Speyside Orphan Hospital on the site of one of the first houses in the town (built for Lady Anne Duff in 1765, and later the town's grammar school from 1787 to mid-1790s). The original building became the first orphanage in the Highlands, largely funded by a bequest by Lady Jane Grant of Monymusk (d. 1788) it was converted to serve as a Foundling Hospital for reception and education of orphans in 1796. Concerns over the stability of the building forced its closure by 1819. The orphanage was largely rebuilt in the early 1820s with a new frontage moved back from the plot line to reduce the span of the building. Only the central tower remains on the original building line. Parts of the original rear wall may survive. The rebuild was designed by local stone mason John Russell. The rear wing was added in 1879.

The building stands out in its refined grey granite ashlar front and gables, with rusticated door piece. The central tower rises through a further 2-storeys terminating in an octagonal drum with domed lead roof and weathervane. Originally with both a clock and bell for public benefit. The 1823 turret clock works were installed in a new freestanding bell tower at Grantown Museum in 2006.

Palace Hotel Nos. 12,14, 16 & 18 High Street (south side) unlisted



Encompassing the site of the Black Bull Inn (still present in the image on the left © AmBaile), the Palace Hotel was constructed from c.1894. Built in three stages, the central block first; the western extension early in the 20th century (the remaining traditional inn was removed, and a pend incorporated to access stabling at the rear); and the eastern section in 1930. The central section consists of a 4-bay frontage in Scots Baronial style like the Grant Arms with a conical corner turret with fishscale slate roof and elaborated gabled attic dormers with finials. Now the Grandview Nursing Home.

Caledonian House Nos. 3 & 5 High Street (north side) unlisted



A good example in the change in retail buildings in the high Victorian era. Built around 1890 on the site of earlier houses (fig 8), this building was designed to provide three shops with the Post Office occupying the central area with Allan Grant & son, Draper & Clothier on the right and to the left, Macpherson Brothers, Merchants. After a fire in 1900, it was rebuilt with 2 large shop frontages. The Post Office relocated in 2015. The most striking feature is the central corbelled bay with high steeply sloped roof and flanking conical turrets, all in fishscale slate detail.

Strathspey Hotel, Nos. 70 & 72 High Street Category B listed



Early 19th century building (c.1807-8) on a prominent site at the corner of Spey Avenue. It is a good example of the simple refinement of this period. Squared dressed rubble with some caulking and tooled rubble dressings. Local heavy slate roof with 3 small piend dormers. 12-pane glazing to surviving timber sash and case windows. Converted to a hotel in the middle years of the 19th century, it was for some time known as the New Inn and Dunbar's Hotel. Built for James Grant, the Clerk's son-in-law, which may explain a high level of detail and quality exhibited here.

Dunallan and Ravelrig /Craighdu, Woodside Avenue unlisted



Two good examples of a late Victorian villas, of only four (built from 1868-1904) currently sited within the conservation area boundary. Dunallan (left) is a fairly simple 3-bay gabled form with overhanging eaves and decorative front porch (possibly later) with stained glass windows, ornate timber eaves boards and fishscale slate roof (Welsh). The semi-detached villa comprising Ravelrig and Craighdu is similarly symmetrical but the detail is more elaborate with blond sandstone 2-storey bays topped with decorative ironwork balconies in front of elaborate gabled dormers with carved woodwork and cast iron finials.

4.2.3 Materials and Local Details

The traditional buildings within the conservation area, and adjoining areas, are from the late Georgian through to the late Victorian and early Edwardian periods. This is reflected in their architectural detailing and construction materials.

Georgian buildings

Masonry walls most clearly illustrate the period and status of a building. The original buildings of the new town were transformative in terms of their use of materials for construction for 'ordinary' folk. Prior to the 18th century few in the Highlands other than the landed classes could afford a stone house. In the new town, stone (local grey granite and whinstone) was the prevalent stone constructed with local lime for mortar. The buildings would generally be of 'rubble' construction, that is irregular hewn blocks of stone, built in rough courses. The earliest houses used field stone literally taken from the tenement lot or street in front. Later stone boulders were transported from the brae slopes toward Castle Grant. The appearance of the rubble walling wasn't important as the stone would be harled in lime and lime washed to provide both a consistent protection against the weather and a homogenous and clean look to the town. Lime originally came from a new lime kiln constructed in 1765 by James Grant at Laggan above Dulnain Bridge (Dixon, 11.10.90). Only 'grander' buildings would use 'ashlar' masonry, stone dressed into regular blocks and which may be left unharled, a fine early example being Speyside House (c.1822). Today many of the houses have lost their harled finish and have exposed rubble masonry (e.g. Nos. 22 & 24 Castle Road and adjoining Clifton House on Burnfield Avenue; refer Section 4.2.2). Others have used cement render as an alternative to lime harl, usually painted (e.g. 14-16 Castle Road).

Roofs on the Georgian houses are pitched with timber rafters and sarking boards, and predominately gable ended (not piend). Timber originally came from natural pine forests at Abernethy and Rothiemurchus, floated on the Spey to the mouth of the Kylvntra Burn. Roof finishes were originally local heavy slate, from local quarries above Backharn (near Nethy Bridge), or near Tomintoul (Cnoc

Fergan slate). If finer Scots slate was required it would likely have been transported from Easdale (e.g. Grant Lodge). All slate would be laid in diminishing courses from ridge to eaves as is typical practice for all Scots slate, using as much material from the quarry as possible. These heavy slate roofs were usually topped with stone ridges. Good examples of local slate roofs include two buildings which are currently at risk: Gladstone House and the former Strathspey Hotel which also has small local slates on its piend dormer roofs (refer Section 4.2.2). Several early properties have replaced this slate in alternative slate types, such as Welsh which is thinner, more consistent and different in colour, and not laid in diminishing sizes. This changes the character and appearance of the building and the general roofscape of the conservation area.

Roof finishes on these early buildings were continuous, i.e. without dormers. The attic often lit by a small gable window for example at No. 12 and No. 24 Castle Road. Some Victorian images show small cast iron skylights in use which may have been early interventions (fig 8). Generally alteration of these roofs has been restricted to the introduction of new skylights, and if sympathetic types are used this has limited impact on the traditional roofscape and character of individual buildings and groups. There are however a number of buildings with inappropriately large rooflights and/or modern box dormers (fig 37). Flat stone copes are typical at gable end walls and also occur at the dividing wall between the 2-bay and 3-bay houses, some copes may have been removed, and this is often indicated by a bulge in the roof at the dividing wall head (fig 31d).

Window and door openings in the original houses were simply formed with a tooled granite lintel and squared stones around the opening. As highlighted above, early houses followed a regular 2-bay or 3-bay format. Originally with timber sash & case windows most commonly with 12 panes (6 over 6) as can be seen at the Strathspey Hotel and the Garth. Other fenestration patterns include 2 over 2 (which may be Victorian or later replacements) and an unusual 8 over 8 pattern at Nos. 22 & 24 Castle Road and adjacent Clifton House.

Examples of surviving traditional entrance doors are small, but would appear to have been generally timber double doors (boarded or panelled), some with rectangular lights above. The door at No.24 Castle Road has an attractive Georgian lay light.

Victorian buildings

The Victorian and Edwardian buildings within the conservation area, and immediate adjoining it in the villa development, use similar natural materials, stone and slate, but with greater variety. This reflects access to new markets with the introduction of rail, and improvements in material production. The original local granite and heavy grey slate palette were added to with Welsh slate and sandstones for dressed masonry. The transition from Georgian to Victorian architecture occurred over time and is evident in a number of plainer houses which retain the simple design paradigms of their predecessors but have greater proportions and tend to have more refined stone facades. Examples include No.10 the Square (which incorporates 'cherry-caulking') and the block from No. 41-49 High Street (fig 30b & e).

The later Victorian and Edwardian periods favoured dressed stonework in a variety of finishes such as polished ashlar and stugged coursed rubblework. In Grantown, most frontages are of regular coursed ashlar – granite or whinstone squared and dressed on site. Gables and rear walls often consist of random coursed rubble work. For most of the buildings this stone was quarried in one of the several local quarries including Dulaig Quarry. Sandstone allowed for greater carved detail and contrasting dressings when used next to the local grey granite. Its use became more common in the late Victorian period, for example on the former Palace Hotel, the Grant Arms, Caledonian House and Rosehall. There is a predominance of generally light buff/blond coloured sandstones, mostly this freestone came from

Hopeman on the Coast but occasionally from further afield. There are no examples of red sandstone in the conservation area.

Roofs remain pitched and predominately gable ended but several are articulated to suit the building plan creating more complex roof forms. Later Victorian and Edwardian buildings often have pronounced overhanging timber eaves with timber gable bargeboards. This is commonplace in the villa development for example overhanging eaves with exposed rafter ends (Fern Cottage) or soffits (Rosemount), but also seen at Nos 9-11 High Street and Nos. 34-36 High Street. Overhanging gables removed the requirement for stone copes.

New types of slate allowed elaboration of the design and in particular thinner slate produced an ability to create more intricate patterns such as the fishscale detailing which is popular in Victorian Grantown in both commercial and some domestic buildings. It also allowed more intricate work such as slated turrets, good examples of which are found on the Grant Arms, the Victoria Institute, and former Palace Hotel.

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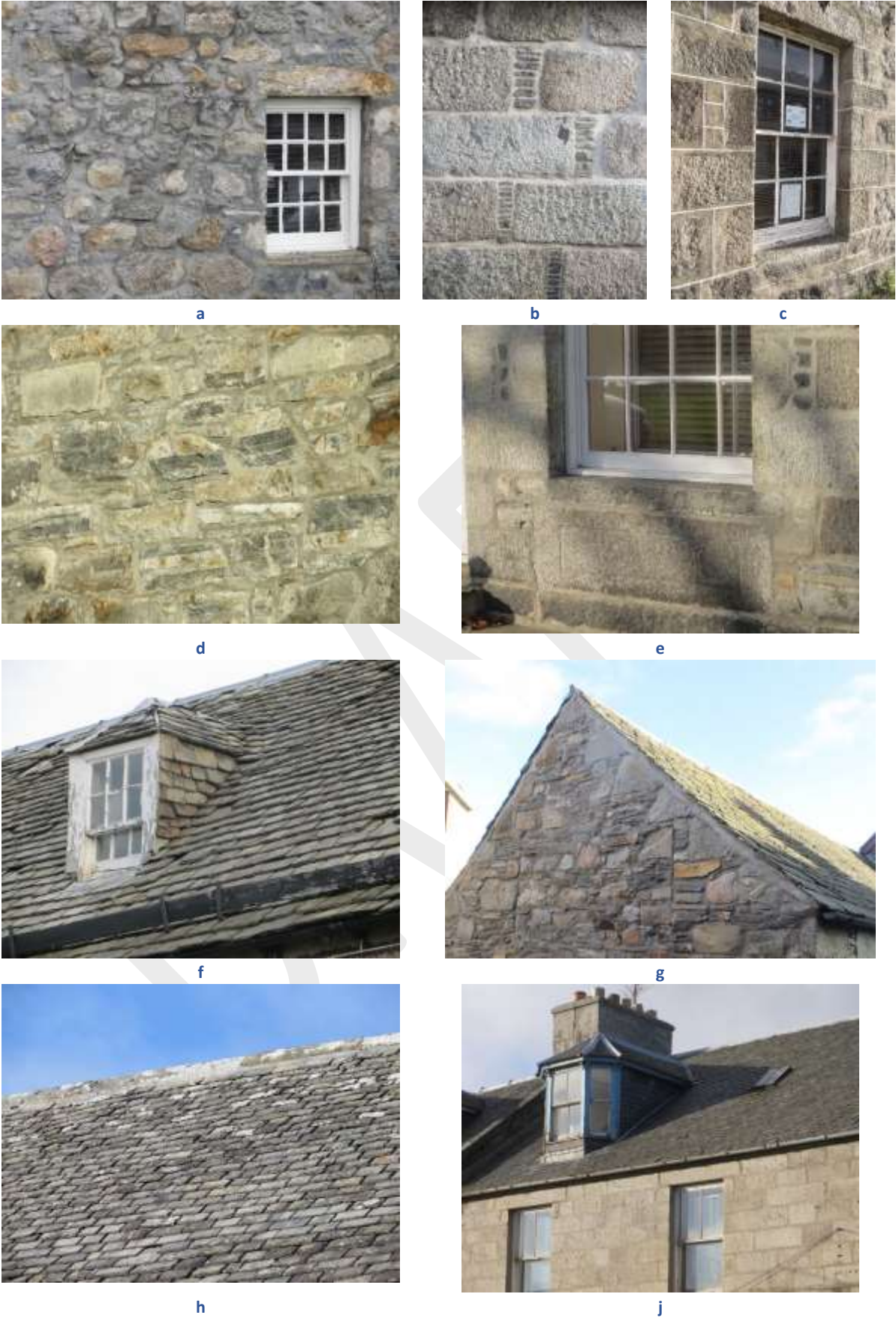


Fig 30: Local materials and details of Georgian and early Victorian buildings. (Top) development of masonry from local field stones (a & d) through to more refined square and tooled stones and cherry chaulking (b&e). (Below) traditional heavy grey local slate (f & h), early piend dormer (f) and later Victorian canted dormer (j).

Traditional dormers appear in this period including canted dormers and gable-fronted dormers projecting from pitched roofs, some possibly later alterations to earlier properties. Other later properties are 1½-storey with gabled half dormers. Those at No. 77 High Street and the adjoining Burnroad House have very decorative timber bargeboards. These houses have further embellishment with cast iron and timber finials. Cast iron finials also elaborate the former Palace Hotel roofline. All these features mark a considerable change from the continuous roofscape of the Georgian town but are now a strong characteristic of Grantown both within and out with the conservation area.

In the second half of the 19th century, window design became more elaborate. Bipartite and tripartite window forms appeared. Projecting window bays, commonly canted, were introduced but are not common in the conservation area. Bay windows are however common out with the conservation area in the villa development. Here bays may be symmetrical or asymmetrical and through one or two storeys. Crenulations adorn the bay windows of several buildings, whilst others are elaborated by a balustrade (Holmhill) or a mock balcony with trefoil designs at Heath Bank and Kinross House.

Windows remained generally timber sash and case, vertically proportioned. Glass sizes became larger and fenestration patterns changed to 2 over 2 panes, or 1 over 1 in the Victorian properties. Edwardian properties could have more elaborate fenestration often favouring small upper panes for example Nos. 34-36 High Street (built c. 1899).

Entrance doors are generally moulded timber panelled, often with a large rectangular light above. In the villa development, porches are common, some later additions (Seafield Lodge, Reidhaven, Gowan Lea) or original (Granite Villa; the Knoll). Decorative ironwork is found on porches either below the roof (Comely Bank) or above in the form of a low rail (The Laurels).

On traditional properties of all dates chimney stacks were an essential part of their appearance and retain an important function for both heat and ventilation. This is an important feature of the roofscape. Most early properties have stout prominent gable end chimneys and at the dividing wall between the original the 2-bay and 3-bay houses. There are also examples of later and grander chimney stacks such as those on Morlich House. A small number of chimneys have been removed, lowered or rebuilt which changes the composition of individual properties and the pattern of the roofscape. Repair and rebuilding can result in a loss of material and detail of the chimney stacks, for example the loss of the traditional slate cope on Nos. 21-22 the Square (but surviving on No. 20). Chimney pots are still common, although a significant number have been lost or removed. The most common are octagonal buff terracotta pots, but there are more decorative examples such as the Egyptian style pots on the Bank of Scotland (fig 31a). Throughout the area, rainwater goods are cast iron, commonly half-round but with some ogee profile gutters and a number of examples of ogee hoppers. Several gutters still discharge directly onto the street.

Most of the traditional shopfronts in Grantown appear to have been altered or replaced. However some interesting elements and details survive (refer Section 4.2.1). It should be borne in mind that earlier details may survive under modern fascias and panels.

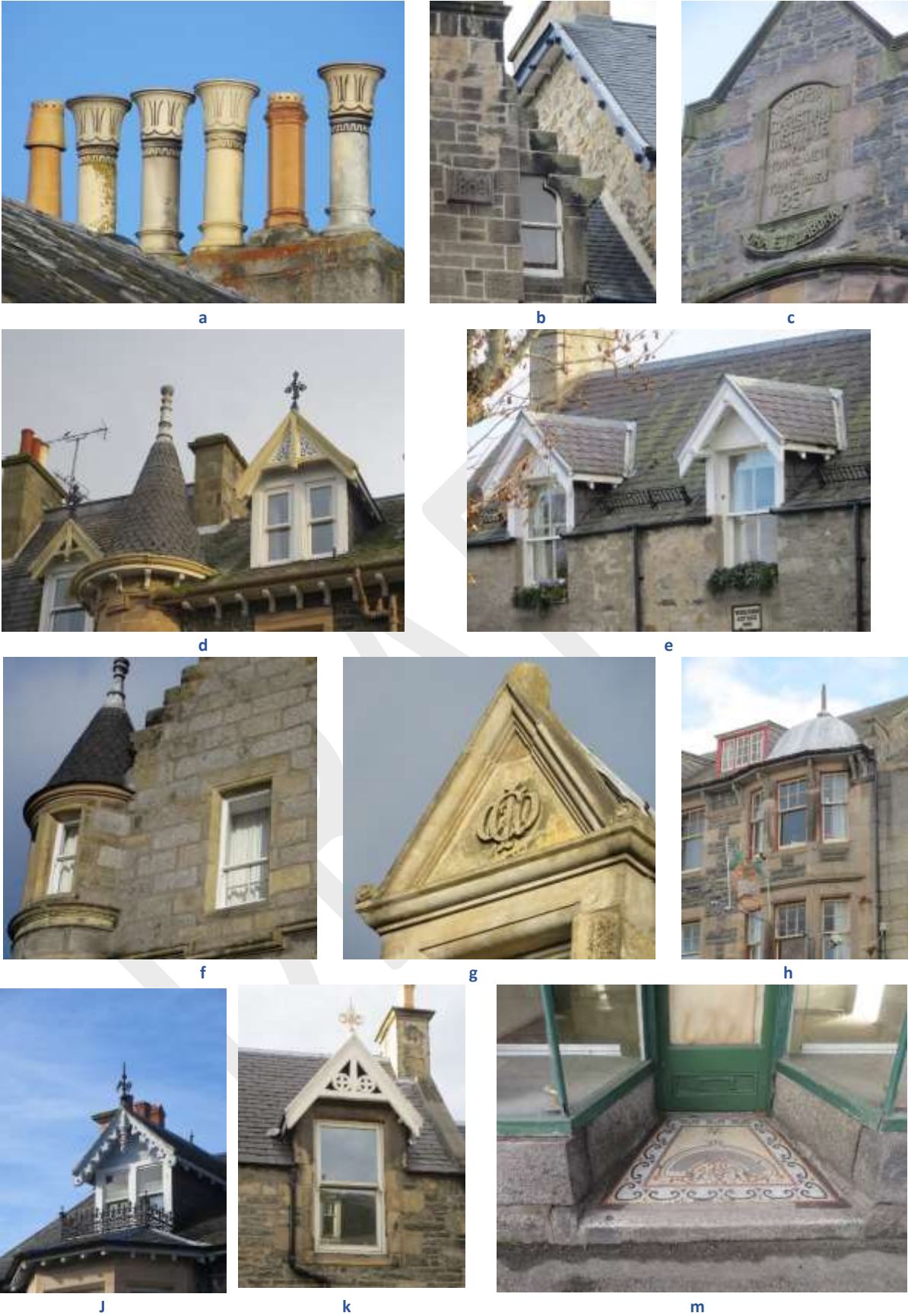


Fig 31: Local materials and details of later Victorian and early Edwardian buildings. One of the most noticeable differences is the elaboration of the roofscape with gable fronted decorated dormers (d, e, j & k) and turrets (d & f). Sandstones allowed for carved stonework (b, c & g). Fashionable styles included Egyptian forms (a) and Scots Baronial (f). Decoration of shop premises was popular (m).

4.2.4 Building Condition

The vast majority of the traditional buildings within the conservation area remain robust and functional. On observation from the street level, the general condition of most buildings appears to be fair; however, there are elements in poor condition particularly noticeable on High Street especially at high level, where there are noticeable repair and maintenance issues. These include:

- blocked and defective gutters and downpipes;
- cast iron with failed paint finishes and corrosion;
- upper windows and timber work on dormers in poor condition;
- vegetation growth;
- slated roofs in need of repair

It was estimated in 2016 that 10% of town centre buildings were in need of repair or maintenance (GAP, 2016). Defects, particularly at roof level, can pose a safety issue especially on public streets. Furthermore there are a number of vacant buildings which are in poorer condition (refer Section 8.3).

One of the greatest threats to any heritage site is the loss of primary fabric through lack of maintenance or inappropriate repair and replacement, reducing the authenticity of the site. A common significant threat is the use of inappropriate modern materials and details, such as replacement windows and doors, and impervious cement mortars and paints.

Masonry on several buildings and boundary walls has been repaired inappropriately including use of cement mortars and poor working methods. There are localised areas of stone decay on some buildings. In particular, sandstone details and exposed or high level elements such as chimneys are more vulnerable. The original Georgian buildings would have had a lime harl and lime wash finish. This has been replaced by cement renders and modern paint finishes in some cases (others now have exposed masonry). Attention should be drawn to the risk associated with such impermeable materials and finishes and opportunities taken to repair in traditional materials when they arise.

A significant number of properties have had alternative slate types used to replace the traditional local slate which can be detrimental to the appearance of the building and character of the area, in particular where buildings form groups or terraces, or for example the continuous gable-to-gable roofscape of the High Street. All Scots slate is a diminishing resource (as it is no longer quarried) therefore maintenance of existing roofs should be encouraged and Scots slate always salvaged and reused.

A significant number of original windows and entrance doors have been replaced, often in inappropriate fenestration design and materials. Replacements in uPVC, aluminium, and/or non-traditional fenestration patterns and opening methods have a negative effect on both the character and quality of individual buildings and a cumulative impact on the character of the conservation area as a whole. The Georgian buildings would originally have had the same window and door designs; however, varied replacement has left a lack of continuing over some frontages.



Fig 31 : Examples of disrepair: cast iron in need of painting and missing rainwater goods (a-c); slates poorly laid at the junction of 2 properties - possibly original cope stones have been removed (d); missing slates (e); timber dormer in need of repainting (f); blocked gutters (g); and eroded high level stonework (h).

4.2.5 Public Realm

On the Square, the hard landscaping of the roads and pavements is a mix of tarmac and modern paving with some damage. There are concrete kerbs around the perimeter of the roads and pavements, which are in fair condition. There are short painted bollards with metal chains which mark off the grass areas from the pavements; these may date back to the earlier 20th century. Whilst tarmac surfaces are generally unobtrusive on major routes, they do not enhance the conservation area and in particular the Square. At the eastern end of the Square, there are some interesting features including the new Regality Cross (2015) with interpretation board; and opposite a giant set of draughts set into the grass.

There are several items of street furniture including a bus shelter with modern solar powered bus stop information; a large twin free-standing information board; large flower tubs; stainless steel cycle stands; a variety of timber and metal benches; litter bins with painted finish in poor condition; and various signage. These items are a variety of different styles. Street lighting is of standard modern design which does not enhance the conservation area or the setting of the adjacent buildings.

There are modern concrete steps adjacent to the library with standard contrast nosings and platts and a basic unpainted steel balustrade (fig 36). This clashes with the attractive decorative cast iron railings adjoining at the higher level and also the adjacent traditional houses.

The modern tarmac, concrete kerbs and standard lighting continue of Castle Road and High Street. On Castle Road there is a decorative railing along one block and standard reproduction style gold-and-black bollards and flower tubs.

Burnfield Avenue has a large tarmac area for car parking with a public toilet block and standard recycling banks near the main road. The High Street Car Park is similarly landscaped with a toilet block and small grass area at the far end of the lot. This area is not bounded by any walls (the original cottages here understood to have been demolished before the 1970s) and forms an obvious gap in the continuity of the High Street frontage. Two birch trees have recently been removed which did softened the grey tarmac surfaces. There is a third open-fronted car park on Spey Avenue.

With properties generally build up to the building line, there are few boundary walls on the main thoroughfare of High Street / Castle Street and on the Square. Exceptions are at the Garth and Gladstone House which sit back from the road. They have rendered low walls or pillars. Traditional stone boundary walls were an important component in defining the original lots. Where they survive, it is important to retain these walls which contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Some good examples include the rear of plots now facing onto Mossie Road. There are some low sections surviving, now forming the front boundaries of the later 20th century bungalows on Woodside Avenue and Grant Road. These are generally interspersed with other modern boundaries of timber fencing or rendered low masonry walls. However generally most plots are demarcated along the street lines, although there are few examples of traditional cast iron railings. There is a more consist run of stone walling on the north side of South Street across including a number of higher walls to some plots. However, several sections are either in poor repair or have been inappropriately cement pointed. Also on South Street, short painted bollards and chains (as per the Square) mark off the road from the grass areas on front of the stretch of cottages at the eastern end of the street (fig 19).



Fig 32: Public Realm: new Regality Cross (a); War Memorial (b & c); gardens next to the Garth Hotel (d); car park on Burnfield (e); bus stop with solar powered timetable (f); street furniture at the Square in different designs and condition (g & h); signage at the junction of High Street and Spey Avenue (j).

5.0 CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY

5.1 Boundary Review

As part of the assessment, the appropriateness of the boundary of the conservation area was considered. In undertaking any review of the content and boundary of a conservation area, it is important to establish criteria against which options can be assessed. An overarching principle comes from the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. There are four main themes which may assist planning authorities in defining conservation areas:

- (a) Architectural interest
- (b) Historic interest
- (c) Character
- (d) Appearance.

Grantown is unusual in that its expansion did not take a linear form as is common in many towns where suburbs develop on arterial routes from the centre. In Grantown, the Victorian suburb was created around and outwith the original Georgian plan. Subsequently, in the later 20th century, subdivision and development occurred on the rear of the original lots. This is not uncommon on historic feus but usually not to the extent or pattern seen here, where effectively significant levels of later 20th century housing is sandwiched between the historic town centre and its Victorian suburbs.

This pattern of development, and subsequent conservation area boundary decision, has created something of an anomaly, in that a significant number of later 20th century houses, which are not part of the town's traditional character and appearance, are included in the conservation area (refer map 6.1). Correspondingly, the chief part of the Victorian expansion, the 'villa development', is not, despite being of the same period as redevelopment of several town centre sites, and making a significant contribution to the town's traditional character and appearance.

This may be explained in the context of the original designation, which took place over forty years ago when designation and management of conservation areas was still in its infancy (the Civic Amenities Act 1967 introduced the option of designation). Designation was also often prompted by threats to traditional buildings, as was the case in Grantown after a Comprehensive Development Area had been designated to demolish a large part of the lower High Street. In 1974 the Scottish Civic Trust requested the Moray and Nairn Joint County Council consider conservation area designation, as a minimum to protect the original town plan (the 'Georgian Rectangle' as it was by then described) and its historic buildings. An interpretation of the 1768 plan appears to have been used, though extended to include the cottages on South Street, and Inverallan Church. Everything else out with the 'rectangle' was excluded even the early development which extended to the Kyntra Bridge. The area which was designated including the modern bungalows on the original feu plots.

Review of any conservation area is important in its ongoing management. It is not known if any previous review has been undertaken, though it is not thought that there have been any changes to the conservation area boundaries since designation.

In this review, the main contributory factors considered were:

1. Analysis of building dates to provide a clear picture of the historic development of the town;
2. Analysis of those buildings which make a positive contribution to the town in terms of architectural and historic interest, and traditional character and appearance;
3. Historic interest in expressing the story of Grantown as a whole;
4. Setting and physical context of the town.

5.1.1 Building Analysis

Map 6.1 illustrates the growth and redevelopment of Grantown. It illustrates 3 points:

1. That the historic spine of the conservation area is chiefly a combination of Georgian and Victorian properties, with the principal period of redevelopment from the mid-19th century in particular after 1860.
2. That there is a considerable percentage of buildings from the later 20th century onwards behind the historic buildings within the original Georgian plan, with only seven traditional villas.
3. That immediately out with the conservation area, virtually all the traditional buildings are Victorian villas dating from the late 1860s to before 1904, with few exceptions such as Grantown Primary School, St Columba's Episcopal Church (1893) and the Craiglynne Hotel (originally three villas).

5.1.2 Positive Contribution

Map 6.2 illustrates buildings which make a positive contribution to the traditional character and appearance of Grantown. Positive buildings (refer Appendix 2) may vary but are commonly good examples of relatively unaltered traditional buildings where their style, detailing and building materials contribute to the interest and variety of the conservation area.

There are two points:

1. Positive buildings are often considered to provide a 'complimentary function' to listed buildings, however in Grantown they go further in defining the character and appearance of the town itself, particularly as there are very few listed buildings.
2. The majority of buildings, which make a positive contribution to the character of the town out with the conservation area boundary, are the Victorian villas. Other positive buildings outside the boundary include the Grantown Primary School, early 20th century houses on Heathfield Road, and Woodburn Place.

Most of these positive buildings would be unlikely to be considered for individual listing, with the exception of possibly the school. Conservation area designation provides an appropriate level of management of these important buildings and features. The villas in particular are part of what makes Grantown special as a whole today, complementing the centre and overall composition of the town. They are buildings of quality traditional materials and characterful detail which are currently unprotected.

5.1.3 Historic Interest

The story of Grantown has two important periods: firstly its establishment with a Georgian plan and buildings; and secondly its Victorian expansion and tourist industry. Villas such as those on Woodlands Terrace reflect the expansion of the town toward the new railway station. There is therefore a case to be made that the Victorian expansion is of historic interest.

5.1.4 Setting and Physical Context

The relatively flat and open aspect of Grantown means that there's a spatial quality and openness to the town. The original new town, modern bungalows, and Victorian villas are often seen together particularly in the parallel streets and approaches, and their character and appearance effects how the whole is seen. The garden grounds and mature trees of the residential parallel streets create an attractive environment in which the transition from the urban centre to the surrounding woodlands takes place.

Whilst much of the later 20th and early 21st century properties are not constructed of the same traditional materials, they do retain important characteristic such as pitched roofs. Generally, houses are set back from the road, with a low density and storey height which does not detract from the historic properties. Most retain significant garden grounds and the principal historic plot boundary lines.

Furthermore, the irregular form of development on the rear of the original lots and in the backland area means extracting the modern 'neutral' properties from the historic traditional ones is not a simple task. Many modern buildings are in close proximity and therefore have a visual influence of adjacent traditional buildings and townscape views (fig 33). It is therefore important to have proportionate management controls.

5.1.5 Anomalies

The following items are considered to be anomalies in relation to the current boundary line and the four principal themes listed in Section 5.1.

1. High Street / Woodlands Crescent: Currently the southwest boundary at High Street dissects one cottage on the north side and excludes the listed 2-storey house on the south side. Whilst the lots on the south side of Woodlands Crescent are a little more irregular in form due to the natural topography toward the burn, most were let by the turn of the 19th century and represent the progression of the new town to the Kylintra burn, its natural border at that time.
2. Victorian villas: A significant number of Victorian villas on the parallel streets are excluded from the conservation area, yet more modern houses on the same streets are within the boundary.
3. Grantown Primary School (1836-1933): the current building complex has been extended and reconfigured over time since its initial founding on the Hillock in the 1700s. It is a fundamental part of the history of the town and occupies a large site between the current boundary and the woodlands beyond.
4. Later 20th and 21st Century development: Consideration has been given to removal of the later 20th century and more modern developments currently within the conservation area. This modern development has an impact on the existing conservation area, and so too on any extended conservation area. An appropriate level of management of this area is therefore possible through conservation area designation. It is presumed the planning authority will take a comparatively flexible approach to existing modern development in terms of alterations etc., however it is important that issues which effect character and appearance, such as design and material choice are carefully considered. There will be opportunities to enhance and unite this area. Furthermore key features of the conservation area such as original stone boundary walls within modern plots are protected. Designation also protects against demolition without sound reason of minor structures such as traditional outbuildings.

5.1.6 Recommendations

Map 6.3 provides recommendations for consultation.

These are:

1. Extend the boundary to include the north side of Grant Road. This would bring a coherent group of Victorian residential properties into the conservation area. Continue this boundary extension to include the important belt of trees surrounding the Inverallan Church.
2. Extend the boundary to include the south side of Woodside Avenue. As above this would bring a coherent group of Victorian residential properties into the conservation area. Continue the boundary extension to encompass the Grantown Primary School on South Street and its grounds (and including adjacent properties on Forest Road).
3. Extend the boundary westward to include the properties on both sides of the main thoroughfare (High Street extending into Woodlands Crescent) as far as and including the bridge over the Kylintra Burn and the Episcopal Church. Continue the extension on the north side to include the Craiglyne Hotel and Victorian villas on Woodlands Terrace.
4. Make minor amendments to the boundary at the rear of properties on South Street (east side) where current boundaries do not include full plots.

If recommendations proceed, THC should review the final revised boundary line on site to ensure any boundary walls, trees and other minor structures within ownership boundaries are included as appropriate.

The above recommendations exclude the option to remove later 20th century and more modern developments currently within the conservation area for reasons stated above. If removal of the modern section of the Georgian plan were favoured, the practicalities of this would need further consideration including a detailed survey to determine exact property boundaries within the intermediate 'backland' area in particular where development planning has been inconsistent. An assessment of the impact and contribution of individual properties would be required on a case by case basis considering their individual merit for inclusion or not.

5.2 Character Areas

A conservation area can be broken down into character areas when there is discernible difference in character and appearance. Whilst there is considerable continuity to the spine of the town, two character areas could be considered:

1. The Square and Castle Road: spatially and architecturally retaining the strongest character and appearance of the Georgian planned town;
2. High Street: a dense urban frontage of Georgian and Victorian buildings.

If the extension of the boundary is adopted then a third character area would be the Victorian villa development that encircles the lower half of the Georgian Rectangle.



Fig 33: Backland Development (top) traditional survivors of early development and use behind the High Street frontage; (below) the same area looking south contrasts with modern housing, timber fencing and various outbuildings, a villa roof in the distance.

6.0 MAPS

The following maps are provided:

6.1 Building Analysis Map

Building dates have been compiled from onsite evidence, historic OS mapping and original research provided by the Grantown Society.

6.2 Positive Buildings Map

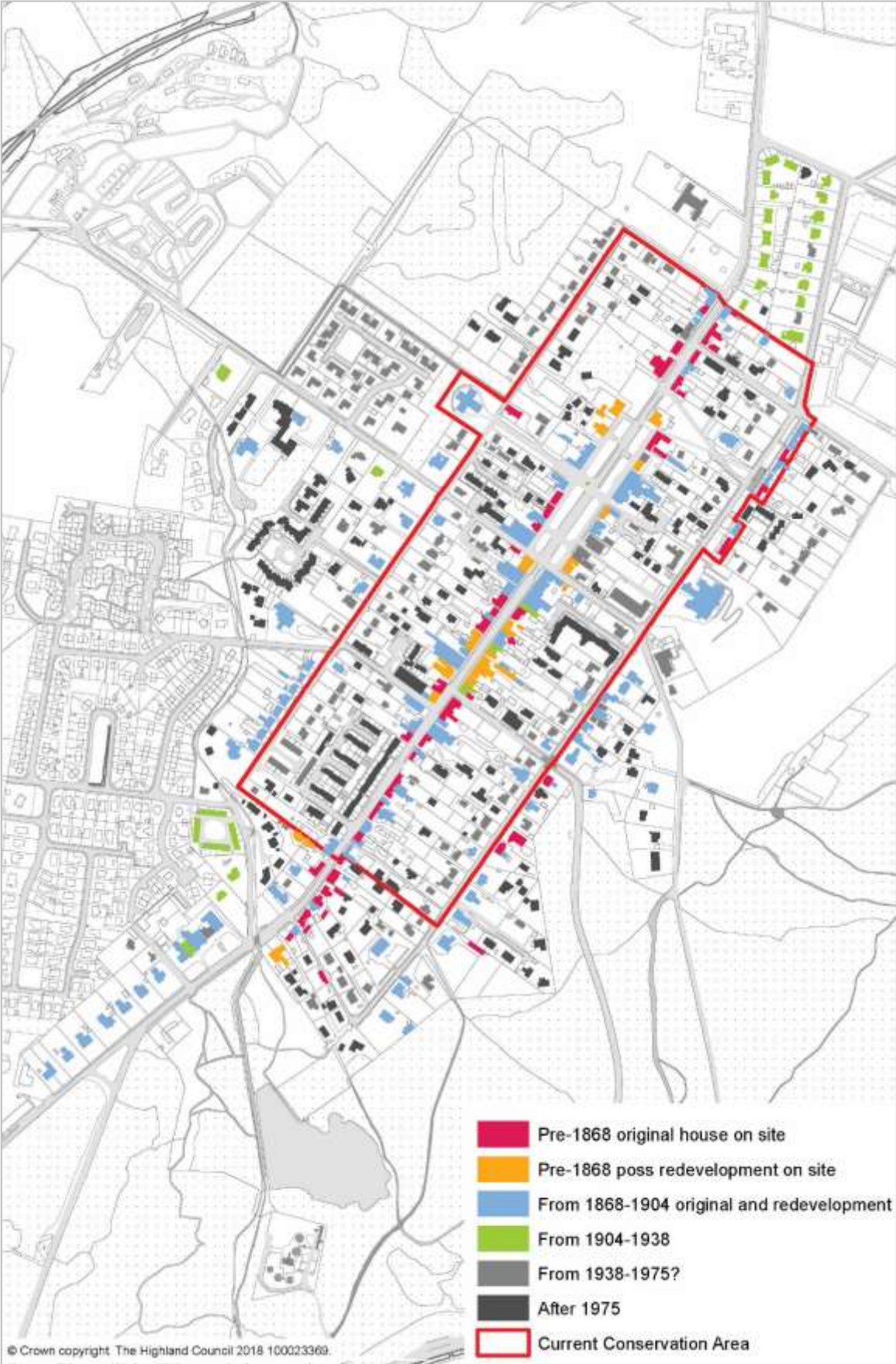
Refer to Appendix 2 for definition of positive buildings.

6.3 Boundary Map

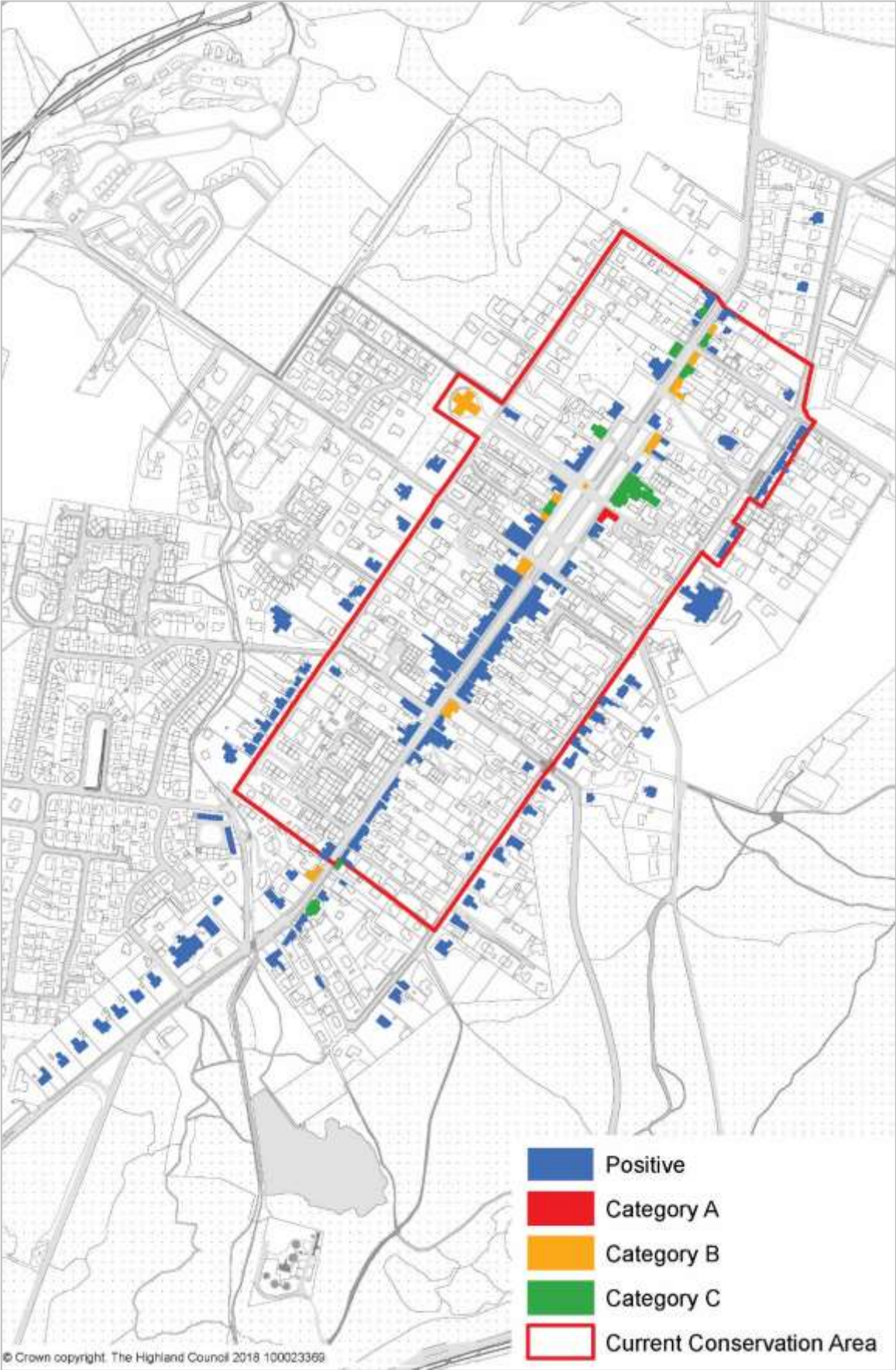
Indicating current and proposed boundaries for consultation. Further explanation in Section 5.1.

DRAFT

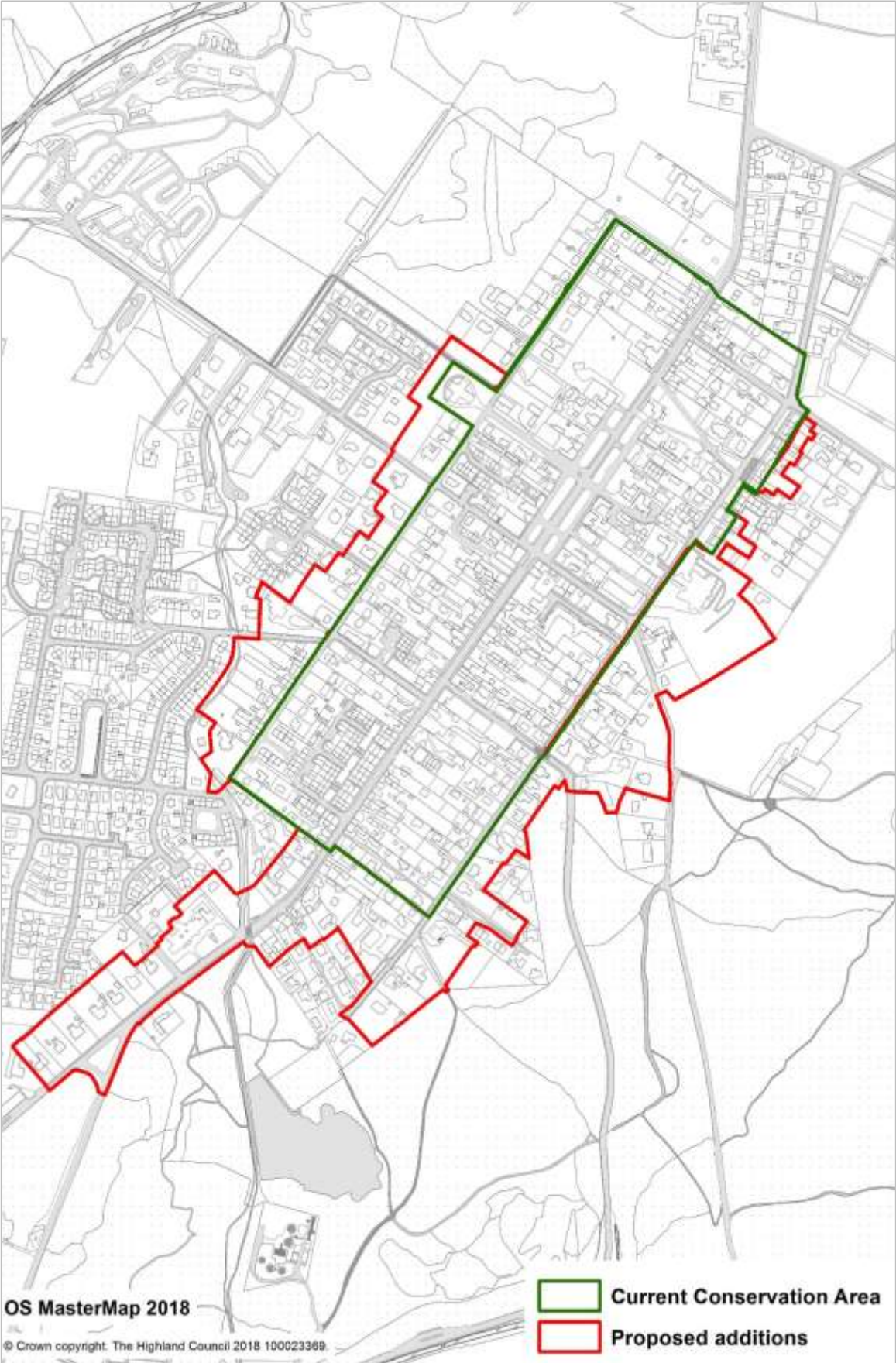
6.1 Building Analysis Map



6.2 Positive Buildings Map



6.3 Boundary Map



7.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

7.1 Summary of Key Features

Having carried out an assessment of the Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area it is now possible to identify the key features that define the special architectural and historic character of the area. These are:

- Built legacy of the Scottish Enlightenment and the vision and determination of one man and his tutor: Sir James Grant of Grant and William Lorimer.
- A Georgian planned town which remains a successful local commercial centre with mixed use properties and busy High Street.
- The integrity of the original plan. A strong urban form running from Castle Road in the east, to the Kylintra Bridge in the west, maintaining the one building line with few exceptions. Pends and lanes at right angles to the main thoroughfare giving access to the rear of properties and back courts.
- The Square, the original market place is a significant public open green space and amenity.
- Traditional construction methods, in stone and lime with slate roofs and glazed timber windows. Indigenous local materials including granite, whinstone and local heavy grey slate.
- A mix of original Georgian buildings and later Victorian redevelopment on original lots.
- Attractive setting including Victorian villa suburbs and historic woodland.

Further notes on the significance of the planned town are provided below for reference.

7.2 The Planned Town

"The most obvious, most widespread, most immediately tangible sign of large-scale capitalised improvement was the founding of a planned town or village. This was more distinctively a Scottish than an English activity in the 18th Century because England was already well stocked with long-established villages."
(Dixon, 6.8.1990)

This movement had its origins in the 1720s and 1730s. Early examples include Gartmore, Stirlingshire (1725), Ormiston, East Lothian (1732?), and Callander, Perthshire (1730; first feus 1740), the latter two both having family connections to the Grants (Dixon, 16.08. 90). It is estimated that around 500 towns and villages were established from 1720 to 1850 in Scotland. In this context, Grantown is considered by Professor Smout to be, "...among the best-preserved and most interesting of all Scottish planned villages." (Phillipson, 1970).

The conditions required to be right – a time of civil peace and improved road access – but a new town also required investment and aspiration by the landowner. In Strathspey, James Grant of Grant was an able and dedicated improver, educated and influenced by his tutor (and later adviser) William Lorimer (1717-1765), he became "...one of the most outstanding Improvers in 18th-Century Scotland" (Dixon, 23.08.90).

James also received influence from others including his uncle Lord Deskfoord already an outstandingly successful Improver in Banffshire (Dixon, 27.09.90), and he called upon the advice of Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696-1782), an eminent lawyer and later known for his great agricultural achievement of the draining of the Moss of Kincardine, Stirling.

This was the period of the Scottish Enlightenment and great debates over how the Scottish Highlands might be developed. Many new towns and villages were founded on an industrial base – fishing, linen, other manufactory. The success of such towns and villages varied widely depending on many factors. Some did not flourish due to geographic location, limited land for expansion, etc.

The new town of Grantown was primarily founded for the establishment of manufactories (fig 2). Chiefly supported was linen, at that time the main growth area in the 18th century Scottish economy. William Lorimer witnessed first-hand the prosperity this industry had brought in the Perthshire estates of Atholl and Breadalbane. Whilst the linen industry did not flourish in Grantown, others did and the town developed steadily as a market town. Grantown is a successful planned town and remains populous after over 250 years.

7.3 Town Design

Grantown's Georgian plan is simple, a main thoroughfare and large market place with standard plot sizes, no variety other than the shortening of the Square lots. However, the plots in Grantown were generous. Naismith (1985) states that in Scotland generally the largest feus were 42 to 46 feet wide by 150 to 165 feet long. Grantown's tenement frontages are approximately 60 feet (in reality often more) this being split into a 40-foot and a 20-foot building generally. The lengths were increased (after initial advertisement) to 485 feet generally with 425 feet at the Square, the larger approximately two thirds of an acre. This length is considerable larger than average. This, and the original design without parallel or formal side street provision, created a strong linear development. When development did occur beyond the original Rectangle, it was sited outwith these long plots on the inner facing side of the service routes at the back of the lots. This created an unusually spacious atmosphere to the town.

The lack of involvement of a land surveyor, although not intentional, has also been cited as most unusual and may account for the slight irregularity in the frontage widths; lots on the Northside and Southside do not exactly line up; and that lots on the south side are in fact longer than those on the north.

7.4 Comparative Examples

The following are planned towns and villages established before 1800 in the region around Grantown.

Keith, Moray (formerly Banffshire; 1751) founded by James Grant's uncle James Ogilvy, Lord Deskfoord (later 6th Earl of Findlater; c.1714-1770). It was the first new town north of the Grampians. Earlier settlement here. Population c. 4750 (2011).

Aberchirder, Aberdeenshire (1764 & 1805) founded by Alexander Gordon 5th laird of Auchintoul as an industrial village with linen factory. Population c. 1150 (2001 census).

Fochabers, Moray (1776) founded by Alexander Gordon, 4th Duke of Gordon, which high standards required to complement the nearby castle. Population c. 1750 (2011 census).

All three above (Keith, Aberchirder and Fochabers) were planned with a central square and main street intersecting, like Grantown, however they also incorporated with parallel back streets in the original design. Fochabers allowed for a greater variety of plot sizes than Grantown.

Rothes, Moray (1765) founded by Lord Deskfoord on the earlier settlement close to Rothes Castle with a Saltire plan. Population c. 1250 (2011 census).

Archiestown, Moray (1761) founded by Sir Archibald Grant of Monymusk as weaving centre. It had a devastating fire early in this history, the original roofs being finished in thatch.

Tomintoul, Moray (1777; formerly Banffshire) founded by 4th Duke of Gordon on the new Military Road (1750s). With varied plot sizes and a large square, the plan set out by Alexander Milne, land surveyor. Population 322 (2001).

Kinguise, Highland (1799) founded by Alexander, 4th Duke of Gordon (prompted by Duchess Jane Gordon and Rev John Anderson) on the 1760s Military Road with varied plot sizes. Population c.1, 400.

Other planned settlements established by James Grant in the 18th century were **Skye of Curr** (1797) described as an 'open village' it consisted of a small number of lots near Dulnain Bridge for farming, and **Lewistoun** in 1769.

Notwithstanding physical comparisons, it is worth noting that Grantown is very unusual in the wealth of archival information available on the founding and growth of the town in the Seafield Estate papers (now largely held in the National Records of Scotland reference GD248). This is as a result of James Grant and his clerk being diligent in their recording of the town. The Clerk, James 'Heathfield' Grant, became *"...the principal recorder of the most richly documented of all the hundreds of Georgian new towns and villages in Scotland."* (Dixon, 4.10.90)

8.0 CONSERVATION ISSUES

A number of conservation issues have been identified which have the potential to have a detrimental impact on the conservation area. These are listed below. These form the basis for the Opportunities for Enhancement (Section 9).

1. The replacement of traditional materials and elements has led to loss of historic fabric and a negative impact on the character of the conservation area.
2. Maintenance and repair requirements have been identified for both properties and the historic built environment.
3. There are buildings at risk.
4. Modern development (generally new housing) in the area is not always sympathetic to the character of the area in terms of materials and design. This is particularly the case in the bungalow developments. Modern development has eroded the original new town plan in terms of development on the rear of the original lots and redevelopment which has not maintained the building line on the street frontages.
5. The public realm is generally utilitarian in character and can detract from the high-quality historic built environment.
6. Loss of setting, trees and boundary enclosures.

8.1 Loss of original architectural details and building materials

Although the majority of the buildings in the conservation area appear to be in fair physical condition the area as a whole is at risk from small changes which can cumulatively dilute the special character of the area. Examples which have adversely affected buildings in the conservation area include:

- the replacement of original timber windows and doors with inappropriate materials such as uPVC or unsympathetic designs or methods of opening;
- the replacement of local slate roofs; changes to chimney stacks and stone copes;
- inappropriate and poor quality repair to masonry;
- Loss of original shop frontages, detail and proportions.

These changes in detailing and the loss of original features effect both the external appearance of individual buildings, building groups and the streetscape. It is important that future changes are managed, ensuring that appropriate materials and designs are used, in order to protect and enhance the character of the conservation area.

8.2 Repair and maintenance

There are properties and boundary walls in need of repair and maintenance. This is important to prevent the loss of original fabric and details and to ensure buildings are energy efficient and safe.

8.3 Buildings at Risk

There is only one building on the formal Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland. That is Gladstone House, Nos. 17-19 Castle Road (Section 4.2.2). This property has been on the register since 1997.

Other buildings which are either vacant and in poor repair in the conservation area are:

- The former Strathspey Hotel (refer Section 4.2.2). Its current condition gives cause for concern as the roof is in a deteriorating condition with the risk of internal damage and loss of original fabric of the building.
- Nos. 23-27 High Street (formerly Ritchies; fig 34).

There are currently a number of vacant commercial units on High Street including the former SSE showroom and former Strathspey & Badenoch Herald premises. There is a level of uncertainty over the ownership and occupation / condition of several upper floors above shop premises on the High Street. After recent national announcement, it is likely the Royal Bank of Scotland on High Street will close.

Outside the conservation area, potential buildings at risk include the Colintra cottage and boundary walls on Dunstaffnage Brae (fig 35), the remains of the former houses on lower High Street (fig 16), and possibly the Ian Charles Hospital, the future of which is uncertain.

The CNPA undertook a Town Centre Health Check in 2015 which recorded seven vacant commercial units (four of which were retail) of a total of seventy-seven (CPNA, 2016).

Buildings at Risk pose several concerns including the potential loss of original materials and building features, and ultimately the loss of buildings of historic or architectural importance. Particularly vulnerable are standalone vacant buildings such as Gladstone House and the former Strathspey Hotel which have lain vacant for a considerable time. Vacant shop units are physically less vulnerable but can give the impression of economic difficulties and cause community concern. In general buildings at risk generate a sense of neglect.

8.4 Quality of new development, alterations and extensions

There is a large proportion of new development in the conservation area. The most visual development dates from the second half of the 20th century and comprises the bungalows constructed in the 1960-70s, the majority of which are presumed to date to before conservation area designation. There are a number of large modern buildings from the same period including the Fire Station and former Telephone Exchange. The majority of the new development has occurred behind the main thoroughfare on the rear of the original lots. The spatial development of Grantown is unusual and as a result the newer development is generally street facing and very visible, i.e. not screened or 'hidden' as is often the case where development on individual plots occurs in rear gardens for example. There has also been a considerable percentage of more recent development in the backland areas (refer map 6.1).

In general modern developments are considered to have a neutral effect on the conservation area although specific examples could be seen as negative, and positive. In general however, materials and building patterns are not in keeping with the traditional character of the conservation area.

There is very little new development on the original building frontage of the High Street, Castle Road and the Square. However there are some exceptions including the lower section of High Street (part of the 1970s CDA) and the Police Station buildings on Castle Road. Neither development has respected the original plan of buildings constructed hard on the street line.



Fig 34: Vacant retail units and upper floors on High Street with repair issues.



Fig 35: Vacant early cottage and boundary walls on Dunstaffnage Brae outwith the conservation area.

8.5 Quality of public realm

The utilitarian nature of the public realm does not reflect the character of the conservation area. It is vital to ensure that public works and street furniture do not detract from the otherwise high quality historic environment. Where traditional and original finishes and architectural detail such as walls, railings and gates survive these should be appropriately maintained and repaired.

The Square is a significant feature and community asset; however, some elements of street furniture are in poor condition, and generally there is a lack of continuity in the design and materials used for information boards, signage and street furniture. The steps adjacent to the former Court House are utilitarian and their appearance detrimental to the surrounding historic buildings and the Regality Cross (fig 36).

The Burnfield Avenue site (car parking, recycling and public toilets) could be enhanced with better maintenance, provision of information and the relocation (or redesign) of the recycling facilities. Similarly, other public car parks are utilitarian and enhancement would benefit the townscape.

Information boards are generally ageing and public engagement identified a need for more and improved interpretation of the historic town for both local community and visitors.



Fig 36: The steps adjacent to the former Court House are utilitarian and their appearance detrimental

8.6 Protection of setting, trees, and traditional boundaries

Trees make an important contribution to the open space of the Square and should be properly managed and protected. Stone boundary walls, hedges, railings and gates also make a contribution particularly at the rear of plots and similarly need to be retained. There are instances of poorly maintained /repaired boundaries, plots with no boundary definition, and the use of inappropriate or poor quality materials, all of which detract from the character of the conservation area.

Public engagement raised concerns over the future planning of tree management in particular both within the town’s public realm and also the surrounding woodlands. There are few TPOs, and none within the conservation area. Some trees on the Square appear to be of considerable age and status.



Fig 37: Examples of positive and negative design: the former Telephone Exchange building (a) is not in-keeping with the form and scale of the conservation area; new residential designs which make a positive contribution (b-d); roofscape is important, however large rooflights, box dormers and mansard roofs can detract (e & f); original small rectangular dormers on this Edwardian tenement (g) however the windows on the left dormer have been replaced altering the design intent; the traditional shop front (left) is dwarfed by its neighbour which is not sympathetic to the shop frontage or tenement as a whole.

9.0 OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

9.1 The control of unlisted buildings

As part of the appraisal process, unlisted but ‘positive buildings’ have been identified (map 6.2). Generally, these are individual or groups of traditional buildings which contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area (refer Appendix 2). The Council will consider applications for change (i.e. repair which includes necessary replacement of original materials and features; alterations and extensions) to positive buildings extremely carefully and should refuse any which adversely affect their architectural or historic interest.

Any application for the demolition of a building which is deemed to make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area will need to be accompanied by a reasoned justification as to why the building cannot be retained, similar to that required for a listed building. The owner must also have made positive efforts to market the building, or to find a suitable new use, before an application can be determined.

In relation to shop fronts, a detailed audit could be undertaken to record the existing fabric and its condition as a starting point to enhancement either incrementally through individual planning applications, or as part of a wider grant-aided initiative with local business support.

Further reading:

[Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Guidance Notes \(Historic Environment Scotland\)](#)

9.2 Building maintenance and repair

It is important that all buildings are adequately maintained and repaired. This ensures the longevity of the building fabric, that it is energy efficient, and does not pose a risk to public safety. In the case of traditional buildings the use of appropriate materials and techniques is vital. So too is the involvement of building professionals and contractors with suitable levels of experience and skills. The CNPA and THC’s planning teams can provide advice on traditional repairs. Advice can also be obtained from Historic Environment Scotland.

Further reading:

[Maintaining your home - A short guide for homeowners \(Historic Environment Scotland\)](#)

[INFORM Guides \(Historic Environment Scotland\)](#)

9.3 Buildings at Risk

Historic Environment Scotland maintains a Register of buildings that are at risk from deterioration due to neglect, vacancy or threat of demolition (the Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland). Buildings deemed to be at risk can be suggested to the Register by both public bodies and individuals. With only one building on the register, it would appear there is a requirement to update the Register. The Register can be used as a tool to encourage reuse through advertising a building’s availability. It also provides an important record, and a Building at Risk may be prioritised in applications for grant funding.

THC has powers to protect all listed buildings and also, in certain instances, unlisted buildings in a conservation area, where they make a positive contribution to the area’s special character. Where the condition of an historic building deteriorates to a point where it is considered vulnerable and detrimental to the character of the area then THC, in conjunction with the Scottish Ministers, will

consider appropriate action to enable its return to a reasonable state of repair. The Council will encourage the reuse of existing vacant buildings over new build construction where possible.

Further reading:

[The Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland](#)

9.4 Quality of new developments, building alterations and extensions

In assessing planning applications within the Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area or which might impact on its setting, the CNPA and THC shall consider them in relation to the Local Plan and Proposed Local Development Plan policies. Particular attention will also be paid to the following requirements:

- New development, building alterations and extensions should be in accord with the prevailing form of historic development, including the scale, massing and historic layout of buildings.
- New development, building alterations and extensions should not impinge on the setting of existing buildings.
- New development should protect significant views within the public realm.
- Original or historic features should be retained wherever possible.
- New development, building alterations and extensions should use materials which are high quality, durable and which complement the palette of materials traditionally found in the conservation area (the use of UPVC, aluminium, concrete tiles etc are not considered appropriate).
- Where stonework is not currently painted or rendered, a coating should not be applied.
- Colours should be muted and in-keeping with the rest of the conservation area.
- Trees and private gardens should be maintained and managed as an important asset. Any proposed new development should protect important trees, hedges, boundary walls and other established boundaries.
- Hard landscaping, roads and pavements should be maintained and where repair or resurfacing is required, careful consideration should be made to the choice of materials respecting the original character of surfaces. There should be a reluctance to approve the removal of green space for hard landscaping.
- New boundary treatments should use traditional materials and be of appropriate design to suit the locality.
- Historic photographs may be consulted to inform the design of new development, building alterations and extensions (photographic information should be sought from the Grantown Museum, the Grantown Society and the Grantown Street Parade website).

Where necessary, THC will require applications for new development which may have an impact on the conservation area to be accompanied by a Design Statement explaining and illustrating the principles and concept behind the design and layout of the proposed development and demonstrating how the proposal relates both to the site and its wider context. Applicants can use this appraisal to assist them in this.

Further reading:

[New Design in Historic Settings \(Historic Environment Scotland, Scottish Government and Architecture + Design Scotland\)](#)

[Inform guide - Domestic Boundary Walls \(Historic Environment Scotland\)](#)

[Managing Change in the Historic Environment - Boundaries \(Historic Environment Scotland\)](#)

Managing Change in the Historic Environment - Setting (Historic Environment Scotland)

9.5 Public realm enhancement

THC should consider a public realm / streetscape audit to fully record the existing fabric and plan accordingly for future management, change and enhancement opportunities. This could build on information gathered during the public engagement in November 2017 and community and volunteer engagement.

The Square in particular would benefit from a greater continuity in design approach and materials used for information boards, signage and street furniture. This need not be reproduction style, but should be sympathetic to the historic buildings and of good quality.

The steps adjacent to the former Court House should be replaced with more suitable materials and a traditional railing. The Burnfield Avenue site (car parking, recycling and public toilets) could be enhanced with better maintenance, provision of information and the relocation or redesign of the recycling facilities. Similarly, there is also opportunity to improve the appearance of other car parking areas.

Car parking has been raised as an issue locally. In relation to any future intervention and changes to on-street parking and existing car parks, physical traffic management measures should be carefully considered and be sympathetic to the historic environment and not necessarily a 'standard' solution.

Information boards are generally ageing and public engagement identified a need for more and improved interpretation of the historic town for both the local community and visitors. There is a wealth of knowledge locally including the Grantown Museum, the Grantown Society and the Street Parade project which could be harnessed to create heritage interpretation, possibly with professional and financial assistance from the Heritage Lottery Fund or other sources.

Further reading:

[Designing Streets \(Scottish Government\)](#)

9.6 Trees and setting

Considering the significant contribution made by woodland to the approach and setting of Grantown Conservation Area, and of individual trees and groups within the conservation area, it is recommended that THC undertake a review of the area with consideration of possible designation of Tree Preservation Orders.

Management plans for important trees and woodlands should be in place and reviewed regularly. Plans should consider future enhancement, access and interpretation particularly of the important asset of the surrounding woodlands. This should be encouraged with the appropriate stakeholders such as Anagach Woods Trust.

10.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

10.1 Conservation Area Management Plan

The purpose of this appraisal is set out in Section 1.0. Part of the purpose is to provide a basis upon which programmes can be developed by, and in association with, The Highland Council (THC) and the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) to protect and enhance the conservation area. Opportunities for enhancement and priorities for future management have been identified.

One method of progressing and managing specific priorities is to produce a Conservation Area Management Plan (CAMP), tailored to suit Grantown. The document should include an Action Plan and timescale. Management Plans will be required by some funders such as the Heritage Lottery Fund if grant support is sought for capital investment in repair and enhancement. Funding may be available for production of a plan dependant on the development stage of a suitable project.

The plan should consider specific actions for issues identified in this appraisal, for example: a public realm audit; shop front review; monitoring and /or creating strategies for buildings at risk; encouraging and advising on appropriate repair and maintenance of traditional buildings; providing heritage interpretation; collating information for the Historic Environment Record; etc.

It is important that a CAMP dovetail with other proposed local action and policy. There have been several recent reports prepared for Grantown on a broader context than the remit of this report. These include the Town Centre Pilot Project (2016) and the Town Centre Health Check carried out by the CNPA, and the Grantown Action Plan (GAP; 2016) commissioned by the Grantown Initiative (the town's community development company). The latter has three themes: Protecting, enhancing and promoting Grantown's town centre; developing tourism and events; and strengthening community action. All three themes fit with the conservation area priorities in some way, and the GAP includes proposed actions for the conservation area.

The CAMP can be the first step to reaching local consensus on priority actions for the conservation area specifically; identifying relevant stakeholders to deliver each action; and how the actions may be supported financial. Sources of funding, including grants can then be identified. Several sources have been identified in the GAP.

10.2 Conservation Area Appraisal Review

This document should be reviewed every five years from the date of its formal adoption by THC. It will be assessed in the light of the proposed Local Development Plan and government policy and guidance on the historic environment at that time. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the conservation area including a photographic survey to aid possible enforcement action.
- An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, and how successful this has been, particularly in relation to:
 - Protection of unlisted 'positive' buildings
 - Quality of new developments and building alterations
 - Buildings at Risk
 - Public realm
 - Setting, trees and boundaries

- The identification of any new issues which need to be addressed, requiring further actions or enhancements.
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action.

It is possible that the review could be carried out by the local community under the guidance of a heritage consultant or THC. This would enable the local community to become more involved with the process and would raise public consciousness of the factors involved.

DRAFT

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Appendix 1

Grantown-on-Spey Listed Buildings within proposed Conservation Area

Name	Preferred Ref	Category
1 High Street and 1 The Square Bank Of Scotland	LB34060	B
10, 12 Castle Road	LB34053	C
10, The Square	LB34065	C
10a The Square	LB34068 (1)	C
11, The Square	LB34066	C
12, The Square	LB34069	B
127, 129 High Street and Adjoining House at rear	LB34061	B
128 High Street	LB34058	C
136, 138 High Street, Willowbank	LB34059	C
14, 16 Castle Road	LB34054	B
17, 19 Castle Road	LB34051	C
17, The Square, Morlich House and Gatepiers	LB34070	C
18, 20 Castle Road	LB34055	C
20, 21 The Square	LB34071	B
22, 24 Castle Road	LB34056	B
22, The Square	LB34072	B
5 Castle Road	LB34050	C
70 and 72 High Street, Strathspey Hotel	LB34057	B
8 Castle Road	LB34052	B
9, The Square	LB34064	B
9a The Square, (Woodlands Cottage)	LB34067 (1)	C
Burnfield Avenue Clifton House	LB34049	B
Mossie Road, Inverallan Church	LB34062	B
The Square Grant Arms Hotel	LB34074	C
The Square Speyside Home (former Orphange)	LB34073	A
The Square, War Memorial	LB34063	B

(1) Not there anymore but still apparently listed

Appendix 2

Positive Buildings

There is no specific criteria provided by the Scottish Government or Historic Environment Scotland for identification of those buildings which make a “positive contribution” to a conservation area although the term itself is used in statutory guidance and implied in the 1997 Act. For example:

Historic Environment Scotland, ‘Managing Change – Demolition’, Section 6.1

*“...presumption in favour of the retention of unlisted buildings in conservation areas where they make a **positive contribution** to the **character, appearance, or history of the area**. Many local authorities have prepared conservation area appraisals and these can be used to identify unlisted buildings which contribute positively to the character and appearance of an area.”*

Section 68 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. Urgent works to preserve unoccupied buildings in conservation areas:

*“If it appears to the Secretary of State that the preservation of a building in a conservation area is **important for maintaining the character or appearance of that area**, he may direct that section 49 shall apply to it as it applies to listed buildings.”*

Historic England has produced guidance available in “Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal Management” (Feb 2016).

Section 61: Positive contributors

“Most of the buildings in a conservation area will help to shape its character. The extent to which their contribution is considered as positive depends not just on their street elevations but also on their integrity as historic structures and the impact they have in three dimensions, perhaps in an interesting roofscape or skyline. Back elevations can be important, as can side views from alleys and yards. It will be helpful to identify those key unlisted buildings that make an important contribution to the character of the conservation area, as well as those which clearly detract from it and could be replaced. A checklist of questions to help with this process can be found in Table 1. A positive response to one or more of the following may indicate that a particular element within a conservation area makes a positive contribution, provided that its historic form and value have not been eroded.”

- *Is it the work of a particular architect or designer of regional or local note?*
- *Does it have landmark quality?*
- *Does it reflect a substantial number of other elements in the conservation area in age, style, materials, form or other characteristics?*
- *Does it relate to adjacent designated heritage assets in age, materials or in any other historically significant way?*
- *Does it contribute positively to the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets?*
- *Does it contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces including exteriors or open spaces within a complex of public buildings?*
- *Is it associated with a designed landscape, e.g. a significant wall, terracing or a garden building?*
- *Does it individually, or as part of a group, illustrate the development of the settlement in which it stands?*

- *Does it have significant historic associations with features such as the historic road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape?*
- *Does it have historic associations with local people or past events?*
- *Does it reflect the traditional functional character or former uses in the area?*
- *Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the area?*

And Section 62: Locally important buildings:

“Recommendations for new local listings could form part of the appraisal or, if there is no ‘local list’, the appraisal might recommend the introduction of local criteria for identifying important unlisted buildings (<http://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/good-practice-local-heritage-listing/>). Local constructional or joinery details, including characteristic historic shop-fronts and unusual local features, often contribute to local distinctiveness.”

For the purposes of this report, professional guidance has been provided by the author on the basis of the definition produced by the Scottish Civic Trust in previous Conservation Area Appraisals and is as follows:

‘Positive buildings’ may vary but are commonly good examples of relatively unaltered traditional buildings where their style, detailing and building materials contribute to the interest and variety of the conservation area.

Notwithstanding those buildings identified through this appraisal, other individual buildings may be of some architectural or historic interest. Unlisted buildings should be considered on a case-by-case basis by planning management.