

Agenda Item	5
Report No	BSAC/09/23

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Badenoch and Strathspey

Date: 29 May 2023

Report Title: Draft Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area Management Plan Update

Report By: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure & Environment

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 The report summarises the public response to the consultation for the proposed Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area Management Plan (CAMP).

2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:-

- i. **Note** the public comments and agree the Council response within Appendix 1; and
- ii. **Recommend** that the Economy and Infrastructure Committee formally approve and adopt the Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area Management Plan within Appendix 2 at their meeting on 17 August 2023.

3 Implications

3.1 **Resource** – None. The recommendations set out in the report for improvements and regeneration of public spaces will be considered as and when the appropriate circumstances arise and within existing budgets

3.2 **Legal** – The Council has a statutory duty to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation, management and enhancement of its Conservation Areas. The adoption of this report will discharge this duty in relation to the Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area. No changes to the legal boundary are proposed as part of this report. There are no other legal implications.

- 3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island)** – The CAMP was written under the guidance of a wide stakeholder group including representatives of many local groups and organisations. The report highlights buildings at risk, underused and vacant buildings, inappropriate or negative development and public realm works and areas that should be targeted for future regeneration. Improving the built environment can have wide-ranging benefits across the local community, including generating a sense of civic pride, investment and tourism. The CAMP identifies more recent development within the Conservation Area that can be managed more proportionately in relation to design, materials and other alterations thereby effectively relaxing restrictions for more recent properties.
- 3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** – The report outlines interventions that can be implemented within traditional buildings to adapt to climate change, in alignment with NPF4.
- 3.5 **Risk** – There are no new risk implications associated with the recommendations of this report.
- 3.6 **Gaelic** – In line with Council policy, Gaelic headings are included throughout.

4 Background

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 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, referred to as Conservation Area Character Appraisals (CAA) and Conservation Area Management Plans (CAMP).
- 4.3 The Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area was designated by the former Moray and Nairn Joint County Council 1975. A Conservation Area Appraisal was carried out in 2018-19. The Appraisal was undertaken on behalf of The Highland Council, as a Grantown 250 legacy project led by The Grantown Society. Recommendations were made to enlarge the Conservation Area in several areas, which were adopted by The Highland Council with effect from 2019. The CAMP does not outline any new or additional changes to the Conservation Area boundary.

- 4.4 The Conservation Area Management Plan was drafted on behalf of The Highland Council by a Conservation Accredited Chartered Architect and Consultant. The Management Plan was supported by a Stakeholder Group consisting of representatives from the Council, Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA), The Grantown Society, Grantown and Vicinity Community Council, the Grantown Initiative, the Grantown Community Centre, and Badenoch and Strathspey Council Ward Representatives. Planning Officers from both the Development Plans and Development Management teams have been involved throughout the process. All those involved have been instrumental in developing the final draft as presented at this Committee.
- 4.5 Local Members, at their Ward Business Meeting (WBM) dated 30 January 2023, supported the proposal that the draft Grantown-on-Spey Management Plan be the subject of a six-week public consultation.

5 Consultation Process

- 5.1 The public consultation was launched via The Council's consultation portal on 6 February 2023. This was widely publicised with a public notice placed in the Badenoch and Strathspey Herald, press releases via The Highland Council's Corporate Communications Team, social media posts and notification, by letter, to all properties (totalling 799) within the Conservation Area boundary. Other agencies, including Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and Scottish Civic Trust, as part of a stakeholder group, were also invited to comment. The draft document was available as paper copies in Grantown Service Point, CNPA Planning Office, Grantown, Grantown Library and Council HQ, Inverness.
- 5.2 The stakeholder group were all notified of the consultation via email, invited to share the consultation within their own contacts, and asked to comment.
- 5.3 A public drop-in event was held at the Community Centre Café, High Street, Grantown-on-Spey to allow interested parties and residents to hear more about the Management Plan, and to discuss any concerns or issues with officers. The event, held on 15 February, was attended by 46 individuals representing a good cross-section of the local community, including residents and business owners.
- 5.4 A wide range of matters were covered including adding new information to the report, clarifying how the Conservation Area may affect residents in relation to building alterations, window replacement, energy efficiency, insulation, micro renewables, how the public consultation process works, car parking and the quality of the public realm. Overall, the event resulted in extensive feedback, which is summarised in this report. In general, the high level of attendance and engagement with residents during the drop-in event meant that many concerns and issues could be successfully dealt with and resolved in person.
- 5.5 In total, 10 responses were received through the Council's consultation portal and via email. Two requests for paper copies of the report were received and these were duly issued. Two electronic versions of the report were also emailed to respondents. The main issues raised are discussed in more detail in Sections 6 and 7 below.

6 Main Issues

6.1 Energy Efficiency/Climate Resilience

Improving energy efficiency measures within the conservation area, and what interventions would be supported, was a popular discussion point, especially in light of the energy and cost of living crisis. There was general acceptance that the measures outlined in the report successfully struck a balance between supporting energy efficiency measures and preserving the character of the conservation area. However, some respondents felt the language used could have been more positive. In light of feedback, the Management Plan has been revised to positively highlight the options and opportunities available to improve the energy efficiency of buildings within the conservation area, for example, how and when to successfully incorporate air source heat pumps, double or secondary glazing, solar panels and improved insulation.

6.2 High Street

Feedback on the proposed regeneration of the High Street was received, notably relating to the overall appearance, lack of maintenance and repair, together with the implications of vacant units. The Management Plan details plans for regeneration and the sensitive repurposing of buildings. The report sets out the aspiration for the creation of a partnership bid between the Council and the community to the recently launched Heritage and Place Programme, a grant scheme run by Historic Environment Scotland. If successful, the scheme could greatly assist in the regeneration of the High Street and suggestions received that the Business Association could further assist in the uptake.

6.3 Public Realm

Support for the prominence given to the public realm and its management was expressed. Feedback on the restricted availability of car parking in the Conservation Area has been received as well as the importance of active travel measures to remove reliance upon vehicles. A number of responses have been received relating to the poor condition of the public realm, foot paths and road network within the Conservation Area, which are acknowledged in the Management Plan and that these issues should be addressed when opportunities arise.

6.4 Character Areas

Positive support has been received for the creation of Character Areas to delineate parts of the conservation area that have a markedly different character and appearance. The proposal that this would correlate with a more relaxed approach to change in the more modern areas of the Conservation Area was welcomed.

7 Other Issues

7.1 Trees

Concern for older, larger trees which may pose a risk to public safety was raised, outlining that maintenance is required by property owners.

7.2 **Loss of Architectural Detail and Original Features**

Concern was raised that a large number of buildings have uPVC windows and doors and other inappropriate materials and that these properties should be required to revert to timber windows/doors more suited to the character of the buildings and Conservation Area. Concerns were also raised regarding some property owners who have not sought permission and carried out unauthorised and inappropriate works.

The Management Plan acknowledges that there are a number of inappropriate and insensitive alterations in Grantown-on-Spey, including uPVC windows and doors, but that the majority of these were installed legally before changes to the General Permitted Development Order in 2012, at which point planning authorities were given more control over development in conservation areas. Since this time, a consistent approach has been applied to reinstate traditional detailing and materials and the Management Plan will ensure that this will continue.

7.3 **Buildings at Risk/Vulnerable Buildings**

Encouragement for the occupancy of vacant buildings was expressed by some respondents, together with the suggestion that the Council uses compulsory purchase orders to create social/low-cost housing via buildings such as Gladstone House, the former Grandview Care Home and the BT Building. The Council supports the view that vacant buildings should be brought back into active use and wherever possible supports property owners to repurpose buildings. Compulsory purchase orders are available to the Council but are rarely used and then only in exceptional circumstances and generally only if a back-to-back agreement is in place with a restoring partner.

7.4 **Maintenance and Repair**

Routine repair and maintenance was recognised by many respondents as essential in preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area, and fully supported the recommendations in the Management Plan. However, concern was also raised that a number of prominent properties were not being actively maintained and appeared neglected resulting in a negative impact on the conservation area. The Council has no power to enforce appropriate levels of repair and maintenance, unless the building is vacant enabling an urgent works notice to be served. If a successful bid to the Heritage and Place fund can be made this could potentially include a small grants scheme for homeowners which may help address some of the issues highlighted. The Council's [Traditional Building Maintenance Guide](#) will be promoted as part of the Management Plan.

7.5 **Education and Awareness**

A resident who has recently moved into the Conservation Area queried how new owner/occupiers are advised of the Conservation Area status. It is the case that solicitors and estate agents must advertise and make known to any prospective purchaser any designations that affect a property. Officers also investigated including notifications alongside Council Tax bills to alert property owners to conservation area status, however due to cost implications and complexities, this is not a viable option. Further options such as the Council's social media channels and press releases will be explored to help raise awareness.

8 Next Steps

- 8.1 Subject to Member comment and agreement, the draft Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area Management Plan will be presented to the Economy and Infrastructure Committee on 17 August 2023 for final adoption.
- 8.2 Further non-material revisions not yet incorporated, formatting changes and illustrations may be made to the management plan in preparation for final publication and public release.
- 8.3 Subject to Members of the Economy and Infrastructure Committee agreeing to adopt the reports in August, Scottish Ministers and Historic Environment Scotland will be notified and an advert placed in the Edinburgh Gazette, as required by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure & Environment

Date: 10 May 2023

Author: Sarah James-Gaukroger, Conservation Area Project Officer

Background Papers: Appendix 1: Summary of detailed representations and proposed response
Appendix 2: Post-consultation Draft Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area Management Plan

Appendix 1 Public Comments - additional

The majority of comments received were concerned with a single issue and these have been outlined in the main report. 10 respondents submitted comments that covered multiple points and/or concerns and these are detailed below, alongside the proposed Council response. The names of individual respondents have been omitted due to GDPR and those submitted by organisations have been retained.

Do you have any comments on the Introduction? (pages 3 - 4)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
CNPA	<p>The National Park Authority thank The Highland Council for the opportunity to comment on the draft Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area Management Plan which overall is very welcome. The Management Plan will support the use of Policy 9: Cultural Heritage in the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (LDP) 2021, which states that “Developments affecting a conservation area should be consistent with any relevant conservation area appraisal or management plan.” The Park Authority is pleased that the Management Plan specifically references Policy 9 and the LDP in its introduction, highlighting the relation between the documents. The Management Plan also supports the National Park Partnership Plan’s (NPPP) 2022 Priority C10. Cultural heritage, which aims to “Safeguard and promote the Park’s cultural heritage and provide opportunities for everyone to experience and learn about the National Park’s outstanding historic environment, history and culture.” The NPPP is not referenced in the Management Plan and so it is recommended that a reference be added in Section 1.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>This has been included in the post-consultation report.</p>

Do you have any comments on the purpose of the management plan (page 4)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
2	<p>First, to commend the detailed work that has gone into preparation of the draft and to support many of the recommendations suggested for the Conservation Area.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
HES	<p>We welcome the draft management plan, which clearly sets out specific challenges and opportunities to enhance the conservation area. The document is easy to navigate and we think it is well-pitched to inform local householders, shopkeepers, owners and developers about different kinds of consent and what types of development are likely to be acceptable. We also welcome the clear information on the principles of demolition and unauthorised work. The document has been clearly aligned with Local Development Policies, providing a summary of the relevant principles, and includes information about Local Place Plans.</p> <p>The document is underpinned with useful links to The Highland Council, HES and other guidance. The sections on adaptation for climate change and renewables are helpful and relevant, as well as the parts of the document that highlight broader initiatives towards town regeneration involving community engagement, various community-led initiatives, education and funding opportunities.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

Do you have any comments on the summary of significance (page 6)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
6	The subdivision of character areas seems appropriate	Agreed.
CNPA	<p>The Park Authority agrees with the summary of significance and identification of the character areas within the town. Further context may be gained from the Park Authority's own work on landscape character and including a reference to this in Section 2.0 of the Management Plan may be beneficial:</p> <p>https://cairngorms.co.uk/caring-future/cairngorms-landscapes/landscape-areas/?grantown-on-spey</p>	Noted; reference to further reading via the link supplied has been included in the post-consultation report.

Do you have any comments on the character areas? (pages 7 – 8)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
3	I absolutely agree with my neighbour that our house (The Warren) appears to be in the wrong category.	Noted and agreed; this has been amended in the post-consultation draft report.
4	Both my property and my neighbour's fall within the description of Character Area 3: Bungalows and Backland, yet they are shown as being located within Character Area 2: Villas. The addresses are Creag Bhan and The Warren, Woodside Avenue (to the rear of Holmhill House). I request that the boundaries in this location are reconsidered and that they are altered in the final version of the CAMP.	Noted and agreed; this has been amended in the post-consultation draft report.

5	<p>2.3 Conservation Area Priorities missed the opportunity to support buildings in the Grantown on Spey Conservation Area become more energy efficient e.g. through double glazing, solar panels etc., and thereby help local people reduce their heating bills. Becoming more energy efficient and supporting efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is one of the top Scottish Government priorities and forms part of the policy direction espoused in NPF4. Indeed, blocking attempts to support buildings in the Grantown on Spey Conservation Area become more energy efficient is in my opinion against NPF4 and so this issue should be directly addressed upfront.</p>	<p>Double glazing has been permitted in Conservation Areas for many years and can be installed without planning permission in unlisted buildings provided the window design, material and opening method is identical. Listed Building Consent is required in listed buildings, and only in exceptional and unusual cases is double glazing not supported. More information can be found via the Council's Historic Windows & Doors Guide.</p> <p>Reference to other acceptable energy efficiency measures, including installation of solar panels and air source heat pumps, has been strengthened in the report In response to feedback.</p>
6	<p>I think that the importance of the architectural integrity of area 3 is overstated.</p>	<p>We do not agree; Grantown has three different character areas, each of which has shaped the town's appearance and development. The space allocated within this section of the report is relative to the other character area's narratives.</p>
7	<p>2.3 - Conservation Area priorities Agree with the first 3 "general" priorities but feel No 4 is a bit too specific a priority for this document.</p>	<p>No 4 relates to Gladstone House (C Listed Building). This is one of Grantown's oldest buildings and as outlined in section 4.4, is part of a very important group of surviving original Georgian houses at the east of the town. Furthermore, the property has been unoccupied since at least 1989 and was added to the Buildings at Risk Register in 1997. Empty and derelict buildings can have a negative effect upon a conservation area and identifying a new and viable long term use for the building is considered a priority.</p>

Do you agree with the issues outlined in wider challenges? (pages 10 - 13)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
5	<p>3.2 LOSS OF ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL AND ORIGINAL FEATURES. This section highlights <i>'loss and erosion can result in the introduction of new and inappropriate architectural forms. For example. the replacement of original window and door designs in unsympathetic designs, materials or methods of opening'</i>. Again, if the changes of windows and doors help buildings become more energy efficient then this should be supported and no penalised by an ill thought out 'conservation plan'. All reasonable efforts by Grantown on Spey homeowners to help tackle the climate crisis should be supported and any so called building conservation policies that prevent that from happening should be changed or abolished.</p>	<p>There is a careful balance to be struck between energy efficiency measures, the use of appropriate <i>sustainable</i> materials and conservation. The legislation and national policy (including NPF4) that underpins conservation area management is set by Scottish Government. However, it is the case that cumulative effects of inappropriate replacements have a detrimental effect upon the Conservation Area. There are, however, many options available to property owners to improve energy efficiency in the conservation area and the Management Plan has relaxed restrictions where more modern development is present. In relation to windows and doors in particular, double glazing is supported (and is often permitted development in unlisted buildings) as are materials that are sustainable and recyclable.</p>
6	<p>Micro-renewables and efficient, functioning insulation are part of the 'significant and urgent global action to mitigate climate change' which Historic Environment Scotland advocates. They also make houses more comfortable and affordable to live in. There is no point in declaring a climate emergency and then putting impediments in the way of positive action. Solar photovoltaic panels are most efficient when facing south, especially at the latitude of Grantown on Spey, and should be encouraged on the South-west and South-east elevations of Grantown's building stock, irrespective of their appearance. In one instance, the denial of planning permission for installation of a PV array on the SW aspect of Inverallan Church is proving to be a barrier to a development plan aimed at preserving the church as a functioning entity.</p>	<p>Noted; however not all interventions are compatible with traditional buildings and the report details the reasons; e.g., external insulation, as this does not allow the fabric of the building to breathe and will compromise the integrity of the building.</p> <p>HES offer advice via their Short Guide on Climate Change Adaption for Traditional Buildings: https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=a0138f5b-c173-4e09-818f-a7ac00ad04fb</p> <p>Solar panels are supported when installed on rear- and most side-facing elevations, or where installed on outbuildings or ground mounted. Proposals for the installation of PV panels to other non-public facing elevations will</p>

		<p>considered favourably. Those which face the public realm will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>With regard to Inverallan Church, the solar panels were subject to an appeal which was dismissed by the Reporter, who acknowledged the importance of adaptation of traditional buildings, but on balance determined that other options were available and the adverse impact on the listed building and conservation area outweighed other considerations.</p>
7	<p>Section 3.3 - Some "inappropriate" materials mentioned, such as uPVC, have been used in buildings for a generation or more. Any challenges need to take into account improvements in technology which help with longevity, costs of renewal and insulation. <i>Inappropriate</i> is too subjective a word.</p> <p>The town must be allowed to evolve and not become a time warp. Trying to enforce a return to original materials (i.e. wood instead of uPVC) would put an undue financial burden on property owners.</p> <p>The comments about "<i>noticeable examples of solar panels</i>" (section 3.6) has a taint of snobbery or Ludditeism. taking a</p>	<p>The majority of these materials were installed legally before changes to the General Permitted Development Order in 2012, at which point planning authorities were given more control over development in conservation areas. Since this time a consistent approach has been applied to reinstate traditional detailing and materials where opportunities arise and the Management Plan will ensure that this will continue. Historic traditional windows should be retained wherever possible; maintaining/repairing traditional windows is much cheaper than replacement units (of any material) and can result in windows which are more thermally effective than uPVC replacements. Timber windows are sustainable, are considerably less resource intensive to manufacture, will last 100+years (many upvc windows only last 25 years) and are more carbon efficient. The report's Additional Information section directs interested parties to the Council's Historic Windows & Doors Guide.</p> <p>We agree and are not proposing that Grantown is to be preserved in aspic; the report outlines diverse ways in which it can be enhanced and protected for future generations of residents and visitors to enjoy.</p>

	<p>wider view of the environment these should be encouraged not disparaged.</p>	<p>We do not agree; section 5.7 of the report outlines measures which are supported, together with a link to HES' guide to micro-renewables. The section on the use of energy efficiency measures has been strengthened.</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Section 3.2 mentions the 'loss of traditional details' including 'windows and doors'. However, modern windows and doors are often more effective at keeping homes warm (and are therefore more energy efficient). It is also often cheaper to replace an old window with a modern PVC window, then to restore the original window. Modern windows tend to have fewer panels and therefore provide a better view to the outside for people living in the house. Whilst I appreciate the historical character of Grantown-on-Spey, and I think it is important not to radically change the size and position of windows on traditional houses, I think replacing old draughty windows with modern windows is a sensible change. Housing must be practical for those who live in it, rather than offering a 'historical village' experience. I also find that some of the other challenges raised, are minor details, that are unlikely to be noticed by the majority of the public. For example, Section 3.3 mentions rainwater goods made of uPVC instead of cast iron. Although I walk up the High Street often, I've never once noticed which pipes were cast iron vs uPVC. Cast iron rainwater goods are much more expensive than uPVC, and the risk is if cast iron is the only permitted option, then owners may not be able to afford to replace defective rainwater goods, which may then risk damage to the building as a whole. Again options need to be practical, rather than just preserving old features for the sake of it. I have no objection to modern plastic shopfront signage. I would much rather see shops occupied, than see restrictions on signage. In Section 3.4, I have no objection to rooflights. These let light into houses, therefore reducing the need to use lighting during</p>	<p>We do not agree; it is often more economical and environmentally effective to repair and maintain traditional timber windows, which can last 100+ years.</p> <p>In addition to the response above, Historic Environment Scotland's technical paper https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=f3e97c76-b4fa-4c76-a197-a59400be931b outlines a variety of measures. Secondary glazing is the most effective overall option, followed by shutters (if available). The greatest reductions in heat loss came from combining these measures.</p> <p>There are many options available to upgrade and overhaul existing windows to improve efficiency, including retrofitting double glazing. If windows are beyond viable repair, however, we will support replacement units. More information can be found via the Council's Historic Windows & Doors Guide.</p> <p>If regular maintenance takes place, costly repairs and replacement can be avoided. The irregularity of cast iron features cannot be replicated in modern uPVC, which is not environmentally friendly and has a shorter lifespan, than that of cast iron. Replacement plastic rainwater goods is often a false economy and detracts from the appearance of a traditional building.</p> <p>We agree; to clarify, the report stipulates 'Introduction of large rooflights,</p>

	<p>the day. People must be allowed to make practical changes to their houses that improve livability.</p> <p>In Section 3.6, I strongly disagree with the comment that micro-renewables can detract from the character and appearance of the town. Again, housing should be eco-efficient and livable. Some changing with the time is inevitable, and the goal should be to provide high quality, eco-efficient housing, rather than to provide a 'historical village' experience.</p>	<p>especially if non-traditional forms'. Original rooflights are supported, however larger interventions disrupt the grain and rhythm of the roofscape.</p> <p>Where sensitively sited, micro-renewables are supported and we agree that they will not detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. There is, however, a balance to be struck between modern interventions and the Council's statutory duty to preserve and enhance the character of the conservation area.</p>
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Do you have any comments on the section on the High Street buildings? (pages 14 - 16)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
2	<p>As regards the general appearance of the High Street, we do not think it is realistic to look for a return to traditional shop fronts. Several established traders have , and would argue they need, fairly large windows for their businesses.</p> <p>What would be helpful to elderly and disabled people and to people with children in pushchairs would be improvements to access, in particular doors and ,where possible, removal of steps. There should also be a requirement not to put advertising boards and other obstructions on the pavements.</p>	<p>There is a strong economic and business rationale for restoring and reinstating traditional shopfronts. Research has shown that they encourage shoppers to linger longer, spend more and contribute more to the local economy. In conservation terms, they are an important part of the town and their variety of materials, styles and designs tells a story of the town's retailers, shop designers and changing architectural fashion.</p> <p>Noted and agreed. Shop owners should be improving access wherever possible, and this would be supported.</p>
6	<p>This is really tricky, and calls for a nuanced approach to planning. Whilst I would like the High Street to keep its character, I would prefer to have it occupied and looking less</p>	<p>Noted; the Council is supportive of regeneration and occupancy of retail units.</p>

	pretty than empty and looking like one of the black and white images provided. Occupation helps to preserve the overall fabric of buildings, and stringent planning regulations can deter acquisition and effective maintenance of buildings.	
7	The vision of a uniform high street is very nice but perhaps utopian. The economic health of the High Street would not appear to be great (quite a number of empty units) so any recommendations should take that into account.	Improving the economic health of the High Street and improving the shopping experience for both retailers and shoppers is important. A fundamental element of this is ensuring empty units are filled. The Management Plan supports this aspiration and sets out regeneration suggestions in section 5.10.
8	I don't agree with the statement that the High Street looks tired. There are a few empty shops, but otherwise there is an excellent selection of independent local shops. I like the neon signs and bright colours. Why the objection to bright colours? It seems a bit controlling to limit what colours people can use in their signage!	Noted. We agree; Grantown has a vibrant mix of independent retailers. Noted; the report states: "Colours may vary but historic images suggest darker and/or muted colours were often used rather than white".

Do you have any comments on the section on the public realm? (pages 17 - 22)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
6	I am broadly in agreement.	Noted.
7	This is the area where most benefit could be derived. Most of the suggestions are very good and, implemented wholesale, would have a material positive effect on the look and feel of Grantown. I strongly disagree with any proposals to try to curb the use of motor vehicles in Grantown. Any proposals should do the contrary i.e. make it easier to use motor vehicles.	Noted. Noted. It is acknowledged that parking is a difficult issue in Grantown. The Management Plan does not seek to limit the use of cars but does encourage active travel and public transport, whenever possible.

8	<p>don't think the mix of signage styles is a concern. I walk around Grantown every day, and had never noticed that some of the signage was in different styles. In the interests of sustainability, you could perhaps choose one design to use for all future signage, but I wouldn't support replacing existing signage which is in good condition. I think any changes to the public realm should be made with sustainability in mind (i.e. don't create unnecessary waste by replacing signs that are in good condition). In Section 4.2.1, I agree that it can be difficult for pedestrians to cross the road near the Coop, e.g. if heading from the Coop to the main section of the High Street. It would be good to improve pedestrian access around this area. Again, similar to the signage, I hadn't noticed that the bollards and street furniture are a mix of colours/styles. I think this is a minor detail, that many people won't notice and therefore not a priority. I think sustainability should be key, i.e. don't replace what's not broken (but perhaps have a plan for any new additions to be in a consistent style).</p>	<p>Noted and agreed. If and when opportunities arise to make appropriate changes to street furniture and signage care should be taken to ensure the design, style and materials are consistent.</p>
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Do you have any comments on the section on the loss of setting, boundary enclosures and trees? (pages 23 - 24)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
6	<p>I agree that the trees and gardens make a positive contribution to the amenity of the town, and that a plan for the management of Local Authority owned trees would be helpful.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
7	<p>Improved boundary definition is a reasonable idea.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Do you have any comments on the section on the buildings at risk and vulnerable buildings? (pages 24 - 29)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
6	As in Specific Challenges, vacancy is the biggest risk to preservation of these buildings in the long term, and planning regulations should not deter occupation.	Noted. The Planning Authority will support and wherever practicable encourage the re-use of vacant buildings.
7	Encourage Highland Council to use compulsory purchase powers and fix and convert such buildings into social and / or low cost housing. This could apply to Gladstone House, Grandview and the BT Building.	The Council is supportive of repurposing and regeneration of these buildings by the owners, as outlined in the report. It is unlikely that compulsory purchase orders would be used in these cases at this time.

Do you have any comments for the section for 20th century development? (pages 30 - 31)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
6	I think that the architectural or heritage merit of these properties is overstated in this plan. They tend to be poorly insulated. We are currently experiencing an energy and cost of living crisis of unknown duration, and a climate crisis which is worsening. I would say that planning approaches for energy efficiency improvements should be positively encouraged and outweigh heritage considerations in these buildings.	<p>The report outlines the important neutral characteristics, which acknowledges that they do not have the same positive impact than those of older traditional properties.</p> <p>The report outlines separate management approaches for these buildings including supporting measures to improve energy efficiency.</p>
7	The bungalows, should be excluded from the Conservation Area. They are so far out of character of the Edwardian / Victorian Grantown that any historic "wrongs" committed can't be righted.	The Management Plan does not propose any changes to the Conservation Area boundary; this was addressed in the 2019 Appraisal.

8	4.7.2 I think some of the points identified in this section are unlikely to be noticed by the general public. I live opposite these houses and never noticed that the window panes are in different colours, for example.	No response required.
CNPA	The Park Authority support the identification of different management approaches to different areas of the Conservation area. In particular, the more permissive approach to the alteration and adaptation of buildings within the more modern parts of the Conservation Areas is welcomed.	Noted.

Do you agree with the recommendations for the repair & maintenance of buildings in the Conservation Area? (pages 33 & 38)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
2	<p>First, to commend the detailed work that has gone into preparation of the draft and to support many of the recommendations suggested for the Conservation Area. Although the Area extends beyond the Square and the High Street, it is those locations which define Granttown, both for residents and visitors and so seem to us to demand the most attention. There is a clear need to ensure that all buildings have safe guttering and slating and sound drainpipes.</p> <p>Are there powers to require owners of the properties to make repairs where necessary? Similarly, can they be required to repaint doors and window frames? There are a number of</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted. Individual property owners are responsible for their building's maintenance and repair. The Council is supportive of this, having recently created a free maintenance guide: https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/25880/building_maintenance_guide</p> <p>The Council has limited powers to require property owners to undertake basic maintenance.</p>

	examples of neglect which give the town an unwelcoming shabbiness.	
6	Sadly, I can't wholeheartedly support these recommendations if they will deter occupation of vacant buildings, and improvement in energy efficiency of occupied buildings, and I think that they will broadly have that effect. Agree with relaxed approach to replacement of windows in bungalows etc – promote energy efficiency.	We do not agree; regular, routine maintenance helps prevent more costly replacements and this responsibility lies with the building owners. Noted.
7	In theory - good. Shop owners must, however, not be financially disadvantaged and any work should be aided by public monies.	Noted, however property owners are responsible for the maintenance of their buildings. At the time of writing, we are not aware of grant opportunities but would promote the Heritage and Place fund as run by Historic Environment Scotland.
8	<p>On page 32, I don't really know what 'heritage-led' means. I think a fundamental principle should be sustainability. I don't think modern windows and doors are inappropriate, I think they are cost-effective and warm! I think modernisation of windows and doors should be allowed, in order to support warm, eco-efficient homes.</p> <p>On page 35, there seems to be a disconnect between wanting to fill empty shops, and restrictive rules on what needs planning permission. It seems extreme to require planning permission to repaint a shopfront in a different colour, for example, and restrictive rules may encourage potential shop owners to put their businesses in other local areas instead of the Grantown High Street. In Section 5.5.3, it seems a bit strict to restrict the colours of windows and doors. I think the colours of windows and doors is not something most people would notice.</p>	<p>Heritage-led often equates well with sustainability and they relate, respond and respect the Conservation Area.</p> <p>Traditional buildings and their accompanying materials are not generally resource intensive in production/manufacture and are easily repaired and/or recycled. Timber components will outlast plastic components by many decades and uPVC is often not recycled and is often sent to landfill.</p> <p>Planning legislation dictates what permission is required in conservation areas, and this is not a decision for local planning authorities. However, control over colour and material is important in conserving the historic nature and vibrancy of the High Street, whilst assisting regeneration of the vacant units.</p> <p>A wide range of heritage colours are encouraged in windows, doors and shopfronts, and so it is unlikely that any prospective shop owner would not find a suitable colour palette.</p>

NPA	The Park Authority agrees that lack of repair, loss of original architectural detail, the use of inappropriate materials, inappropriate and unsympathetic alterations and extensions are a challenge within the conservation area. It notes that many of the measures to address these fall outside the planning system and would welcome further practical guidance or examples of best practice on how to encourage or implement them.	Noted. Appendix 1 contains further information on shopfront design and section 8.0 outlines relevant guidance available from Historic Environment Scotland and The Highland Council, specifically shopfronts. Due to space limitations, it is not possible to outline the information available via these organisations and interested parties are encouraged to access information from the websites directly.

Do you agree with the measures outlined for adaptations for climate resilience & energy efficiency? (pages 38 - 40)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
5	<i>'Measures which would affect the appearance of any building in the Conservation Area, for example the introduction in external insulating render or changes to windows and doors, will require Planning Permission'</i> . I fundamentally disagree with this policy in relation to energy efficiency measures. For example, internal double-glazing should not only be allowed within the Grantown on Spey Conservation Area, but actively supported The Highland Council through grants etc. When the subjective and one-sided <i>'We don't like the look of it, or it detracts from the character of the area'</i> type comments and policies are made, these pale into irrelevance against the urgent and objective actions we must all take to deliver Scottish Government's Net Zero agenda. The 'conserve old, energy inefficient buildings as they are' type policies are obsolete and must be challenged and removed from this and other Conservation Area Management	When planning permission is required in conservation areas is dictated by Scottish Government, not the local planning authority. Internal double glazing (secondary glazing) does not require planning permission (Listed Building Consent is required for Listed Buildings). Double-glazed units retrofitted into existing frames, or like-for-like replacement windows (with double glazing) can be fitted without planning permission. More information can be found via the Council's Historic Windows & Doors Guide . In response to feedback, the post-consultation report will be updated to increase the prominence of energy efficiency measures which will be supported.

	<p>Plans as a matter of urgency and policy. The suggestion that <i>'Historic Environment Scotland is the lead agency in the research of, and guidance on, improving climate resilience and energy efficiency in traditional and listed buildings'</i> and their guidance may be helpful it misleading. There are many actions e.g. double-glazing that could be taken but are actively blocked. There should be clear shift in policy towards <i>'All reasonable measures to improve energy efficiency will be supported'</i>. If the policy did this, then you might find much more local support for it.</p>	
6	<p>PV panels should be allowed on SW facing elevations of SW High Street, and regulations regarding replacement of windows and doors should encourage energy efficiency over appearance. Whilst the historic character and appearance of the building should be taken into consideration, energy efficiency should have priority in planning considerations.</p>	<p>Solar panels are supported when installed on rear-facing elevations, on outbuildings or ground mounted. Proposals for the installation of PV panels to side or non-public facing elevations will be considered favourably. Those which face the public realm will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. A more relaxed approach is to be taken to modern development, including south-west High Street.</p>
CNPA	<p>While the Park Authority agree that the adaptation of buildings and installation of micro renewables represents a particular challenge in the Conservation Area, it finds the suggested means of management, as outlined in paragraphs 5.6 to 5.7, either lacking in detail or too restrictive. The paragraphs and the guidance they direct the reader to could be in conflict with National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), in particular Policy 1 which states that "When considering all development proposals significant weight will be given to the global climate and nature crises".</p> <p>Further areas of conflict arise from:</p>	<p>Officer response via email: Thank you for your response on behalf of Cairngorms National Park Authority, which has been noted as part of the public consultation process. The Highland Council wishes to thank CNPA for the support outlined within your response for the Management Plan.</p> <p>Highland Council has considered your feedback in relation to potential conflict with NPF4. I am forwarding copies of the Reporter's dismissal of the appeal to not grant Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission for the installation of solar panels on the principal roof slope of Inverallan Church, Grantown-on-Spey. The Reporter's decision acknowledges the importance and prominence of NPF4 policies in relation to the climate and nature crisis, but gives significant weight to the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Policy 2, which states that “Development proposals to retrofit measures to existing developments that reduce emissions or support adaptation to climate change will be supported”. b. Policy 11, which states that “Development proposals for all forms of renewable, low-carbon and zero emissions technologies will be supported”. c. Policy 19, which aims “to encourage, promote and facilitate development that supports decarbonised solutions to heat and cooling demand and ensure adaptation to more extreme temperatures” and states that “development proposals for buildings that will be occupied by people will be supported where they are designed to promote sustainable temperature management, for example by prioritising natural or passive solutions such as siting, orientation, and materials.” <p>It is acknowledged that NPF4’s Policy 7 states that “development proposals in or affecting conservation areas will only be supported where the character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting is preserved or enhanced”. However, as stated in the letter, dated February 8th 2023, from the Chief Planner and Minister for Public Finance, Planning and Community Wealth on the transitional arrangements for National Planning Framework 4, Policy 1, “prioritises the climate and nature crises in all decisions”.</p>	<p>1997 and the NPF4 policies that safeguard built heritage. We acknowledge that this is a balanced decision but The Highland Council feels that this gives a helpful direction in the application of NPF4 in such circumstances.</p> <p>In response to feedback received during the public consultation, the Management Plan will be strengthened to emphasise the range of energy efficiency measures that can be supported within the Conservation Area. As you are the CNPA representative on the Management Plan stakeholder group, you will be updated on the progress of the document at the various salient points.</p>
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	<p>The Park Authority is of the view that the adaptation of buildings, to both reduce their carbon footprint and address the effects of the changing climate is of great importance and especially so in Conservation Areas, where many buildings are of an age and construction that means they are challenging in terms of constraints and cost to adapt. There is a risk that a restrictive approach to the adaptation of historic buildings within the Conservation Area will lead to them becoming unaffordable to run and unusable for a range of purposes, including domestic, commercial and community uses, thus leading to further issues of maintenance and neglect. We would prefer that the management plan identified how changes can be made at the same time as preserving the overall character of the Conservation Area and recommend that paragraphs 5.6 to 5.7 are re-drafted to be more supportive of the adaptation of buildings for climate resilience, energy efficiency and the installation of micro renewables.</p>	
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Do you agree with the recommendations for public realm enhancement (pages 40 - 43)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
6	I like the idea of a Grantown-specific suite of street furniture as an aspiration. I am intrigued by the recommendation to remove the chains in the square. There is no accompanying explanation of their historic significance or original purpose. I rather like them, although they can be a pain to remove for events.	Noted; the report outlines that consideration be given to removal of chains to ease pedestrian access, together with accessibility issues for the visually impaired. The Council's Amenities Manager has advised that they are happy for the chains to be removed, as they are a trip hazard and make grass cutting more awkward in this area.
CNPA	The Park Authority welcomes the prominence given to the public realm and its management within the Management Plan. This supports a number of priorities of the NPPP's, including B9. Mental and physical health, C4. Village and town centres, C6. A sustainable destination, C7. Transport to and around the Park, C8. Accessible path and cycle network, C9. High-quality visitor experience and C10. Cultural heritage.	Noted.

Do you agree with the recommendations for the protection of setting, boundary enclosures & trees? (pages 43 – 44)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
5	<i>'Trees in conservation areas are protected through the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. Before carrying out any work on a tree in a conservation area owners must give six weeks' notice to the Planning Authority of any intention to cut, lop, top, uproot, damage</i>	

	<p>or destroy a tree'. Whilst I broadly support this, there should be a clear exemption to this with regards to public safety. My understanding is that homeowners are liable if their trees fall on someone. Efforts to make trees safe should be exempt from this policy, so long as convincing evidence is provided. If a tree is dangerous it should not be left for 6 weeks' before emergency action is taken. I think it would strengthen this policy if such a statement were made and also the type of evidence required to be supplied.</p>	<p>The extract quoted is in planning legislation and there is no scope to alter or amend this in the Management Plan. Individual landowners are responsible for the care, maintenance and safety of all trees on their land. Trees within a conservation area are protected and it is good practice for landowners to regularly assess their trees. Support will always be given for trees that are dead, dying or dangerous. If remedial works are required, written permission must be obtained from the Council. When these works are carried out, the landowner must make sure the works do not pose a danger to other people or property. Further guidance is available via https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1225/countryside_farming_and_wildlife/63/trees_woodland_and_forestry</p>
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Do you agree with the recommendations for town centre regeneration? (pages 44 - 46)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
2	<p>We do not think it is practicable to introduce further limitations on car parking in the High Street or the Square. The fact is that many people living on the outskirts of the town or travelling in from Dulnain Bridge, Cromdale, Nethybridge and further afield expect to be able to park near the shops. They do not stay for longer than necessary. Some may use the off-street parks but it must be borne in mind that they may have heavy shopping to carry .Some owners and staff of the shops and businesses may park on the street but could be encouraged to use the car</p>	<p>Noted. It is acknowledged that parking is a difficult issue in Grantown and is limited within the Conservation Area. The aspiration is to take opportunities to improve and/or develop active travel links where possible.</p>

	<p>parks. It must also be remembered that there are residents who own cars in flats above the businesses</p> <p>We do not agree that the chains around the grassed areas in the Square should be removed. While some people may step over them to access the shops, removing the chains would undoubtedly increase the wear on the grass.</p> <p>We would welcome the development of a footpath along Church Avenue, if practicable, because, when the Church Hall is in use there is a danger to pedestrians and wheelchair users who find themselves in the middle of the road among car users.</p> <p>Improving the lanes between the Square and South Street will need careful consideration of the surfacing to be used. Because of the downwards slope involved, heavy rain and snowmelt can cause flooding in South Street.</p> <p>Finally, there is a pressing need for resurfacing of roads in many places throughout the Area. Potholes continue to appear and although sometimes filled in they inevitably reappear.</p>	<p>Noted; there are opposing views regarding this proposal. As previously outlined, the report states that consideration be given to the chain's removal, to ease pedestrian access, together with accessibility implications for the visually impaired. The Council's Amenities Manager has advised that they are happy for the chains to be removed, as they are a trip hazard and make grass cutting more awkward in this area.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted. If the affected road is a trunk road, the issue can be reported to Bear Scotland: https://www.bearscot.com/report-a-defect/ The Council has agreed to invest c£20m in the road infrastructure across the Highlands in 2023/24. Members of the public can report issues directly to the Roads Authority (and anonymously if they wish) on the website at: https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads_and_pavements/96/road_faults</p>
8	<p>I do not support the 'Rails to Grantown' project. I would much rather see the investment in better public transport. Bus services between Grantown and the other local towns are</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

	limited and finish too early in the evening. I would much prefer to see better public transport for locals rather than the steam train.	
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Do you have any comments on the planning policies (pages 52 - 57)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
HES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1.3 – it may be helpful to include a link to the Highland Council’s planning enforcement webpages and charter. 6.2 – this section requires updating to reflect NPF4, adopted 13 February 2023, and to include a link to the Scottish Government webpages 	<p>Noted, the post-consultation report will include this.</p> <p>Noted; the post-consultation report will be amended accordingly</p>
5	NPF4 requires much more action on climate change to be taken and this policy should seek to support that through energy efficiency measures.	Noted; the post-consultation report will be amended accordingly
CNPA	Paragraphs 5.6 to 5.7 contain a number of links to Historic Environment Scotland (HES) documents, all of which pre-date the publication of NPF. The Park Authority therefore recommends that the compliance of these documents with NPF4 be checked before publishing a final draft.	The Council is not responsible for the content of external websites and interested parties are directed to sources of information, the owners of whom are responsible for compliance with NPF4.

Do you agree with the recommendations for the monitoring and review of the Conservation Area? (page 58)

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
HES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.0 – we welcome the intention to review this document, but suggest a clearer commitment is set, such as every 5 years. 	Noted.

Do you have any other comments you would like to add?

Respondent No.	Comment	Council Response
1	<p>I have read through the Grantown Conservation Area Management Plan with great interest and I fully support its aims but I do have a practical point to raise.</p> <p>How do people know that the property they own or lease is in the conservation area? My wife and I moved to Grantown in June 2021 but it was at least another six months before we discovered that our new home was in the Grantown Conservation Area.</p> <p>Is there an official method by which new owners/tenants are informed about this? If there isn't then may I suggest that such a process might reduce any problems faced by owners, tenants and the authorities that oversee the conservation area.</p>	<p>Officer response via email:</p> <p>Thank you for getting in touch with us and for your positive feedback on the Management Plan; it is appreciated.</p> <p>I also appreciate your feedback regarding cascading of information about conservation area status. This is something which I am mindful of and I acknowledge that there are areas where this can be improved. For instance, I would hope that in the point of reference would be an inclusion about conservation areas in property particulars, both for sales and lets of associated buildings. I am also looking at ways that this may be included in future years' Council Tax notifications.</p> <p>If you have any other suggestions, I would be most interested to hear from you.</p> <p>Again, thank you for taking the time to outline your feedback.</p>

		Post-script: Estate agents are legally required to indicate conservation area designation on sales/lettings particulars.
6	It is really tricky to find a balance between preserving a beautiful town with lots of character, and enabling people to live comfortably in it and taking the urgent action necessary to mitigate the era-defining threat that is climate change. I think that this document errs on the side of preservation, and that some of its recommendations may be counterproductive. I think that primacy should be given to energy efficiency of homes and buildings, and that planners should be afforded a great degree of autonomy in the interpretation of this plan.	Noted.
7	<p>My main concerns are:</p> <p>1 A lot of subjectivity is included. Modern technology / benefits should not be discarded due to a subjective view on "traditional appearance" (especially in private homes).</p> <p>2 First priority for the High Street should be maintenance of the properties. It is getting very tired looking (especially the vacant units).</p> <p>3 The suggested changes, collectively, for the Public Realm, would make a material positive difference.</p> <p>4 The Council should make more use of existing powers to improve social / low cost housing.</p>	<p>Noted. Modern technology and benefits can be incorporated successfully in many cases, where it is appropriate and where it is sustainable.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
CNPA	The Park Authority note the inclusion of potential development sites within the Management Plan. It should be noted that the identification of a site within the Management Plan does not bestow any weight upon any development proposals on these sites and that proposals will be determined in accordance with the policies of NPF4 and the Cairngorms National Park LDP.	The sites identified offer opportunities to repair the built form of the conservation area. The report states "It is noted this is not a formal planning assessment. The purpose of identification of these sites is to highlight potential for improved use and enhancement of the site and/or Conservation Area as a whole." We feel that this narrative is sufficient for the purposes of the Management Plan.

	<p>The Park Authority welcomes any further consultation with the Highland Council on the Management Plan and is happy to provide further information or clarification if necessary.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
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Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area Management Plan

Plana-Stiùiridh Sgìre Glèidhteachais Bhaile Nan Granndach

May 2023

Post-Consultation Draft







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INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE | RO-RÀDH AGUS PUINGEAN

1.0 WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA? | DÈ A TH' ANN AN SGÌRE GLÈIDHTEACHAIS?

1.1 CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION

Conservation areas were first introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 provides the current legislative framework and 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 parts of their area which merit conservation area status.

Highland currently has 30 conservation areas varying in character from city and town centres, to rural villages and a battlefield. 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 in May 1975. Following appraisal, boundary review and consultation in 2018, the Conservation Area was extended in May 2019.

Conservation area designation should be regarded as the first positive step towards an area's protection and enhancement. Planning authorities and the Scottish Government are required by law to protect conservation areas from development which would be detrimental to their character.

1.2 WHAT DOES CONSERVATION AREA STATUS MEAN?

In a conservation area, it is both the buildings and the spaces between them that are of architectural or historic interest. Planning management is therefore directed at maintaining the integrity of the entire area and enhancing its special character. Conservation area status does not mean that new development is unacceptable, but care must be taken to ensure that the new development will not harm the character or appearance of the area. Trees, in recognition of their contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area, are also subject to additional controls.

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2011 removes a number of permitted development rights within conservation areas to provide an appropriate level of management of incremental change. Therefore, conservation area status brings the following works under planning management, meaning that permission requires to be sought from the Planning Authority:

- Demolition of buildings;
- Removal of, or work to trees;

- Development involving house extensions, roof alterations, windows, stone cleaning or painting of the exterior, satellite dishes, provision of hard surfaces, the erection or alteration of gates, fences and walls;
- Erection of ancillary buildings (such as sheds/garages) and raised decking/platforms.

The Planning Authority has a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. As such, development proposals that may affect a conservation area are considered more carefully, and in more detail than proposals located elsewhere. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan provide a firm basis on which applications for development in or affecting a conservation area can be assessed.

Where a development would, in the opinion of the Planning Authority, affect the character or appearance of a conservation area, the application for Planning Permission will be advertised in the local press providing an opportunity for public comment. Views expressed are taken into account by the Planning Authority when making a decision on the application.

Grantown-on-Spey is located within the Cairngorms National Park and planning policy is set out by the Park Planning Authority in its Local Development Plan (LDP). Planning management is undertaken by The Highland Council using Cairngorms National Park planning policies in the LDP and relevant supplementary and non-statutory guidance. Planning applications may, however, be 'called in' for determination by the Park Planning Authority.

Policy 9 of the Cairngorms National Park LDP (2021) outlines policy on conservation areas, including that all planning applications with the potential to affect the Conservation Area must demonstrate how proposals make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area and are consistent with the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal and/or Management Plan.

Policy 10 of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP, 2022) outlines policy on cultural heritage, which aims to safeguard and promote the Park's cultural heritage and provide opportunities for everyone to experience and learn about the National Park's outstanding historic environment, history and culture.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

The first purpose of this Management Plan is to address the findings of the [Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area Appraisal](#) (adopted June 2019) and further consider the Conservation Area's challenges, threats and opportunities. This Management Plan should be used in conjunction with the Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area Appraisal.

The second purpose is to provide strategy and guidance on the management of change and development in the Conservation Area, in order to preserve and enhance its special qualities, character and appearance as identified in the Appraisal. It identifies opportunities and priorities for enhancement as well as conservation area management more broadly.

This document is therefore a valuable tool with which to inform planning management for controlled and positive change in the Conservation Area and forms a basis, with the Granttown-on-Spey Conservation Area Appraisal, upon which planning decisions are made.

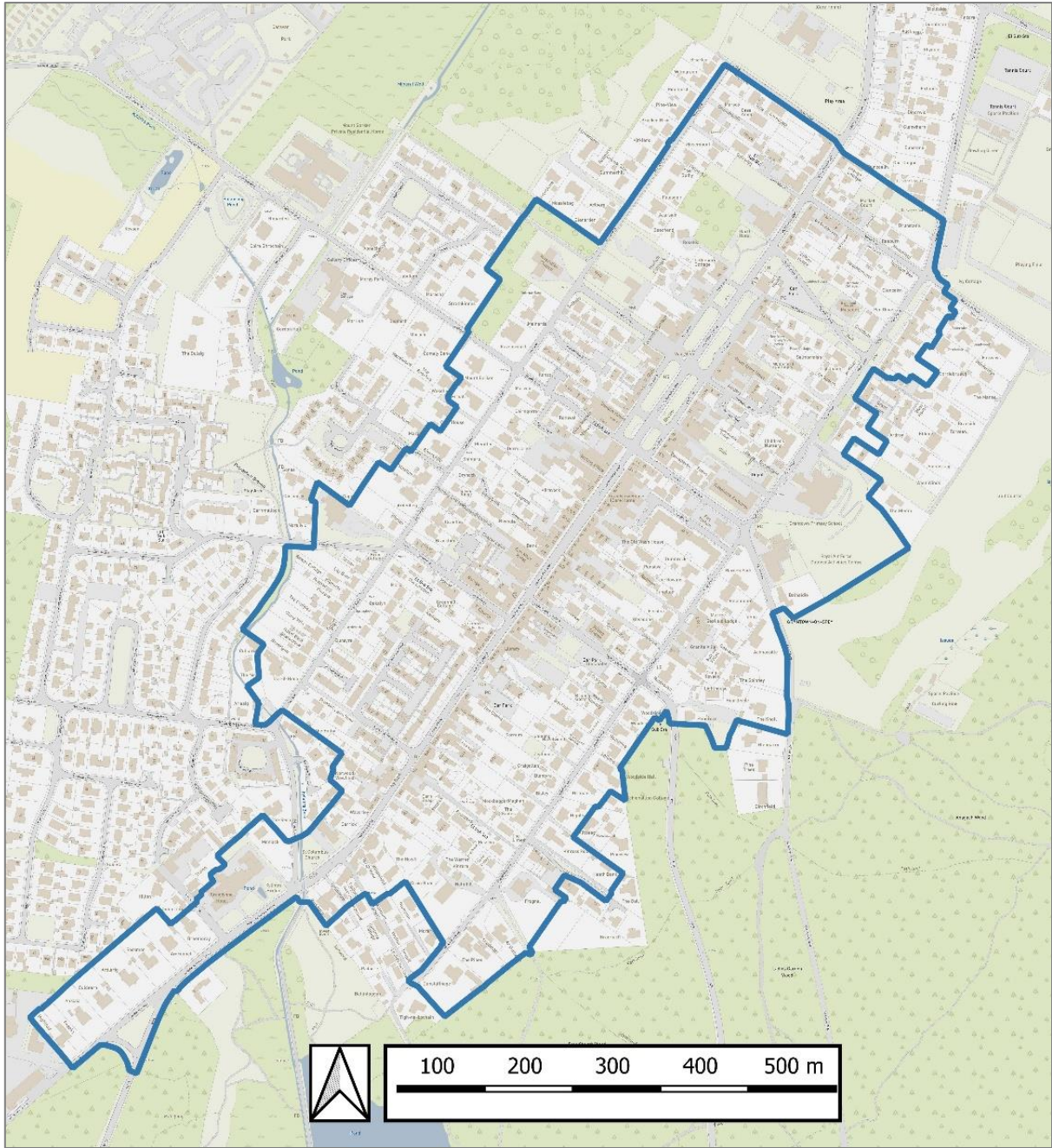
The plan also aims to assist local residents, property owners and other stakeholders, who have a major role to play in protecting and enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

1.4 METHOD

This commission has been undertaken on behalf of The Highland Council (THC) by The Granttown Society. The final draft Management Plan for public consultation was prepared by Sonya Linskaill, RIAS Conservation Accredited Chartered Architect and Consultant. The report format is based on a template provided by The Highland Council and adapted to suit the Conservation Area.

The Management Plan was undertaken in conjunction with a Project Stakeholder Group consisting of representatives from The Granttown Society, THC, Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA), Granttown and Vicinity Community Council, the Granttown Initiative, the Granttown Community Centre, and Badenoch and Strathspey Council Ward Representatives.

DRAFT



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Map 1: Granttown-on-Spey Conservation Area (outlined in blue) as adopted June 2019

2.0 OVERVIEW | FOIR-SHEALLADH

2.1 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

The character of the Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area is derived from a number of unique qualities and elements which make it a distinct and important place. These factors must be considered and respected when undertaking any development. Full details are provided in the Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area Appraisal.

- A Georgian planned town which remains a successful local town centre with mixed use properties and busy distinctive High Street;
- The architectural form, scale, rhythm and massing of its buildings, and their interrelationship with its streets, spaces and topography;
- The integrity of the original plan, plot size, plot boundaries and divisions;
- A strong urban form running from Castle Road in the east, to the Kynlira Bridge in the west, maintaining one building line with few exceptions. Closes and lanes at right angles to the main thoroughfare giving access to the rear of properties and back courts;
- The repetition of certain distinctive architectural features and the cumulative effect of these on the appearance of the wider townscape;
- The quality, diversity and authenticity of Grantown-on-Spey's historic buildings; a mix of original Georgian buildings, commercial Victorian redevelopment and suburban Victorian villas;
- Their palette of traditional materials and finishes, in stone and lime with slate roofs and timber windows and doors. Indigenous local materials including granite, whinstone and local heavy grey slate;
- The contribution made by open green space and trees both in their own right and as contributors to the setting of buildings, streets and spaces. The Square, the original market place at the town's heart, is a significant public open green space and amenity;
- Wider area vistas and views experienced within the Conservation Area, looking out, looking inward on key approaches and looking across and through the Conservation Area;
- Attractive setting including historic woodlands enclosing the town.



The Square with war memorial; Grant Arms hotel and former Speyside House beyond.



The High Street

2.2 CHARACTER AREAS

The Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area can be considered broadly as comprising three character areas:

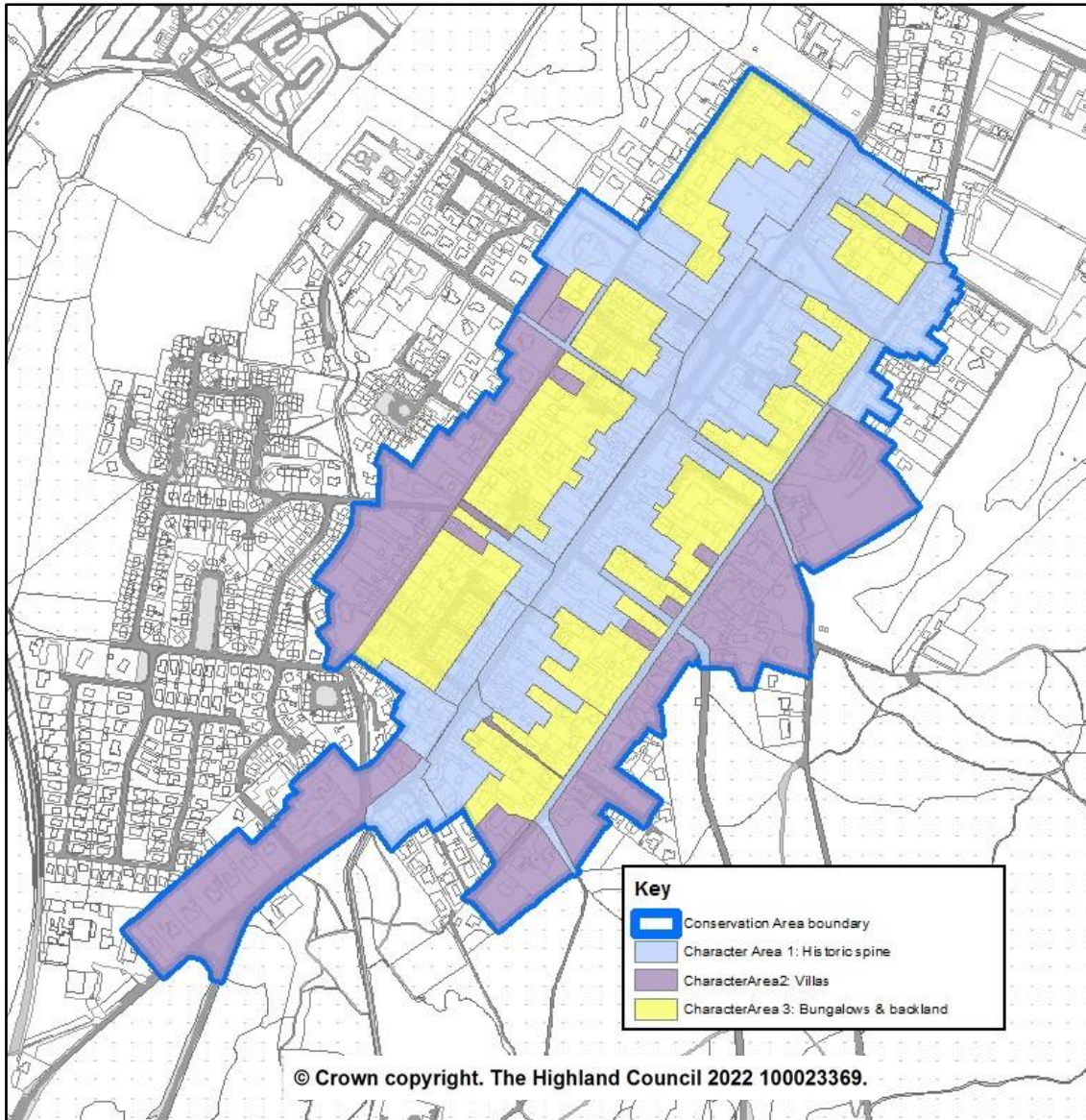
1. The historic spine of the town: a combination of original Georgian and Victorian properties, with some later Victorian redevelopment of individual sites, in particular after 1860. Castle Road and the Square spatially and architecturally retain the strongest character and appearance of the Georgian planned town; with the High Street a dense urban frontage of mixed Georgian and Victorian buildings, with closes and lanes leading off to traditional 'backland' buildings and yards.

2. The Victorian and Edwardian villa development: dating from the late 1860s, this encloses the original Georgian planned town to the north and south, and on approach from the west. It includes a number of public buildings of this period such as the Grantown Primary School and St Columba's Episcopal Church (1893).

3. Later 20th century bungalow and backland development: construction of 1960s and 1970s bungalows, resulting from the subdivision of the original planned town lots, and later 20th and early 21st century infill development on former gardens and yards in the 'backland' areas behind the historic spine of the town.

The relatively flat and open aspect of Grantown means that there is a spatial quality and openness to the town. The original planned town, modern bungalows, and Victorian villas are often seen together particularly in the parallel streets and approaches, and their character and appearance affects how the whole Conservation Area 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.

Planning management criteria for these different character areas is highlighted as applicable in the Management Plan. Map 2 illustrates these three character areas. Note buildings of other periods may lie within a different character area, for example part of the 1970s redevelopment of South-West High Street sits within the historic spine of the town. Individual buildings and their immediate context should always be considered in any planning proposals and decisions, alongside with the broader character area and Conservation Area context.



Map 2: Granttown-on-Spey Conservation Area indicating the three Character Areas

2.3 CONSERVATION AREA PRIORITIES

Much of the strategy and guidance in this Management Plan relates to the day-to-day conservation area management and the statutory duties of the Planning Authority. However, there are also opportunities and actions to deal with threats that may benefit from a partnership approach, or from a prioritised approach by the local authority and/or national park authority.

These will be described in greater detail in the plan, but can be summarised as follows:

1. Public Realm management and enhancement, in particular establishing a strategy for the Square and investigating opportunities to enhance Burnfield Avenue.
2. Investigating opportunities for High Street regeneration.
3. Supporting reuse of vacant retail premises in the town centre and vacant upper floors.
4. Securing the future and appropriate reuse of Gladstone House.

PART 1: CHALLENGES AND THREATS | DÙBHLAIN AGUS BREATAICHEAN

The Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area Appraisal (2019) identified 'conservation issues' which are detailed in section 8 of the Appraisal. These have been reviewed for this Management Plan and are summarised below and in Map 3. They are separated into challenges and threats which tend to occur in conservation areas across Scotland, and challenges which are specific to Grantown.

DRAFT

3.0 WIDER CHALLENGES | DÙBHRAIN NAS FARSAINGE

3.1 LACK OF REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

Grantown-on-Spey is reasonably well maintained in terms of its buildings, public realm and open spaces. However, maintenance and repair requirements are evident with elements in poor condition particularly noticeable on High Street at high level. Repair and maintenance issues include:

- Slated roofs in need of repair, slipped slates, evidence of possible 'nail sickness' or need for more comprehensive slate repairs;
- Blocked, missing and defective gutters and downpipes; cast iron with failed paint finishes and corrosion;
- Upper windows and timber work on dormers with flaking paintwork and possible timber damage;
- Vegetation growth at high level;
- Localised areas of stone decay and loss of pointing, particularly sandstone details and exposed or high-level elements such as chimneys;
- Stone boundary walls in need of repair.

Defects, particularly at roof level, can pose a safety issue especially on public streets.

3.2 LOSS OF ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL AND ORIGINAL FEATURES

One of the greatest impacts on Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area has been the accumulative effect of small, incremental losses which together have had a significant negative impact on its authenticity, character and appearance. The incremental removal and loss of traditional details and features contributes to the erosion of the special character of the Conservation Area. This includes: windows and doors; the replacement of local slate roofs; changes to chimney stacks and loss of stone copes; loss or damage to stone boundary walls; and the loss of original shop frontages, details and proportions.

Likewise, this loss and erosion can result in the introduction of new and inappropriate architectural forms. For example; the replacement of original window and door designs in unsympathetic designs, materials or methods of opening.

3.3 USE OF INAPPROPRIATE MATERIALS

Materials are an important element of the Conservation Area, and the use of appropriate natural materials on its traditional buildings is crucial to its preserving the character and appearance. One of the greatest threats to any heritage site is the loss of authenticity through use of inappropriate modern materials in repair and replacement. In addition, modern materials tend to have a uniform surface, profile and patina, may weather comparatively poorly and often stand out from traditional materials. Common examples in Grantown include:

- Concrete roof tiles which appear heavy and unrefined, and weather poorly compared to slate, often becoming discoloured and attracting moss;
- uPVC rainwater goods which lack the character, variety of finish and texture of cast iron;

- Impervious cement mortars on masonry which can accelerate stone decay and reduce the breathability of the building fabric;
- Modern painted cement renders, which often appear uniform in colour and surface texture compared to traditional lime harl and lime wash finishes; and prevent moisture movement through the external wall surface;
- Application of modern paint finishes to previous unfinished stone masonry walling changing the character and appearance of the building and obscuring the original design; also prevents moisture movement through the external wall surface;
- uPVC or aluminium windows and doors which lack the profile, texture and variety of colour finishes of traditional painted timber windows, doors and shop frontages;
- Modern plastic shopfront signage which lacks the quality of traditional metal or timber signage and painted signwriting finishes.

These materials have replaced original materials to varying extents on many traditional properties in the Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area. This has resulted in a loss of uniformity, symmetry and cohesion, and has had a significant impact on its character and appearance particularly in the town centre High Street.

Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area contains later 20th century buildings, many of which are constructed using some of the materials above. This will be discussed in section 4.7.

3.4 INAPPROPRIATE AND UNSYMPATHETIC ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS

Due to the original plot pattern of Grantown-on-Spey, where buildings are street-facing, extensions have chiefly taken place to the rear of properties in the traditional central spine along Castle Road, the Square and High Street. Similarly, the street-facing Victorian villas and 20th century bungalows are set back from the road with front gardens, again resulting in rear or sometimes side extensions. These extensions are therefore often hidden from public view from the main thoroughfares; however, they are visible when moving through the area using the closes which access backland areas, and lanes which connect to the principal streets north and south of the centre.

Inappropriate and unsympathetic alterations in the Conservation Area include:

- Box dormers;
- Alteration of roof pitches to extend attic/upper floor space;
- Large flat roof extensions;
- Introduction of large rooflights, especially if non-traditional forms;
- Poor quality, short-life materials;
- Widening of shopfronts disproportionately to a traditional neighbouring shopfront and/or to the partner building.

3.5 ADAPTATION FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Adaptation of the Conservation Area's building stock to adapt to a changing climate and improve energy efficiency are important considerations in securing a sustainable future for the Conservation Area. It is, however, important that external adaptations are carefully considered,

are sensitive and appropriate to the character, appearance and performance of building and its wider heritage context. In some cases, it will be necessary to find acceptable compromises to ensure a balance between the preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and adaptation.

3.6 INSTALLATION OF MICRO-RENEWABLES

There are examples of solar panels in the Conservation Area and a small number of air source heat pumps. In many cases it will be possible to incorporate at least some micro-renewable technologies without detriment to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. However, in some cases, where micro-renewables are clearly visible from the public realm, are visible on principle elevations or in important views other options may need to be considered. Information on climate-change mitigation measures which are supported in the Conservation Area can be seen in Section 5.6.

3.7 NEW DEVELOPMENT

3.7.1 Design of new development

There is a large proportion of modern 20th century development in the Conservation Area, the most visual being the bungalows constructed from the 1960s and 1970s, the majority of which are presumed to date to before Conservation Area designation. There has been considerable new development in the Conservation Area since its 1970s designation, chiefly in the area between the traditional spine of Grantown (Castle Road, The Square and High Street) and the later bungalow development, in an area termed the 'backlands', originally rear yards and gardens. In the last 12 years over 50 new dwellings have been constructed in this area including detached houses and flats. (Refer CAA map 6.1 date analysis).

Most of the mid to later 20th century bungalows have a neutral impact on the Conservation Area's character and appearance, being low in height and using a neutral palette of colours (refer section 4.7). However some more recent modern development (generally new housing) in the Conservation Area has not always been sympathetic to the character of the area in terms of:

- The planned town pattern, and the building's relationship to the street line;
- Storey height is too high, for example some 2-storey or tall 1½ storey detached houses amongst low bungalow and traditional cottages and backland outbuildings;
- Lack of articulation of the street façade;
- Large areas of uniform dry dash or brightly painted wet dash renders;
- Lack of articulation of the roofscape; large rooflights spread across front roof pitches;
- Windows without vertical emphasis;
- Exposing hard surfaces for parking fronting the street; some on former garden ground;
- Inappropriate boundary treatments;
- Use of standard modern materials which detract from the palette of local materials.

3.7.2 Potential for new development

There is limited space for new development in the Conservation Area as a result of fairly intensive subdivision of formerly open ground behind the street fronting buildings. In some cases, backland areas are effectively landlocked due to a lack of, or potential for, modern vehicle access (width and visibility). However, the integrity and character of the Conservation Area may benefit from the enhancement and appropriate new development (subject to the appropriate permissions) of two locations, by bringing a number of plots together and having a common design approach to an assembled site.

Site 1: Rear Plots at Nos. 70-80 High Street. A highly visible gap site on Spey Avenue neighbouring the recent successful reuse and extension of the former Speyside Hotel. There is potential to enhance the streetscape, introduce boundary definition and potential for non-vehicle access routes.

Site 2: Rear of Nos. 32-33 the Square, British Legion site and Telecom building. The Telecom building design has a negative impact on the Conservation Area, and elements are in poor condition; e.g., boundary wall, maintenance of light wells and grounds. The adjoining lane would benefit from repair and enhancement as it forms a popular pedestrian route from South Street to the Square.

The two locations are described in section 5.11.

3.8 PLACEMENT OF SERVICES AND TELECOMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT

On a smaller scale, but still significant with regard to potential impact on character and appearance, are poorly sited services such as large aerials, satellite dishes, cabling, flues, security equipment and pipework. These items can have a negative visual impact, and also in some cases cause building fabric damage, for example aerials and satellite dishes attached to high level masonry.

4.0 SPECIFIC CHALLENGES | DÙBHLAIN SÒNRAICHTE

4.1 CONDITION OF HIGH STREET BUILDINGS INCLUDING SHOPFRONTS, WINDOWS AND DOORS

Grantown's High Street is very unusual in that it contains almost 100% independent retailers, providing essential services to the local community and a unique offering for visitors. Its traditional townscape provides an appropriate setting of character, however the accumulative effect of a lack of maintenance, need for repair to some properties, and poor quality and design of replacement elements, has been described by locals as creating a 'tired' look to the High Street.

Most of the wider challenges described in section 3 are evident in the High Street, for example:

- Roof slate and high-level building elements in need of repair and maintenance;
- Upper floor windows and dormer windows in need of repair / maintenance;
- A risk of loss of original elements in poor condition and a dilution of special character;
- Inconsistent design of window and door replacements, many inappropriate window and door designs and material choices (aluminium, uPVC);
- Inappropriate alterations such as box dormers and roof pitch alterations;
- Maintenance and repair required to parts of the public realm.

In addition,

- Previous alterations to form shopfronts leading to removal of masonry, loss of façade symmetry and overly large frontages disproportionate to neighbouring shops and/or the parent building/street block;
- Inappropriate design of modern shopfronts, some now aging;
- Overly large fascia signage;
- Low quality or inappropriate materials used for shopfronts and signage;
- Painting or modern cladding over stone piers and stall risers;
- Neon signs and very bright colour use.

Comparative images overleaf illustrate some of these changes to Grantown's High Street. All historic images courtesy of The Grantown Society.



The original Georgian buildings did not have 'shopfronts' but used ground floor windows, whereas the later Victorian and Edwardian buildings were designed to incorporate shopfronts. Many Georgian buildings have been modified to introduce large shopfronts for example the vacant SSE unit (above right), seen in its earlier form in the left foreground (above left). This is typical of a number of unsympathetic interventions where masonry has been removed leaving little visual support to the storey above and no street level stallriser.



Views of the southside of High Street in the Edwardian era, mid-20th century and 2022. Many of the traditional Victorian or Edwardian shopfronts introduced on the High Street, and still evident in the mid-20th century, have subsequently been replaced. Upper floor windows have also been replaced in non-traditional opening styles, fenestration patterns and materials.



From the Victorian period onwards, mixed commercial and residential premises were typically designed for high streets such as Nos. 3 & 7 and No. 34 High Street. The latter (right) retains an original Edwardian shopfront, its close door and original timber sash and case windows.



No. 7 High Street, the former Post Office, had a very large late Victorian shop frontage, the basic form of which survives (right), although there has been some adaptation and replacement. Note the individually mounted lettering on its original fascia, a suitable signage approach today and used on the neighbouring Mortimer's.



In a number of buildings, earlier ground floor opening patterns have been altered for example by combining /relocating / widening doors and windows which chiefly effects the symmetry and fenestration pattern of the traditional parent buildings and groups of similar buildings.

4.2 PUBLIC REALM

The Conservation Area Appraisal states that the public realm is generally utilitarian in character and can detract from the high-quality historic built environment. The quality and upkeep of the public realm is of importance to the interests of commercial business and residents and presents an image of the town to visitors. General areas of concern include:

- Damage to street surfaces, footpaths and parking surfaces, patch repairs;
- Some street furniture in poor condition or in need of maintenance / replacement;
- A mix of signage and waymarking styles / colours / designs;
- Some places with dominating signage;
- Standard street lighting, some with failing finishes.



Low quality timber/wire fencing and concrete bollard detract from the historic setting with decorative iron bridge railings; the standard yellow & black signage is highly visible but could be provided with a more sympathetic signage design and material for this attractive historic and natural setting.



Iron railings on Kyntra Bridge, and the adjacent ornate drinking fountain are in need of minor maintenance.



Damaged footpath and car park finishes in need of repair / replacement in Burnfield Avenue.



Some street furniture is in poor condition such as this litter bin in Burnfield Avenue.

The public realm makes a considerable contribution to the setting of Grantown and its amenity and enjoyment to residents and visitors. The specific challenges of these key public spaces are described overleaf.

4.2.1 Public Realm: the Square and Burnfield Garden

The Square is one of the principal defining features of Grantown, the heart of the original planned town design, and today a distinctive amenity space and location for community events. It is identified in the Local Development Plan as a Protected Open Space, recognising its importance to the setting and overall fabric of the settlement.

In general, the Square is a well maintained and attractive greenspace with mature trees, the earliest planted in 1853. Most recently, the Grantown Initiative has worked with The Highland Council and the local Community Council using Town Centre Funds to remove damaged trees and replant young trees (mainly field maples), and provided new seating to encourage social interaction in the Square. Trees now have electric points for lighting and power during events.

However, there is community discussion as to possible larger enhancement opportunities for the Square particularly to make the space more accessible to all, pedestrian and cyclist friendly. Some of the challenges for the Square are:

- Fairly heavy traffic cutting through the centre of the Square;
- Busy area and parking need at the Cooperative store;
- Pedestrians not a priority; parts of the access road around the Square don't have pavements; no formal pedestrian crossing points along the Square;
- War memorial isolated by roads on all sides;
- Short painted bollards, some damaged and in poor condition, with metal chains which section off the grass and require to be removed for events; pedestrians commonly step over and walk diagonal across the grass on 'desire lines';
- Bollards are a variety of colours, painted green and white previously, black and gold more recently;
- Some gaps appear to remain in the tree planting, one recent tree needs replaced, fewer trees at the Cooperative end of the Square;
- Some areas of grass erosion;
- No medium to long term tree management plan;
- Mix of street furniture, infrastructure and signage, some in need of maintenance;
- Mix of colour schemes / standard colour schemes for street furniture and signage;
- Standard modern material finishes for street surfacing; areas with patch repairs.

At the eastern end of the Square, Burnfield Gardens is an attractive greenspace but its use is unclear and it has limited seating.

Two lanes lead from the Square to South Street providing important pedestrian routes, one next to the Grant Arms Hotel, and the other at the British Legion, however both would benefit from maintenance / repair / enhancement of surfaces, boundaries, trees and natural vegetation. In their current condition they are difficult to negotiate for some users, for example those in a wheelchair or pushing a buggy.



Key points on the Square such as its junction at Seafield Road can appear cluttered with street furniture and signage.



Surface finishes throughout the public realm are generally standard tarmac with some modern brick pavements which don't enhance the historic environment; chains enclosed the grass.



The town's war memorial is a landmark on the Square and important community focal point. It is however isolated by roads on all sides.



View towards South Street on the lane next to the Grant Arms hotel, traditional stone walls, trees and vegetation add interest but the footpath's surface condition and width makes it difficult for some users.



Burnfield Gardens at the eastern end of the Square is attractive with less traffic and no parked cars unlike the Square, but provides little seating.



Pedestrians including secondary school children use the cut-through beside the Court House and take a diagonal 'desire line' across the grass.

4.2.2 Public Realm: Church Avenue and Grant Road

Church Avenue, connecting the centre of the Square to Grant Road, forms a natural extension of the Square with its attractive tree-lined space with views of the Inverallan Church and war memorial closing vistas north and south. As in the Square, there are some very mature trees, alongside some established younger trees. There are no pavements on Church Avenue, but a broad grass strip both sides of the tarmac road is used as an informal footpath, besides pedestrians using the road itself. Similarly, the section of Grant Road from here to Seafield Avenue has almost no pavement, with the original stone boundary walls of the house plots enclosing the tarmac road.

Some of the challenges for Church Avenue / Grant Road are:

- Effectively, these routes remain in their original form as 'shared spaces' for pedestrians and traffic, however, in modern times vehicle traffic presents potential safety issues;
- On-street parking can create an obstruction cutting off the grass verges and may cause greater use of the road by pedestrians;
- Vehicle parking is reported to be busy at times with the parish church and Cairngorms National Park Authority offices located here;
- The presence of trees on parts of the grass verges is not consistent with clear pedestrian footpaths and not useable for those on wheeled transport. However, the important role of the trees in the setting of Church Avenue requires their retention.



View of Church Avenue looking towards the Square from its junction with Grant Road.



Pedestrians using the road surface on Grant Road where pavements are not present.



West side of Church Avenue used as an informal path.



East side of Church Avenue with young trees.

4.2.3 Public Realm: Burnfield Avenue and car park

This is an important arrival point with a large car parking area for visitors and locals. There are public toilets, recently transferred to community ownership (Grantown Initiative) with plans for their improvement, including caravan/camper waste disposal, due for 2023. The only community recycling point in the town centre is also located here. The Grantown Museum is a key attraction and adds character to the space with traditional lamp posts, stone walling and a tall freestanding bell tower, as well as a number of mature trees. The second landmark is the former Court House (now public library and offices) located at the eastern end of the Square. Burnfield Avenue forms a key route from the secondary school to the town centre, with pedestrians commonly using the narrow cut-through beside the Court House to access the Square.

There is community discussion as to possible enhancement opportunities for this area particularly as the principal arrival point for visitors. Some of the challenges are:

- Unattractive single storage garage and recycling facilities, wheelie bins for general rubbish;
- Tarmac road and path surfacing with no surface definition for pedestrians, and areas in poor condition;
- Good amount of greenspace but lack of planting and trees to add interest, biodiversity and define/screen public/private space;
- A lack of seating, except picnic tables at the museum;
- Interpretation, wayfinding and tourist information is limited;
- No pavement to the east side of the Court House on route to Castle Road, The Garth hotel and Burnfield Gardens;
- The public realm around, and access to the Court House, is of poor quality, utilitarian design with parts in poor condition; modern concrete steps with unpainted steel balustrade; decorative cast iron original railings require maintenance;
- The Regality Cross interpretation board is in poor condition.



View of Burnfield Avenue on the path from South Street, note the uniform surfaces in poor condition.



Recycling facilities at the east side of the Court House are unattractive.



The cut-through from Burnfield Avenue past the Court House to the Square would benefit from enhancement, and maintenance of the original decorative railings.



The area outside the Court House retains original railings and stone walling but new interventions of standard design detract from the potential of this space.



Pedestrian route from Castle Road through Burnfield Avenue is only defined by lines on the tarmac.



The road junction with Castle Road has no pavements on Burnfield Avenue making the crossing towards The Garth hotel / Burnside Gardens potentially hazardous.

4.2.4 Public Realm: High Street

Grantown's High Street has a typical traditional Scottish form with a shops and businesses lining a busy road with pavements each side. Lanes and closes break the building frontages, with two lanes which provide access to Woodside Avenue.

Some of the challenges for the High Street are:

- Fairly heavy traffic dividing the street;
- Maintenance of through routes/lanes; unknown / uninviting to visitors;
- On street parking, one hour parking limits are not regularly enforced, which leads to longer term parking and associated access and delivery issues;
- On street parking, whilst essential at present and for those with access needs, impairs the visibility of shops and poses risks to pedestrians crossing the street and cyclists moving along the road;
- Mix of street infrastructure and signage, some in need of maintenance;
- Large road signage combination at Spey Avenue crossroads;
- Standard modern street surfacing and lighting.

4.3 LOSS OF SETTING, BOUNDARY ENCLOSURES AND TREES

To the rear of the plots the majority of later 20th century development has been set in gardens generally both front and back. Similarly, the Victorian villas are set in garden grounds. 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. This greenspace, i.e., gardens, lawns, trees, shrubs and boundary hedging, contributes significantly to the setting, biodiversity and atmosphere of the town beyond the enclosure of High Street. It provides important softening and screening of the later 20th century development, but loss or lack of screening is evident in some places, resulting in a detrimental impact on the Conservation Area.

Stone boundary walls and hedging make a positive contribution in defining the original planned town plots and the traditional urban character along street lines and lanes. There are instances of boundary walls which are poorly maintained or in need of repair; which have used inappropriate materials in repair, or erected unsuitable boundaries; all of which can detract from the character of the Conservation Area. Some plots have no boundary definition, either from removal of original stone walls or earlier buildings which lined the street, or they did not have stone boundaries. On South-West High Street redevelopment of original housing resulted in new development being set back from the road with now private gardens directly adjoining the pavement. Whilst this is a break from the historic precedent of housing directly onto the street on this section of the High Street, the maturity of these gardens with scrubs and mature trees now adds positively to the streetscape and approach into town and should be maintained without the loss of greenspace and use of enclosures in this case.



Loss of boundary definition at the south High Street carpark where buildings previously lined the street.



Lack of boundary definition on Spey Avenue.

There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in the Conservation Area however, mature trees make an important contribution. Those in the Square and Church Avenue are crucial to the character of these spaces, and there are other importance groups, as well as numerous individual mature trees and small tree groups in private gardens.

There has been tree loss from damage and natural dieback, but the presence now of Ash Dieback and Dutch Elm Disease is likely to impact significant veteran trees in the Conservation Area, for example the elms on Church Avenue and South Street, and the ash trees on the Square. Natural dieback is affecting ash trees close to the war memorial on the Square.

The Highland Council's Amenities Service manages the trees on the Square and South Street. The trees on Church Avenue remain in the ownership of Seafield Estates and are not managed

by the local authority, although the grass area is maintained by them. There is some uncertainty as to the responsibility for management of the roadside birches on South-West High Street where the community council look after the large planters.

At present there is no formal survey or management plan for local authority owned trees, although there is considerable in-house knowledge. Limited resources means that tree removals are not necessarily replaced, for example the elms recently removed in South Street, and there is no medium to long term plan for the Square where, notwithstanding the risk of disease, the predominant trees are of a considerable age.



South-West High Street has a section with large planters incorporating small trees and a group of mature birches, some within private garden ground, others possibly under local authority management.



View from the NW corner of the Square, a replacement tree in the foreground has been damaged.

4.4 BUILDINGS AT RISK

At risk buildings pose several concerns including the potential loss of original materials and features, and ultimately the loss of those of historic or architectural importance to the community and place. In general buildings at risk generate a sense of neglect. Particularly vulnerable are those that are standalone and vacant such as Gladstone House, Nos. 17-19 Castle Road, which has lain vacant for a considerable time.

Currently, Gladstone House is the only building on the formal Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland in Grantown. The property is believed to have been empty since at least 1989 and has been on the register since 1997. A photograph taken just prior to its vacancy is available on Canmore <http://canmore.org.uk/collection/1618963>

Significance: Category C listed building, Gladstone House was constructed in c.1787 and forms part of a very important group of surviving original Georgian houses at the east end of the town around Castle Road. It retains its traditional local slate roof, stone ridges and double entrance doors to No. 19.

Planning: Planning was approved in 2014 for restoration, alteration and single storey rear extension to Gladstone House. The remainder of the original lot has been cleared of any earlier extensions / outbuildings, but it is unclear if any works have commenced which would represent a 'material operation' and commencement of development; otherwise, the Planning Permission will have lapsed (valid for three years from approval).

The above application only covered part of the long original lot at Nos. 17-19. Next door, land behind the Garth Hotel forms part of the same ownership. This appears to have been subject to planning discussions in the past for residential and visitor accommodation but no planning applications have progressed.

Current condition: in need of repair and maintenance externally, removal of self-seeded tree growth in the front garden; internal condition unknown. The building is enclosed at the rear with Heras fencing but the rear building envelope is not secure, putting the structure of this listed building at risk of vandalism and impact from weather, vermin etc.

Ownership: the property was sold in December 2020 to the hotel group which owns The Garth; Land Registration available.



Gladstone House in 2018



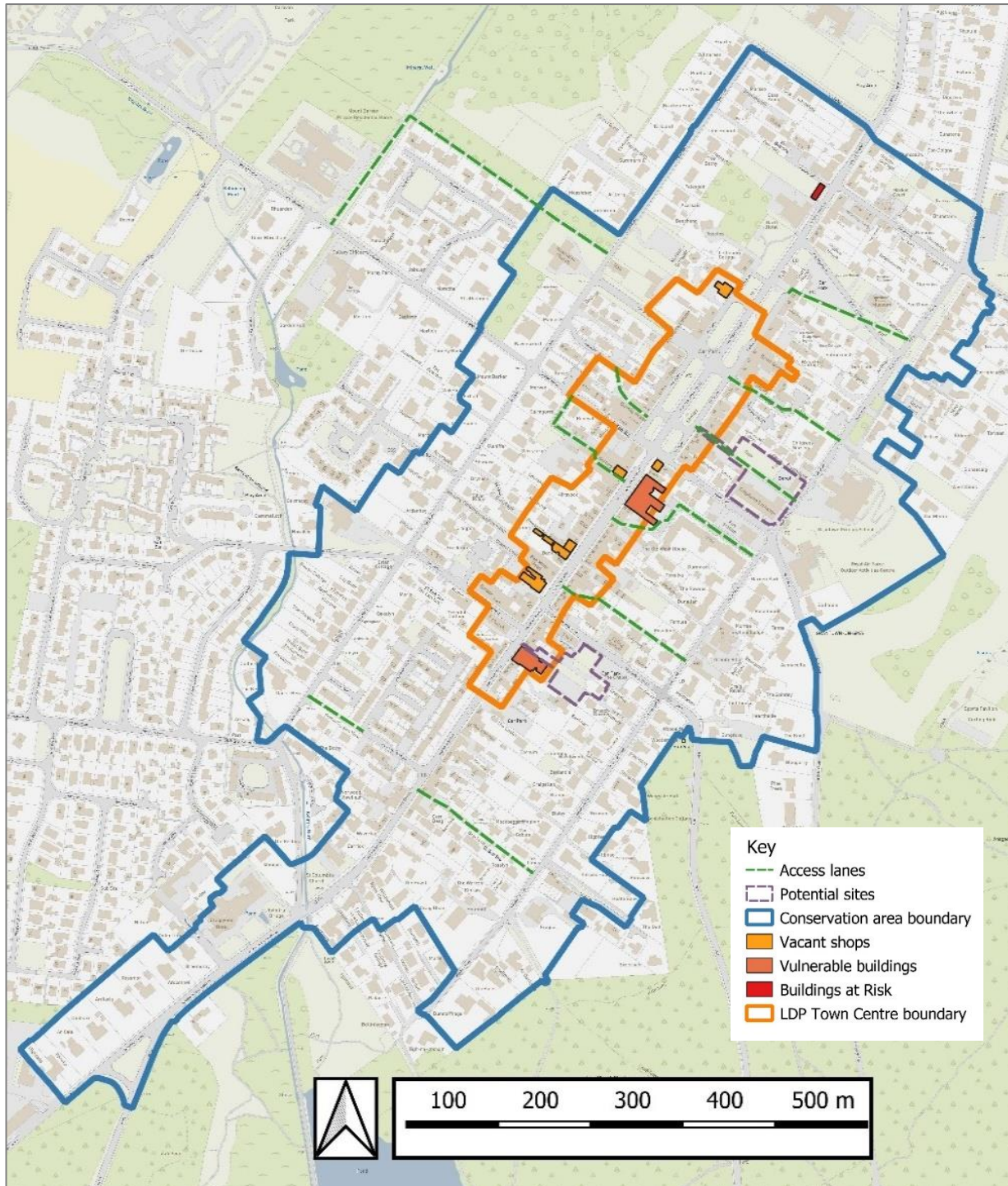
Gladstone House in 2022



Rear elevation not secure 2022



View of plot 2022



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Map 3: Granttown-on-Spey Conservation Area indicating some challenges and opportunities

4.5 VULNERABLE BUILDINGS

Other buildings, which are not 'at risk' but may have a level of vulnerability, are the Granttown Community Centre and the former Grandview Care Home, both on High Street.

4.5.1 Granttown Community Centre, No. 80 High Street

The Granttown Community Centre on High Street is operated as a community centre incorporating large Victorian halls and other rooms, and a later 20th century two-storey rear hall and external sports pitch.

Significance: constructed as the Victoria Institute (1897/8) the building forms a landmark to the western end of High Street close to its major crossroads with Spey Avenue and opposite the Baptist Chapel. Its tall gable frontage and corner turret distinguishing it from the streetscape. It has considerable social importance as a community facility offering a small cinema, sports hall, event space, office space and a recently created shop unit.

Current condition: Urgent repair work was undertaken in 2021 to temporarily secure the dormer windows on the front elevation, and address rot as a result of defect rainwater goods on the side elevation, and a structural roof survey to investigate signs of historic movement. Currently on-going professional monitoring of historic cracks on the front elevation as a priority. Future repair work will be required to the front elevation stonework as well as to the rear gutters and improvements to the front door, glazed link, and a need for efficient heating. Further improvements to internal spaces could include insulation of the large 1960s extension, adaptation of the former upper flat and other internal enhancements.

Ownership: Granttown-on-Spey YMCA Community Centre, a registered Scottish Charity and Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). Like many similar organisations, the success of the community centre very much depends on the work of its voluntary Board.



Granttown Community Centre forms an architectural and community landmark on the High Street



Historic movement on the front elevation is being monitored but will require repair.



Former Grandview Care Home forms a minor landmark on High Street with distinctive architectural detailing.

4.5.2 Former Grandview Care Home, Nos. 14-18 High Street

Operated as a care home from 1989 until its recent closure, the building forms a very important part of High Street.

Significance: reflecting the commercial status and growth of Grantown, the former Palace Hotel was constructed from c.1894 in three stages encompassing the site of the original Black Bull Inn (refer Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area Appraisal section 4.2.2). It forms a minor landmark on the High Street, its 3½-storey façade dominates as an exception to the 1- to 2-storey traditional properties.

Current condition: The exterior of the building appears to be in reasonable condition; however, its complex roof form requires regular maintenance. The building retains considerable original architectural detail and elements including cast iron finials, decorative slating, high level decorative timber to dormers and eaves, and timber sash and case windows generally.

Ownership: known (i.e., marketed for sale). Note that No. 12 Claymore Bar is owned separately.

4.6 TOWN CENTRE VACANCY

A snapshot of vacancy in the last seven years is provided in the Cairngorms National Planning Authority's Town Centre Health Check reports (2016 & 2018) recording overall vacancy to town centre businesses at 9% and 10% respectively. The 2018 report noted that there were ten new businesses indicating a turnover of some premises. Of those which were vacant in 2015, all have now been brought back into use. Of those identified in 2018, the former Strathspey Hotel and two small shop units are back in use. However, other premises are now vacant, with a total of four large shop units vacant on the High Street, plus the former care home and Morlich House, both currently marketed for sale. Some of these may not be 'at risk' and will in turn find new lessees under normal market circumstances, or currently have development plans, such as the former Royal Bank of Scotland. However, vacancy can give the impression of economic difficulties and cause community concern. Those listed below are particularly significant in their size, positions and/or status and may require further action or policies to secure new uses.

Former SSE showroom, No. 2 High Street. Vacant since c.2018, with very occasional temporary community uses. Lease available. Large plate glass modern shopfront which would benefit from enhancement. Refer section 4.1 for images.

Former post office, No. 7 High Street was vacated sometime after 2018 (post office services relocated in 2015). Currently marketed for lease. A good example of the change in retail buildings in the high Victorian era. It stands out in High Street as one of a small number of more elaborate Victorian / Edwardian buildings which form minor landmarks in the streetscape. The shopfront generally retains its original form with a high fascia. Refer section 4.1 for images.

Nos. 43-51 High Street, a row of four buildings, the central two being vacant at ground and upper levels, and a third, with a poorly designed shopfront, is for sale.

No. 43-45 High Street (formerly Ritchie's) has been vacant since 2018 although purchased subsequently and with a proposal for change of use, alteration and extension to form a microbrewery and canning operation in the shop unit. The upper floors appear vacant, and their future use is unknown.

Bay Leaf Spice No. 47 High Street is currently vacant, including, it appears, the upper floors and rear extensions and outbuildings. Elements of the building are in very poor condition with a defective timber lintel above the close door and parts of the rear buildings where a recent fire occurred, and the building is not secured. However, the buildings retain a number of traditional elements including the Bay Leaf Spice large plate glass shopfront windows with curved glass and slender colonnades to its entrance. Original 2 over 2 pane timber sash and case windows remain to the upper floor windows and dormers and are in need of repair and painting. The original paneled close door has significant character despite its need for repair and painting. The Grantown Society has previously contacted The Highland Council regarding its condition and potential for assistance through the Empty Homes Initiative.

No. 51 High Street, adjacent to Bay Leaf Spice, is currently marketed for sale. Like the former SSE this has had a considerable intervention in the past to create a glazed commercial frontage (former bank; <http://canmore.org.uk/collection/1618958>) and would benefit from remodeling to reinstate openings more suitable to the partner building and neighbouring properties. The Bay Leaf Spice traditional shopfront could form be a good basis for a new shop front design to reinstate symmetry across this building pair.



Nos.47-51 High Street



Nos. 41-45 High Street

4.7 20TH CENTURY DEVELOPMENT

4.7.1 Bungalow development

It is thought that the transfer of the original land leases to feus in the 1960s removed the original restraints on the subdivision of plots. As a result, bungalows were constructed from the 1960s on the 'tails' of the original lots, establishing an area of street facing bungalows on Grant Road / Mossie Road and Woodside Avenue/South Street. These bungalows were not constructed of the same traditional materials as the original historic town, and their close proximity to traditional buildings means they have a visual influence on townscape character and views within the Conservation Area. Most have a neutral impact on the Conservation Area's character and appearance, as they display important building characteristics in terms of design and material use. However, there are specific elements and characteristics which do have a more negative impact.

Important neutral characteristics:

- Low in height, usually single storey;
- Low density, one house per plot initially although some additional backland subdivision has created additional interim houses increasing the density;
- Set back from the road;
- Pitched roofs, often hipped reducing the height of gable end elevations;
- Most don't have dormers or rooflights on street facing roof slopes;
- A neutral palette of colours often with artificial buff coloured stone and partly light coloured (not white) render and buff-coloured concrete tiles;
- Most retain garden grounds and mature shrubs and trees which soften their visual impact;
- Most retain street boundary definition, some with the original stone walling or hedging.

Potential negative characteristics:

- Prominent gables fronting the street;
- Strong dark coloured materials and finishes including timber cladding;
- Non-traditional roof forms;
- Box dormers which disrupt the low sloping rooflines;
- Bold and irregular artificial stone patterns can be distracting;
- Repainting or rendering in white finishes;
- No trees and garden screening;
- Inappropriate or lacking boundary treatments.



Typical examples of bungalows which have a neutral impact on the Conservation Area including low pitched roofs, elevations articulated with artificial stone and light coloured renders, subtle colour palette, low boundary walls and hedging.

Considering their age (approx. 40-50 years from construction), planning approaches for alterations, replacements and energy efficiency improvements of these properties should be carefully considered. Many are of individual design which adds to the character of this area, and if houses were to become more uniform, their impact on the Conservation Area could be more detrimental.

4.7.2 South-West High Street

South-West High Street is the part of the original High Street that was redeveloped in the 1970s. Similar to some traditional buildings, the original unity of group's design has been affected by inconsistent changes to windows and their fenestration patterns. This includes a mix of single pane and two-pane glazing in different proportions, and a variety of colours. This is most visible on the houses that front the main thoroughfare approaching the town centre.



1970s redevelopment on South-West High Street: inconsistent changes to windows has reduced the unity of the original group design

PART 2: OPPORTUNITIES AND MANAGEMENT | COISEAN AGUS RIAGHLADH

There are opportunities to enhance the positive qualities of the Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area through effective management which should be seized wherever practicable. A fundamental principle when considering the management of the Conservation Area is that it should be proactive and heritage-led.

The following section 5 suggests opportunities to respond to the challenges set out in sections 3 and 4. Planning policy in support of planning management and in relation to the challenges and opportunities is then outlined in Section 6.

DRAFT

5.0 OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT | COTHROMAN AIRSON NEARTACHADH

5.1 INCREASED MAINTENANCE AND TIMELY REPAIR

The best means of preserving the character and appearance of any area is through the routine maintenance of buildings, public realm and green infrastructure, such as trees and open spaces. Responsibility for maintenance and repair lies with individual property owners and for most routine works, planning permission is not required. Roofs, chimneys, windows, doors, rainwater goods, stonework, paintwork, wall finishes, entrance steps and boundary treatments all need regular attention to prolong their life, protect the built environment and its setting. Regular inspection and maintenance can help reduce costs in the long term and support sustainable use of resources. Similar considerations apply to the management and upkeep of trees, private gardens and other private and public open spaces.

Maintenance can hold off repair for a considerable time, but poorly maintained buildings and spaces can cause defects and repair needs more quickly. All materials have a 'shelf life' and will need repaired at some point. Repairs should be undertaken in a timely manner as soon as defects appear to reduce the loss of original fabric, and reduce potential costs of repair. 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.

Historic Environment Scotland's [INFORM Guide](#) series provides useful information on maintenance and repair for many elements of historic buildings, alongside their [Short Guide 9 Maintaining Your Home](#). THC also has a [maintenance guide](#) on its website which can be used for information on traditional buildings.

5.2 PRESERVE AND REINSTATE TRADITIONAL FEATURES

Original architectural detail and features make a defining contribution to the character and appearance of Grantown-on-Spey. Where original architectural detail and features remain, there is a presumption they will be preserved.

Where traditional features have been lost, the Planning Authority will support their reinstatement. For example, replacing inappropriate modern windows and doors with historically appropriate units; replacing modern boundary treatments with appropriate traditional boundaries; reinstatement of traditional detailing and traditional signwriting on shopfronts etc. Further guidance on shopfronts, windows and doors is provided in section 5.4.

5.3 USE OF APPROPRIATE MATERIALS

It is important that inappropriate materials are not permitted on both traditional properties and new buildings in the Conservation Area in line with Policy 3 and Policy 9 of the Cairngorms National Planning Authority Local Development Plan.

Many inappropriate materials evident today were likely used legitimately when the associated works of repair, replacement or alteration were classed as permitted development and not because they were specifically condoned or approved by the Planning Authority. Changes to the General Permitted Development Order in 2012 brought many of these works under planning legislation to enable better management of conservation areas. Planning Permission is now required to carry out most external changes to buildings in a conservation area and inappropriate modern materials should not be proposed or permitted moving forward. Further guidance is provided in section 5.4.

5.4 PROMOTION OF SENSITIVE ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS: TRADITIONAL BUILDINGS

Sensitive alterations and extension of listed buildings, where this will not harm their special interest, and of unlisted buildings where the proposals preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area will be supported. Legislation and best practice in managing change will be followed. Historic Environment Scotland's [Managing Change in the Historic Environment series](#) provides guidance on a wide range of listed and traditional building topics. Guidance for specific challenges in Grantown-on-Spey is provided below.

5.4.1 Approach to existing High Street shopfronts

Many of the traditional shopfronts in Grantown have been altered or replaced. However, some interesting elements and details survive (refer Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area Appraisal section 4.2.1) and it should be borne in mind that earlier details may survive under modern signage fascias and panels.

Notwithstanding any broader regeneration project discussed in section 5.10, case-by-case opportunities which arise from commercial turnover or upgrading should be taken to enhance existing shopfronts and signage, all of which should be in accordance with guidance in Historic Environment Scotland's Managing Change in the Historic Environment: [Shopfronts and Signs](#).

The following high-level principles should be followed:

1. Existing original shopfronts and features that survive should be retained and carefully conserved including stallrisers, pilasters, fascias, doors, windows, fanlights, thresholds, tiles and ironmongery;
2. Where an existing shopfront is unsympathetic or of poor quality, consider a more appropriate design that is in-keeping with the style and character of the existing parent building;
3. It may be appropriate to reinstate a traditional shopfront based on sound historical or contextual evidence. Use historic images to identify earlier designs and inform enhancement proposals; section 4.1 illustrates a number of historic shopfronts on Grantown's High Street;
4. Where no evidence of the traditional shopfront exists, or it can be demonstrated that reinstatement is not appropriate and/or possible, the Planning Authority will consider a

contemporary design that is sympathetic to and in-keeping with the scale and character of the existing parent building;

5. All shopfronts should be well-designed and use high quality materials and appropriate signage in order to maintain and strengthen the local distinctiveness and Grantown's unique High Street;
6. All shopfronts should maximise their transparency between the street and shop interior by ensuring display windows are not obscured by signage, advertising or other visual clutter. This will vary depending on the individual shop window style and does not indicate a need for widening existing shopfronts.



Traditional shopfront design often incorporated a lobby, and its threshold may display decorative tiles or trade names which are increasingly rare and should always be retained.



Traditional retractable blinds were popular in Grantown and several shops retain blind boxes and mechanisms.

Appendix 1 provides further detail on considerations for the design of new shopfronts in Grantown, signage, advertising and security measures. Historic Environment Scotland's [Short Guide 12: Scottish Traditional Shopfronts](#) and THC's [Shopfront Design Guide](#) can also be referred to for information.

All external alterations to a shopfront in Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area will require Planning Permission. This can include repainting in a different colour, small changes to features such as doors, decorative details, as well as the installation of CCTV and burglar alarms. Where the shopfront forms part of a listed building, Listed Building Consent for internal and external alterations will be required.

Signage and advertisements may require Planning Permission and Schedule 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) Regulations 1984 (as amended) outlines what signage can be displayed with Deemed Consent. All other signage will require Advertisement Consent and within a conservation area illuminated signs always require Advertisement Consent. Where signage is installed under Deemed Consent provisions, enforcement action can still be considered where inappropriate signage, in the view of the Planning Authority, has been installed, such as unsympathetic plastic or otherwise inappropriate signage that has an adverse effect on amenity. It is, therefore, important that the Planning Authority is consulted first, prior to installation, even if the signage appears to be permitted under the Deemed Consent provisions.

5.4.2 Approach to High Street window and door design

The design, quality and condition of upper floor windows and close doors also contribute to the character and overall appearance of the High Street. Whether that is the repetitive rhythm of the Georgian window pattern, or the more distinctive contributions made by individual Victorian and Edwardian windows and doors. Whilst a significant number have been lost, going forward, taking a consistent and informed design approach to applications for replacement of modern inappropriate windows in the High Street would assist in making positive incremental change.

The following principles should be followed:

- There is a presumption in favour of the repair of original windows and close doors in preference to their replacement;
- Where shown to be beyond repair, or replacing an inappropriate modern window or door, replacements should use timber; uPVC and aluminium are not acceptable in listed buildings or on traditional buildings in the Conservation Area;
- Use traditional opening methods for windows, i.e., sliding sash and case, unless historic evidence of an alternative style;
- Designs should seek to unify window design over a building, or group of buildings, following the historic precedent of the original building, commonly either 6 over 6 panes or 2 over 2 panes. Refer to historic images;
- Where trickle ventilation is required, it will be designed not to be visible;
- Replacement doors should replicate exactly the proportion, panel style and moulding details of the original;
- Timber should be painted; stained or varnished timber is not generally suitable;
- Colours may vary but historic images suggest darker and/or muted colours were often used rather than white.

Historic Environment Scotland provides guidance on the finer details of replacement in its Managing Change in the Historic Environment: [Windows](#) and [Doorways](#) as well as various research publications on [window design and performance](#). The Highland Council's Historic Windows and Doors guide should be referred to for information; [Historic Windows and Doors](#)

5.5 PROMOTION OF SENSITIVE ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS: NON-TRADITIONAL BUILDINGS

Sensitive alterations and extension of non-traditional buildings, where this will not harm the special interest, character and appearance of the Conservation Area will be supported. Due to the flat and open nature of the built environment in Grantown, rear and side extensions can be visible in views across the Conservation Area. Therefore, the location of an extension and/or alteration should not be seen as justification for designs which are not to a conservation area standard or appropriate to its character and appearance. Decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis; however, the following approaches provide general guidelines.

5.5.1 Approach to existing bungalows and modern backland buildings

For the existing bungalows and modern backland buildings, the Planning Authority will take a proportionate management approach to alterations and extensions. Traditional materials such as natural slate tiles and timber windows and doors are strongly preferred both for their appearance and that they provide a more sustainable solution. However, in some cases materials which would not be acceptable on traditional buildings or new construction such as roof tiles and uPVC windows may be acceptable. Many bungalows and modern backland buildings are in close proximity to, and therefore have a visual influence on, adjacent traditional buildings, townscape and views. As with any building, individual character and the impact of any changes on neighbouring properties and the wider Conservation Area must be assessed. It is important that issues which effect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, such as design form and material choice, are carefully considered. There will be opportunities to enhance individual buildings and the Conservation Area, in particular where there has been unsympathetic design or material choices in the past.

The following guidelines should be followed for the bungalow development:

- Low single storey building height;
- Pitched roofs without dormers and large rooflights on elevations visible from the public realm;
- Articulation of elevations where mixed finishes exist (stone and render);
- Muted colour palette for roofs, walls, windows and any timber work; avoid overly dark colours and brilliant white;
- Retain and where applicable, enhance traditional boundary treatments such as stone walls and hedging;
- Retain and where applicable, enhance trees, garden grounds and soft landscaping to provide screening and to preserve the Conservation Area's character and appearance.

5.5.2 Replacement windows and doors in non-traditional buildings

In the Conservation Area Planning Permission is required for replacement windows and doors that are not like-for-like replicas of the existing (i.e., a different material, design, opening method, fenestration pattern etc). Unless the building is Listed, the replacement of existing windows with new windows that are substantially the same (i.e., the same design, fenestration pattern, similar colour and opening method) does not require planning permission. Likewise, planning permission is not required for the installation of secondary glazing. Further guidance can be obtained from the [Planning Authority](#).

The following general principles will be applied by the Planning Authority when considering such proposals:

- There is a presumption in favour of the use of sustainable materials appropriate to Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area;
- The proposal will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;

- Replacement windows should maintain the uniformity of original window design and material and should open in a manner that does not disrupt the elevation;
- Replacement doors should maintain the form and material of the original door;
- Where a modern building is part of a group, i.e., semi-detached or terraced housing, or a coherent grouping of uniform design, the Planning Authority may insist upon window or door design, detail and materials that preserve the character and coherence of the group;
- Where recent development has utilised traditional design, consideration will be given to the use of windows and doors that reflect that character;
- UPVC may be acceptable on a case-by-case basis and must be responsive to the existing character and style. UPVC windows and doors must be of a similar pattern and of suitable colour.

5.5.3 Approach to South-West High Street

South-West High Street is an example of a coherent design grouping, where the Planning Authority will seek to unify window and door design to enhance the character and coherence of the group.

The following guidelines should be followed for South-West High Street development:

- Pitched roofs without dormers and large rooflights on elevations visible from the public realm;
- Muted colour palette for roofs and walls including renders;
- A limited colour palette of dark brown, grey or white, but not golden oak, for windows and doors;
- Unify the window fenestration pattern over the buildings and group where possible, using single pane windows;
- Retain and where applicable enhance trees and front gardens; gardens to remain unenclosed on the High Street side.

5.6 ADAPTATION FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

In order to make buildings more energy efficient and resilient to climate change, for example more extreme weather events, heavier rainfall etc., appropriate changes to buildings will be supported. Traditional buildings were often constructed of materials that are breathable and require a degree of ventilation. The installation of some energy efficiency measures can affect the fabric of a traditional building in terms of airtightness, breathability, ventilation and condensation. This should be considered when identifying the most appropriate solutions. The energy efficiency of the building and performance of any interventions will be affected by the external building fabric condition, therefore buildings should be in good repair prior to any such changes.

Measures which would affect the appearance of any building in the Conservation Area, for example the introduction of external insulating render or changes to windows and doors, will require Planning Permission. Listed buildings will require Listed Building Consent for both interior and exterior changes. Further advice can be provided by the [Planning Authority](#).

5.6.1 Adaptation of traditional buildings

The impact on the building of changes to the exterior, for example the introduction of external insulating render or changes to windows and doors, must be considered carefully. External insulation can alter the overall character of a traditional building (obscure architectural detailing, original finishes and fabric, alter the profile of window and door openings) and effect its technical performance e.g., how rainwater goods and weathering details perform. It is unlikely that external wall insulation will be supported on most traditional buildings in the Conservation Area for these reasons. However, proposals for external insulation to be applied to modern extensions to historic buildings will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

In most cases double glazing is fully supported and encouraged where it will not adversely impact the character of the window. Planning Permission is not required where double glazing is retrofitted into existing historic frames. Likewise, Planning Permission is not required for replacement windows that incorporate double glazing but are otherwise identical in all other respects (including material, opening method, design, profile, detailing, colour and fenestration pattern). More detailed information can be found in the Council's Historic Windows and Doors in Listed Buildings and Unlisted Buildings in Conservation Areas Planning Guidance.

Historic Environment Scotland has useful guidance on improving climate resilience and energy efficiency in traditional and listed buildings:

[Guide to Energy Retrofit of Traditional Buildings](#)

[Short Guide 1: Fabric Improvement for Energy Efficiency](#)

[Short Guide 11 – Climate Change Adaption for Traditional Buildings](#)

Various Historic Environment Scotland cases studies and technical research papers are also available online.

5.6.2 Adaptation of existing bungalows and other modern buildings

Where buildings are of a more recent construction, including the post-war bungalows, external insulation will be considered on a case-by-case basis depending on the character and appearance of the building, some of which may already have a cement-based render finish. External insulation, like any changes to exterior appearance, can have an adverse effect on the building itself, neighbouring buildings and on the wider Conservation Area and this must be taken into consideration when determining applications. For example, a large number of the bungalows were individually designed and provide variety in their elevations, quite a few using a mix of render and artificial stone to articulate their facades. Reducing the palette of materials and creating uniform rendered elevations would be detrimental if carried out in sufficient numbers. Brilliant white render is not commonplace on the bungalows, therefore new renders in more subtle and natural tones would be desirable to maintain the current neutral colour palate.

5.7 INSTALLATION OF MICRO-RENEWABLES

Micro-renewables are small-scale non-commercial systems including solar, wind, thermal (ground/water/air source) and biomass which use zero- or low-carbon energy technologies. The use of renewable energy technology in the historic environment supports the transition to net zero and ensures assets are resilient to current and future impacts of climate change. The historic environment is valued and enhanced where the character of the historic building and Conservation Area can be protected through careful siting and design. The circumstances of each case will require individual assessment.

Points for consideration when installing micro-renewables include:

- Renewables may have a visual impact beyond the building or plot; carefully assess the impact on the neighbouring buildings and Conservation Area setting;
- Always look to minimise any physical intervention on a traditional building and ensure that equipment can be removed at the end of its life without detriment to the original building;
- It is important to consider archaeological concerns if ground disturbance is necessary, for example ground-source heat pumps.

Before considering micro-renewables, the energy efficiency of the building should be addressed through building maintenance and repair; equipment upgrades; and any appropriate improvements to the fabric of the building.

The type or combination of renewable systems should be carefully considered to respect the building's historic character and significance. The physical installation may vary from equipment applied to the exterior of the building, such as solar panels and air source heat pumps, to those with less visual impact such as ground source. However other structures, flues and/or outbuildings may be required for equipment and the siting and design of these will also need to be considered in the context of the building and Conservation Area. New or altered access may be necessary for fuel delivery, repair and maintenance of systems and should be considered in the context of the Conservation Area.

When considering solar panels and ASHP, cognisance should be given to the following points:

- Solar Panels: As with any change to the character and appearance of the conservation area, there is a balance to be struck between the nature and extent of the change, and ensuring that the character, integrity and quality of the Conservation Area is not adversely impacted. The installation of solar panels will be considered favourably where they are installed on hidden roof slopes (i.e., flat roofs or in valleys), on secondary or rear, non-public-facing elevations, on outbuildings or mounted on the ground. Installation of solar panels on side elevations will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In order to preserve the character and appearance of key streets, frontages, views and heritage buildings, there is a general presumption against the installation of solar panels on a principal elevation (i.e., front roof slope, or side roof slope that fronts the public realm). However, cases will be considered on their merits;

- Air-source heat pumps (ASHP) require large external units that do not fit easily into a heritage context. They therefore need to be located as unobtrusively as possible. Unless the building is Listed, ASHPs can be installed on the ground floor of the rear elevation with Planning Permission. ASHPs located on a side elevation will require Permission but are likely to be supportable where appropriate screening is included where necessary;
- The location of new chimneys/flues should be unobtrusive and avoid visual impacts.

Some types of installation will require Planning Permission and/or Listed Building Consent. Refer to section 6.1 General Permitted Development and contact the Planning Authority for further advice.

5.8 PUBLIC REALM ENHANCEMENT

Section 4.2 laid out general and specific challenges for Grantown's public realm, which included:

1. The Square and Burnfield Garden
2. Church Avenue and Grant Road
3. Burnfield Avenue and car park
4. High Street

In 2021, the Grantown Society (TGS) commissioned a feasibility report looking at options for improved Active Travel and associated public realm and environmental enhancements in Grantown. This included design concepts for a number of key routes. Whilst the report focused on Active Travel solutions throughout the town, there is an obvious connection with required works and desirable enhancement of the public realm described in section 4.2. A combined approach to key challenges could benefit the whole town.

General recommendations are:

1. The Conservation Area would benefit from an overall public realm strategy to prioritise and coordinate preservation and enhancement actions in the public realm.
2. Undertake a public realm / streetscape audit to fully record the existing fabric and input information into a public realm strategy for the principal spaces, primarily the Square.
3. A reinterpretation of some shared spaces to indicate pedestrian and cyclist priority, alongside the planned introduction of a 20 MPH speed limit, would be beneficial. Education on the use of shared spaces in conjunction with any physical works will be valuable.
4. Design solutions for public spaces must respect the original planned town concept and the character of its spaces, for example the rectilinear form of the Square, and linear enclosure of the High Street. Contrasting geometries such as circular forms and curvilinear shapes could detract. Reference to the historic development of spaces may be helpful.
5. Physical changes in the historic environment must be carefully considered, for example introducing pavements, new signage, carriageway markings and coloured surfaces. Standard solutions are unlikely to be suitable and surface materials, tactile surfaces etc.,

should be discussed and agreed with all stakeholders at an early stage and be applied consistently. The choice of materials will be crucial to the final results and how well they integrate with the historic environment. There is opportunity to add quality traditional surfaces to key routes/spaces.

6. Establish a suite of Grantown specific street furniture, including signage and waymarking to aid consistency across the town centre and Conservation Area. This could be used to create a 'brand' and unique colour palette for Grantown that is distinctive from standard modern and heritage reproduction styles, but that is sympathetic to the historic and natural environment and of good quality.
7. An agreed strategy for designs and specifications could be combined in a public realm manual. This could also record lighting, power and other infrastructure, required to facilitate management of services and safe access for tree management. This manual could be combined with, or work in parallel with, the recommended tree management plan. This would support partnership work across local authority departments, and where the local community is delivering public realm enhancements.
8. Consider an agreed maintenance plan for the Square which would encompass work programmes across all relevant local authority departments.

5.8.1 Enhancement: the Square, Church Avenue and Grant Road

Following the feasibility report, The Grantown Society is focusing on the Active Travel Project 'routes to school' creating safer pedestrian and cycle routes which cross Grantown, with Sustrans support and the Cairngorms National Planning Authority facilitating a steering group. One of the principal routes would be from the junction of Seafield Avenue and Grant Road, via Church Avenue, across the Square at the war memorial, and via the lane at the Grants Arms Hotel to the primary school and on to the secondary school. This route offers opportunities to enhance the public realm in these areas, including:

- Improved shared space /surfaces in Grant Road and Church Avenue;
- Improved surfaces and more pedestrian friendly crossing point at the centre of the Square and around the war memorial;
- Improvements to the lane by the Grant Arms Hotel to South Street with appropriate preservation of original features such as stone boundary walls and mature trees;
- Consider opportunities for off-street parking in Church Avenue including land adjoining to the rear of the church hall. Any off-street parking here would need to be designed to integrate with the historic and green environments in terms of boundaries, trees and surface finishes.

Notwithstanding the focus of the above route, other public realm enhancement opportunities in this area include:

- Improved shared space /surfaces on the access roads around the Square;
- Consider removal of the chains which cut off the grass to ease pedestrian use; possibly retain and repair the traditional bollards to maintain the historic appearance and deter traffic misuse;

- Opportunities to enhance the lane between the British Legion and South Street.

5.8.2 Enhancement: Burnfield Gardens

There is potential to enhance the activity and amenity of this greenspace which has a quieter character to that of the Square. Concept designs for Burnfield Gardens and the Square were commissioned by The Grantown Society following the feasibility report. The concept design and subsequent community discussions on Burnfield Gardens suggested introducing seating, picnic benches and a canopy over the Petanque court.

5.8.3 Enhancement: Burnfield Avenue and car park

Notwithstanding focus on routes to school, public realm enhancement should be considered for the Burnfield Avenue area. Enhancements could also improve safe routes from the secondary school to the town centre as well as improved amenity for residents and visitors. This could include:

- Repair / renewal of surfaces in poor condition; enhanced surface finishes for pedestrians and cyclists to define their routes more clearly from the vehicular traffic and parking;
- Enhancement of the pedestrian connection from Burnfield Avenue to the Square on the west side of the Court House, in conjunction with improvements around the Court House, including replacement of the modern steps and handrail in more suitable materials and traditional railings (based on restoration and replicating existing traditional railings there). Include any maintenance to the Regality Cross and renewal of its interpretation panel. A combined approach to this area could form an attractive focal point;
- Improved pedestrian connection from Burnfield Avenue across the Square to Burnfield Gardens. Consider traffic calming/ surface finishes;
- Consider relocating large recycling bins to car park at the south end of High Street, or provide screening;
- Consider introducing new smaller rubbish and recycling street bins for general use;
- Consider introducing trees and planting to grass areas on Burnfield Avenue and provision of visitor information / heritage / woodland interpretation and wayfinding.

5.8.4 Enhancement: High Street

The feasibility report put forward some ideas for the High Street. In relation to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, the following could be considered in any future project:

- Could off-street parking be found / encouraged to alleviate parking on both sides of the High Street, for example reduce parking to one side only, or shorter sections on both sides. Enabling wider pavements or building out of sections of pavement to ease crossing the street;
- Opportunities to enhance the use of the lanes between the High Street and Woodside Avenue.

Public realm enhancement could be considered in conjunction with other possible High Street regeneration, as discussed in section 5.10.

5.9 PROTECTION OF SETTING, BOUNDARY ENCLOSURES AND TREES

Greenspaces, both private and public, are vital contributing factors to the character of the Conservation Area. Their retention and sensitive management are crucial to maintaining this special character and for the protection of biodiversity. Green infrastructure is important in terms of local amenity and can have many benefits, including health and wellbeing and a sense of place. There is a presumption to retain existing greenspace, whether public or private, which contributes positively to the character of the area. Likewise, features that define and are integral to greenspace, i.e., trees, hedging, boundary walls and other landscaping features, should be retained, enhanced and protected. In some cases, the introduction of new stone boundaries may be encouraged to enhance the streetscape and define the original planned town lots.

Trees in conservation areas are protected through the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. Before carrying out any work on a tree in a conservation area owners must give six weeks' notice to the Planning Authority of any intention to cut, lop, top, uproot, damage or destroy a tree. This is separate to any other permissions or consents that may be required. Planning proposals should protect any trees on the site unless relevant notification procedures to the Planning Authority have been made and completed.

Due to the important contribution trees make to the character of Grantown's public greenspaces, it is recommended that a formal tree survey and recording take place, to inform preparation of a tree management plan for key greenspaces, with the Square the first priority. The plan could:

- Capture current in-house knowledge on Grantown's trees;
- Inform strategy for replacement of trees (e.g., timing, position, specification);
- Provide the community with information which could support funding bids where local authority resources are limited;
- Provide a medium to long term plan to address future losses to disease and age-related decline.

This could be carried out in parallel with the recommendation for public realm enhancement described in section 5.8.

Not all the trees are in local authority ownership or care. The local authority should work in partnership with other owners, for example with Seafeld Estates for the trees in Church Avenue, to ensure appropriate management and replacement of trees which have broader significance for the public realm.

5.10 TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

In support of sections 4.1 and 4.4 – 4.6, a number of recommendations, both standalone actions and broader initiatives, are proposed which would support town centre regeneration.

Regeneration can be triggered by other opportunities alongside those described in this Management Plan and evidence of need. The 'Rails to Grantown' project, supported by the Local Development Plan, is a strategic plan to extend the Strathspey steam railway from its current Broomhill terminus to a site outwith the Conservation Area on the north-west side of Grantown. Whilst it would not have a physical impact on the built environment of the Conservation Area directly, it could provide further stimulus for regeneration of the town centre and enhancement of the public realm.

5.10.1 Steering appropriate uses and businesses to town centre locations

As outlined in the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (2021, Policy 2), the Cairngorms National Planning Authority fully supports the Town Centre First principle to increase the vibrancy and vitality of town centres. Monitoring key indicators on the town centre through the Cairngorms National Planning Authority's Town Centre Health Check will allow information to be fed into Local Development Plan policies.

5.10.2 Support for Buildings at Risk

A Planning Authority 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. Under Sections 49 and 68 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997, urgent works to preserve unoccupied buildings can be instigated, to both listed, and unlisted buildings in a conservation area which are important maintain its character and appearance. Under Section 51, a local authority may contribute towards the expenses of repair or maintenance of a listed building, or a building which is not listed, but appears to them to be of architectural or historic interest.

Local authorities therefore have a duty of care to buildings of merit in their area, and whilst prioritised resources can negate proactive work on such buildings, it would be considered appropriate that action is taken on Gladstone House to ensure the remaining structure and fabric is secure and weathertight to allow restoration to occur in the future. Informal discussion by the local authority with the owner, including as to whether the previous Planning Permission is underway, could assist and guide any further actions for this important building.

5.10.3 Support for vulnerable buildings

Larger scale building projects, such as Gladstone House and the Grantown Community Centre, could form priority projects in an area-based grant scheme (see below) or an individual building project. Community projects and those owned by charities, such as the community centre, will be prioritised by funding organisations and may be able to seek funding from a number of sources for different aspects of a project. A first step could be to support the charity to undertake condition surveys and feasibility studies to explore their needs and aspirations for the building.

5.10.4 Encourage residential reuse of the empty floor space above shops

The Highland Council takes part in the Scottish Government's Empty Homes Initiative, delivered in partnership with Shelter which seeks to bring long term empty homes back into residential use. The Highland Council's Empty Homes Officer can seek to identify owners, discuss constraints in the property's use, and incentives (Council Tax, VAT) to bring it back into use. This could include upper floors on the High Street including those identified in section 4.6. The Highland Council's role is one of facilitator, and support from the local community may assist in moving this forward.

5.10.5 Support for wider grant assistance for regeneration of the High Street

Public and other charitable funding can be available for various aspects of regeneration of the historic environment and town centres more generally.

Some of the above items may be suitable for support from Scottish Government and UK funding directed via local authorities. The Highland Council's Community Regeneration Fund incorporates the strategic themes of Town Centres and Place with funding which responds to the needs of local areas and which will have a positive community impact. Funds may be available for feasibility and development work towards larger projects, or smaller capital works. Examples may include community spaces, green public spaces, energy efficiency measures, or projects that support the journey towards Net Zero. Details of current local authority funding sources are outlined on The Highland Council's website.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic Environment Scotland both offer area-based grant funding for a wide range of physical building, education and training projects in conservation areas and other areas of recognised heritage value. Historic Environment Scotland's successful Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) has been refreshed and launched in 2022 as the Heritage & Place Programme, with greater emphasis on the importance of place to the local community, and partnership working between the local authority and key community groups and other stakeholders. Development funding can be sought as the first stage in the process and assist with gathering information and developing projects including building condition surveys, specialist surveys, design work etc. Applications can be made to both funds by local authorities and national park authorities in partnership with community stakeholders.

The following work may be helpful in preparing to move forward with a large-scale regeneration programme but could equally inform incremental changes and small initiatives:

Shopfront survey

A detailed shopfront survey would be helpful to establish what remains of historic or cultural significance on each shop and research its history; outline what works may be required and the design criteria for replacement or enhancement. This would be of benefit for a larger grant-based scheme, targeted shopfront enhancement grant, and also as a planning tool for one-off applications. This could be shared with shop owners and lessees to inform any future plans. The survey could include the close doors which play a crucial part in the overall look of the High Street.

High Street building condition survey

A need for repair and maintenance is evident from street level and as such a detailed external condition survey would be the first step toward identifying repairs and potential costs, and providing information with which to seek grant funding.

Upper floors audit

Identifying any long term vacant upper floors, their owners and reasons for vacancy could be used to inform reuse.

5.11 NEW DEVELOPMENT

New development will be considered in line with the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (LDP). Design, materials and landscaping must all be of a high quality and support the Scottish Government's placemaking principles. New development does not need to copy what is already there but should respond to the existing built form and make a positive contribution. In relation to the Conservation Area, Policy 3 and Policy 9 of the LDP will be particularly relevant. Some of the detrimental issues described in section 3.7 would not now be supported under Policy 3. Policy 9.3 states that

Development in or affecting a conservation area should:

a) preserve or enhance its character and appearance; and

b) use design, materials, scale, layout and siting appropriate to the site and its setting.

Policy 9.3b states that 'setting' is a consideration for development in or affecting a conservation area and therefore relevant new development outwith the conservation area which can be seen from inside the conservation area, or which affects its approaches and enclosure should be carefully assessed.

Historic Environment Scotland's [New Design in Historic Settings](#) also provides guidance.

5.11.1 Potential for new development in the Conservation Area

There is limited space for new development in the Conservation Area and there should not be a presumption that any 'vacant' land remaining should be developed to the detriment of the amenity and biodiversity of the area. However, there are locations which may benefit from enhancement and/or appropriate new development by having a combined design approach for a number of plots. Discussion with property owners/lessees and relevant stakeholders would be required on the sites described. It is noted this is not a formal planning assessment. The purpose of identification of these sites is to highlight potential for improved use and enhancement of the site and/or Conservation Area as a whole.

Site 1: Rear plots at Nos. 70-80 High Street

A possible land assembly for development was discussed during the repair and adaptation of the former Strathspey Hotel and the construction of the adjoining block on Spey Avenue. The site lies adjacent to the Council's carpark on Spey Avenue and could comprise:

- The remainder of the former Strathspey Hotel site extending to the Council carpark;

- The rear pitch of the Granttown Community Centre;
- The car repair garage site (or part thereof) to the east including a disused chalet;
- Enhancement and/or reconfiguration of the Council carpark.

Vehicle access could be possible from Spey Avenue pending agreement of owners. Sensitive design would be required to maintain the hierarchy of the historic north-south access pattern of the town. There is pedestrian access on the east side of the community centre to the garage site, and a lane from the rear of the community centre pitch to Woodside Avenue.

Any prospective development would need to be 1½ or 1¾ storey in height, i.e., no higher than the new residential development on Spey Avenue and existing former Strathspey Hotel and be of commensurate in scale and massing. Definition of boundaries on Spey Avenue using buildings on the street line and / or new stone boundary walls would be beneficial.



General view from Spey Avenue.



Granttown Community Centre pitch.



Plot in commercial use including car repair garage.

Site 2: Rear of Nos. 32-33 the Square, British Legion site and Telecoms building

Possible planning strategy for plots along the lane which connects the Square (at the British Legion) to South Street. This could comprise:

- The lane from the Square to South Street;
- The land behind the British Legion building and the adjoining plot facing South Street;
- The Telecoms building and yard.

The lane provides a pedestrian route from the Square to South Street close to the primary school. Vehicles can pass through the lane, although vehicle access appears to be focused around the private parking area to the rear of the buildings fronting the Square.

There are a number of trees in this area which would need assessment to consider which should be retained. There is a small electric substation at the end of the British Legion plot.



General view from the Telecoms building.



Telecoms building's external light wells and boundary walls in poor condition.



View towards the Square with British Legion building on the right.



View on entering the lane from the Square with private parking and outbuildings.

5.11.2 Promotion of Sympathetic, High Quality New Development

Where opportunities arise for new development in the Conservation Area, design solutions should take account of the following.

General design principles:

- The local area character and environment;
- The specific site including settlement pattern, urban grain and local built form;
- The principles and street lines of the original planned town as applicable to the site;
- The site context such as the amenity and setting of existing buildings and views, and protect significant views within the public realm;
- The building form including scale, massing, roofscape and elevational treatment; plain untreated facades are unlikely to be supported unless applicable to the context;
- Any original or historic features on the site should be retained wherever possible; characteristic features of the Conservation Area such as original stone boundary walls and traditional outbuildings are protected against demolition without sound reason.

Materials:

- All development 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);
- Colours should be muted and in-keeping with the character area in which the development will be sited.

Windows, doors and rooflights:

- Windows and doors will relate materially and aesthetically to their immediate context and also the wider historic setting;
- The preference is for timber windows. Where justification is provided high quality contemporary materials, such as steel and powder coated aluminium, may be supported. Note that uPVC will not be supported;
- Unless justification that horizontally aligned windows are a necessary component of the overall design, windows will generally be vertically proportioned;

- Doors will generally be of timber. Fully and part-glazed doors may be acceptable where justified in terms of historic precedent or architectural composition of the new building;
- Rooflights will generally be confined to reverse roof slopes and positioned as close to the wall head as possible. The number of rooflights will be kept to a minimum, be vertically proportioned and not oversized. Rooflights should always be conservation style.

Boundaries and grounds:

- Original boundary divisions, especially where stone boundary walling is present, should be retained; enhancement and reinstatement is encouraged;
- Any proposed new development should protect garden ground, important trees, hedging and original boundary walls;
- Boundary treatments should be in-keeping with their surroundings, for example in Grantown the use of stone walling, hedges, shrubs and trees all enhance the setting of the Conservation Area. Boundaries and fencing that are not in keeping with the local character are unlikely to be appropriate;
- Landscaping (soft and hard) and access, need careful consideration as the visual impact of vehicle access and parking immediately in front of buildings, and visible from the public realm, can detract.



Recent example of sympathetic new development in the Conservation Area maintaining a low storey height and long form typical of traditional outbuildings in the backland areas. Slate roof and contemporary design for elevations.



Recent flatted development using architectural elements such as pitched dormers, chimneys, copes and contrasting wall materials to articulate the street façade and provide a characterful design. The building height has been matched well to the neighbouring traditional building.

Where necessary, the Planning Authority 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 the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan to assist them in this.

5.12 PLACEMENT OF SERVICES AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

All external pipework, cabling and fixtures such as satellite dishes should be carefully considered when designing new development, and when siting such or making alterations to existing

buildings. Wherever possible they should be sited on elevations or roof pitches which are not visible from the public realm or that may affect the amenity of neighbouring properties. Where possible paint or specify colours which blend in with the building fabric. Installations should not damage the building fabric or put it at risk and should be reversible. Opportunities to remove redundant cabling and fixtures when undertaking other works or repairs should be taken.

5.13 EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

It is important to consider ways in which interpretation and educational benefits of the Conservation Area can be maximised as a learning, teaching and participation resource for all sections of the community. Engagement with the local community is essential in fostering a sense of local ownership and responsibility for the historic environment. The Planning Authority will encourage local involvement through liaison with local and community groups, amenity/heritage groups and stakeholders with issues affecting the historic environment.

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6.0 PLANNING MANAGEMENT | STIÙIREADH DEALBHaidH

Planning management of conservation areas falls under both national legislation and strategy, and local policy.

6.1 PLANNING LEGISLATION

6.1.1 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997

Managing change is regulated by this legislation including requirements for Planning Permission, Listed Building Consent and Conservation Area Consent. Further information is available from the Planning Authority.

6.1.2 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2011

Permitted development rights allow certain types of development to occur without a requirement to seek Planning Permission, subject to specific limitations described in the above legislation. In the case of development to dwellings, many permitted development rights are removed in a conservation area and if the dwelling is a listed building. This includes the following categories of development, which in Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area *will* require Planning Permission.

1. **Enlargement of a dwelling** including for example, single storey extensions, conservatories, porches and dormers (front or rear) and roof only structures such as car ports.
2. **Improvements, additions or other alterations** to a dwelling, which are not an enlargement, for example installing access ramps, satellite dishes and flues; replacing windows or doors; and the installation, alteration or replacement of solar PV or solar thermal equipment. Also, alteration to the external appearance of a dwelling such as painting (or repainting) of the property.
3. **Other developments within the curtilage of a dwelling** including:
 - a. Sheds, garages, greenhouses: in a conservation area if the floor area exceeds 8 square metres (4 square metres if within the curtilage of a listed building), height restrictions apply;
 - b. Free-standing solar panels, flag poles, swimming pools, oil tanks etc.;
 - c. Hard surfacing, new or part/ whole replacement;
 - d. Decking or other raised platforms if the deck area exceeds 4 square metres;
 - e. Gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure including erection and improvement / alteration.
4. **Domestic microgeneration equipment** including
 - a. Biomass etc. heating flues if attached to the principal elevation of a dwelling, or a flat;

- b. Air source heat pumps, if not at ground level on a rear elevation or if on a listed building. If one or more ASHPs are already present on the building or within the curtilage of a building. A 'building' in this context includes a terraced house, semidetached house or a block of flats.

The above is a brief summary of the Order, and further information for householders can be found in the Scottish Government's [Guidance On Householder Permitted Development Rights](#).

6.1.3 Planning Enforcement

Where work appears to be unauthorised the Planning Authority has statutory powers to investigate alleged breaches. Planning enforcement notices will be issued in cases of unauthorised development within the Conservation Area and to listed buildings, including inappropriate repairs, alteration or extension in ways that affects character, as well as any unauthorised demolition of buildings or structures. More information can be found via [The Highland Council's Planning Enforcement pages](#).

6.2 NATIONAL PLANNING STRATEGY

[The National Planning Framework 4 \(NPF4\)](#) replaced the National Planning Framework 3 and Scottish Planning Policy (SPP). The NPF4 (Feb. 2023) sets out the Scottish Government's planning strategy and the requirements on local planning authorities for their Local Development Plans. For conservation areas there are a number of relevant principles and policies including the spatial principle of 'conserving and recycling assets' to make productive use of existing buildings and places, reduce the need for new materials and minimise waste. The overall objective of NPF4 is to deliver sustainable, livable and productive places as outlined in its policies, a number of which will be relevant for Granttown-on-Spey Conservation Area and its future management including: climate mitigation and adaptation; biodiversity; forestry, woodland and trees; historic assets and places; brownfield land, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings; zero waste; sustainable transport; local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods; design, quality and place; tourism; and culture and creativity.

NPF4's intent is to protect, value and enhance assets and places within the historic environment and to enable their positive change as a catalyst for regeneration. The policy supports the transition to net zero so that assets are resilient to climate change, empty or neglected buildings are brought back into sustainable and productive uses, and that the historic environment's social, environmental and economic value is recognised to our economy and cultural identity.

Conservation areas are specifically referred to in the NPF4 Policy 7 including:

- 7d) Development proposals in or affecting conservation areas will only be supported where the character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting is preserved or enhanced. Relevant considerations include the:
 - i. architectural and historic character of the area;
 - ii. existing density, built form and layout; and
 - iii. context and siting, quality of design and suitable materials.

7e) Development proposals in conservation areas will ensure that existing natural and built features which contribute to the character of the conservation area and its setting, including structures, boundary walls, railings, trees and hedges, are retained.

7f) Demolition of buildings in a conservation area which make a positive contribution to its character will only be supported where it has been demonstrated that:

- i. reasonable efforts have been made to retain, repair and reuse the building;
- ii. the building is of little townscape value;
- iii. the structural condition of the building prevents its retention at a reasonable cost; or
- iv. the form or location of the building makes its reuse extremely difficult.

NPF4 promotes distinctive places, supporting attention to detail of local architectural styles and natural landscapes to reinforce identity and sense of place, including architectural styles, choice of materials and finishes, detailing and landscape design.

6.3 CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

As Grantown-on-Spey is located within the Cairngorms National Park, planning policy is set out by the Cairngorms National Park Planning Authority in its Local Development Plan (LDP). Planning management is undertaken by The Highland Council using the Cairngorms National Park Planning Authority policies in the Local Development Plan and relevant supplementary and non-statutory guidance. Planning applications may be 'called in' for determination by the Cairngorms National Planning Authority where they meet the criteria set out in the Cairngorms Planning Advice Note: [Applying for Planning Permission in the Cairngorms National Park](#)

6.3.1 Local Development Plan Policies

The LDP identifies Grantown as a strategic settlement and states its settlement objectives to:

- *Protect the role of Grantown-on-Spey as a service centre for Strathspey;*
- *Conserve and enhance Grantown-on-Spey's distinctive built heritage and the integrity of its Conservation Area;*
- *Support the delivery of housing that meets local needs;*
- *Support opportunities to increase the attraction of Grantown-on-Spey as a tourist and recreation destination, particularly the Strathspey Railway extension;*
- *Support proposals for business development, growth and diversification;*
- *Maintain a range of community facilities;*
- *Support proposals for safe active travel around Grantown-on-Spey and beyond to Dulnain Bridge and Carrbridge.*

All of the above objectives can be related to challenges and opportunities in this Conservation Area Management Plan.

In assessing planning applications in or affecting the Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area, the Planning Authority shall consider them in relation to the Local Development Plan policies. The most relevant policies for conservation area management in the LDP are:

Policy 2: Supporting Economic Growth

This includes the principle of 'Town Centres First' where high footfall development must take a sequential approach. Location of relevant suitable development in the existing town centre is the priority in order to maintain vibrant town centres. Visitor accommodation and developments are also supported through this policy.

Policy 3: Design and Placemaking

Aims of Policy 3 are for development to contribute positively to the sense of place and quality of life in the Cairngorms National Park. This includes preserving and enhancing the distinctive character and identity of its natural and built heritage through good design and placemaking. The policy promotes the highest standards of design in all development. This includes siting and design, the use of materials, the impact the development has on the environment, accessibility, and the long-term sustainability credentials of the development. A number of the requirements of this policy are relevant to the Conservation Area such as:

Policy 3.3 Sustainable Design

- b) be sympathetic to the traditional pattern and character of the surrounding area, local vernacular and local distinctiveness, whilst encouraging innovation in design and use of materials,*
- c) use materials and landscaping that will complement the setting of development.*

Policy 3.6 Alterations to existing building stock

- Alterations to existing building stock will be considered favourably where they:*
- a) respect the design, massing, proportions and general visual appearance of the building and area.*

Policy 9: Cultural Heritage

This policy aims to preserve and enhance the rich cultural heritage of the Cairngorms National Park by ensuring all development makes a positive contribution to its conservation and enhancement. This is the policy which relates most directly to the Conservation Area and the heritage assets within it including listed and unlisted buildings and features. It includes:

Policy 9.3: Conservation areas

Development in or affecting a conservation area should:

- a) preserve or enhance its character and appearance; and*
- b) use design, materials, scale, layout and siting appropriate to the site and its setting.*

There will be a presumption against development which would result in the loss of a building within a conservation area which makes a positive contribution to its character. Proposals for demolition should demonstrate that attempts for the building's retention, restoration or sympathetic conversion to another compatible use have been considered.

Positive buildings are identified and discussed in the Grantown-on-Spey Conservation Area Appraisal section 5.1.2. Proposals for the demolition of any building or structure in a conservation area must provide reasons for the demolition and submit detailed plans of existing and proposed replacement buildings if any are proposed. For proposals to demolish a listed building or a building that makes a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area, further information must be provided to support the reasons for removal including a survey of the building's structural condition by a suitably qualified structural engineer, with conservation accreditation in the case of listed buildings. This requirement is also found in Policy 3 *Demolition and alteration of existing buildings*.

It is a criminal offence to demolish a building in a conservation area without consent from the Planning Authority.

Other parts of the conservation area such as specific sites or features including those of wider cultural, historical or archaeological significance, and their settings are covered in Policy 9.4 *Other Cultural Heritage*.

6.3.2 LDP Non-statutory Guidance

Non-statutory planning guidance has been adopted to support the interpretation of the Local Development Plan policies and provide additional information.

Non-statutory guidance: Policy 3: Design and Placemaking

This guidance includes information on the CNPA's approach to design and placemaking requirements for all development in the park boundaries. The guidance includes detail on the considerations required when appraising a site or building for development and requirements of design statements to be submitted as part of any planning application.

Non-statutory guidance: Policy 9: Cultural Heritage

This guidance includes information on the CNPA's hierarchy approach to safeguarding cultural heritage from repair and restoration for reuse, through repurposing options, and replacement only where other options have been exhausted. It states that the best way to conserve a building or structure of cultural significance is to keep it in active use. Every effort should be made to find solutions that allow unused buildings or structures to come back into use, or to be adapted for a similar use without damage to their character and that of the wider area.

In relation to the use of materials it states that:

The highest standards of materials and workmanship will be required. Materials and techniques used must respect traditional practice, unless modern substitutes are proven to provide a significant and sustainable advantage.

The guidance also refers to the importance of planned towns, such as Grantown, for their historical and architectural interest.

Planning applications in planned towns should demonstrate what efforts have been taken to retain the structures and features that contribute to the character of the planned

town. Proposals should make a positive contribution to the character of the planned town (and other cultural heritage interests) for the long term.

Veteran trees are also recognised as part of the cultural heritage of the Park to be safeguarded in line with the principles set out in its policy and guidance.

6.4 LOCAL PLACE PLANS

Community-led Local Place Plans are part of the Scottish Government's wider work on planning reform and implementation of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. They offer the opportunity for preservation and enhancement in partnership with the community and wider opportunities to raise awareness of the value of conservation areas with those that live in them. Once completed and then registered by the Planning Authority, Local Place Plans are to be considered in the preparation of the next local development plan. Local Place Plans may be used, like the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, in support of project strategies and funding applications. It is important that any future Local Place Plan takes cognisance of the Granttown-on-Spey Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan in relation to the historic environment, landscape and green space setting and cultural heritage of the town to form a shared vision of preservation and enhancement of the area.

The LDP Action Programme confirms CNPA support to communities to achieve their community objectives through Community Action Planning (including Local Place Plans) and Community Plan Partnerships.

6.5 PLANNING ADVICE

Advice on Planning Permission, Listed Building Consent and other relevant conservation area matters can be provided by [THC's planning team](#), including best practice for repair and appropriate alterations to the historic environment. The Council welcomes and encourages discussions before a planning application is submitted and provides a Pre-application Advice Service.

Sharing the findings of the Granttown-on-Spey Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan with relevant local authority departments (e.g., building standards, housing, amenities etc.) and those in the national park authority, is important to ensure that best practice is followed in the management of the Granttown-on-Spey Conservation Area, and that consistent information is provided.

Historic Environment Scotland's Managing Change in the Historic Environment series provides guidance, and is intended to provide advice to local authorities when developing their planning policies, and in the determination of applications relating to the historic environment. They are available free online alongside other resources. Further information is listed in Section 8.

7.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW | SGRÙDADH AGUS SGRÙDADH

This document will be reviewed periodically by The Highland Council, in partnership with the Cairngorms National Park Authority and it will be assessed with reference to current local policy for the historic environment, local development plans, and government policy and guidance on the historic environment. A review will include the following:

- A survey of the Conservation Area, including a photographic survey to aid possible enforcement action;
- An assessment of whether the recommendations detailed in both the Appraisal and the Management Plan have been acted upon, and how successful they have been, particularly in relation to the conservation issues identified:
 1. Maintenance and condition of the Conservation Area.
 2. Quality of traditional repairs and necessary replacement.
 3. Quality and condition of the public realm.
 4. Quality of new development including building alteration and extension.
 5. Buildings at Risk, vulnerable buildings and town centre vacancy.
 6. Management of setting including boundaries, trees, private and public green spaces.
- The identification of any new challenges or threats to protect the Conservation Area, and opportunities for planning management or enhancement.

The review will be carried out in consultation with the local community.

8.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION | FIOSRACHADH A BHARRACHD

The following offer further relevant guidance and information on the topics covered in this Management Plan.

Legislation

Town and Country Planning Act (Scotland) 1997

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2011

Scottish Government policy and advice

Planning Advice Note 71: Conservation Area Management

Planning Advice Note 65: Planning and Open Space

Planning Advice Note 68: Design Statements

Guidance On Householder Permitted Development Rights

Designing Streets: A Policy Statement for Scotland

Creating Places: A Policy Statement on Architecture and Place for Scotland

Cairngorms National Park Authority

Local Development Plan 2021

Non-Statutory Guidance: Policy 3 Design and Placemaking

Non-Statutory Guidance: Policy 4 Natural Heritage

Non-Statutory Guidance: Policy 5 Landscape

Non-Statutory Guidance: Policy 7 Renewable Energy

Non-Statutory Guidance: Policy 9: Cultural Heritage

Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2022-27

[CNPA Landscape Character Areas/Grantown-on-Spey](#)

Cairngorms Nature Action Plan

Planning Advice Note: Applying for Planning Permission in the Cairngorms National Park

Historic Environment Scotland publications

Managing Change in the Historic Environment series: various topics including:

Shopfronts and Signs, Windows, Doorways, Roofs, External Walls, External Fixtures, Boundaries, Micro-renewables, Use & Adaptation of Listed Buildings, Demolition of Listed Buildings, Setting, Extensions

INFORM Guides: short succinct guides for property owners on numerous traditional building features, maintenance and repair issues.

Short Guide series: more detailed guides on key topics.

Short Guide 1: Fabric Improvements for Energy Efficiency

Short Guide 8: Micro-renewables in the Historic Environment

Short Guide 9: Maintaining Your Home

Short Guide11: Climate Change Adaptation for Traditional Buildings

Short Guide 12: Scottish Traditional Shopfronts

In addition to the above,

For Windows and Doors:

Sash and Case Windows: A Short Guide for Homeowners

INFORM: Maintaining Sash and Case Windows.

INFORM: Maintaining Traditional Plain Glass and Glazing

INFORM: Decorative Domestic Glass

INFORM: External Timber Doors

A Guide for Practitioners: Conservation of Timber Sash and Case Windows

For Shopfronts

Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Shopfronts and Signs

Short Guide 12: Scottish Traditional Shopfronts.

Scotland's Shops. Lennie, L. 2010 for Historic Scotland.

For New Development

New Design in Historic Settings

The Highland Council

Highland Historic Environment Record: <https://her.highland.gov.uk/>

Please note that THC development guidance does not form non-statutory planning guidance for applications in the Cairngorms National Park. It can be used for information.

Traditional Building Maintenance Guide

Historic Windows & Doors

Shopfront Design Guide

Other advice and historic environment grants

For Maintenance and Repair

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) website

Under One Roof website

For Buildings at Risk

Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland website and Toolkit online

For Funding

Historic Environment Scotland website: Grants and Funding

The Highland Council website: Grants

National Heritage Lottery Fund website

Architectural Heritage Fund website

Heritage Trust Network website

Scotland's Towns Partnership Funding Finder online

Historic Photographs

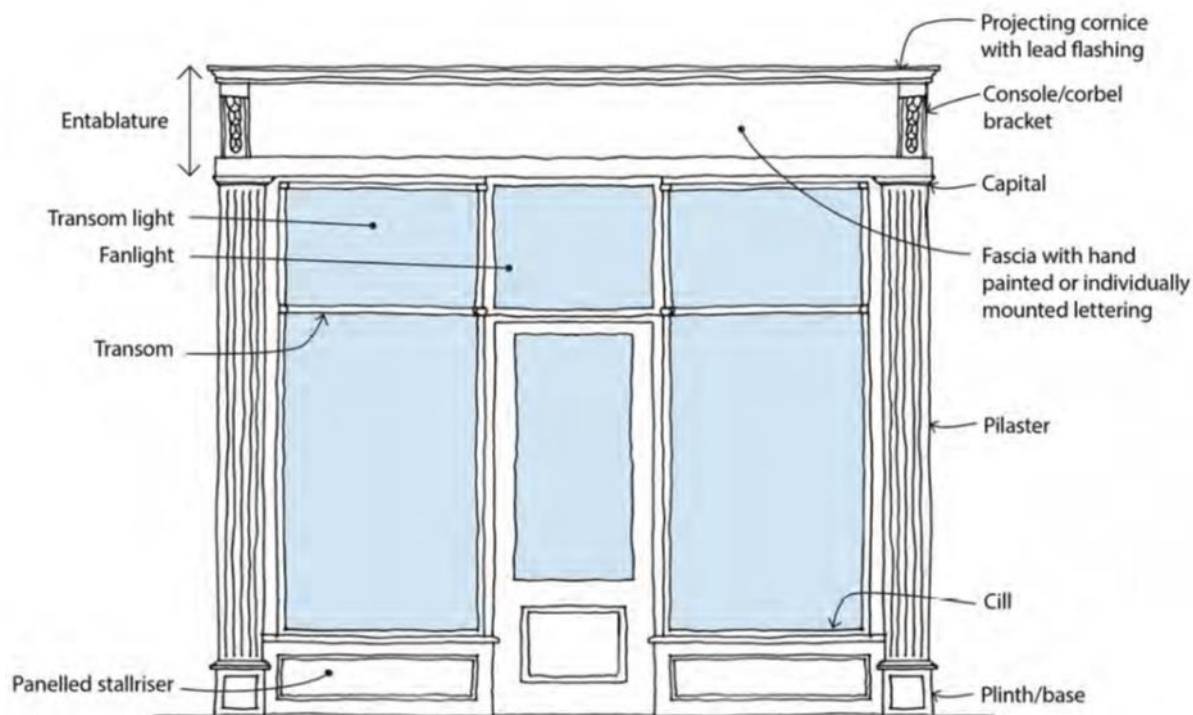
Am Baile, Highland History and Culture website

Canmore, National Record of the Historic Environment website

APPENDIX 1: SHOPFRONT DESIGN

New shopfront considerations

In terms of designing a new shopfront, or reinstating a lost shopfront, adopting a pastiche approach that copies a historical style is not necessarily the best design solution. However, following traditional shopfront design principles, including on proportion and components, will enhance and strengthen the overall positive impact of Grantown's High Street shopfronts.



Components of a traditional shopfront © The Highland Council

Basic principles would include, as applicable to the individual case:

- Maintain or re-establish stallrisers (preferably in timber or stone to match the original).
- Reinstating traditional shopfront heights where later alterations have covered or reduced the frontage;
- Pilasters should always be incorporated into the design. Together with the fascia and cornice, they provide the visual support for the upper part of the building, and importantly frame the display windows and entrance of individual shops;
- Maintain or reinstate traditional recessed door lobbies, but keep the remainder of the shopfront flush with the building line;
- Respect the opening pattern of the historic frontage of the parent building and neighbouring properties;
- Take account of the wider streetscape by relating well to building proportion and scale; try to reinstate the symmetry and pattern of the original building or group of buildings;
- Have a vertical emphasis to fenestration, maintain or reinstatement stone pilasters/piers, use timber mullions to subdivide glazing if necessary;

- Have a well-proportioned fascia board and avoid projecting box fascias or overly deep fascia boards that are out-of-scale for the building, especially on the modest 2-storey Georgian buildings;
- Use high quality materials, ideally traditional materials, in particular timber for shopfronts, windows and doors. Avoid unsympathetic materials such as uPVC, sheet plastics, Perspex, laminates, aluminium, or plastic coated or anodised metals and plastic signage. It should be noted that uPVC is never acceptable on a listed building or a new or existing shopfront in the Conservation Area;
- Use colour sensitively in the context of the predominant local palette and character; Darker and muted tones will be favourably in most contexts and work especially well where the shopfront extends across most or all of the building; lighter and neutral colours (including pastels) may be suitable on smaller shopfronts and those with slender detailing. Overly vivid colours should normally be avoided, as should brilliant white;
- Stained or varnished timber is not generally suitable for traditional shopfronts;
- Stonework surrounding a shopfront should not be painted unless there is suitable historic precedent;
- Where protection is required, chiefly from sunlight, repair of existing traditional blinds or reinstatement of appropriate blinds should be considered.

Shop signage and advertising considerations

Regardless of the age or style of the parent building, signage should always seek to be in keeping with the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and in general, comply with the following principles.

- Signage and advertising will make use of traditional materials and be of an appropriate design;
- Design and location of signage should be appropriate to the size and scale of the parent building and the Conservation Area in general;
- Signs should fit within the original fascia, where this exists;
- In circumstances where a traditional fascia has either been removed or covered over by a non-traditional fascia, it is expected that the fascia is returned to its traditional form;
- On buildings where no purpose-built fascia exists (or existed in the past) the design and detailing of the façade will dictate the form and scale of the advertising. The preferred option in this case is to fix individual letters onto a frame or bracket which can then be carefully fixed to the masonry. However, in some cases individual letters fixed to the stone by way of concealed fittings may be acceptable. Other options to consider could include sign writing (signs may only be painted onto buildings where the building itself is painted), a window transfer or a simple projecting sign;
- Signage should make use of traditional materials. Timber boards with traditional hand-painted signwriting or individually applied lettering is preferred; plastic letters will not normally be supported although non-reflective metal or acrylic may be acceptable;
- Vinyl and banner signs and/or signs with internal illumination will not be supported;
- A proliferation of temporary signage/A-boards should be avoided as this adds to street clutter and can restrict circulation.

Security considerations

Security can be an important consideration for shopkeepers and in Grantown there are a number of small 'CCTV' type cameras noted on individual shop frontages and also a very small number of internal roller shutters. Large areas of glass can of course cause potential security or breakage issues and consideration can be given to suitable alternatives if replacement is required, or when designing a new shopfront such as:

- The introduction or re-instatement of glazing bars/mullions which reduce the size of single sheets of glass;
- The use of stallrisers to reduce full height glazing and provide greater strength to a shop window;
- Where original glass does not survive, the use of laminated or other strengthened glass.

If a physical barrier within a shopfront is necessary the most appropriate option is an internal lattice or brick-bond grille. Internal grilles have a limited impact on the appearance of the shopfront whereas external retractable roller shutters and shutter boxes can be very unattractive and are unlikely to be acceptable in the Conservation Area or on listed buildings. When closed, solid shutters detract from the visual appearance of individual buildings and will not be supported. Where external shutters are permitted or are already *in-situ* they should be coloured to match the shopfront; uncoated or galvanised metal shutters are not acceptable.

