Forres Conservation Area

Part 2: Conservation Area Management Plan

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0 Executive summary

The Forres Conservation Area Management Plan is the second of a suite of four related documents which are linked to a number of strategic economic initiatives which are being developed for Forres. The first of the documents, the Conservation Area Appraisal (Part 1), sets out what was considered to be significant about the outstanding townscape qualities of the historic burgh of Forres, while at the same time identifying problems and risks from which it is presently suffering. The Conservation Area Management Plan identifies the need to preserve the best features of what has survived and sets down conservation standards for their repair and enhancement. Measures are also set out for encouraging sensitive development within the conservation area and for ensuring that the wynds fulfil their potential within the context of the overall townscape. Suggestions are made for the enhancement of the public realm.

It is intended that this document should be of value in giving guidance to the following: to property owners and facilities managers over the ongoing care of their properties and how they may be altered; to their agents over applications to be lodged when change is proposed; to contractors and tradesmen in providing guidance on the conservation standards to be met; to developers when considering to invest in the new projects within the boundary of the conservation area; and to planning and conservation officers within the Council in dispensing advice and dealing with planning applications, and specifically applications relating to listed building consent and conservation area consent.

Recommendations are set out for creating greater conservation awareness for those properties falling within the designated conservation area. To be effective these recommendations will require to be embedded within the wider planning system and cannot be considered in isolation if the overriding aim - of making Forres a vibrant and living town once again, as it had been in the past – is to be achieved.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the document

1.1.1 This document is the second of a suite of four documents focused on the Forres Outstanding Conservation Area. The documents have been commissioned by a consortium of bodies under the leadership of the Moray Council. The client group is represented by the Moray Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), the Forres Heritage Trust, Forres Area Community Trust (FACT), the Friends of the Falconer Museum and the Forres Britain in Bloom Committee. The four documents are listed as follows:

Part 1 Conservation Area Appraisal

Part 2 Conservation Area Management Plan

Part 3 Conservation Area Action Plan

Part 4 Interpretation Plan

1.1.2 The document should be read in conjunction with Part 1 of the suite of documents, the Conservation Area Appraisal. Its primary purpose is to provide guidance to owners of historic buildings within the conservation area, their agents and the contractors they may engage on the repair and maintenance of the fabric of traditional buildings. It provides also advice to statutory undertakers and to the Council on the interpretation of the guidance in preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area.

1.1.3 Recommendations have been set out in Section 10.1 of the Conservation Area Appraisal (Part 1) for the extension of the area boundaries. It should be noted that the guidance set out in this document relates to the conservation area as it is currently designated. If the boundaries are to be extended the guidance may require to be reviewed.

1.1.4 The guidance set out in Sections 3 and 4 has been prepared to promote conservation standards that might be expected to meet the requirements of Historic Scotland, tailored to the specific needs of Forres if the town centre area is successful in attracting a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS). Wherever possible, guidance is cross-referenced to Historic Scotland's own advisory publications. These publications are largely intended for a lay audience and are available free of charge.

1.1.5 A glossary of common terms used to describe elements of construction of traditional building is reproduced in Appendix 10.1, and should be referred to when reading this document.

1.2 Project team

1.2.1 In the preparation of this document the lead consultant has been the principal author and has been supported by Katherine Wolfe of Horner Maclennan for the sections setting down management issues in relation to the public realm.

1.3 Conservation Area Appraisal

1.3.1 In addition to the feedback provided by the members of the working group through meetings and commenting on the drafts of the documents, public consultation has taken the form of an open public meeting held at the Town Hall on 9 May 2013, at which the consultants set out the principal findings and recommendations set out in the reports.

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1.3.3 The documents were deposited for scrutiny in the Public Library during July 2013, when opportunities were provided for feedback to be passed to the working group and consultants. This document represents, therefore, the final version and takes into account all feedback received on the consultative drafts.

1.3.4 The conclusions reached in the Conservation Character Appraisal (Part 1) were based upon an audit of each property within the conservation area. The document reinforced the view that the conservation area is highly worthy of its 'Outstanding' designation. Forres has had a fascinating history, if somewhat turbulent at times, of which a substantial amount survives from only the major periods of development of the town from the seventeenth century to the present time. The centre of Forres has elements of a historic environment with a strong sense of identity and distinctiveness, and these qualities find expression in the high quality of the historic buildings of the town and in the generous open spaces of the public parks.

Forres High Street looking west

1.3.5 While, in part, this is represented by the large numbers of buildings within the conservation areas which are listed, the survey team identified that, with the passage of time (the lists were last reviewed in the early 1980s), late Victorian and Edwardian buildings may not as yet be adequately

represented on the statutory list. Accordingly recommendations have been made for the list survey to be brought up to date.

1.3.6 Not unlike other royal burghs which have their origins in medieval charters, Forres's historic townscape follows a recognisable pattern of building on the extended burgage plots, and this has very largely survived to this day. The greatest damage to the established urban grain occurred during the twentieth century with the demolition of substandard housing, some of which was historic, and from the redevelopment of the cleared sites with social housing. This damage was compounded in the mid-1970s when large undeveloped areas within the backlands were cleared to make way for public car parks. While the legacy of this provision has been beneficial to keeping the town's High Street vibrant, the damage caused to the character and appearance of the town has been considerable.

1.3.7 The fabric of the town reflects the burgh's established status as an important retail centre which continued into the twentieth century. The streets of the centre of the town boast a considerable variety of shopfronts from all of the phases of development. There are several cast iron shopfronts, fashionable at the time. As a sign of the times new shopfronts would be inserted into older structures, often at considerable expense to the trader.

1.3.8 With the arrival of the railways in the mid-nineteenth century and with Forres an interchange station on the network, the town flourished and expanded with manufacturing activity. The railway signalled the arrival of tourism, largely promoted by the pioneering Hydropathic Establishment which opened its doors on the eastern slopes of the Cluny Hills. In the late nineteenth century a new confidence arrived which saw the creation of many distinguished street frontages and the villas springing up on St Leonards Road and in other areas of the town. The philanthropy of those brought up and educated in the town who made their fortunes abroad played a major part in the embellishment of the town throughout the course of the nineteenth century. The town's picturesque skyline of towers and spires, seen from miles away, as well as its major civic buildings, owes much to this visible legacy.

1.3.9 Philanthropy played a major part in transforming the public spaces and parks provided for the benefit of the townsfolk. This legacy had been established at a remarkably early date with the woodland and public walks created at the Cluny Hills in the early nineteenth century from public subscription. Whereas neighbouring Elgin had benefited from the generosity of Sir George Cooper in the early twentieth century, Forres was transformed when its major benefactor, Sir Alexander Grant, made possible the acquisition of Forres House and its policies for the lasting benefit of the town in 1922. This act of generosity was capped a decade or so later by the acquisition of the ground at Castlehill where the obelisk commemorating the life of Dr Thomson had already been erected in the 1850s.

1.3.10 The Character Appraisal draws attention to the unusually rich legacy of finely carved architectural detail throughout the town centre, reflecting a long tradition of the skills of the masons of the Laigh of Moray for which the area was particularly noted throughout history. Although it has suffered less than many other comparable burghs which are on the fringes of the Moray Firth from the use of inferior sandstone, the town's buildings are not wholly immune from the problem. A particular problem is that a significant number of chimneyheads are in a poor state of repair.

1.3.11 One of the conclusions from the audit work was that, although there has been a considerable degree of change to the historic fabric of the buildings of the conservation area, levels of authenticity are significantly higher than in many other conservation areas. Some changes have been detrimental to

The unimaginably difficult to carve sandstone globes at The Park, Victoria Road show the skill of masons at work in the town (1877)

the character and appearance of the conservation area, while standards for carrying out repairs to decaying fabric were often found to be poor, or to have accelerated the levels of damage. In a small number of cases fabric was considered to be in a dangerous condition, placing the building at risk. Buildings which are in poor condition, or which have not been maintained, have a negative effect on property values. Some level of skills training on maintaining and repairing historic buildings, if provided, would appear to offer tangible benefits.

1.3.12 The Conservation Area Management Plan addresses these, and other, issues in providing guidance on managing change throughout the conservation area, with the overriding objective of preserving and enhancing its character and appearance.

1.4 Context: problems and opportunities

1.4.1 The following problem areas have been identified from the Conservation Area Appraisal (Part 1). While they are matters that have an impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area, they should be seen also as representing opportunities for enhancement, and for bringing life back into the centre of the town. Good management of the conservation area has the potential to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of those who live and work in the town, and for those who may visit it for the many facilities it offers, or as tourists.

1.4.2 The Conservation Area Management Plan should not be seen in isolation of other initiatives that have been embarked upon, through which elements of the programme may be delivered. The critical factor is that all the stakeholders involved have recognised that Forres's outstanding historic environment is a valuable asset, and it should not be regarded necessarily as a burden to be overcome.

1.4.3 Forres is by no means alone in suffering from a number of Buildings at Risk, listed in 5.7 of the Conservation Area Appraisal document (Part 1). Some have been vacant for a while and are awaiting investment for continuing uses, or compatible new uses. Some are in poor condition and are not being

A single storey property in the wynd to the rear of 149 High Street has lain empty for many decades

maintained, but they tend to have less of a negative impact on the conservation area than elsewhere as they are sometimes found at the ends of wynds in private ownership. A few are in such a dilapidated state that it may have to been accepted that they could not be saved and put to continuing beneficial uses.

1.4.4 The wynds of Forres have survived better than elsewhere and are undoubtedly one of the town's major assets. Many of them provide attractive and safe places in which to live and habitation levels are generally high. Some redevelopment has taken place within the backlands in recent years but the quality of design and the use of materials have not always been of the highest standards.

1.4.5 Unlike neighbouring Elgin, Forres has suffered much less from the pressures of commercial developments undertaken in the 1960s and 1970s, and so the damage to the historic townscape has been largely confined to the insertion of car parks and modern social housing schemes as noted above. In some cases historic buildings of some distinction and real townscape value were demolished to make way for them, adding to the pain of their loss.

1.4.6 Studies of activity and movement in the conservation area suggest that the heart of the town centre is quiet at night. Activity to either side of this area, where the fast food outlets, public houses and restaurants occur, is slightly more animated. The lack of visual interest at night is not helped by a corresponding lack of creative illumination for shopfronts and buildings, and of the public realm.

1.4.7 The only gap sites within the streetscape of the High Street occur where roads have been widened (as at the head of Castlehill Road), or to serve car parks created out of the backlands in the 1970s (as at Leask Road). Otherwise, elsewhere in the conservation area gap sites appear more regularly, and sometimes appear to be associated with unresolved

boundaries, for instance at the Leys Road car park or at North Road from previous demolitions. There would appear to be opportunities for improving the northern boundary of the conservation area where it coincides with the town centre. No similar opportunities were observed for the outlying residential areas of the conservation area (Character Area B as defined in the Conservation Area Appraisal) where no obvious gap sites were observed.

The High Street pictured in the early evening of a winter's night shows the principal street of the town devoid of activity and interest

1.4.8 As noted above, while there have been localised problems arising from the loss of historic fabric and architectural detail throughout the conservation area arising from decay, there are still relatively high levels of authenticity to be encountered and this merits the conservation and enhancement of surviving traditional materials and features. However, the rate of change has been significantly less than in many conservation areas.

1.4.9 The quality of the surfaces throughout the public realm is patchy. Attempts have been made to improve it but the results are piecemeal with much of the detail at junctions unresolved. Materials are generally not of high quality. Some of the principal wynds leading to the public car parks in the backlands have been resurfaced but the finishes of interlocking concrete blocks look tired and unappealing. Some of these surfaces remain an unattractive tarmacadam. In some of the wynds, often gated at the entry from the High Street, a surprising amount of original material has survived without loss, extending from sandstone slabs to cobbles and even, in one instance, hexagonal wooden setts. While some of the private wynds have been well maintained and have attractive surfaces, in a few cases there has been considerable degradation and loss of historic finishes.

1.4.10 Forres is noted for the considerable success it has achieved over the years in the Britain in Bloom competition. With the displays at their peak in mid-summer the town centre and public parks are enhanced considerably but at other times of the year the beds, planters and poles on which the floral displays are mounted can appear intrusive within the street scene. In general the parks are well maintained but problems were noted with some of the flights of steps and from the fact that the park furniture has been

replaced in a piecemeal fashion. Issues regarding the maintenance of the woodlands at the Cluny Hills and the town cemetery were also observed.

2 Planning policy framework for the conservation area

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The guidance set down in this section of the Conservation Area Management Plan has taken into account the following statutory instruments and sources of guidance.

2.2 Primary legislation

2.2.1 The principal legislation relating to the conservation area and the listed buildings falling within it is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997.

2.2.2 Legislation relating to Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the boundaries of the conservation area is the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

2.2.3 Where references are made in Section 8 of this document to permitted development the relevant legislation is the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992.

2.2.4 The Historic Environment (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 2011 ties up some anomalies and procedural matters in the above legislation.

2.3 Scottish Planning Policy

2.3.1 Scottish Planning Policy (February 2010) sets out the Scottish Government's policy on nationally important land use planning matters.

2.3.2 Clauses 110-124 of the document set out policy in relation to the historic environment with sections on Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, Archaeology and non-designated assets.

2.4 National planning policy guidance

2.4.1 Relevant documents are listed in the following table:

PAN 42	Archaeology
PAN 52	Planning in Small Towns
PAN 59	Improving Town Centres
PAN 65	Planning and Open Space
PAN 68	Design Statements
PAN 71	Conservation Area Management
Policy Paper	Designing Places
Circular 10/2009	Planning Enforcement

2.5 Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) December 2011

2.5.1 The latest version of the consolidated SHEP published by Historic Scotland sets out policy in respect of the historic environment, in which it supersedes the Memorandum of Guidance. It sets out Scottish Government policy on Scheduled Monument Consent, Listed Building Consent and Conservation Area Consent.

2.5.2 Policy in relation to setting the criteria for determining whether a building is of 'Special Architectural or Historic Interest' for the purpose of listing is set out in Annex 2 of the SHEP.

2.5.3 Powers to local authorities regarding varying the boundaries of conservation areas already designated are set out in Clause 2.41.

2.6 Managing Change in the Historic Environment

2.6.1 Historic Scotland published in 2010 a suite of leaflets giving non-statutory guidance on individual topics under the title of 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment'. These leaflets replaced the previous guidance published in 1998 as *Memorandum of Guidance on listed buildings and conservation areas.* Guidance set out in these leaflets corresponds with the policy set out in the SHEP referred to above. Where appropriate, references to the leaflets are given throughout this document.

2.7 Scheduled Ancient Monuments

2.7.1 There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the conservation area.

2.8 Listed buildings

The Ramnee Hotel, built originally as a substantial Edwardian villa on Victoria Road, together with many properties of a similar age in Forres, is presently not listed

2.8.1 There are presently 146 listed buildings within the conservation area. Of these only 3 are listed Category A (which is considered to be too low a number for the quality of buildings recorded); 53 are Category B and 90 are Category C. It is the view of the survey team that some of the buildings in the C category should migrate to B, and that there are strong grounds for adding to the lists. All listed buildings within the highest two categories, A

and B, are identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal (Part 1) and are shown in Appendix 14.2 of that document with a selection of other buildings considered to be of merit.

2.8.2 Although this may appear to represent a healthy number which reflects the outstanding category given to the conservation area, as stated in Section 8.13 of the Conservation Area Appraisal (Part 1), it is considered that there are buildings of sufficient merit falling within the boundaries of the conservation area which should be entered on the lists. In particular it was observed that residential buildings of the late Victorian and Edwardian eras were not adequately represented, with some obvious omissions. It has also been identified that, for similar reasons, some of the buildings could be in the wrong categories, and in this respect the forthcoming *Buildings of Scotland* volume (still to be published at the time of preparing these documents) may also throw fresh light on the history of the town's buildings. Thus it is recommended that discussions should be opened up with Historic Scotland over addressing these issues.

2.9 Gardens and designed landscapes

2.9.1 An entry for Grant Park, the town's cemetery and the woodlands of the Cluny Hills are included in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes (inaugurated 1987) under the title Grant Park and Cluny Hill. The entry was made in 2006. The designation extends beyond the present eastern boundary of the conservation area and includes the whole of the designed landscape.

2.9.2 Grant Park and Cluny Hill meets the criteria published in the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP), Dec 2011, for inclusion in the inventory, which is maintained as a statutory duty, on behalf of Scottish Ministers, by Historic Scotland under The Historic Environment Amendment Act 2011.

2.10 Moray Structure Plan 2007

2.10.1 The document sets out strategic policy which applies to the whole of the Moray Council area. It focuses on established settlements as development areas, defining Elgin, Forres, Buckie, Keith and Lossiemouth as the main centres.

2.10.2 Clause v of the Development Strategy sets out an obligation towards:

> Protecting, conserving and enhancing the valued elements of the natural and built environment.

2.10.3 The strategy set out for the built environment reinforces the objectives of this suite of documents and is repeated here:

> Moray has a rich and varied history of human habitation. The area's built heritage includes 2681 archaeological sites, 665 listed buildings, 17 conservation area, 7 Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes, townscapes and vernacular (local) buildings. The educational, tourist and recreational value of this heritage is undoubted and the quality of life greatly enhanced by it.
>
> The conservation, enhancement and promotion of Moray's built heritage is therefore important. In particular, this will mean safeguarding listed buildings, ancient monuments, archaeology and designed landscapes and to retaining buildings, townscapes, and artefacts which are part of Moray's character and identity.

2.10.4 Policy 2 Environment and Resources lists the following policies relating to the built environment and commits the Council to:

f) conserving and enhancing the areas (*sic*) built heritage resources and their settings
g) supporting proposals aimed at regenerating the area's natural and built environment including good design

2.11 Moray Local Plan 2008

2.11.1 Policies affecting archaeology, listed buildings, conservation areas and unlisted buildings within conservation areas are covered under the Environment & Resources section of the Moray Local Plan 2008, under the subheading Built Environment. It should be noted that the policies have been derived substantially from the *Memorandum of Guidance* 1998 which has been superseded by the latest version of the SHEP published in December 2011.

2.11.2 **Policy BE1** relates to scheduled ancient monuments (SAMs) and archaeology. Policy is defined in respect of national and local designations. Justification for the policy is given for the protection of archaeological sites and SAMs against development which may affect them, and recognition is given of the educational and tourism value of archaeological resources. Further guidance in relation to the archaeological resource and its potential which has been identified within the conservation area is given in 6.2 of this document.

2.11.3 **Policy BE2** relates to listed buildings. The aim of the policy is to protect listed buildings from inappropriate development proposals. It is recognised that listed buildings are an important part of Moray's heritage and should be safeguarded for future generations. Specific advice is given on the demolition of listed buildings which can only be considered as a last resort, and conditions under which demolition might be considered appropriate are set out in the policy.

2.11.4 **Policy BE3**, of particular relevance to this document covering Conservation Areas, and stipulates that all development within a conservation area should preserve or enhance the established traditional character and appearance of the area. There is a presumption against the demolition of unlisted buildings falling within the boundaries of a conservation area if they are considered to make a positive contribution to it, and consent to demolish can only be considered if the proposals for the redevelopment of the site are deemed to be acceptable. Boundary walls, fences and ground surfaces are defined as having the potential to contribute to the amenity of the conservation area, and to the setting of an individual building.

2.11.5 Policy BE3 also sets out specific policies in respect of the following:

- ❖ Shop fronts and security devices
- ❖ Satellite dishes and other fittings
- ❖ Advertisements and fascias
- ❖ Article 4 Directions

Detailed guidance on these matters is included in Sections 3 and 4 of this document, and takes into account the advice set out in Policy BE3 and latest guidance which has been incorporated within Historic Scotland's 'Managing

Change in the Historic Environment' leaflets. A note on Article 4 Directions is included in 8.1 of this document.

2.11.6 **Policy BE4** covers Gardens and Designed Landscapes, and sets down controls over development which might have an adverse effect on the designed landscape or its setting.

2.11.7 **Policy E3** covers Tree Preservation Orders and controls relating to the preservation of trees having amenity value.

Specific clauses of the local plan applying to Forres

2.11.8 An objective set out in the local plan is 'to protect the outstanding Conservation status of the town centre' (page 164).

2.11.9 There is a presumption towards maintaining shop premises in the town centre for retail use and against conversion to other uses; professional and financial services are excluded on the basis that the public would continue to have access to the premises (page 167).

2.11.10 Policy ENV1 defines green spaces in Forres as being the Mosset Burn, Grant Park, the Castlehill and Market Green (p169) and sets down a presumption to protect the recreational value of the public parks. Policy ENV6 defines Cluny Hill as a 'green corridor'.

2.11.11 A Tree Preservation Order is noted for an amenity tree at the foot of Tolbooth Street and South Street which no longer stands, having blown down in a gale. Legislation relating to the management of other trees within the conservation area is set out in Clause 6.3.2 of the Conservation Area Appraisal (Part 1).

3 Managing the historic environment: guiding principles

3.1 Conservation principles and philosophy

3.1.1 Conservation philosophy recognises that the preservation of historic fabric within a conservation area will be a paramount consideration, but it should not normally be considered in isolation of the potential for accommodating change or new uses which are compatible with preserving what is important about the site. The adaptation of a historic building, if carried out with sensitivity, may secure its future in the long term and allow it to contribute to the wider aims of regenerating the town centre.

3.1.2 The focus in this section of the Conservation Area Management Plan is on conservation actions where the fabric is of historic or architectural importance, and where it makes a contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area - or, in those cases where it has been disguised, it has greater potential to do so. It should be noted that the guidance in this section is not provided exclusively for listed buildings, and covers all properties constructed prior to 1948 when the Town and Country Planning Acts were first introduced.

3.1.3 The principles of conservation philosophy and associated definitions listed in British Standard 7913:98 *Guide to the Principles of the Conservation of Historic Buildings* have been widely adopted throughout the UK. In recent years conservation philosophy has been shaped increasingly by the principles embodied in international conservation charters and, in particular, the Australian ICOMOS Burra Charter. In Scotland these principles are presently enshrined within the Stirling Charter prepared by Historic Scotland in 2000, although it should be noted that, at the time of preparing these documents, Historic Scotland is on the threshold of publishing a historic environment strategy for Scotland.

3.1.4 It is recognised that there should be a presumption always in favour of retaining historic fabric. Historic buildings and the spaces surrounding them tell us about a place, its history, and the people involved in shaping them. Future generations should have the opportunity to decide for themselves on the values *they* may place on preserving authenticity and historical accuracy. With so much historic fabric having been lost already through insensitive alterations, or destroyed, this has a particular significance for Forres.

3.1.5 As a general rule repair, and alterations, should be the minimum necessary to preserve historic fabric. Quoting the maxim of the Burra Charter, a cautious approach should be adopted to *'do as much as necessary to care for the place, but otherwise change it as little as possible'.* Where intervention of any kind is required, wherever possible the work should be reversible in conservation terms.

3.1.6 Commensurate with the above, for the more complex sites and buildings where a high level of intervention might be anticipated (for instance, in seeking new, compatible uses for a redundant building), it would be essential to ensure that changes are guided by a full understanding of the history of the site and the structures upon it, and what makes them important. For these sites there would be merit in preparing a conservation plan setting out in an ordered way what is significant about it, and in preparing conservation policies with the specific purpose of guiding the

solutions for the repair and adaptation of the site so that its significance, or the character and appearance of the conservation area, is preserved or enhanced. For the more sensitive sites the preparation of a heritage impact assessment will be encouraged. For less complex sites, there would still be merit in carrying out such historical research as is necessary to understand how the site and any structures upon it may have changed over time, for which a conservation statement (an abbreviated conservation plan) could be better suited for the presentation of the information. It will be a requirement of any application for either conservation area consent for the demolition of a property within a conservation area, or listed building consent, that an understanding of the site and its importance lies at the core of any justification statement which may be prepared.

3.1.7 Where intervention is necessary to preserve the site or building, either by way of internal alterations, partial demolition, or by the addition of new work, it is important it should be carried out in a contemporary manner that does not distort history. The solution should not challenge the authenticity and integrity of the original building, or its neighbours within the wider setting of streets and open spaces. Pastiche of former architectural styles is not encouraged as this is likely to devalue levels of authenticity within the conservation area, which is greater than most other comparable historic burghs.

3.1.8 In those rare cases where the reconstruction of lost features may be appropriate - for instance, in restoring the architectural integrity of a façade which may have been altered - the work should be based on known pictorial or documentary archival sources. It should never be conjectural.

Advanced decay to sandstone ashlar masonry, exacerbated by the application of a dense cement render which has fallen off the face of the wall: further plastic repairs are unlikely to be successful here

3.1.9 Wherever possible repairs to historic fabric should be carried out in like materials. If the source is no longer available, extreme care should be exercised over the suitability of replacement material in terms of its long term performance and effect on any surviving traditional materials. Similarly, it would be preferable to replicate obsolete patterns of architectural features rather than discard them altogether when carrying out repairs to material that may have failed through age and decay.

3.1.10 Repairs and alterations to historic buildings should observe recommendations for good conservation practice set down in advisory publications prepared by Historic Scotland, for instance, through Technical Advice Notes and Guidance to Practitioners. Throughout this document reference is made to relevant leaflets from the INFORM series published by Historic Scotland, providing advice to property owners on the repair of traditional buildings.

3.1.11 Important as national standards undoubtedly are, it is of particular importance that local variations and traditions are understood prior to embarking upon repairs or alterations. Sound conservation practice should be based always on knowledge and understanding of the particular site or building and of the specialist skills needed to conserve them.

3.1.12 The fabric of historic buildings can be damaged too readily by applying modern construction practice or materials where an alternative and more sympathetic approach may be called for, and which may be more effective for the care of the building in the longer term. Particular damage can arise from the ill-considered application of current building standards regulations to historic buildings within conservation areas. In this respect Historic Scotland's Guide for Practitioners *Conversion of Traditional Buildings: Application of the Scottish Building Standards* (2007) sets down valuable principles which should be followed by the applicant's agent, and by the Council also when processing applications.

3.1.13 Taking into account the discoveries made from archaeological excavation in comparable historic burghs, the boundaries of the conservation area coincide with the high likelihood of archaeological deposits corresponding to the growth of the medieval burgh of Forres. This resource might be anticipated on the sites of the foreland properties lining both sides of the High Street, and throughout the length of each of the wynds. Requirements for addressing this archaeological resource when considering development of any kind are given in 6.2.

3.1.14 Principles of conservation philosophy for the preservation of the fabric of scheduled ancient monuments (SAMs) vary from those set down for historic buildings which are already in use, or for which new uses may be sought. Guidance is set out in Historic Scotland's *The Conservation of Architectural Ancient Monuments in Scotland* (2001).

3.2 Managing change: overriding principles

3.2.1 Notes in this section relate primarily, but not exclusively, to properties erected before 1948. Guidance in relation to changes having a potential impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area which will apply to all buildings and proposed development appears in Sections 6 and 7.

3.2.2 Change of any kind within the conservation area should be guided by the overriding principles of *preserving* its character and appearance and *enhancing* it by following recognised standards of conservation practice, or through the encouragement of high standards of design and construction in any new development which may occupy gap sites in the townscape, or the site of a building for which conservation area consent has been granted for demolition.

3.3 Variables by property age and typology

3.3.1 In the absence of being able to define the age of a property through pictorial, cartographic, or other archival evidence, construction and architectural detail can often provide firm clues and evidence of phasing in more complex structures that may have been added to, or altered, during the course of their history. It should be borne in mind always that properties may be disguising earlier structures and, occasionally, structures may harbour more than a single period of physical change in their evolution.

3.3.2 The conservation area displays an unusually rich resource of buildings that can be readily identified from the late seventeenth century right through to the present time. Phases of development from each stage of the town's development give the buildings their own special characteristics, contributing to a townscape of great variety and interest. It would be misleading, however, to state that buildings of the interwar years of the last century are of a lesser importance than those of earlier period as buildings of all ages have the potential to contribute to the variety of the townscape and to the richness of detail. The contribution of later buildings can, occasionally, be overlooked, especially when they may not be listed.

A wing to the rear of a listed building on the High Street displays a steeper roof pitch than would be the norm and crowsteps suggesting that parts of an earlier building could have been retained on the site: a chimneyhead at the gable has been taken down and the fabric modernised with modern windows and a new slate roof with a modern tile ridge

3.3.3 Earlier buildings may be distinguished by roofs with a steeper pitch than would be the norm, and a significant number of the more domestic properties had retained their thatched finishes into the twentieth century judging by the evidence of historic photographs. Buildings from the late seventeenth century to the mid-eighteenth century, and possibly later even, were usually harled and retained their distinctive crowstepped gables with elegant curved skewputts. It is not uncommon to find the existence of crowstepped gables to the rear of High Street properties which may have been altered or refaced which may suggest the existence of an earlier property on the site. Gables from this era would be marked by chimneyheads with heavy splayed sandstone copes and plain roll mouldings. Rooms within the attic space of these buildings occasionally have 'cat-slide' dormers of a simple pattern, but while good examples of distinctive heavy stone slates had survived into the mid-twentieth century from the evidence of historic photographs all of these older structures have now vanished from the street scene. Gable widths and floor spans would be governed by standard joist spans and sizes. Crowstepped gables would often be revived in the nationalistic revival styles of the mid-to-late nineteenth century of

which good examples are to be found also in the residential areas at the extremities of the conservation area.

3.3.4 Early to mid-eighteenth century structures would preserve a similar gable width and roof pitch, but roofs would be finished in local slate from a wide variety of sources, or in some cases West Highland blue slate brought in to the town's harbour at Findhorn by sea. These slates would be blue-black in colour and mainly of small face size laid in diminishing courses. Gradually, as the century progressed, roof pitches would reduce, and gable wallheads would have plain skews which in a higher pitched roof would be prone to slipping off the wallheads. By the late eighteenth century window glass would consist of slightly larger panes of thinner glass, with astragals that are less heavy. Forres is relatively unusual in retaining a number of grander three-storeyed buildings on the High Street with gablets (or 'tympan', or 'nepus', gables) serving the attic storey, these structures are normally associated with the late eighteenth century. In the period between 1775 and 1815 a highly decorative form of scrolled skewputt emerged on a number of properties in the form of a capstan, most probably an indication of the town's historic links with ship-owning and maritime trade.

Elaborate carved skewputts of which there are a number of examples to be found in the period c1775-1820

3.3.5 More sophisticated buildings of the late eighteenth century might introduce a 'double pile' plan of two rooms in depth, resulting in broader gables and roofs with shallower pitches. By the early nineteenth century the roof pitches to buildings designed in classical styles would often be much lower than previously and flat roofs over the centre of the roof span became increasingly common. By this time most street frontages were of ashlar masonry, and harled surfaces were no longer common. Towards the end of the nineteenth century larger floor spans for hotels, shops and tenements on the upper floors became possible with the introduction of rolled steel joists spanning wider openings, while architectural styles had moved away from the classical forms and detailing common up to around 1870, offering greater variety in the streetscape. By this time roofs were rarely other than blue slate, laid with a standard face size and regularly coursed, changes which resulted from the mechanisation of the industry and from the ease of transportation of building materials due to the railways. Building stone came from a wide variety of sources, with only a few of the quarries being local. Sandstone for architectural dressings had to be sourced from further afield, coming from the many quarries in operation around Elgin and Hopeman, or from Nairn in the west. Despite some of the best sandstone in Scotland being quarried in Moray, unfortunately not all of the stones have proved to be durable.

A range of Victorian cast iron shopfronts inserted at the ground floor of the earlier building at 117-121 High Street which carries the date of 1748

3.3.6 The greatest physical changes to the town's High Street came from two principal sources. Firstly, there came revolution in retailing - forever at the heart of the prosperity of the Forres merchants in the past, much as now - throughout the course of the nineteenth century. In the second half of the nineteenth century more sophisticated shop windows were appearing, taking advantage of the new techniques for manufacturing and transporting large panes of plate glass. It was not uncommon to see large shop windows being introduced into existing masonry walls at ground floor and, increasingly, new shopfronts were inserted in cast iron. More often than not properties would be taken down and rebuilt with an increased number of storeys at the commercial heart of the town, changing the appearance of the principal streets which had been, hitherto, characterised by a number of gable-ended domestic properties at the termination of the old burgage plots, of which only a few have survived to this day in the street pattern. These buildings with their generous shop windows mark the third age of the prosperity of the town.

3.3.7 The second source of change can also be seen as a manifestation of the confidence of this third age, and resulted from the diversification in strands of religious worship in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Fuelled by philanthropy, three landmark buildings were erected: the first was at the Castlehill, followed by the new churches at St Leonard's and St Laurence. The decades to either side of the turn of the twentieth century witnessed the growth of the residential suburbs and the erection of several fine villas in fashionable late Victorian and Edwardian styles.

3.3.8 The loss of original fabric and features of buildings has accelerated over the last decades, and in this Forres is by no means unusual. Cast iron rainwater goods in a wide variety of patterns have survived in large numbers but increasingly they are being replaced in cheaper, lightweight materials which no longer required skilled labour to fix. Decaying masonry has been patched up in dense cement mortar or render, thereby accelerating the rates of decay. New shopfronts were inserted in the second half of the twentieth century, destroying the evidence of earlier shopfronts, blind boxes and fascias. Traditional windows and doors which may have survived for 150 years and more are being replaced with modern alternatives. There has been a consequential erosion of the skills base for the repair of traditional buildings in Forres, and across Moray as a whole.

3.3.9 In order to compensate for some of these perceived shortcomings there would be considerable merit in establishing a local centre for conservation advice and for dispensing leaflets to property owners within the conservation area, such as might be funded by a CARS scheme, or a similar programme. The following guidance notes assume that these leaflets can be made available locally to help with a programme of raising conservation awareness in the community and among local tradesmen.

3.4 Property maintenance

3.4.1 The Conservation Area Appraisal (Part 1) identified recurring problems with keeping the fabric of structures in good repair from planned, regular maintenance. Good conservation practice cannot be seen in isolation of undertaking targeted maintenance, whether replacing slipped or missing slates, repairing damaged leadwork in hidden gutters, or in removing debris and vegetation growth from high level gutters and repairing cracked downpipes.

A key listed building on the High Street displays a lack of maintenance with a number of features failing: gutters need to be cleaned, roof slating needs to be overhauled, chimneyheads are leaning and bulging and have open masonry joints with missing stonework, and joinery needs decoration and repairs for which access is heavily constrained

3.4.2 Failure to carry out regular maintenance can place a property at considerable risk. It can place a considerable financial burden upon property owners if unattended problems lead to damage of the internal fabric from wet rot, or more devastatingly, from dry rot.

3.4.3 Given the difficulties of physical access, there are many good examples to be seen where high level maintenance has been tackled, and these are to be strongly applauded. There are clear opportunities to build upon the current initiatives and tackle the problem through engaging a wider audience. Through funding secured from a CARS scheme, for instance, it might be possible to draw in expertise from organisations such as the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings in Scotland (SPABiS), or the Scottish Lime Centre Trust, both of which have expertise of working with communities in this field.

4 Local distinctiveness: architectural features and materials

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The following guidance is based on the findings of comprehensive audits of the townscape and buildings undertaken for the conservation area character appraisal. The audit took into account: the significance of surviving elements of historic fabric; levels of authenticity; where change had occurred; negative features; and any recurring problems.

4.1.2 Clauses setting out guidance on repair and enhancement in the clauses that follow are summarised at the beginning of each category in lighter bold type. Outline guidance is followed by narrative on the extent to which the subject makes a contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. At the end of each section reference is made to INFORM and Short Guides where they exist on the particular subject or category. These informative leaflets are available free of charge and are published by Historic Scotland for property owners, and for those having a responsibility for the upkeep of historic buildings. Where relevant, guidance set out in relevant leaflets in the 'Managing Change' series is also referred to.

4.2 Towers and spires

Vertical features within the Conservation Area have been strategically placed on the skyline and are important landmarks, often visible from a considerable distance; by their very nature because of height and exposure, towers and spires will be demanding elements to maintain and keep free of defect. Regular maintenance inspections will be encouraged, followed up by programmes of repair to reduce risk in the longer term.

Structures observed to be in need of repair were the spire at Anderson's Institution and the stonework and cast iron balustrading at the Market Cross.

4.2.1 Towers and spires are among the most important elements in the historic townscape and make a strong contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. They appear in numerous historic images. Dominating the skyline of the town centre are a series of landmark structures – from east to west these are the tower to St John's Episcopal Church; the spire to Anderson's Institution; the spire to St Leonard's Church; the staged tower and domes to the Tolbooth; the elegant spire, finials and flêche to St Laurence Church; and the obelisk to Dr Thomson at Castlehill. For any historic burgh this would constitute an exceptional array of monuments, but for a small town of the size of Forres it is highly unusual

and reflects a strong sense of civic pride over the centuries, and also the conspicuous philanthropy of the town's former citizens.

4.2.2 Also visible from a considerable distance, rising well above the tallest buildings on the ridge where the medieval burgh had been laid out, is Nelson's Tower. This was planned to sit on the highest point of the Cluny Hills and provides a viewing platform offering outstanding views of the Laigh of Moray and the firth to the north, with the mountain ranges to the north and west on the far horizons.

4.2.3 Though not visible on the skyline of the town, but prominent as a vertical feature within the townscape is Thomas Mackenzie's market cross of 1844. As an early example of the Gothic Revival it was convincingly detailed when first erected for which inspiration had been drawn from the Scott Monument on Edinburgh's Princes Street. Suffering from stone decay and having been stripped of a number of its key architectural features, it is now somewhat diminished in appearance and in a state deemed to be unworthy of its prominent location on the Plainstones.

4.3 Chimneyheads and chimney cans

The loss of a single chimneyhead can be damaging to the appearance of the building, and to the wider conservation area. There will be a presumption against the demolition of chimneyheads. Where these elements of the roofscape require to be taken down, but only if their condition merits it due to decay or structural instability, sound material should be retained and incorporated in any rebuilding. The appearance of the original feature should be matched in all respects. Encouragement will be given to restoring missing chimneyheads.

Where chimneyheads have been rendered in modern cement renders, consideration should be given to restoring earlier known historic finishes. Where they exist thackstanes should always be retained. Cement pointing should be raked out and repointing carried out in hydraulic lime to an appropriate specification.

Where a chimneyhead is found to be beyond repair, it should be replaced as an accurate replica in both style and colour; where redundant, chimneycans cans should be fitted with unobtrusive ventilating caps, or raised slate pieces where no cans exist.

Traditional patterned chimney cans should always be preserved where sound and replaced with matching cans where damaged, or lost. Whenever the opportunity presents itself, consideration should be given

to removing chimneycans to buildings of the period from the late seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth century on grounds of authenticity.

Encouragement will be given to taking down and rebuilding chimneyheads in stone where the original copes have been replaced in artificial stone.

4.3.1 Chimneyheads and chimney cans are important elements of the historic townscape, if often unseen or noticed from ground level. Finishing off gables, they punctuate the skyline and provide a sense of rhythm that reflects the feus of the individual properties set out on the burgage plots of the old wynds. They add to variety within the townscape, especially where taller structures rise above properties of a more domestic scale.

4.3.2 These qualities are particularly noticeable in the wynds running at right angles to the High Street. Historically it was the norm for properties on the principal street of a burgh having a medieval layout to be taller and of a different scale to those on backlands. Often there would be a descending scale as less important properties were located at the outer edges of the rig, or burgage plot.

4.3.3 The loss of chimneyheads, particularly at gables which have been slated over, or left as a stump, can result in a disturbing loss of symmetry affecting the rhythm of the street or skyline. A gable which is not capped by a chimneyhead will tend to look unfinished. Chimneyheads are among the most vulnerable parts of any historic building due to exposure to the combined effects of a harsh climate and flue gases. Throughout Forres these elements are particularly at risk because of the poor weathering qualities of some of the building stones or of risk where this has been used. Many decayed chimneyheads have been coated with modern dense cement rendered finishes, or will have been heavily over-pointed in cement mortar

which serves only to accelerate the rate of decay. A significant number of chimneyheads were observed to have open joints. At the time of the audit work there was evidence of some chimneyheads which were almost in a dangerous state and this presents a risk in the short and longer term, and their condition suggests that in a large number of cases the withes (bridging pieces) will have collapsed. A significant number of chimneys on buildings in the town centre of the early nineteenth century, and later, were observed to be leaning or bulging suggesting that rebuilding would be necessary.

4.3.4 The earliest chimneyheads are dated to the late seventeenth century, and traditionally they would have been plain, of harled stonework, with a plain blocked stone course to the copes but originally without chimney cans (most examples from this date have been retrofitted with cans). Chimneyheads with projecting moulded stone copes became the norm by the late eighteenth century, and by the early nineteenth century some chimneyheads still had 'thackstanes', a projecting stone from the base of the chimneyhead to protect a thatched roof finish, even though by this time slated roofs would have been the norm.

4.3.5 Chimneyheads in the nineteenth century would be built of ashlar stone or rubble, depending on the status of the building, in preference to being harled. In the period from the end of the nineteenth century through to the twentieth century the design of chimneyheads became bolder in profile, often with distinctive heavy moulded copes of which Forres has a number of very good examples, some with rope mouldings. Brick chimneyheads can often be seen in the backlands.

4.3.6 Forres has chimney cans of varying patterns, heights and styles from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They make a positive contribution to the townscape and more complete ranges and greater variety can be seen here when compared with elsewhere. Most are plain round beaded cans or hexagonal, mainly of yellow clay although red clay examples are to be seen frequently in the roofscape, mainly for late nineteenth or early twentieth century buildings.

4.3.7 Occasionally where failed chimneyheads have been rebuilt the original copes have been dispensed with and have been renewed in precast concrete. Sometimes an entire chimneyhead will have been rebuilt in modern concrete brick. Rarely do they ever appear satisfactory and consideration should always be given to rebuilding them in stone.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Domestic chimneys and flues
MANAGING CHANGE: Roofs

4.4 Roof ridging, piended roof coverings, ventilators and lanterns

Stone ridging should always be preserved. Ridging should be fully bedded in mortar and there should not be open joints between ridge pieces. Where sections have failed matching salvaged sections should be used, or damaged sections replaced with new stone of durable quality.

Lead ridging should be preserved wherever possible, and repaired; where beyond repair it should be replaced in lead and not zinc. Where lead has been replaced with modern alternatives encouragement will be given to reinstating the original finish.

Other traditional finishes, such as yellow clay ridge tiles, red clay cresting tiles or zinc sheet, should always be preserved with any defective lengths renewed in matching material. Ridge and hip tiles should be kept fully bedded and pointed up. Encouragement will be given to replacing modern zinc, or unsightly modern blue clay or concrete ridge and hip tiles, which are not original to the roof, with lead or stone ridging depending on the evidence of former finishes.

Glazed lanterns or cupolas and traditional metal roof ventilators where they have survived always add interest to the roofscape and should be preserved or restored.

Modern ventilated ridges more suited to tile or slated roof proprietary systems appear incongruous in the conservation area and will not be permitted.

Varied roofscape in the left image, with a modern clay tile, sandstone and lead roll ridge; red clay cresting on the right

4.4.1 Stone ridges have survived on Forres roofs in abundant numbers. In the late nineteenth century several appear with raised profiles. They are always an attractive feature of the roof and every effort should be made to preserve them.

4.4.2 From the early nineteenth century there was also a tradition of finishing slate roofs with lead ridging dressed over a timber roll, which is found commonly on piended roofs to dormers. In the highest quality work slated piends may be mitred against a flush lead roll.

4.4.3 Roofs of lesser buildings were occasionally given yellow clay ridge tiles, but only from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. Zinc ridges with galvanised iron over-straps appeared from the late nineteenth century, and lead that had perished was often substituted with zinc when repairs were carried out in the twentieth century.

4.4.4 Red clay cresting tiles with a distinctive profile are to be found throughout the conservation area and are known to date from the late nineteenth century.

4.4.5 Blue or black clay, or concrete, ridge tiles appear occasionally on roofs. They are not a traditional element, being likely to date from the middle of the twentieth century. Commonly where this material has been used the material may suffer prematurely from frost damage. Where clay tiles are used as hip tiles, roofs (and especially dormer roofs), can appear heavy and look clumsy. More recently where slated roofs have been re-roofed with

new material modern ventilated ridging has been fitted which appears incongruous.

4.4.6 Examples of lanterns and ventilators to roofs have survived and add interest to the roofscape. A good example of a glazed cupola can be seen at the nave crossing at St John's Church on Victoria Road.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Roof leadwork
MANAGING CHANGE: Roofs

4.5 Gables: skews, skewputts and crowsteps

There will be a presumption to retain all examples of skews, skewputts and crowstepped gables, including where these features appear in wallhead dormers. Where there are ongoing problems with water penetration at skews, remedial work should be undertaken to ensure that appropriate damp proof membranes are installed and that the stones are held securely on the wallheads. The haunching to skews over the roofing slates should be sound and pointed up regularly. Only as a last resort should the feature be removed or covered over in lead.

Where skews have been removed and are known to have existed previously encouragement will be given to reinstating them.

4.5.1 Crowstepped gables are important features within the townscape, most closely associated with the earliest buildings in the conservation area. All have distinctive curved skewputts. Sometimes crowstepped gables are found in revivalist buildings of the mid- to late-nineteenth century of which the Tolbooth is one of the best of the examples. They should always be preserved and kept well pointed up to prevent water penetration. In rare cases an inscribed date may appear on the face of the skewputt, as in the case of the oldest known building on the High Street which carries the date of 1668.

4.5.2 More commonly found for buildings of all ages are plain stone skews with plain blocked skewputts, very occasionally with dates carved into the face. As the nineteenth century progressed skews would become increasingly three-dimensional, reflected in steeply angled or triangular shaped skewputts in the more elaborate examples of the high status buildings. A further development emerged with a growing preference for 'tympan' gables with complex profiles built off the wallheads of the street elevations around the end of the nineteenth century.

4.5.3 A particularly elaborate form of skewputt can be seen on a number of buildings erected in the town centre between 1775 and 1815, taking the form of a capstan when viewed from the front of the building with the frayed ends of the rope delineated in a decorative pattern on the gable (see page 17). These features appear to be unique to the town, and demonstrate considerable skill in carving and artistry.

4.5.4 The use of projecting bargeboards has been largely shunned throughout the town centre and is reserved for the villas of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. One of the finest examples of a projecting bargeboard with elaborate fretwork detail is to be found in Russell Place.

4.5.5 Skews may sometimes be the cause of water penetration if not well maintained, and in a few rare instances they have been removed, damaging the appearance of the building. Sometimes they will be subject to slippage as the mortar joints and beds fail due to exposure.

4.6 Pitched roof finishes: blue and other slate

All slate roofs should be preserved and repaired. Where roofs are beyond reasonable repair they should be re-roofed in salvaged material supplemented by closely matching material or, where such material is unavailable after reasonable enquiry in new slates that match the colour, texture, coursing and thickness and overall appearance of the existing roof. There will be a strong presumption against re-roofing in Spanish or purple Welsh slates where these are a poor match for the predominantly blue colour of the existing roofscape.

Particular care should be exercised over sourcing slates for roofs of West Highland slate due to the scarcity of the resource.

When re-roofing there will be a strong presumption against introducing modern construction practice such as roof ventilators which stand proud of the slates and destroy the appearance of traditional roofs. Penetration of roofs with ventilation terminals should be kept to a minimum and, if unavoidable, they should always be located on the reverse slopes of the roof.

4.6.1 Pitched roofs are among the most important elements of the townscape. While a few such examples of stone slate roofs have survived in Elgin on high status buildings the last examples disappeared in Forres in the mid-twentieth century. The last examples of roofs clad in Cnoc Fergan schist slate from near Tomintoul disappeared in the 1980s, and there is now only

one roof observed which is clad in a Tarrymount stone slate shipped from Portgordon harbour.

4.6.2 Nevertheless, despite these losses, Forres still has many examples of roof slates from a variety of local quarries including a distinctive light blue slate thought to be quarried from outside the town up to the first half of the nineteenth century. From the early nineteenth century roofs would normally be clad in distinctive West Highland slate, generally small in size and laid in diminishing courses. The texture, colour and scale of the few roofs of West Highland slate that have survived are an attractive feature of the conservation area and can provide a useful indication of the age of the property. With the opening of the Caledonian Canal in 1822 the availability of slates from the quarries at Easdale and Ballachulish would have increased.

4.6.3 After the arrival of the railway, in the late nineteenth century machine dressed slates, often of a constant face size, were substituted for the smaller slates from the West Highland quarries. In the main the source of these slates appears to be Welsh, with a distinctive blue variegated colour rather than the purple associated more commonly with the quarries of North Wales. These slates were supplied to suit the Scottish market, and were normally heavier and more coarsely textured than the standard thin Welsh purple, or blue, slate. Machine dressed slates are recognisable by having a regular face size and coursing, but some variations occur where slates have varying face widths, producing an attractive roof. More rarely, late nineteenth century villas would be given roofs clad in green Westmorland slate, once more made available due to the railways.

4.6.4 In the main, buildings erected after the middle of the twentieth century have slate roofs of varying colours, which contribute to the harmonious appearance of the conservation area. Some new buildings have been erected where either Spanish or smooth purple Welsh slates have been specified, and occasionally older roofs may have been reslated in these materials. The texture and shiny black colour of Spanish slates and the use of thin, non-matching Welsh slates, or ones which are too purple in colour, appear as intrusive elements in the traditional roofscape.

4.6.5 There are a few examples of highly decorative slate roofs using scalloped slates to good effect.

4.6.6 A few of the older roofs in the conservation area were observed to be in a poor state, with the customary problems of nail sickness and other common problems apparent such as the degradation of individual slates. Sometimes roofs that have failed have been replaced in unsuitable modern materials (see 4.8 below). One example was observed, in a particularly prominent part

of the High Street, where the slates had been painted over misguidedly with a proprietary material, presumably with the intention of extending the life of the roof – the resulting finish appears quite alien and the slates will no longer be capable of being salvaged for reuse.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Repairing Scottish slate roofs
HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Ventilation in traditional houses
MANAGING CHANGE: Roofs

4.7 Pitched roof finishes: corrugated iron

Corrugated iron roofs should generally be considered historic and to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area; in some cases the material may be replacing earlier roof materials such as thatch. Wherever possible the surfaces of the iron sheets should be preserved and prepared for painting, but where it can be established that the material is incapable of being repaired new material should be sourced which is an accurate match to the original. Painted surfaces would be considered preferable to a galvanised finish.

4.7.1 There are a few examples of roofs with corrugated iron finishes occurring in the conservation area, mostly as a roof covering to structures such as stores, garages and workshops. In the majority of cases these finishes should be considered as being historic. Often paint may no longer be effective and the sheets will be prone to rusting, and ultimately loss. In the row of cottages behind 154 High Street, the use of corrugated iron is as a replacement for thatching which has failed and the possibility that the remnants of thatching material has survived is high, having the potential for being of archaeological importance.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Care and Maintenance of Corrugated Iron

4.8 Pitched roof finishes: modern materials

There will be a presumption against modern roof finishes appearing in the conservation area as a substitute for slate. Where roofs have been re-

roofed in modern materials, such as asbestos cement tile, concrete interlocking tiles or mineral felt tiles, encouragement will be given to replacing them with natural slate.

4.8.1 Forres has suffered hardly at all from the replacement of failed slated roofs with modern substitute materials such as asbestos cement slates or their modern alternatives, when compared with other historic burghs. Of regular face size, and appearing too thin, they are a poor substitute for slate. The colour washes out over a number of years in use and later examples are held in position with exposed clips which affects adversely the appearance of the roof.

4.8.2 Likewise there are examples of roofs which have been clad in plain concrete tiles or interlocking tiles, and examples of these materials occur in structures at the end of the wynds in modern storage buildings where they may be less prominent.

4.8.3 The use of corrugated asbestos roofing sheets is mainly confined to low grade outbuildings or stores in the wynds, but the refurbished museum store at the head of the car park is visible at a distance from the High Street, and the use of this utilitarian material has a negative impact on the conservation area.

4.9 Rooflights

There will be a presumption in favour of retaining all traditional cast iron rooflights and historic glass in 'non-living' spaces of attics which should be repaired and preserved in their original positions.

Where new rooflights are introduced, they should be as few as are necessary, kept unobtrusive as possible, be of vertical proportions and should not be over-sized. Care should be taken over the selection of 'conservation rooflights' as some types are no more than standard rooflights with a subdivision of the glass panes, and can be considerably more intrusive than others. Conservation rooflights where the panes of glass are subdivided are deemed preferable to units with single panes, unless small in size. They should be chosen so that the frame of the rooflight sits as low as possible in relation to the line of the slates so that the appearance of the roof is undisturbed.

Where rooflights occur in symmetrical elevations consideration should be given to ensuring that the positions of rooflights are balanced within the overall composition of the façade. Wherever possible rooflights should be confined to the reverse slopes of roofs, and should be kept as low as possible in relation to the roof ridge.

4.9.1 Large numbers of traditional cast iron rooflights have survived throughout the conservation area, considerably more than in other conservation areas. Of varying patterns and sizes, and often fitted with small overlapping panes of glass, they make a positive contribution to the roofscape of the conservation area.

4.9.2 Modern rooflights can be intrusive where older rooflights are replaced or where roofspaces have been converted for habitation, especially if they are oversized, or of square or horizontal proportions with large single sheets of unbroken glass when viewed from street level. Also, the frames tend to sit considerably higher above the roof finish than traditional cast iron skylights. Rooflights sold as 'conservation rooflights' can be little more than standard items with artificially subdivided glass panes and are considered unsuitable for use in the conservation area. Great care should be taken over the selection of suitable replacement rooflights of which good examples can be sourced from suppliers such as the Rooflight Company or Lumen Rooflights.

MANAGING CHANGE: Roofs

4.10 Dormer windows and box dormers

There will be a presumption in favour of retaining all traditional dormers as found, and repairs should be carried out always in like materials.

Proposals to reface timber used in dormers with modern materials such as uPVC will not be permitted, and the replacement of original dormer windows with modern replacements will be discouraged. Encouragement will be given to restoring earlier finishes and the profiles of dormers where changed in the past.

Infilling between dormers, or the formation of attic accommodation by the introduction of flat-roofed box dormers, will not be permitted. Opportunities should be pursued to remove unsightly box dormers.

4.10.1 Most historic burghs possess a rich legacy of dormer windows, but the sheer quality and variety of those found in Forres surpass the majority, giving considerable rhythm and character to the roofscape of the conservation area.

4.10.2 The earliest examples of traditional patterns of dormers are no longer prominent features within the townscape as they had been once, and of these cat-slide dormers have survived to the rear of 154 High Street and appear on the rear roofs of 117-121 High Street. Occasionally cat-slide dormers appear on nineteenth century buildings. Some of the carved pedimented dormers which were once part of this seventeenth century tradition have survived only as replicas of the late nineteenth century of which there are good examples surviving at the former Longview Hotel on the High Street and in some of the finer villas of the residential areas.

4.10.3 Towards the end of the nineteenth century the design of dormers became more diverse – while some are plain pedimented, others have semicircular heads or are gables blocked out to complement a gothic façade. There are also some vertically proportioned dormers built off the wallheads. It is not uncommon to find that carved stone detail, for instance in finials, has been damaged through decay, with many features lost, and not replaced.

4.10.4 Timber dormers appearing on the buildings of the High Street are equally diverse, with a number of them pedimented with distinctive console brackets, and some with semicircular heads. Most of them have retained the original slate finish. Of the plainer types of dormer there are equally good examples to be found, for instance of angled dormers, or plain dormers with piended, or hipped roofs with lead coverings to the hips and ridges. Slated haffits are commonplace. Away from the High Street it is not uncommon to encounter dormers with decorative bargeboards.

4.10.5 Forres has been largely spared large numbers of box dormers or later mansard roofs which have damaged so many other conservation areas,

although several were noted during the audit of properties. Flat-roofed box dormers are normally erected to gain additional headroom for the upper habitable spaces, or to introduce bathrooms at roof level. There is a prominent example to be found on the High Street to the rear of a building of 1778 of architectural importance. Although the vertical surfaces of box dormers are normally clad in slate, without exception they disturb the lines of a traditional roof and always have a negative impact on the conservation area.

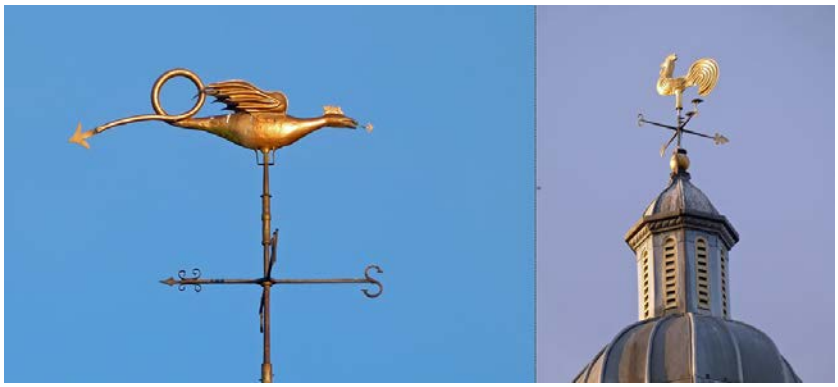
MANAGING CHANGE: Roofs
MANAGING CHANGE: Extensions

4.11 Decorative finials

All decorative finials adorning the roofscape, whether of turned wood, lead, carved stone, terracotta, or decorative cast iron, should be retained and conserved in position wherever possible, and should not be removed.

Forres has an unparalleled array of finials decorating towers and spires throughout the town centre.

Encouragement will be given to ensuring that decorative finials which have been lost, and for which there is historic photographic evidence, are restored to the original patterns.



4.11.1 Finials are decorative architectural features. The plainest examples may be painted, turned wood; other examples of wooden finials may be clad in lead. Also common are the red clay finials of terracotta found on roofs from the turn of the twentieth century, but there are numerous examples of cast iron finials, mainly to the dormers of lesser roofs. Sometimes finials adorn the more humble structures such as workshops and stores.

4.11.2 Forres has inherited a rich tradition which grew up in the nineteenth century of punctuating the skyline with decorative finials of varying types applied to spires and towers. A gilded flying dragon adorns the spire of Anderson's Institution while gilded cockerels can be observed at the Tolbooth and at St John's Church. Other spires have elaborate weather vanes, and these features are occasionally found on domestic properties.

4.11.3 As noted elsewhere, one of Forres's crowning glories is its carved architectural detail, which finds expression here in a remarkable collection of finials to gablets on street frontages. In some cases they are so elaborate that they display the outstanding skills of the town's masons, while in some cases carved stonework will be the work of sculptors. The array of detail and its variety is astonishing – carved thistles, fleurs-de-lys, floral sprays, roses, obelisks, urns, orbs, and ball finials are all to be seen at high level. Through decay and neglect many of them have been lost, and in some cases this spoils the symmetry of an elevation.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Finials and terminals
HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Terracotta and faience
MANAGING CHANGE: Roofs

4.12 Low-pitched, or flat roofs

Lead lined roofs, where they have survived, should be preserved and repaired as appropriate. Where beyond repair the roof should be relined in new lead laid to current advisory standards, and this may require the roof decking to be relaid to achieve recommended falls and steps between lengths of lead sheeting. Leadwork should always be undertaken by specialist contractors. There will be a presumption against replacing lead roofs with modern materials or proprietary flat roof systems. Consideration should be given always to the possibility of the underside of the lead being damaged by condensation where roof insulation is introduced.

Lead lined gutters, often invisible within the conservation area, should always be maintained to avoid placing buildings at risk. Where linings have failed, the gutters should always be replaced in lead laid in accordance with current advisory standards which may require the wooden decking to be lifted and relaid to suit sheet lengths, step heights, falls to outlets and overflows. Where risks of ice build-up may occur, electric trace heating may be considered.

4.12.1 Early flat roofs occurring throughout the conservation area would have been finished in lead. There are relatively few flat roofs appearing in the conservation area, and they are mostly found between pitched roofs in the

form of wide valley gutters, or behind stone parapets. Lead lined roofs have the potential to last for many years if laid correctly and maintained.

4.12.2 Lead parapet and valley gutters are important elements in preventing water from entering the interiors of buildings. Parapet gutters are mostly invisible from ground level, and where they are not maintained considerable damage can result, leading to severe outbreaks of timber infestation and fungal attack.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Roofing leadwork
HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Bituminous sheet flat roofs: their repair and maintenance
MANAGING CHANGE: Roofs

4.13 Bargeboards and eaves boards

Painted bargeboards and eaves boards where they are original should be preserved always and maintained whether plain or decorative. There will be a presumption against renewal in modern maintenance free materials such as uPVC.

There will also be a presumption against the fitting of flush eaves boards at wallheads where none existed previously.

4.13.1 Painted bargeboards and projecting eaves boards are absent among the earlier structures in the conservation area, and only began to appear in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. They are features normally associated with domestic buildings, of which there are a number of good examples occurring throughout the conservation area. Some are highly decorative, with curved profiles and elaborate fretwork. On dormers bargeboards may often be supported on attractive brackets. Projecting bargeboards are common in late nineteenth and early twentieth century villas of the residential areas.

4.14 Rainwater disposal

Original rainwater goods of cast iron, even where plain, should always be preserved and maintained in good condition. There will be a presumption against replacement with modern rainwater goods of uPVC, GRP, or aluminium, and where systems have been replaced in this way encouragement will be given to restoring earlier cast iron patterns.

Given the significance of surviving decorative cast iron rainwater systems, repairs should be undertaken and salvaged sections of the original patterns should always be reused when systems have to be dismantled. Encouragement will be given over the sourcing of replacement sections which may require to be cast as an exact match of original patterns.

4.14.1 The earliest buildings within the conservation area would have had no rainwater goods originally, and would have been reliant on the large stone slates overhanging the projecting wallhead tabling found on buildings of this age. The later introduction of cast iron rainwater goods to these structures recognises the improvements that were made to street drainage in the early nineteenth century.

4.14.2 Buildings from the early nineteenth century onwards were normally fitted up with ordinary half-round cast iron rhones and round downpipes. Towards the end of the nineteenth century more elaborate patterns appeared on the principal buildings, of which nearly all have survived. Decorative cast iron rainwater goods were used extensively up to the 1930s. Not all of them are in good condition and some damaged sections have been lost and replaced. Square downpipes with decorative holderbatts, hoppers and ogee rhones supported on wall brackets, supplied by a number of different foundries, are to be seen on the buildings of the principal streets. Of these Forres is considered to have an exceptional collection.

4.14.3 There have been problems in maintaining decorative rainwater goods. While many of the systems are capable of continuing in use, difficulties in obtaining replacement parts have led to temporary repairs having to be carried out.

4.14.4 For the lesser properties in the conservation area there has been a gradual erosion of original cast iron rainwater systems, and where improvements have been made it is common to find plastic alternatives having been used. Although maintenance free, plastic rainwater goods have a flimsy appearance and can become brittle and prone to damage from ladders. They have none of the lasting qualities of well-maintained cast iron systems.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: The maintenance of cast iron rainwater goods
MANAGING CHANGE: External fixtures

4.15 Soil and vent pipework

Wherever it is possible to do so surface soil and vent pipework should be re-routed internally; where terminals have to be incorporated they should be located on the reverse roof slopes away from principal elevations. No new systems in any material defacing historic buildings will be permitted within the conservation area.

4.15.1 Cast iron soil and vent pipework appearing on the face of buildings will be likely to date to the late nineteenth century onwards and reflect the introduction of sanitary regulations. More often than not, in older properties they reflect changes that have been made. Later systems may be of modern materials, such as uPVC. They are, without exception, disfiguring in appearance, especially where they occur on a principal elevation, or where seen along the length of a close.

4.16 Lime harling and early Portland cement renders

Traditional lime harls or renders are relatively common when compared with other conservation areas, and should be repaired, keeping as much original material as possible. Mortar for repairs should be based on analysis of the original mortar to establish the likely constituents and type and size of aggregate. Where replacement of harling is found to be unavoidable the mortar mix should match the material being replaced in colour, texture, strength of lime or cement and size of aggregate. Most traditional lime harling was finished in limewash, mostly white, of which there is evidence that has survived.

Rarer are the early Portland cement ashlared renders, of which original surfaces can be seen on domestic properties away from the High Street. A more prominent example is found at 117-121 High Street, now painted over.

There will be a presumption against replacing traditional renders and harling with modern dense cement renders, and where such a finish has been applied in the recent past encouragement will be given for its removal and returning the wall to an earlier known state.

When removing old harling or rendered finishes there is always the possibility that features of archaeological interest will be uncovered, which should be recorded and, where appropriate, left exposed.

Examples of lime harling surviving in the wynds (see also the photograph on page 28)

4.16.1 Good examples of traditional lime harled surfaces can be found throughout the conservation area; sometimes these surfaces have been overpainted. The treatment of lime harling with pigmented limewash never seems to have been a strong tradition and most of the surfaces where limewash had been applied seem to have been natural-coloured, or white. There are good examples of harled surfaces which were never limewashed, where the attractive colour of the finish has been derived from the aggregate used in the mortar having been exposed over time as the lime dashing coat has worn away.

4.16.2 The greatest chance of finding survivals of lime harled surfaces occurs in the wynds, and here the finishes are often less like a traditional harl than a thin coat of lime applied over rubble masonry to give the appearance of a flush surface. Often this would be done as sneck harling, in which the faces of the largest stones would be seen exposed. Over time the surface would wash off, revealing the underlying rubble work. Occasionally these surfaces are smoke blackened.

Examples of early Portland cement ashlared renders

4.16.3 It is possible that some areas of rendering identified as being original may in fact be of early Portland cement (a material which could have been in use from the late nineteenth century) and not lime. Early Portland cements are historic. Identification of the type of rendered finish will be essential in establishing appropriate repair strategies. Ashlared rendered surfaces are less common than in other areas, probably because of the ready availability of lime for building purposes.

4.16.4 Where rendered surfaces have been renewed in dense cement the finish is never attractive, especially if left as self-finished. It is quite conceivable that the underlying masonry or brick surfaces will be damaged from the use of such strong material. Consideration should always be given to removing it and replacing with lime harling.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: The use of lime and cement in traditional buildings
MANAGING CHANGE: External walls

4.17 Ashlar stone walling

Ashlar masonry walls should always be preserved, and there will be a presumption against ashlar work being painted. Repointing should be carried out only in lime putty mortar and only when necessary, applied skilfully and without widening joints in the finished work. Where individual stones may have decayed, repairs should be indented in small sections but in some cases the re-facing of a badly decayed surface may be merited. Considerable care should be taken over selecting suitable replacement stone where repairs are required, which should have regard to factors such as the porosity of the host stone, its colour and durability. Patch repairs, repointing in cement mortar or in any other material should never be undertaken. The use of proprietary repair mortars will be discouraged.

Wherever possible, paint layers should be removed to reveal the original wall finish.

Cleaning of sandstone will generally be discouraged. Also to be discouraged will be the application of proprietary weatherproof sealants or silicone-based products which can accelerate the processes of decay and lead to unexpected problems with the historic fabric. The presumption against these treatments will apply equally to all forms of masonry walling, and to brick.

There will also be a presumption against undertaking repairs to decayed ashlar masonry as plastic repairs or in modern untried lime-based restoration mortars such as Lithomex applied over large areas of masonry.

4.17.1 Ashlar stone walling from all ages would be reserved for the town's principal buildings, and often would be restricted to the street elevation. As a measure of the skill of the masons virtually every possible form of ashlar masonry has been attempted. There are good examples to be found of smooth (or polished) ashlar, hammer-dressed, rock-faced, random tooled, vertically and angled droved, puncheoned with margins, and rusticated ashlar with both channelled and vee-jointed examples. The rock-faced walling of the ground storey of the ironmongery shop at 107-111 High Street is found normally only in cities like Edinburgh.

4.17.2 The colour of the stone used for ashlar work varies considerably across the whole of the conservation area. It varies from blonde sandstone used for the later buildings (and, often, quite soft), and from yellow through to orange coloured sandstone which may be iron-rich and browner, or even pink-coloured stone. Some of the stone is noticeably grey in tone. This adds considerably to the variety of the streetscape.

4.17.3 In some cases ashlar masonry has been painted over in the past, often at ground floor and normally only where shopfronts occur. Some of the building facades of ashlar seem to have been limewashed at an early date.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: The use of lime and cement in traditional buildings
HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Repointing ashlar masonry
HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Indent repairs to ashlar sandstone masonry
HISTORIC SCOTLAND: Cleaning sandstone: risks and consequences
MANAGING CHANGE: External Walls

4.18 Rubble masonry

Rubble stone walling should be preserved as close as possible to its original state, and there will be a presumption against coating it with harled or dry-dashed finishes unless it can be proved that the walling had been originally harled. Original lime mortars should always be preserved where sound and in general dense cement pointing should be removed, unless the act of removing it is likely to cause unacceptable damage to the underlying masonry. Replacement lime mortars should be based on an analysis of the original mortars in terms of the type of lime, its hydraulicity, and the type of aggregate which should be matched carefully in the finished work.

Considerable care should be taken when repointing to ensure that the style of the original pointing is replicated in the finished work. There will be a presumption to retain all sound original mortar.

4.18.1 Rubble masonry is the most common wall treatment throughout the conservation area, a reflection of the wide variety of quarries which were in operation across the Laigh of Moray as there were relatively few quarries operated for building stone around Forres. None of the stone appears to have been imported by any distance – but local granites and whinstones from the upland areas are occasionally seen, mostly as field stones. Whinstone became more common at the end of the nineteenth century.

4.18.2 Earlier walling would have been harled originally. Where the harling has worn off uncoursed random rubble has been revealed. Coursed masonry with a large number of small snecks in the interstices between stones may suggest masonry of the late eighteenth century, for which the walls had been prepared for harling but in Forres the interstices are normally filled more crudely. By the nineteenth century, lime harls appear to have been dispensed with and rubble walls were built with more regular coursing and with the absence of snecks; in some cases they were built to receive a thin coat of harling, or alternatively they were sneck harled leaving the surfaces of the larger stones exposed. A further development was in building coursed rubble walls with a wide joint in lime mortar but lined out to give the impression of coursed masonry.

4.18.3 There is strong evidence to suggest that, prior to the mid-nineteenth century, in the growing absence of applied harled finishes to walls built of rubble were given coats of limewash to improve their appearance.

4.18.4 It is not unusual to encounter frontages on the principal streets where the less important buildings were to be found constructed of regular coursed rubble, or of square coursed snecked rubble.

4.18.5 A large amount of walling has survived in which the mortar is either original or has been renewed in lime mortar, and this is unlike most conservation areas where the majority of walls have been repointed in unattractive dense cement mortar. Where this has happened it is not uncommon to see considerable damage caused to the sandstone from accelerated weathering.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: The use of lime and cement in traditional buildings

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Repointing rubble stonework
HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Masonry decay: dealing with the erosion of sandstone
MANAGING CHANGE: External walls

4.19 Carved stone: architectural detail and sculpture

The quality of the carved architectural detail to be discovered on the buildings of Forres is quite exceptional. It is found on buildings across the whole of the conservation area and demonstrates the skill of the local masons. Some of the work may be attributed to stone carvers and sculptors. In some cases the use of soft sandstone has accelerated the decay of carved detail, but this appears to be less of a problem than in some of the neighbouring towns. In such cases it may be possible, and indeed appropriate, to restore lost detail for reasons of maintaining the architectural integrity of a composition – for instance, in the replacement of missing finials. However, if the loss of carved detail is extreme it may have to be accepted that it cannot be restored. Fine carved detail should be repaired and consolidated only by skilled craftsmen and conservators. In general there will be a presumption against repairing damaged carved architectural detail and sculpture with plastic repairs, or by the use of proprietary repair mortars.

Sculpture of exceptional carved work may be found on certain civic buildings such as the Falconer Museum, and across the whole of the façade at the former Longview Hotel on the High Street. At the freestanding Market Cross much of the carved detail has weathered, but of greater concern has been the loss of architectural detail where elements have been removed. They should be restored. Repairs to carved stonework should be undertaken only by accredited conservators in accordance with a written report. Repairs to preserved armorial panels, carved lintols and other features of archaeological interest should, likewise, be undertaken only by an accredited conservator.

4.19.1 The calibre of the carved architectural detail in the sandstone buildings of the principal streets and the residential villas is of a remarkably high standard, reflecting a long tradition of masons' skills fostered in the Laigh of Moray over many generations. By the end of the nineteenth century carvings appear frequently, adorning a number of buildings throughout the conservation area. These skills are translated into carved inscriptions and date-stones on buildings, of which there are many fine examples of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are to be seen. Mention has been made already of the exceptional quality of the carved work in executing skewputts in the form of capstans in the period between 1775 and 1815 (see page 17).

4.19.2 It seems to be something of an anomaly that Forres appears to have had relatively few armorial panels which can be dated reliably to the period before 1730. Where they have survived they should be preserved *in situ*. This shortage is compensated to a degree by the exceptional carved pedimented dormers of late nineteenth century buildings where the work is inspired by this tradition.

4.19.2 While exceptional carving is to be found on the town's leading commercial buildings, the churches at Castlehill and at St Leonard's exhibit fine sculptural detail. At the former, the rose window at the south gable is of outstanding quality, and the tracery to the raised gable at the north end of the former nave is visible from the High Street. At the latter there is fine carving to be seen in the capitals of the columns at the entrance doors, and at high level at the tower to the spire where the gargoyles projecting at each corner give life to what would have been otherwise a plain steeple.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Cleaning sandstone: risks and consequences
MANAGING CHANGE: External walls

4.20 Datestones

Carved datestones can tell us a great deal about the history of a particular site and Forres has many good examples from the late seventeenth century to the present day. Datestones should always be preserved *in situ* and consideration should be given to ensuring that the evidence is not lost through stone decay – vulnerable examples should be fully recorded and consideration given to engaging a conservator to arrest further decay.

4.20.1 Forres has a rich legacy of datestones from all ages of building in the conservation area. They provide important information about the history of individual sites, and often the names or initials of those involved may be recorded for posterity. They add considerably to an understanding of how

the town had evolved, and some of the dates are commemorative – for instance at the Castlehill Bridge and at Nelson's Tower where the history of Nelson's naval engagements are recorded.

4.20.2 In a few of the examples stone decay has taken its toll making the carved inscriptions difficult to read.

4.21 Masonry decay

Where sandstone has decayed considerable care will require to be exercised over determining suitable repair strategies, which may extend to stone indenting, re-facing the worst affected areas with matching (but more durable) stone. In some cases a sacrificial weak ashlared lime-based render may be considered appropriate. Each case will be considered on its merits, and there may be no standard solutions, but if applications for external funding are successful the Council will seek to provide guidance on the most appropriate repair technologies after having commissioned research and specialist reports.

Embedded iron fixings may cause stone to split, and should always be drilled and repaired out to prevent further damage from rusting.

Subject to the foregoing, extensive work by way of plastic repairs using proprietary restoration mortars, or from using cement rich mortars likely to aggravate the risk to the underlying fabric in the longer term, will be discouraged. Work in repairing or replacing decayed stonework should be carried out only by skilled masons.

4.21.1 The use of soft sandstone, quarried during the course of the nineteenth century, has caused damage to the facades, decorative architectural detail, and the features at high level such as parapets and chimneyheads. However, the problem is confined to a number of buildings throughout the conservation area and does not present the universal problem encountered in some conservation areas in the North of Scotland. The problem can be manifested in the loss of profiles to raised window margins or lintols, or from the interruption of key architectural detail in mouldings and string courses. In general, but with some exceptions, the standard to which repairs have been carried out throughout the conservation area has fallen short of recommended conservation practice, and this suggests a shortage of skills.

4.21.2 Rubble masonry, especially where this occurs at exposed gables at high level, can present problems where individual stones are soft; often it is the case that the condition of the masonry has been exacerbated by the use of dense cement mortars.

4.21.3 Occasionally the decay of sandstone masonry will be caused by embedded iron fixings, resulting in the stone splitting.

4.21.4 There are no standard answers to the repair of soft sandstone, and each case will need to be considered on its merits. Sandstone will require to match the colour of the original stone carefully, and although of greater durability than the host stone, it should not be so durable as to accelerate the decay of the walling or feature being repaired. Indenting or re-facing stonework is highly skilled work, and in some cases it may be appropriate to consider the application of a lime ashlared render, or a render on an expanded stainless steel metal lath depending on the soundness of the substrate. Where extensive repairs are needed the application of a limewash finish may need to be considered to maintain architectural integrity where this is considered important.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: The use of lime and cement in traditional buildings
HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Masonry decay: dealing with the erosion of sandstone
HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Indent repairs to sandstone ashlar masonry
MANAGING CHANGE: External walls

4.22 Brickwork

The contribution made by brickwork to the townscape is greater than in many comparable conservation areas and should not be overlooked. The use of this material is not confined to chimneyheads.

Surviving panels should be preserved and repaired with traditional non-cement based mortars to match the original work. Where individual bricks require to be replaced, or areas of damaged brickwork taken down and rebuilt, second hand bricks to match colour, texture, and face size, should be used. Where they are unavailable, matching new handmade bricks should be substituted. Modern machine wire-cut bricks should never be used as they are different in appearance, with face dimensions that are much smaller than handmade Victorian bricks.

4.22.1 Possibly because of the general shortage of working quarries in the vicinity of the town producing building stone, brick has often been selected as a material for external walls. The earliest examples suggest that use of the material was confined to stores and outbuildings, where the brick would be disguised by the application of lime harling. In such cases it is not uncommon to find that the underlying brickwork will have been damaged by frost action.

4.22.2 Towards the end of the nineteenth century the use of the material became more common, but it is rare to find brickwork other than in the wynds behind the High Street. Common uses were for bathroom extensions, pend walls leading to closes, gable infill walls and occasionally for rear walls of buildings which were not intended to be prominent when erected. Brick voussoirs are used for the arched windows to the hall to the rear of the Territorial Army Drill Hall on Victoria Road. Occasionally chimneys are built of brick, or have been rebuilt in brick where stonework may have failed, or where a chimneyhead was extended upwards. Red clay bricks are most commonly used, but examples of yellow brick and white glazed bricks were observed.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Repairing brickwork
MANAGING CHANGE: External walls

4.23 Timber cladding

Traditional timber clad walls of vertical boards are not common features within the conservation area, but where they exist they should be repaired in like materials and the painted or stained finish preserved. A small number of porches use timber board linings decoratively. Replacement in alternative modern materials, such as PVC, will not be acceptable.

4.23.1 Timber cladding is rarely used throughout the conservation area, and where it has survived it takes the traditional form of painted, limewashed or creosoted vertical boards with cover battens, occasionally with rounded profiles. Porches to residential buildings occasionally use timber board linings which may be laid to diagonal patterns.

4.24 Mass unreinforced concrete

Walls constructed of shuttered mass unreinforced concrete appear to be rare, but where they have survived they should be considered historic. They may be disguised by lime harling. There should always be a presumption towards retaining them, and repairing them having due regard to the strength and appearance of the mortar mix as modern Ordinary Portland Cements perform differently. The aggregates should be matched as closely as possible.

4.24.1 The use of walling of shuttered concrete taking advantage of the availability of early Portland cement seems to be rare, but as they are historic they should always be preserved. Often the surfaces will have coated with lime harling. A boundary wall was observed of this construction adjacent to the Orchard Road car park.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND SHORT GUIDE 5: Historic concrete in Scotland Part 1: History and development

4.25 Structural movement

Structural movement occurs in pockets throughout the centre of the town and appears to have resulted from foundation problems from poor ground conditions, leading to distortions in masonry walling most often appearing in window cills and lintols being out of alignment. Where structural cracking has occurred in external walls and is considered to be progressive, the advice of a structural engineer experience in the repair of historic buildings is recommended. Repairs should never be visually intrusive.

The structure of the former Castlehill Church poses particular structural problems which have resulted in a potentially dangerous structure, the condition of which will require to be monitored by the Council.

4.25.1 Several problems were observed with structural movement most likely caused by poor foundations but some of the façade's on the town's High Street may have been affected by the insertion of modern shopfronts. Where minor problems were observed the route of cracking followed the weak spots in the external walls, focused on lintols, cills and window breasts, and cracked lintols and rybats in raised margins at window openings were observed. Occasionally some outward movement could be observed at the heads of walls suggesting problems with rafter thrust from trussed roofs.

4.25.2 In a number of cases, buildings of the mid-eighteenth century display distortion in the masonry of the front facades; more often they are out of plumb, falling inwards towards the head of the walls.

4.25.3 The nave walls of the former Castlehill Church pose particular problems caused by the effect of prolonged rot in supporting timbers. In one location severe distortion was observed where an internal wooden beam had sagged.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Foundations and wall footings
HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Structural cracks

4.26 Use of colour

The application of colour to wall planes never seems to have featured strongly in Forres, and where evidence of the application of limewashed finishes has survived the limewash appears normally as a self-coloured white finish.

From the evidence of historic photographs consideration should always be given to reverting to darker colours for window joinery where this enhances the appearance of the building.

Where painting schemes that have been introduced are disruptive to the overall appearance of a unified architectural design within the streetscape, consideration should be given always to removing the paint and restoring the original wall surface. Vivid colours chosen for shopfronts and fascias have the potential to be visually disturbing to the overall unity of the historic townscape and should be avoided.

4.26.1 At present the use of colour is restrained and does not, in general, make a strong contribution to the townscape. Colour applied to rendered or harled surfaces is normally neutral, either in white, grey or cream and black and white colour schemes are not uncommon. Colour is most apparent in the doors of the buildings in the wynds which can add variety and interest to these routes though the town centre, especially where these have been carefully selected.

4.26.2 Shopfronts can appear more brightly coloured, but even here it is not uncommon to find the structural elements of the shopfront painted white, black or cream and many shopfront colours are subdued. Vivid colours can have a disturbing effect on the townscape, and the impact can be even greater if the associated signage is over-sized, or too brightly coloured.

4.26.3 Occasionally a unified design as part of a street frontage can be disturbed by the walls above a shop frontage having been painted out.

4.26.4 Entries to the wynds off the High Street can occasionally give an insight to older colour schemes which are now mostly obscured by later decoration. Painted dado panels would not have been uncommon at one time, and it is

possible to see that there had been more colour applied to buildings in the past where paint layers have peeled off.

4.26.5 Where traditional lime harls or smooth ashlared renders are applied, there will be no presumption against the use of strong natural coloured or pigmented limewashes, such as may have been found in the past, provided they are based soundly on historic examples.

MANAGING CHANGE: External walls

4.27 Architectural ceramics

The few examples of architectural ceramics in the conservation area should be preserved. Encouragement will be given to ensuring that the repairs are carried out only by specialist conservators. Only matching tiles or mosaics should be used to maintain the integrity of the design of each panel.

4.27.1 There are relatively few examples of architectural ceramics surviving in the conservation area, appearing mainly as encaustic tiled floors at entrance lobbies to shops, churches or private residences. A particularly fine example of a mosaic floor can be seen at the entrance to R&R Urquhart's office at 117-121 High Street.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Ceramic tiled flooring

4.28 Wall openings: maintaining proportion and rhythm

The rhythm of wall openings at first and upper floors of properties should be preserved. There will be a presumption against enlarging them to create picture windows, or changing their proportions. There will also be a presumption against the removal of intermediate structural mullions, whether of stone or timber, when seeking to modernise window openings.

Decorative wall treatments surrounding windows and doors should always be preserved and repaired where damaged or decayed.

4.28.1 In common with many historic burghs, while alterations were taking place throughout many stages in the evolution of the town centre to respond to the pressures of retailing at street level, the pattern of window openings remained substantially unaltered at the upper storeys, giving a strong sense

of authenticity to the historic townscape. This occurred even in those cases where additional storeys were added to the original frontage at a later date. They create an unbroken rhythm at the upper storeys and punctuate the wall planes, characteristics which can be appreciated in the long vistas from the ends of the High Street, and along its entire length.

4.28.2 Openings on the upper storeys are sensitive to change, and their contribution to the townscape relies on maintaining a vertical emphasis from the use of short stone lintols.

4.28.3 Although changes have occurred from modernisation, sufficient numbers of the traditional shopfronts of the nineteenth century have survived in Forres to contribute positively to the rhythm of the openings of the principal street frontages. This is particularly true of the shopfronts at the extremities of the High Street, and also on Tolbooth Street and North Street.

4.28.4 Window openings are embellished in a number of ways. While the majority have plain raised window margins, sometimes painted depending on the treatment of the wall surfaces, occasionally margins and mullions will be chamfered for greater elegance. Moulded architraves, pediments and hood mouldings may also appear around and above window openings. Many of the architectural features have, unfortunately, been affected by stone decay (see 4.21), but the quality of the carved detail is generally of a very high order.

MANAGING CHANGE: External walls

4.29 Traditional windows

There will be a presumption against the further loss of traditional windows throughout the conservation area. Individual sashes or window frames should be repaired always in preference to replacement. Where timber windows are beyond repair, replacements should match the original work exactly in terms of materials, mouldings, astragal sections and patterns, and decorative finish. Standard stock mouldings will not be acceptable. There will be a presumption against clear varnishing or staining in modern woodstains and windows should normally be painted, unless evidence of past historic finishes suggests otherwise. Consideration should be given always to reinstating original patterns of windows where

they have been lost in the interests of preserving the authenticity of the conservation area. Where windows had been multi-paned originally, consideration should be given to reinstating known astragal patterns especially where it is important to restore the architectural integrity of the façade.

Traditional sash and case windows need not be dispensed with because of problems with draught-proofing - there are proprietary systems available which will achieve improved performance, and without loss of appearance. There will be a presumption against the replacement of traditional sash and case window glass with double glazed units where the existing window assemblies are sound. Where windows are beyond repair, and there is no loss of historic glass, replacement units should result in no obvious change of external appearance, for which the fitting of narrow width double glazed units may be considered appropriate. It should always be borne in mind that double glazed units may have only a limited life before the hermetic seal breaks down and the units require to be replaced. Secondary glazing systems will be looked upon favourably provided they are not unduly visible from the exterior of the building or interfere with the astragal patterns. There will be a presumption against the introduction of trickle ventilators to window sashes.

All historic ironmongery should be preserved and reused in any replacement windows.

4.29.1 Together with the treatment of the surrounds, windows have much to inform us about the history of the building and architectural styles. The earliest surviving windows in the conservation area are likely to date from the early nineteenth century by which time the production of sash and case windows with elegant narrow astragals was well within the capabilities of local house carpenters and joiners. There were limitations on pane sizes producing the universal multi-paned sashes of which there are several examples in the conservation area, more than in many other conservation areas.

4.29.2 With plate glass becoming readily available from the middle of the nineteenth century window panes became larger. In some cases window sashes would have been replaced so that single panes of glass could be introduced to each sash. Sashes with plain glass and without astragals are by far and above the most common pattern of sash and case window to be found in the conservation area. In some of the lesser properties of the minor streets and closes 2-paned sashes, subdivided vertically, have survived. Towards the end of the century horns might be introduced to the upper sashes of windows, although the use of horns in windows replicating patterns before this date would be incorrect. From the 1890s onwards, with

the rising influence of the Arts and Crafts Movement, there are good examples to be found of windows with unequal sashes, with the smaller upper sashes being multi-paned.

4.29.3 The rate of loss of traditional sash and case windows and replacement with modern windows has accelerated in recent years, to the point that the authenticity of the character and appearance of the conservation area has been impaired. It is not a particularly new phenomenon, and is likely to have begun several decades ago. Since then there has been an onslaught of different types of window – aluminium, timber replacements with modern profiles and, more recently, uPVC. While in some cases there has been no endeavour to replicate the pattern of the windows being replaced, where window patterns have been replicated the result bears little more than a notional likeness. In some cases replacement windows have been positively damaging – for instance, where a symmetrical façade has been subject to change over one half of the elevation, but where the sash line fails to line through with the subtlety of the original work. There are also examples where both sets of original windows have been renewed, with neither matching the other exactly.

4.29.4 More often the damage caused is incremental, from factors such as oversized astragals, modern glazing beads, a lack of depth in the appearance of the window, differentiations in how windows open (top-hung as opposed to sliding sash, etc), the addition of trickle ventilators, and the impact of modern glass. Sash boxes of traditional sash and case windows in an urban environment would always be disguised behind the stone rybats of the window surround, revealing only the slim profile of the sash itself; in many replacement units the subtlety of this arrangement has been destroyed, changing the appearance of the fenestration pattern.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Maintaining sash and case windows
HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Timber window shutters

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Improving energy efficiency in traditional buildings
HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Energy efficiency in traditional homes
HISTORIC SCOTLAND SHORT GUIDE: Sash and case windows: a short guide for homeowners
MANAGING CHANGE: Windows

4.30 Historic glass

Examples of historic glass should always be preserved, even if imperfect, and despite having minor defects or cracks. Where repair works of any kind are undertaken historic glass should be protected against damage. Where panes have to be removed, for instance, when carrying out repairs to window frames, care should be taken over its removal for which the use of a putty lamp would be strongly advised. Curved glass should never be replaced with straight panes of glass, and consideration should be given to replacing broken historic glass with reproduction cylinder glass to give the desired characteristic distorted reflections. Glazing should always be bedded and pointed up in traditional linseed oil putty, which should be painted and not left undecorated, stained, or varnished.

4.30.1 Forres has excellent examples of historic glass surviving in windows, characterised by distortions in the reflections of the glass and the evidence of how the glass has been manufactured. This is particularly noticeable in cylinder glass. There are some very good examples to be seen of bottle glass of inferior quality used in windows to the rear of buildings or within the wynds. While none of the examples are likely to date from before the early nineteenth century, historic glass is vulnerable and is damaged easily (see photographs on page 51).

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Maintaining traditional plain glass and glazing
MANAGING CHANGE: Windows

4.31 Decorative glass and its protection

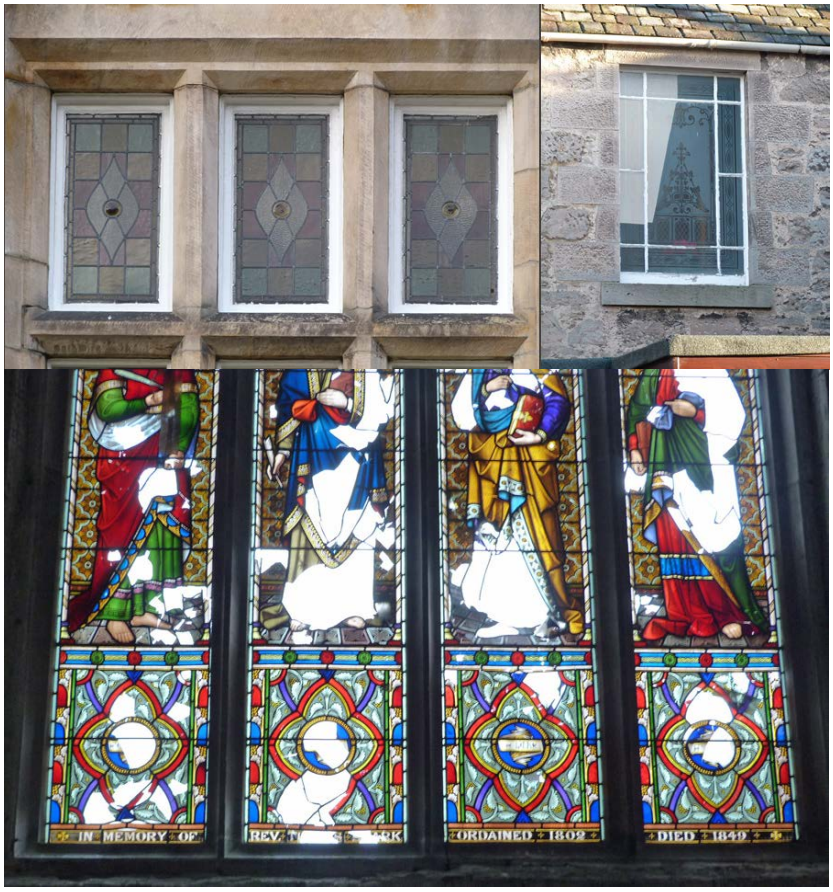
There are few surviving panels of decorative glass to stairwells in domestic and commercial properties and where they occur the glass should be preserved. Etched glass panels may be found at inner glazed doors at entrance lobbies. Repairs to stained or coloured glass should be undertaken only by skilled conservators.

Zinc or lead painted diamond-paned panels to the lancet windows of churches, or former church buildings, should be preserved and repaired by specialists. There will be a presumption against their removal and replacement with panels of modern glass.

The fine architectural stained glass panels to the windows of St Laurence Church should be preserved, and should be repaired and protected against the risk of damage.

Where protection of decorative glass is required, there will be a presumption against the use of clear polycarbonate sheeting throughout the conservation area. Specialist advice should always be sought on appropriate methods of protection, taking into account the preservation of the architectural appearance of the building and its contribution to the

streetscape, and matters such as fixings into masonry, ventilation, and the creation of a microclimate within the cavity.



4.31.1 All of the principal ecclesiastical buildings within the conservation areas have excellent examples of stained decorative glass, plain glass with lead kames or zinc with coloured borders commensurate with the status of the buildings, and to reflect the generosity of local philanthropy. Not all of the glass is protected against casual damage or vandalism; the protection which is in place at the redundant former Castlehill Church has not been such as to save the stained glass which has been extensively damaged.

4.31.2 Examples of stained glass panels to domestic properties can be seen throughout the conservation area and not uncommonly these are found within windows illuminating staircases within the wynds. There also examples of etched glass panels to the inner glazed doors of entrance lobbies.

4.31.3 The application of protective sheeting, unless carefully handled, detracts from the way in which window openings are read within the wall planes, especially where window tracery has been disguised. Polycarbonate sheeting is prone to yellowing over time and the use of such materials will be discouraged.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Domestic decorative glass

4.32 Traditional doors and fanlights

Forres is notable for the extent to which traditional doors have survived without major loss. Where original doors survive they should be preserved

and repaired. There will be a presumption against the replacement of doors with modern hardwood off-the-shelf patterns or uPVC doorsets. Historic ironmongery, including knobs, letter boxes and brass numerals should always be retained, and overhauled as required in preference to replacement with modern ironmongery.

Encouragement will be given to restoring the patterns of lost traditional doors wherever possible. Unless it can be established to the contrary, doors and their replacements should always be painted or varnished. Original decorative finishes should be matched in any replacement work and there will be a presumption against finishing with modern woodstains, or clear varnishing. Door fanlights and any associated historic glass should always be preserved.

4.32.1 Forres has a remarkably good collection of traditional doors serving various kinds of properties of differing ages, many of which have survived. They make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

4.32.2 Doors are of many styles. Examples seen in the conservation area consist of flush panelled, panelled with raised bolection mouldings, double margin, beaded panelled and fielded panelled doors. Simpler doors are usually vertically lined. Many doors were observed with traditional fanlights. A few doors of the late nineteenth century serving commercial premises were observed with highly decorative design motifs.

4.32.3 Church doors are normally more elaborate, some having decorative iron hinges. The doors to the jail to the rear of the Tolbooth are studded.

4.32.4 Where doors have been renewed with modern off-the-shelf replacements, or with doorsets in aluminium of uPVC tailored to the sizes of the openings, the result is never satisfactory. These elements appear jarring within the conservation area. The visual damage can be all the greater where doorsets have been renewed in semi-detached properties where pairs of doors are no longer a match for one another.

4.32.5 Traditional ironmongery, letterboxes, door knockers, brass and painted letter numerals, and early nineteenth century boot-scrapers, where they have survived, add to the interest in the street scene and should always be preserved.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: External timber doors
HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Energy Efficiency in Traditional Homes
HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Improving energy efficiency in traditional buildings
HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Domestic decorative glass

4.33 Porches and porch canopies

Original porches, or porch canopies, are important decorative features within the conservation area and there will be a presumption against their removal, or altering them. Repairs should be carried out in matching material and surfaces should only be decorated where they were so treated previously.

There will be a presumption against the erection of new porches, or conservatories in modern materials such as uPVC or aluminium where

they appear on any elevation visible to a street or from within one of the closes.

4.33.1 There are relatively few examples of porches within the town centre which reflects the fact that many of the properties in the town centre are built up to the rear of the pavement line, or are found within the closes where the available space may be confined. The best examples appear mostly in the later residential developments at Victoria Road or St Leonards Road. A particularly fine classical porch with stone columns and pediment forms the centrepiece of Cluny on Victoria Road. On St Leonards Road there are good examples of projecting timber porches: at the property known formerly as The Elms double columns support an elegant curved porch canopy, while further up the road an example of a porch with rustic columns can be seen

4.33.2 Porches and canopies are decorative features. Open canopies are used to good effect to enliven the terrace of properties erected in 1900 at Tulloch Place.

4.34 Traditional shopfronts

There are fine examples of shopfronts of all periods, from simple enlarged openings in a gable wall to shopfronts which have retained the original

stone piers to the more elaborate later cast iron shopfronts. Taken collectively this represents a significant resource which continues to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area, despite the many changes that have occurred. The appearance of shops provides an insight into the wellbeing of the town, given current retail pressures and the impact on small businesses. There will be a presumption to retain all traditional shopfronts and their fittings, and encouragement will be given to restoring lost features and recovering the authentic appearance of shopfronts as they appeared on historic photographs. Original outer doors (of which considerable numbers have survived), inner glazed doors, fanlights and ironmongery should be preserved wherever they have survived.

Particular emphasis will be given to the impact of decorative schemes in improving the townscape. Encouragement will be given to establishing past decorative schemes by undertaking historic paint layer investigation as appropriate in order to inform the choice of colours and how they should be applied to the architectural elements of the shopfront, many of which are currently painted in bland colours or, conversely, colours for which there is no historical precedent and which appear too bright. There will be a presumption against painting stonework surrounding a shopfront where there had been no painted finish previously, and encouragement will be given to the removal of paint from masonry where it has been applied in the past.

Shop windows rendered 'blind' through the application of opaque film with shop advertising will not be permitted in the conservation area.

There will be a presumption against the use of security roller shutters, or external protective grilles. Where they have been fitted encouragement will be given to their removal, and returning the shopfront to an earlier known state. Removable, or fold away grilles, would be preferred where external security is considered to be an issue, but they should always be fitted within the openings of the shop windows and should never project beyond the line of the frame of the shopfront or the adjoining wall.

Consideration should be given to developing a design guide on shopfronts to assist the business community in achieving the above aims.

4.34.1 Cast iron shopfronts were introduced to Forres from around the middle of the nineteenth century. Until then most shopfronts had plain masonry piers, of which a number have survived on the High Street, Tolbooth Street and North Street. The earliest shops had enlarged openings to the gable elevation facing the street, of which a few examples survive. Later stone shopfronts were more elaborate, and some in Forres have retained elegant stone arcades or pilasters. Later shopfronts incorporated the entrances to the wynds within the façade, sometimes to give access for horse-drawn vehicles to the close, and they would be located to one side or at the centre of a frontage extending over two or more of the original burgage plot widths.

4.34.2 As stone shopfronts became more sophisticated the stone pillars were reduced in order to maximise the amount of glass, made possible with advances in plate glass manufacturing and transportation. Cast iron shopfronts would have been supplied most probably from either the Newmill iron foundry in Elgin, or the Rose Street foundry in Inverness, and they are often difficult to distinguish from stone in having chamfered pillars

and lintols. They are often combined with plain iron lintols which can be distinguished by the fact that they are always painted.

4.34.3 Many traditional examples have been lost with programmes of modernisation over the past fifty years or so, to the detriment of the appearance of the conservation area. Despite this, the rate of survival is surprisingly high, even though it may be difficult always to identify the original fabric. In a few cases the original glazed doors have survived.

4.34.4 There are few examples of good shopfronts surviving from the mid-twentieth century. An Art Deco façade has survived intact at the west end of the High Street, and there is a solitary example of a 1930s black granite shopfront and fascia extended over two shops at the junction with Cumming Street.

4.34.5 Negative factors relate primarily to the degree to which an original shopfront has been submerged beneath insensitive and oversized signage (see 4.35, below), or where decorative schemes for shopfronts fail to bring out the features of the façade in ways which had been done in the past. Forres had splendid shop frontages from examining historic photographs in which the architectural detail had been carefully defined in traditional decorative schemes much of which has now been subdued or lost even. Late

twentieth century shopfronts do little to contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area and quite often detract from it.

4.34.6 Roller shutters have been particularly damaging to the minority of shop frontages to which they have been fitted and have a marked negative impact on the wider conservation area.

4.34.7 Several shopfronts have retained original doors and ironmongery.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND SHORT GUIDE: Traditional shopfronts: a short guide for shop owners

4.35 Shop signage and illumination

Encouragement will be given to shop owners to improve their shopfronts, based on knowledge of how they may have appeared in the past, having particular regard to the manner in which advertising was restricted to certain areas, and how fascias were used to display the name of the business and the wares being sold.

There will be a presumption against shop fascias which are larger than the area intended historically for lettering, and those which appear oversized in relation to the street elevation. Further, there will be a presumption against internally illuminated shop fascias and projecting box signs, subject to detailed guidance. Overhead illumination of signs should be proportionate to their size and impact on the street elevation, and should be discreet and not result in light pollution. There will be a presumption against the installation of highly reflective shop fascias, and of advertising panels applied to masonry piers or shop surrounds. Hanging projecting signs should be aligned in height with the structural shop fascia.

Projecting canopies or awnings must be of a design and of materials appropriate to the character of the shop or street. There will be a presumption against the use of modern awnings with rounded profiles or ends. Lettering applied to awnings should not be dominant within the streetscape.

Consideration should be given to developing a design guide on shopfronts to assist the business community in achieving the above aims.

4.35.1 Historic photographs of the High Street and of individual shops reveal the subtlety of how traders promoted their wares and took particular care of the design and display of their shopfronts. Lettering would be applied as individual letters in relief, painted on, or would be part of a unified glass panel. Most of the shop signs conformed to an unwritten code that lettering would be confined within the limitations of the stone band over the shop windows, or in the case of the later shopfronts, within the area of the structural fascia panel. The breakdown of this 'code' seems to have begun in the latter half of the twentieth century and may have been prompted by the arrival of the national stores on the High Street. Paradoxically, it is often the case now that the national retailers have standard designs for shop fascias that comply with the requirements of most conservation areas in which their shops appear.

Examples of oversized shop fascias

4.35.2 Nowadays none of the original shop signs have survived on the High Street, and signwriting has become much less practised as an art. Some of the signs on the High Street are of highly reflective plastic and, with few exceptions, are intrusive, often with poorly designed computer-generated letters and images. Many of the signs are overlarge for the shopfront, overwhelming any interesting architectural detail that may have survived. In townscape terms, the effect of continuous arcading of columns and shaped lintols can disappear, or be interrupted. Against this, there are exemplary shopfronts to be found which conform with good practice.

4.35.3 In general, projecting signs have been well controlled and do not interfere with the long views to be enjoyed down the High Street.

4.35.4 Poor illumination of signs can be highly detrimental to the character and appearance of the conservation area, and there are both good and bad examples to be seen on the town's principal streets. Internally illuminated fascias and projecting box signs are intrusive. Indirect external illumination can also be acceptable, provided that the number of fittings is kept to a minimum.

4.35.5 In certain instances it has proved possible to retain an earlier shop sign which makes a contribution to the historic streetscape in conjunction with carefully designed signage for a new business operating from the same premises.

Preserved shop sign relating to past uses

4.35.6 There are many examples to be seen in the conservation area of finely detailed timber fascia boards, not all of them in use as current shop signage.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND SHORT GUIDE: Traditional shopfronts: a short guide for shop owners

4.36 Historic signs and interpretation

There will be a presumption in favour of preserving historic painted signs, street names and close signs, and other features in the townscape representing past commercial activity in the burgh.

Surviving examples of painted house numerals should always be preserved.

Reference should be made to Part 4 of the suite of documents regarding interpretive signage.

4.36.1 It is often the case that remnants of past retail activity in a historic burgh or city will become embedded in the fabric of buildings and spaces, and will survive changes made in more recent times. Sometimes they relate to old signs that have not been painted over, advertising which has not been removed, or trade symbols.

4.36.2 In relative terms, Forres has a few survivals of cast metal signs to closes, while some enamelled local street signs have survived later changes. There are few cast metal interpretation signs giving visitors information about a

site, but they are not always easy to see. Sometimes the information is less than helpful in helping a visitor arrive at an understanding of a historic site.

4.36.3 A number of historic painted signs, now faded, appear at high level on building facades and on rendered panels at projecting gables within the streetscape. They provide important information about past trading activity.

4.36.4 There are a few good examples of painted or stencilled house numerals in the closes.

4.36.5 Unusually Forres has two examples of projecting historic symbols for pharmacists' shops, of a gilded mortar and pestle, occurring within the same street block on the north side of the town's High Street.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND SHORT GUIDE: Traditional shopfronts: a short guide for shop owners
MANAGING CHANGE: External fixtures

4.37 Boundary walls

Lengths of boundary walls of rubble stonework where collapsed should be preserved and repaired in matching material, or where the profile has been broken. Damaging pointing in dense cement mortar should be raked out and rubble masonry repointed in lime mortar matching historical precedent. There will be a presumption against the demolition of stone boundary walls and rebuilding them in modern materials.

4.37.1 Properties bordering the High Street and the principal retail thoroughfares are generally built to the rear of the pavement line. Where the frontage of the building is set back a boundary wall will assume particular importance, giving welcome relief within the historic townscape. Boundary walls take on a particular importance where larger properties are set well back from where the street is widened out at the east end of the High Street, where the scale of the buildings is greater than elsewhere. Dwarf walls with stone copes are used commonly to define boundaries and their impact has been lessened from the removal of decorative ironwork (see below).

4.37.2 Boundary walls may assume particular importance in the backlands where defining the old burgage plots within the closes. Older boundary walls are often defined by rubble work consisting largely of field stones, of which there is also a good example at the foot of St Leonards Road. Some of the boundaries to the rear of residential properties at Victoria Road are in red brick.

4.37.3 Decorative gate piers are important elements defining entrances to the more important buildings of the conservation area. There are good examples of gate piers at St Leonards Church, while the late eighteenth century date piers have survived with the graveyard wall at St Laurence Church. The more important villas on Victoria Road have well defined entrances with elaborate gate piers.

4.37.4 The treatment of boundaries formed in the late twentieth century, for instance where the car parks have been introduced into the backland areas of the wynds and where social housing schemes have been erected is, in general, much less satisfactory. Boundaries may be defined by unfinished concrete block walls, or in timber fencing.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Domestic boundary walls
HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Earth mortar and earth buildings
MANAGING CHANGE: Boundaries

4.38 Decorative architectural metalwork

As many historic burghs on the Scottish mainland, Forres has suffered the loss of boundary wall railings cut down for the war effort but a number of good examples have survived. Examples of historic cast iron railings can still be discovered in the side streets or in the wynds. There will be a presumption to keep all cast iron gates, gate piers and decorative boundary wall treatments, and encouragement will be given to keeping these elements well maintained.

Decorative cast iron railings to buildings on street facades should always be preserved and, where damaged, should only be repaired by skilled tradesmen experienced in repairing cast iron or traditional wrought iron.

Some of the historic wrought iron gates have survived at the entries to the wynds in the town centre and should be preserved. Opportunities exist for replacing existing gates at the ends of closes with examples made by artist blacksmiths, perhaps as part of a coordinated programme of enhancement, tied in with the public realm.

4.38.1 Forres has suffered from the loss of decorative cast iron railings cut down for the war effort, but examples have survived in a few of the side streets

and the wynds, some of them in a slightly damaged state. Occasionally fragments of cast iron boundary railings survive within the residential suburbs and these should always be preserved.

4.38.2 More than in some conservation areas good examples have survived of gate assemblies and associated railings for the town's key buildings, including Anderson's Institution, the late eighteenth century gates to St Laurence Church and the fine set of cast iron railings and gates of 1848 at the town's cemetery within the Cluny Hills. There are good freestanding cast iron lamp standards outside the entrance to the Tolbooth, and as part of the entrance assembly at St Leonard's Church. There is a small cast iron fountain at the Museum Square.

4.38.3 A few examples of decorative cast iron brattishing to the towers and projecting bay windows of residential properties, but these are not common features. The Market Cross has suffered badly from the removal of cast iron balustrading from the upper stages of the tower which should be replaced.

4.38.4 A number of bootscrapers have survived within the wynds, and at the junction between the foot of South Street and St Leonards Road the remains of an elaborate lamp bracket can still be seen.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: Boundary ironwork: a guide to reinstatement
HISTORIC SCOTLAND INFORM GUIDE: The maintenance of iron gates and railings
MANAGING CHANGE: Boundaries
MANAGING CHANGE: External fixtures

5 Public realm and parks

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The following guidance is based on the findings of comprehensive audits of the public realm and parks undertaken for the Conservation Area Appraisal (Part 1). The audit took into account: the significance of surviving elements of historic fabric; levels of authenticity; where change had occurred; negative features; and any recurring problems.

5.1.2 Clauses setting out guidance on repair and enhancement in the clauses that follow are summarised at the beginning of each category in lighter bold type. Outline guidance is followed by narrative on the extent to which the subject makes a contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

5.2 Soft landscape

Maintain the high level of landscape maintenance demonstrated throughout the majority of the conservation area, including formal planting beds and grass cutting.

Areas of soft landscape where regular management has lapsed or become infrequent should be included within a renewed landscape management programme for the conservation area. Areas of under-management include the northern extremities of Mosset Burn within Mosset Park, the older portions of the Cluny Hills' cemetery, and a number of raised planters within the town. Gap sites, underdeveloped areas and areas of stalled development, abandoned properties, and utility infrastructure should also, where feasible, be included.

Consideration should be given to devising a replacement planting programme to tackle areas of bare ground where failures have occurred, where plants are over mature or dying, and where pedestrian desire lines have fragmented the original design, particularly at key entrance points and gateways such as at the main visitor entrance to Nelson's Tower via Grant Park. This should also include any oversowing and improvement treatment to areas of bare, patchy or damaged amenity grassland.

5.2.1 The conservation area is endowed with a host of open spaces ranging in scale and character. Areas of formal landscaping provide a fine example of

well-maintained and much loved planting design, which should form a precedent for areas of future design and management.

5.2.2 Formal planting in and around the sunken garden, designed by Alistair Sinclair to commemorate the former Forres House, is outstanding for a municipal garden and creates a well-manicured, setting of high quality for local buildings.

5.2.3 Open space and amenity grass areas are predominantly well cared for and form important green lungs within the conservation area. Grant Park forms the largest open green space within the conservation area and is well used by the town's folk and for many important public events in the town's calendar.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND - GRAVEYARDS AND GRAVESTONES - 1 - WORKING IN A SCHEDULED OR LISTED GRAVEYARD OR BURIAL GROUND
GRAVEYARDS AND GRAVESTONES - 2 - GOOD PRACTICE IN MAINTAINING A HISTORIC GRAVEYARD
SOURCES OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE CONSERVATION OF SCOTLAND'S HISTORIC GRAVEYARDS
THE INVENTORY OF GARDENS AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPES: A GUIDE FOR OWNERS, OCCUPIERS AND MANAGERS

5.3 Seasonal floral displays

Floral displays should continue to be maintained at their current high standard, but consideration should be given to introducing new plant species, such as evergreens, in addition to bedding plants to guard against large areas of visible, bare earth during the winter season.

Consideration should be given to improving the appearance of poles and brackets for hanging baskets as part of the public realm improvements to remove unnecessary visual clutter during the winter months, or when not in use.

Consideration should be given to introducing portable planters to complement a renewed suite of street furniture.

5.3.1 Forres in Bloom has been a long standing and highly acclaimed event throughout the town, especially within the conservation area. The programme achieves horticultural excellence while at the same time involving the whole community. During the growing season the display of bedding plants is impressive and, through the use of portable planters and hanging baskets, filters along streets and around boundaries.

5.3.2 However, during the winter months relatively large areas of bare earth and empty planters can be unsightly, having a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area. During this period hanging basket poles and brackets cause unnecessary visual clutter within the streetscape and, without their purpose, can add to the clutter of the public realm.

5.4 Private Gardens and Grounds

The loss of front gardens and gap sites to car parking or inappropriate development should be resisted.

The loss of original garden walls and boundary treatments should also be resisted and the reinstatement of appropriate boundary treatments encouraged, having regard to traditional boundary treatments throughout the conservation area.

Encourage active maintenance and pride in visible private or communal frontages to strengthen the importance of the conservation area.

5.4.1 Remaining private gardens and grounds create important and welcome idiosyncrasies throughout the conservation area, the character of which varies markedly between the residential area and the nucleus of the town centre where space is at more of a premium. Over time, the boundaries of private gardens have been broken down and lost to development and car parking, which has resulted in the dilution of softening vegetation and seasonal interest.

5.4.2 A number of villas, for example those with gardens fronting onto Victoria Road and the High Street and St Leonard's Road, have beautifully clipped evergreen hedges above stone walls, some with iron railings, and neat beds of evergreen shrubs and trees. This year-round coverage provides consistent textural interest and colour and aids softening and integration of the urban edge at an intimate scale. Broadleaf trees and shrubs and herbaceous species create seasonal diversity and add a further layer of interest to the

soft landscape. The care and pride taken in these prominent gardens reflects overall town pride and strengthens the character and appearance of the conservation area.

5.4.3 Through the backlands, however, and where open space is more of a premium, gardens tend to be less well cared for and in some cases become overgrown and rampant, especially during the growing season when deciduous species top up the evergreen percentage and spread. The problem becomes acute where land or buildings have been abandoned. In places where gardens or buildings were once laid out the car has moved in, typically on top of grassland and surrounded by longer grassland and wild herb species and a mixture of original and new boundary treatments. This creates a sense of neglect and carelessness, which is not commonly associated with a conservation area.

5.4.4 Private spaces within the wynds are often taken over by storage space for wheelie bins. A few hidden gems of maintained vegetation can be glimpsed through locked gates, but in general the public realm in the wynds appears dated and lacks interest, in some cases comprising poorly surfaced access routes and external storage spaces.

5.5 Trees

The retention of all trees within the conservation area contributing to the setting of buildings, the wider streetscape and open spaces will be encouraged.

Further pruning should be undertaken to the lower trunks of mature, parkland and avenue trees, to remove sprouting shoots and tidy up the

open space below – the need for this was noted within Grant Park along South Street.

The potential for including further street trees where feasible to soften the urban fabric and strengthen the woodland setting of the conservation area should be reviewed.

Encourage tree work and vegetation clearance along the upper banks of Burn of Mosset within Mosset Park to improve the appearance of this attractive public park within the conservation area.

5.5.1 The majority of trees within the conservation area are healthy, mature and highly valued with well-lifted crowns. Impressive Lime avenues, for example within Market Green and Grant Park, date back to the 1900s and provide a great sense of history and meaning. Variety is to be found in other mature tree species within the conservation area, contributing to the softening of boundaries and integration into the wider landscape. Mature trees provide a parkland setting of considerable quality for adjoining buildings and streets.

5.5.2 The limited space along and within streets throughout the medieval nucleus of the town centre limits the provision of urban street trees. There is, however, one specimen of a broadleaf street, grilled and guarded, within the museum square to the rear of the Tolbooth building.

5.5.3 A number of young trees along the upper reaches of Mosset Burn have been allowed to generate and grow naturally with very little, if any, maintenance resulting in long grasses and herbs. This results in a 'natural' river bank unsuited to the well-manicured appearance of the rest of the conservation area, and adds to the problems of litter.

THE INVENTORY OF GARDENS AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPES: A GUIDE FOR OWNERS, OCCUPIERS AND MANAGERS

5.6 Woodland

Encourage the retention of all trees within the woodland over the Cluny Hills and continue active management to increase the health and longevity of individual trees.

Consideration should be given to ensuring that brash and felled timber is located in a more planned fashion to avoid a sense of neglect, which is apparent when piles of branches and timber are deposited at various locations within the woodland.

The removal of Laurel is recommended in its entirety. There appears to be no historical context for its presence and, as it is not a native shrub species, offers no real benefit for the native woodland habitat.

The development of a native woodland shrub layer in select locations to improve structural diversity and increase biodiversity should be encouraged, and consideration given to its future maintenance. The development of a rich woodland flora to increase biodiversity and structural value should be similarly encouraged.

It is strongly recommended that a policy for the selective clearance of shrubs and trees surrounding Nelson's Tower be pursued, particularly from west to northeast, to allow the magnificent views across Findhorn Bay, Moray Firth and the distant landforms to be enjoyed fully. This will also allow the tower to regain its status as a visible, local landmark within the wider landscape.

Review the management plan for the cemetery especially in respect of the older areas, to safeguard the future of this important asset together with the health and safety of those who visit.

5.6.1 Established woodland within a conservation area is rare, and it forms a great visual, ecological and recreational asset for the town. To be included within the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes justifies additional cultural and historical assets.

5.6.2 The woodland of the Cluny Hills is extensive and long established. It is recognised for its high conservation value in such close proximity to the town. Furthermore, it is recognised for its positive contribution to the setting and townscape of Forres as a result of its outstanding scenic value.

5.6.3 Although there is clear active management within the woodland, focused on ecological conservation, the spread of non-native Laurel species and the liberal placement of brash are to the detriment of the native character, and to public perception.

5.6.4 The natural growth of tree species, including evergreen species such as Holly, has unfortunately been left unmonitored to the impairment of Cluny Hill's scenic value. Panoramic views from Nelson's Tower have been impaired and call for constant maintenance.

THE INVENTORY OF GARDENS AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPES: A GUIDE FOR OWNERS, OCCUPIERS AND MANAGERS

5.7 Footways and pavements

There is a strong case for further investment to be made into the High Street and wynds, particularly the privately owned wynds, to improve the public realm and replace substandard pavement surfaces.

Encourage unity within and appreciation of the conservation area by formulating a robust and quality palette of appropriate hard landscaping materials and methods, paying particular attention to local detailing, from which all future landscape development can stem, thus enhancing the character and appearance of the town.

Resist development that does not conform to an approved palette of material, methods and/or standard detailing. Consideration should be given to the preparation and implementation of a Design Code.

5.7.1 There has been an attempt to improve the public realm along the southern side of the High Street, with new paving and kerbs and the inclusion of street furniture. However, the conservation area as a whole remains tired and disjointed through the use of too many differing materials and details, and through piecemeal development. Apart from a few remaining, historic details within some of the wynds, the majority of the conservation area footways are largely utilitarian in nature comprising Council standard detailing and materials. In some instances detailing and materials might be considered better suited to private gardens rather than for use in public spaces.

5.8 Footpaths

Consider resurfacing and re-edging all self-binding gravel footpaths (including the surround to Nelson's Tower) to remove dips and hollows and enhance the overall appearance of the conservation area. The successful resurfacing of footpath FR38 along the south-western boundary of Grant Park should be noted.

Consider introducing edging and surfacing for desire line footpaths - for example at the northern end of Mosset Park - to maintain formality within the conservation area.

Repair woodland footpaths where run-off has eroded the surface and edges, including the repair and re-establishment of log-retaining features.

Consider improving the immediate approach to Nelson's Tower, to be in keeping with the wider conservation area footpath network.

5.8.1 There is a vast web of footpaths linking many areas of the conservation area, many of which form part of the adopted Moray Core Path network. One footpath has been resurfaced along the western edge of Grant Park, but to maintain coherence and quality within the conservation area as a whole all footpaths should conform to the same standard. A number of them are suffering from erosion and wear.

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5.9 Street furniture

Consider investment in a suite of complementary street furniture to strengthen unity and to enhance the appearance of the conservation area. A more ornate or – in complete contrast - a contemporary style of furniture should be sought to be commensurate with the designation of the conservation area as outstanding.

Repair and refurbish the railings around the Cluny Hills Cemetery to replace lost finials, remove moss and treat rust.

Consider relocating the electronic information point away from the Tolbooth.

Consider the provision of seating, waste bins and dog bins within the renewed suite of furniture to extend onto the Cluny Hills and provide a visual connection with the town centre.

Consider the creation of a usable public seating area at Nelson's Tower to exploit the magnificent views following selective tree and shrub clearance.

Consider refurbishment of iron lattice bridges within Mosset Park – rust should be treated and the bridges repaint in matching colours having regard to historic precedent.

5.9.1 Street furniture within the conservation area is, in general, well-maintained and adequately provided for; however, a number of items are mismatched and the style and quality does not enhance or complement the character or value of the conservation area.

5.9.2 The extensive network of paths at the Cluny Hills lacks appropriate furniture. Seating should be located to exploit the potentially magnificent views on offer and the atmospheric shelter of mature woodland.

5.9.3 Mosset Park boasts a number of attractive iron lattice bridges over the burn of historic importance. However, they are suffering from peeling paint and from rust.

THE INVENTORY OF GARDENS AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPES: A GUIDE FOR OWNERS, OCCUPIERS AND MANAGERS

5.10 Car parks

The pattern of losing gap sites in the conservation area to car parking should be resisted. Encouragement should be given to establishing appropriate uses - for example, pocket parks or community gardens. Careful consideration should be given to suitable boundary treatments. All car parking areas (including privately owned areas) should be evaluated to determine whether additional space can be gained for enhancement through soft landscaping and tree planting.

Where car parking areas are underutilised, it is recommended that soft landscaping and tree planting is considered for which a robust maintenance plan should be established. Review all boundary treatments to public car parks and seek to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area by making improvements to schemes which appear haphazard.

5.10.1 Public and private car parking within the conservation area is well provided for and makes use of the numerous open, unused spaces between buildings and boundaries. Unfortunately, there is little that is inspired about the present provision of public parking; in most cases where the edges are taken up with concrete set cobbles or open grass. Boundary treatments are typically mixed, with some in a deteriorating condition.

5.10.2 It is often the case that private car parking, as mentioned under 5.4 above, adopts gap sites and old disused, gardens. Along North Road, a gap site has been occupied by a set of privately owned timber and corrugated iron garages.

5.11 Signage and interpretation

Consider replacing all street signs with a distinctive, but classical new design and font to allow easy identification of all streets within and, strengthen coherence of, the conservation area.

Repaint information signage to tidy up areas of peeling paint.

Consideration should be given to the retention, or replacement, of existing signage other than where historic; the recommendations set out in Part 4 of the suite of documents for improved interpretation should be taken into account.

5.11.1 Street signage within the conservation area is typically black letters on a white background, although the font does vary in places. There is a degree of paint peeling, and general tiredness.

5.12 Night illumination

There are opportunities for enhancing the conservation area through the carefully considered illumination of buildings, monuments and public spaces, including the wynds. Existing floodlighting schemes should be reviewed with improvements considered for the public space in front of the Falconer Museum, and at the upper stages of the Tolbooth where white light sources should be introduced. Opportunities for illuminating the Market Cross and the frontage of the Tolbooth at street level should be considered with the public realm improvements. Illumination of the

obelisk at the west end of the High Street would act as a focal point, would be visible at a distance at night, and could discourage antisocial behaviour.

Encouragement should be given to property owners to ensure that the benefits of night illumination of shop displays, fascias and the facades of buildings are exploited.

5.12.1 Night illumination of the town centre is nothing short of disappointing: many of the lighting systems already installed are either ineffective or have not been maintained. It is not uncommon to find that systems already installed are not fully utilised and the majority of the shop displays are switched off.

5.12.2 While lighting of the principal streets of the town centre is effective and carefully considered through the absence of intrusive lamp posts, for a historic burgh the wynds at night are uninteresting and lighting is often substandard. Opportunities have been identified for enhancing the conservation area through the public realm improvements.

5.13 Overhead wirescape and public utilities

Overhead wires are to be found in the wynds and the backlands behind the town's High Street, substantially more than would be expected to be found in an outstanding conservation area. Approaches should be made to the relevant public utility companies to ensure that cables are run underground, with the potential for these works to coincide with public realm improvements.

Discussions should be opened up with utility companies over coordinating works of improving infrastructure, or carrying out repairs, so as to have minimal impact on hard surfaces and to ensure that the finishes are reinstated without harm to the appearance of the conservation area.

The Council should adopt a coordinated approach to reducing the extensive damage to cables and other services, and other fixings, appearing on the facades of historic buildings, and in the wynds.

5.13.1 Forres suffers more than many comparable conservation areas in a profusion of poles and overhead wires leading to individual properties. It would be normal for these services to be run underground. These antiquated arrangements have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

5.13.2 Pavements and the surfaces of the wynds suffer from services trenches having been dug by public utility companies, often disturbing the paved surfaces where materials have not been reinstated and resulting in visual disharmony. An integrated approach would be recommended to overcome the problem.

5.13.3 The facades of the town's buildings are littered with the evidence of cables, junction boxes and sundry fixings for housing floral displays and for supporting banners and bunting; taken collectively, these fixtures, especially when not in use, have a marked detrimental effect on the conservation area.

5.14 Litter in public places

The accumulation of litter continues to be a problem in parts of the conservation area for which a more thorough litter picking regime may be required; some of the effort relies on volunteers. Opportunities should be examined to discourage drinking in public parks and recreational spaces.

5.14.1 The conservation area, on the whole is very tidy with very little evidence of litter. Rubbish bins are well used.

5.14.2 However, there are a number of incidences where litter is an issue. These include upstream, along the Mosset Burn, where litter gathers along the unkempt banks of the burn; within areas of undermanaged vegetation; and within woodland alongside Clovenside Road. Broken glass and discarded cans are encountered in certain sheltered locations within the conservation area.

6 Development within the conservation area

6.1 Opportunities for regeneration

6.1.1 Historic towns of the size of Forres are vulnerable to commercial pressures and must adapt in response to a volatile economy if they are to survive and prosper. The greatest risks to the conservation area in this regard are perceived to affect the long term health of the town centre and while, on the one hand, it must continue to offer an attractive environment in which to live and work, it cannot be allowed to stagnate. With redevelopment of a historic town centre come risks, unless policies are put in place to encourage the redevelopment and enhancement of the buildings and public realm within the conservation area. Without these policies being in place there is a perceived risk that commercial activity will drift away from the High Street and from the principal streets of the town centre.

6.1.2 In the Conservation Area Appraisal (Part 1) it is recognised that the wynds are potentially one of the town's greatest assets – active shop frontages on the High Street are to a certain extent interdependent with the wynds, relying on them remaining in active use and providing attractive environments for business and residential use. The wynds are important for providing permeability through the street blocks from the other parts of the town and from the peripheral car parks. Several areas were identified where these links are failing, or are not used to best advantage. Associated problems are inactive frontages to the buildings within the lesser streets running north-south from the High Street.

6.1.3 Other than by demolishing intrusive modern buildings on the High Street – which in some cases may not be a realistic option – there are relatively few opportunities for redevelopment on the High Street, unless expansion into the wynds is possible with the aim of revitalising them. With the redevelopment of the site behind the former Smoker's Shop on the south side of the High Street, and on the north side the refurbishment by the National Trust for Scotland of formerly rundown properties on Hepworth Lane intermingled with sensitive new buildings, there are good examples of how the regeneration of the wynds has been carried out in the more recent past.

6.1.4 An objective should be encouraging owners of commercial premises to ensure that the upper floors of buildings on the High Street are fully occupied to bring life back into the heart of the town. Although there are few redundant buildings within the street frontages of the High Street, every effort should be made to bring them back into use.

6.1.5 Greater potential for redevelopment exists within the wynds and the lesser streets, where a number of gap sites were observed. Modern buildings of little merit were observed which were either redundant, or substantially underused. In some of the wynds redevelopment of sites has been tentative and the full potential has not always been realised. Unattractive garages and stores too often proliferate on the edges of streets, such as North Road, or the prominent boundaries of the car parks, and development opportunities which have the potential to enhance the conservation area were observed here.

6.1.6 Also observed were a number of gap sites which have resulted from the demolition of dwellings on the lines of the medieval burgage plots to the west of St Laurence Church on the north side of the High Street. While there are attractive wynds to be found here which are well looked after by their residents, some of the properties have fallen into disrepair and are redundant. With good views towards the public park at Mosset Green and towards the north the ends of the rows have often been redeveloped with modern bungalows which make little positive contribution to the conservation area. Inboard of this there are sites with overgrown gardens, or large areas of undeveloped waste ground which have the potential to enhance the wider conservation area.

6.1.7 There are relatively few opportunities for redevelopment within the residential suburbs bordering the town centre. Further subdivision of gardens or land has the potential to be harmful to the low density of established development within these zones and the setting of the larger houses within garden ground and well defined boundaries.

6.2 Archaeology

6.2.1 There has been relatively little undertaken by way of archaeological investigation in the town centre where the archaeological resource is likely to be at its greatest. It is conceivable that there will be fragments of earlier buildings incorporated in the foreland properties of the seventeenth century and later, while the resource of buried archaeology relating to the layout of the medieval burgh is unknown. However, the potential wealth and extent of the medieval resource within the current conservation area and beyond should not be underestimated and is reflected in the Scottish Burgh Survey *Historic Forres: the archaeological implications of development* (1982) to which reference should be made. As further information comes to light there would be the potential for updating this document.

6.2.2 The ever-increasing knowledge base of developments in historic towns and the impact on archaeology does mean that liaison with the Council's

appointed archaeological adviser regarding the archaeological implications of change is imperative, as advised in PAN 2/2011 and Historic Scotland's Technical Advice Note (TAN) 27 Development and Archaeology in Historic Towns and Cities. The consequences of proposed developments may range from desk-based assessments and recording of standing buildings to invasive work in advance of, or during, building works.

It has been postulated that this hexagonal bollard in the wynd behind 101-105 High Street could be a relic of the old Market Cross shown in the illustration on the right

6.2.3 Opportunities to add to the current knowledge of the archaeological resource within the conservation area should be taken, irrespective of whether development is being considered. These opportunities are considered to exist with foreland properties on the town's High Street and in the wynds, and across the area of the ancient fort at the summit of the Cluny Hills about which virtually nothing is recorded.

6.3 Degraded sites and buildings: Buildings at Risk

6.3.1 A list of buildings considered to be currently at risk is included in Section 5.7 of the Conservation Area Appraisal (Part 1). Buildings at risk which are in considerable disrepair, or boarded up, have a marked negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. Moreover, they can detract from the efforts of other property owners in seeking to enhance their properties. They are also one of the clearest indicators of the health of the local economy. While there are always challenges imposed by the appearance of redundant buildings within the streetscape, empty shop units

can have a particularly harmful effect on public perceptions of the health of a successful and active retail centre.

6.3.2 It is acknowledged that lists of redundant buildings at risk will vary from time to time as buildings may be declared surplus to requirements due to a changing economic climate, or from other factors such as a change in ownership, from a business relocating to elsewhere, or even from a parish reappraisal when ecclesiastical buildings may be declared redundant to the purposes of worship. Buildings may be taken off the Buildings at Risk Register when redevelopment proposals get underway for any individual building or a site involving a group of properties. It will be incumbent upon the Council to monitor the lists on a regular basis, and establish effective measures to encourage repair of historic buildings and their refurbishment where this may be appropriate.

6.3.3 Certain buildings may prove difficult to secure compatible uses on account of their architectural importance, condition, building type, size, or location, or due to other factors. In cases where redevelopment may not be possible commercially, consideration may be given to encouraging feasibility studies to be carried out with the benefit of public funding, to look at a range of possible options for buildings or sites of high architectural or historic importance. In such cases the assistance of a building preservation trust (BPT) may be sought.

6.4 Demolition and rebuilding

6.4.1 There will be a presumption against the demolition of buildings within the conservation area where they make a neutral, or positive, contribution to the historic townscape, whether or not the building is listed. For unlisted buildings, for the case for demolition to be made, it will need to be demonstrated that the structure has a negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. Conservation Area Consent will be required for the demolition of any building within the conservation area boundary.

6.4.2 The demolition of buildings in conservation areas and the design of replacement buildings is strictly controlled and will be governed by the tests set out in clauses 3.58-3.60 of Scottish Historic Environment Policy (December 2011). Further guidance is set out in the Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Demolition leaflet (2010).

6.4.3 Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of any structure within the conservation area will not be granted in isolation of considering the extent to which the replacement scheme has the potential to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. Design guidance set out in Section 7 should be taken into account when considering the

appropriateness of any replacement building. The demolition of an unlisted building within the conservation area should, in addition, comply with Policy BE3: Conservation Areas of the Moray Local Plan 2008.

6.4.4 The demolition of a listed building, or part of a listed building, within the conservation area will be subject to satisfying one, or more, of the tests set out in clause 3.44 of the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (December 2011). Further guidance is given in the Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Demolition leaflet (2010). The case for the demolition of a listed building must also comply with Policy BE2: Listed Buildings of the Moray Local Plan 2008.

6.5 Extensions to buildings

An extension to a historic building which has stood the test of time: built c1980 originally as a photographer's studio and now incorporated into the offices of a firm of solicitors

6.5.1 Extensions to buildings, and in particular to dwelling houses in the wynds of the conservation area, will be likely to be governed by the constraints of the linear feuing patterns of the historic burgage plots. They may be visible from a distance and, if carried out insensitively, they can have a detrimental impact on the surrounding buildings and on the wider conservation area.

6.5.2 There will be a presumption against the building of porches, conservatories or sunrooms to the facades of buildings unless historical evidence can be established that a similar structure had existed in the past, and that the proposal will be restoring historic precedent.

6.5.3 Extensions to existing properties should be subservient in scale and in volume to the original structure. Where extensions are proposed to the gable of a property, the roof ridge should not be greater in height than the main roof ridge and the symmetry of the principal façade, where appropriate, should always be observed. Wherever possible, extensions should be confined to the rear of properties for which there should be no relaxation of the design standards. The impact of an extension on the wider conservation area should always be taken into account.

6.5.4 Guidance set out in the leaflet Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Extensions (2010) should be observed.

6.5.5 There will be a presumption against the introduction of attic box dormer roof extensions, whether flat-roofed or Mansard in profile. This

presumption applies equally to box dormers built directly off wallheads, those set back further from the edge of the roof, or box dormers derived from infilling the space between original dormers on the roof.

6.5.6 The design of extensions and the selection of materials for extensions to buildings should follow the general guidance set out in Sections 7.2 and 7.3.

6.6 Satellite dishes, aerials and surface wiring

6.6.1 Without careful siting, satellite dishes are intrusive elements within the streetscape and their fixings and associated surface cabling can be damaging to the fabric of historic buildings. They can be particularly damaging when large numbers of these fixtures appear on the same elevation where houses may be in multiple occupancy. There will be a presumption against them being seen on any elevation visible from public streets or from within the wynds, including gables and chimneyheads.

6.6.2 Radio or television aerials, taken collectively with the associated brackets, poles and surface wiring, can have a disruptive effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area. They can also cause damage to the chimneyheads to which they may be fixed. Wherever possible, they should be mounted within roofspaces of buildings, or in locations where they will not be visible from public streets or wynds.

6.6.3 Much of the surface wiring seen on property frontages within the conservation area relates to telecommunications equipment, some of which is redundant. Redundant wiring should always be removed, and wiring to new installations should be routed indoors rather than appearing on the frontages of properties.

6.6.4 Further guidance is given in Managing Change in the Historic Environment: External fixtures (2010) leaflet. Policy BE3: Conservation Areas of the Moray Local Plan 2008 also sets out requirements to be complied with.

6.7 Building services

6.7.1 Modern developments undertaken in the conservation area have demonstrated that it is possible to disguise air handling plant and air conditioning units in such a way that the equipment is not visible from ground level. Often air conditioning units can be mounted within the reverse slopes of roofs where they will not be visible, and the impact of a heat exchanger within the entrance to a pend will be less than if it were to be fixed to the surface of the building. These issues can, however, be more difficult to resolve with older buildings. Where heat exchanger units appear on external walls, or where air extractor units have been fitted to the sashes of windows, the visual impact is always high. The appearance of pitched roofs can be damaged by poorly sited extractor fan terminals, especially where commercial in scale and oversized.

6.7.2 Where positioned within the roofscape to comply with the requirement not to be visible from ground level, consideration should always be given to the extent to which building services installations may be visible from higher vantage points to which the public may have access.

6.7.3 Efforts should be made to route flues for mechanical extractor fans through redundant masonry flues to terminate at chimneyheads, provided this does not result in the loss of historic chimney cans. There will be a presumption against mounting extractor fans or terminals within the sashes of windows or on external walls.

6.7.4 Flue exhausts associated with restaurant or fast food preparation should be positioned so as to have minimal impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. Efforts should be made to mitigate their impact by

avoiding the use of highly reflective metal ducting, or by disguising the colour of the flue by painting it out. Once installed the flue system should be maintained and noxious emissions avoided.

6.8 Security equipment and sounders

6.8.1 Security alarm sounders may require to be positioned where they are obvious to intruders as a deterrent to entering the premises, and for surveillance in identifying the possibility of forced entry. Invariably the boxes are brightly coloured, and positioned without regard to the architectural features of the building. Redundant alarm boxes are unsightly and should always be removed.

6.8.2 There are numerous examples of badly sited security alarm boxes in the conservation area. Consideration should always be given to mounting security alarms on elevations other than the principal street elevation where this is possible, or on overhanging eaves. If this is not possible the unit should be mounted having regard to the architectural features of the façade, for instance, centred on gables at high level or aligned with shop fascia boards. Units should be restrained in appearance and should not be brightly coloured. Wiring or conduits for cables should never be visible.

6.8.3 Care should always be taken over the siting of security cameras, lights or other equipment. These features should never be prominent within the streetscape. Projecting brackets should be simple in design. As for security alarms, all surface wiring should be avoided.

6.8.4 Further guidance is given in Managing Change in the Historic Environment: External fixtures (2010) leaflet.

6.9 Sundry fixings

6.9.1 All fittings and fixtures referred to in the above categories should be positioned to minimise permanent damage being caused to the fabric of buildings throughout the conservation area. Walls of sandstone ashlar are particularly vulnerable to damage from being punctuated by fixing holes which are revealed after the fixture has been removed. Consideration should always be given to selecting masonry joints for fixings where this may be appropriate.

6.9.2 Fixtures should never be fixed permanently to walling throughout the conservation area other than by stainless steel or non-ferrous fixings. Where iron fixings are left embedded in masonry, they should always be drilled out

and the hole patch repaired or indented to avoid the risk of rust expansion damaging the masonry in the longer term.

6.9.3 Further guidance is given in Managing Change in the Historic Environment: External fixtures (2010) leaflet.

6.10 Micro-renewables and solar panels

6.10.1 Not unlike satellite dishes (6.5 above) a profusion of visible micro-renewable installations in the form of wind turbines will have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area. To be cost-effective and efficient in operation freestanding wind turbines will be highly visible and incapable of being disguised, and will be likely to have an impact on the setting of individual buildings as well as the wider conservation area. In general there will be a presumption against the approval of building-mounted and freestanding wind turbines.

6.10.2 With careful siting behind parapets or within the valleys of roofs, and when used sparingly, solar or photovoltaic panels can be acceptable and not necessarily harm the character and appearance of the conservation area. Multiple assemblies of reflective panels covering large surface areas of roofs are unlikely to be acceptable anywhere within the conservation area. Other than on the principal street facades, in certain circumstances the use of roof mounted panels used individually, or of small scale, may be deemed appropriate provided that, when siting them, consideration should be given always to the extent to which these features may be visible from higher vantage points to which the public has access in the conservation area, or from other properties.

6.10.3 Further guidance is given in the leaflets in the Managing Change in the Historic Environment (2010) series for Roofs and Micro-renewables.

7 Design standards

7.1 Overview

7.1.1 In acknowledging the damage caused to the character and appearance of the conservation area from poorly designed development of the late twentieth century, the Council will seek to encourage the highest standards of design for new buildings and the public realm, in line with Scottish Government policy. The objective will be to ensure that proposed development causes no harm to the conservation area and, moreover, that it should enhance it.

7.1.2 Where the demolition of any historic building, or buildings, within the conservation area may be proposed, and is deemed appropriate in principle (see 6.3), the Council will seek to ensure that the replacement building, or buildings, will be of a higher standard than the structures being replaced. Accordingly designs for replacement buildings will be expected to make a positive contribution to the historic townscape and restore any values that may have been damaged by poor development in the past.

7.2 Design guidance

7.2.1 The Council will encourage the appointment of agents with the appropriate conservation, architectural and urban design skills to interpret and apply the design guidance to development projects within the conservation area.

7.2.2 Reference should be made to the Conservation Area Appraisal (Part 1), in which those architectural features making a positive contribution to the historic townscape of Forres are identified as a potential source for inspiring contemporary designers in the preparation of contextual designs for new buildings in the conservation area. For the design of new buildings it should always be borne in mind that the overriding requirement is to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area, and its setting.

7.2.3 The advisory guidelines set down in Section 4 of this document should also be referred to, in order to avoid replication of elements of construction or materials considered to have been damaging to the appearance of the conservation area in the past.

7.2.4 A pastiche of features of past historic architectural styles should be avoided so as not to confuse, or devalue history. External wall construction should be appropriate for the use of architectural detail. For example, it is difficult to make skews look convincing when they are used in conjunction with timber frame construction, and they should never be of a width less than that used traditionally. Equally, chimneyheads should always be of solid masonry construction and of traditional width. Chimneyheads of the same width as the skews never appear satisfactory. Gables in the conservation area tend to look better with chimneyheads where it appropriate to accommodate them, but the functional purpose of a building should never be falsified through design.

7.2.5 Scale is an important element of architectural design, and may vary for different locations within the conservation area. A good example of this is The Tolbooth at the heart of the town centre. It is primarily a structure of two tall storeys (where it faces west) with a tower that soars to a greater number of equivalent storeys, and its height and scale can be compared

with the equivalent of three domestic storeys when viewed from Tolbooth Street or from the High Street. As a public building it displays a scale that is appropriate for its civic function. A not dissimilar sense of enhanced scale is experienced in the facades of the banks at the centre of the town overlooking the Market Cross. Within a varied townscape, their scale is enhanced from the fact that the frontages can be experienced where the street is at its widest.

7.2.6 The characteristic general height and scale of the rows of buildings at the east end of the High Street tend to be more regular, and less varied than elsewhere in the conservation area. Impressions of scale and height of buildings on Tolbooth Street, North Street and Caroline Street are informed by the relatively narrow width of the streets, but in general the scale rises as the High Street is approached.

7.2.7 Conversely, at the west end of the High Street the scale tends to vary according to the age of the property, creating a townscape of unusual richness. Thus the lowest of the properties appearing in the range corresponds to the late seventeenth century, and is very domestic in scale. The greatest change in scale occurs where the restrained early nineteenth century two-storey classical pavilions at Warden's Place, also of domestic

storey heights, abut the massive, highly decorated late nineteenth structure of the former Longview Hotel which has generous storey heights and rooms in the attic. While the change is abrupt, it adds to the interest of the townscape; the height of the former hotel is such that its scale can be appreciated due to the open space of what had been the public graveyard at the opposite side of the street.

7.2.8 In common with many historic burghs planned on a medieval layout, consisting of a principal street with development laid out at right angles to it along the burgage plots, the buildings fronting the High Street are invariably of a greater scale and height than those within the closes. Historically, being the more important buildings, they will normally have taller floor to ceiling heights for architectural reasons, and in order to accommodate enhanced retail activity on the ground floor. Shops of the late nineteenth century invariably introduced a greater sense of enhanced scale at street level. In any new development within the closes a sense of descending scale should always be acknowledged in the design of new buildings, or in any extension proposed to an existing building.

7.2.9 New development should recognise that the established urban grain of the town centre reflects the medieval plan. Due attention should be given to the linearity of the terraces of buildings laid out along the street frontages, or on the wynds which tend to follow the line of the old burgage plots. Within the wynds the narrow gable widths and heights, which will often reflect the descending scale referred to above, should be reflected in the design for any new development. Roof pitches of traditional buildings would be rarely outside the range of between 40 and 45°, except in the case of buildings pre-dating the early eighteenth century in which case they often be steeper. It is rarely satisfactory for buildings to straddle the width of burgage plots, and be given wider gables than would be the norm. On sloping ground falling away from the ridge on the High Street these characteristics can be exaggerated, adding to the outstanding qualities of the townscape.

7.2.10 Overall increases in density, height and scale are unlikely to be appropriate for sites where these characteristics within the existing historic townscape are less than those being proposed.

7.2.11 The rhythm of existing street frontages should always be observed, in terms of established plot widths, and the punctuation of wall surfaces which may vary between ground and the upper floors depending on differing functional uses. Rarely are traditional openings within walls other than vertically proportioned, acknowledging the limitations of traditional materials (for instance, the span of stone lintols). Where horizontality is adopted, or 'picture windows' installed, the rhythm of the street is invariably disrupted. Good design acknowledges that the proportion of the openings is not the only consideration – the numbers of openings and their positions within the elevation is a matter of importance in terms of the overall proportions. Designers and builders achieved this intuitively in the past.

7.2.12 The subdivision of wall openings is also of importance for maintaining the character of the conservation area; rarely in the past were large, unsubdivided panes of glass used for a single window opening due to technological restraints, aesthetic preferences, and the need to provide effective ventilation. Where panes are subdivided, inspiration may be found from the past in terms of proportions and appearance, but horizontal proportions are usually best avoided. Astragals should not be applied to the surface of the glass as 'mock' astragals as they never look convincing, may not always adhere to the glass, and give a different appearance to where the glass panes themselves are subdivided.

7.2.13 Inspiration may be found from studying how buildings which make a strong contribution to the townscape were embellished in the past by decorative features such as finials or string courses to break up large unrelieved areas of walling.

7.2.14 Dormers introduced to provide additional interest in the roofscape should be carefully designed and detailed from an understanding of historical precedent. Modern dormer windows are often detailed clumsily, and can detract considerably from the character and appearance of the conservation area.

7.2.15 For buildings on the High Street there will be a presumption against the use of timber eaves boards or bargeboards for main roofs in the design of new buildings.

7.2.16 New building within the residential zones of the conservation area should observe the above general principles, but particular regard should be given to the setting of the development in relation to the surrounding properties, the plot of land to which the proposal relates, and to established boundaries, including trees. Particular care will require to be given to boundary treatments which should reflect the character and appearance of the character zone. Existing boundaries should not be eroded in order to satisfy off-street parking or vehicular access.

7.3 Materials for new developments, or extensions to existing structures

7.3.1 There will be a general presumption in favour of external walls being finished in the following materials throughout the conservation area:

- Natural stone, with coursing, colour, texture and pointing to reflect traditional examples within the conservation area and their location
- Lime ashlared renders, for limewashing or oil painting
- Traditional wet harling or roughcast, for painting or limewashing as appropriate, but only within the wynds, and subject to the approval of samples
- Smooth render for painting – the use of self-coloured modern proprietary renders may be considered appropriate, but only within the wynds, and subject to approval of samples

Brick should be used sparingly, and only in situations which will not be prominent when viewed from within the conservation area.

7.3.2 It should be noted that finishes proposed for external walls should take into account the location of the development site within the conservation area. Types of finishes may vary according to the character zone – for instance, in the central character zone the frontages of the buildings on the High Street will have a greater proportion of sandstone ashlar walls compared with the other character zones.

7.3.3 There will be a presumption against the use of modern drydash finishes of any type throughout the conservation area. Timber panelling should be confined to use as wall linings and should not be the predominant finish in

any elevation. There will be a further presumption against the introduction of materials and techniques of building which are alien to the conservation area, for which there is no established precedent in this part of Moray.

7.3.4 Normally pitched roof finishes should be of blue/black natural slate; the specification of new slate as opposed to salvaged slate is encouraged for new developments so as to preserve stocks of salvaged material for old roofs. Imported slate must be selected with great care, and should match the traditional roofs of the conservation area in terms of texture, colour, coursing and general appearance. It is not uncommon to see slate roofs which appear alien within the conservation area from being too black, or too shiny.

7.3.5 Concrete tile ridges and hips as components of proprietary roofing systems will not be permitted, and there will be a presumption against the use of black clay ridge tiles. In those parts of the conservation area where these elements appear, eaves boards and bargeboards should be of durable timber for painting – uPVC or other proprietary maintenance-free cladding systems will not be permitted.

7.3.6 Where for reasons of architectural design low pitched or flat roofed finishes may be appropriate, because of the pitch being unsuited to slate, roof finishes should be of traditionally detailed lead, or of terne-coated stainless steel. There will be a presumption against highly reflective aluminium or proprietary standing seam systems, polymer, GRP or other high performance roofing felts or coatings where these finishes may be visible from street level throughout the conservation area.

7.3.7 Windows and doors should normally be of timber for painting and should be purpose-designed for the conservation area; there will be a presumption against the use of uPVC windows or doors, or mock timber units of the same, or similar, materials.

7.3.8 Colour in the conservation area should be used sparingly and have regard always to historical precedent.

7.3.9 Rainwater goods should be durable, generally of cast-iron for painting. There will be a presumption against the use of uPVC or GRP rainwater goods for new development in the conservation area.

7.3.10 New shopfronts should respect historical precedent (see 4.35 and 4.36). There will be a presumption against the use of proprietary aluminium shopfront systems in the conservation area.

7.4 Supplementary information

7.4.1 Proposals that involve the infilling of gap sites, or the demolition of structures and replacement with new buildings, will be expected to show in the documentation accompanying the application the development site in its context within the wider conservation area. In order to meet this requirement models or other three-dimensional media, including computer generated images (CGIs) will be encouraged.

7.4.2 There will be an expectation that the development site should be shown in relation to the whole of the street elevation. Applications for developments on corner sites should be shown in the context of the impact on each of the street corners, and on the adjoining street elevations. Where proposed

development affects the larger part of any street elevation, there will be an expectation that street elevations for the adjoining blocks within the street block will also be shown to assess the impact of the proposals on the character and appearance of the wider conservation area or, in appropriate cases, on its setting.

8 Planning controls

8.1 Article 4 Directions

8.1.1 The Council recognises the importance of managing change, and in particular alterations and extensions to unlisted buildings within a conservation area. Within the Forres Conservation Area it is proposed that similar controls should apply as for listed buildings. The historic fabric that survives in the town results in outstanding townscape qualities, and the guidance and recommendations set out in Section 4 of this document to preserve this significance will be promoted as setting standards for good conservation and repair practice.

8.1.2 Accordingly the Council, after having adopted the Conservation Area Management Plan, will give consideration to seeking Article 4 Directions of Scottish Government in relation to permitted development under the General Permitted Development (Scotland) Order 1992.

8.1.3 The Council intends to review the desirability of applying Article 4 Directions pending the outcome of the consultation on the GDPO Amendment 2011 which may lead to legislative revisions under the Act.

8.2 Planning measures and enforcement

8.2.1 In pursuit of the aims to preserve and enhance the Forres Conservation Area the Council, as the planning authority, will be committed to the issuing of planning enforcement notices in cases of unauthorised development for the demolition, or partial demolition, of a building within the conservation area, or for its alteration or extension in ways that affects its character.

8.2.2 In considering whether to issue planning enforcement notices Article 4 Directions under the General Permitted Development Order, if implemented, will be considered to be a material consideration.

8.2.3 The Council will be committed to monitoring the condition of the historic fabric of buildings within the conservation area. Where a property is in poor condition and considered to be at risk, consideration will be given to issuing a building repairs notice under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. This action will be adopted where there are early indications of decay in the interests of securing the future of the building and long term uses for its survival, and when costs of undertaking effective repair will be relatively inexpensive.

8.2.4 In the case of a property where the condition is considered to be deteriorating rapidly, and to be at risk, for levels of intervention which may involve temporary support and protection, or by carrying out emergency repairs, an Urgent Repairs Notice will be instructed. If not acted upon within the statutory timescales, work will be undertaken by the Council and the cost of such repairs may be recovered from the owner of the property. Before taking this action the Council will undertake to consult with the owner of the property. A repairs notice may be withdrawn at any time.

8.2.5 Where the conditions of a building repairs notice have not been observed, the Council will seek the approval of Scottish Government to acquire the property by Compulsory Purchase Order. The subjects for acquisition may

include neighbouring land for the amenity of the building and for access to it for its protection and future management.

9 Implementation and review

9.1 Preamble

9.1.1 Clear recommendations were set out in Section 12 of Part 1: Conservation Area Appraisal for monitoring and reviewing proposed action, and on the need to engage with key stakeholders and with the wider community in Forres. Actions in the past have not always been taken in the interests of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area. Latterly standards in the repair of historic buildings, and in the design of new development, have left much to be desired and damage has been caused, however unintentionally.

9.1.2 Suggested performance indicators were set out in the Character Appraisal (Section 12.2.1). For ease of reference they are repeated here:

- the redevelopment of gap sites or undeveloped sites which preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area
- improvements to shopfronts and fascias
- reduction in the number of empty shops
- return to use of vacant floorspace at the upper floors of properties
- reduction in the number of entries on the Buildings at Risk Register (BARR)
- evidence of improved conservation standards being adopted across the conservation area
- tangible evidence of the improved maintenance of historic buildings
- enhanced public realm, for instance in the number of private closes improved
- review of the success of a THI or CARS scheme (if applications for such were to be successful), of priority projects and any other publicly funded works
- review of the impact of guidance set out in the Conservation Area Management Plan
- tangible evidence that enhanced interpretation introduced in conjunction with improvements to the public realm is responding to the needs of visitors and residents of all age groups
- evidence that enforcement measures have been effective
- evidence that any measures taken to inform property owners of the conservation legislation in force, and to provide appropriate guidance, have been effective

9.1.3 For effective monitoring to take place the need to embark upon preliminary surveys in order to establish reliable baseline data was recognised, and is endorsed in this document.

9.1.4 The future of the conservation area cannot be reliant upon actions being taken by the Council alone. It is evident that reacting to change, rather than managing it in a positive way, has not been satisfactory as an approach. Despite the guidelines set down in successive Local Plans and national guidance on managing change within conservation areas, damage to the character and appearance of the Forres Conservation Area has continued through the incremental erosion of the qualities for which the area had been designated. Without effective controls being put in place a distinct loss of authenticity of historic fabric becomes a real possibility. The Conservation Area Management Plan, once adopted, will set the agenda for change, but

change can only be possible with the willing support of owners of historic buildings within the conservation area.

9.1.5 An important first step will be to proceed with setting up a monitoring group to work with the Council in meeting its objectives. The monitoring group should include representatives from interested local organisations to work with the Ward Councillors and the Council's officers over the implementation of the Conservation Area Management Plan.

9.2 Communications and conservation awareness

9.2.1 The buildings of the Forres Conservation Area suffer from a number of problems in common, highlighted in both this document and in the Conservation Area Appraisal (Part 1). Upon receipt of CARS funding (if the scheme continues, and an application were to be successful), it would be proposed to provide dedicated advice on the repair of historic buildings with the full support of Historic Scotland. This will be of considerable help in raising standards throughout the conservation area, and in giving assistance over routes to funding repairs and improvements.

INFORM guides published by Historic Scotland

9.2.2 Close contact with property owners in the conservation area would be beneficial through leaflet drops to encourage greater awareness. Opportunities should be examined for creating conservation awareness through conducting workshops on the maintenance of historic buildings, or from seminars related to individual topics, for instance, on the subject of traditional shopfronts.

9.3 Skills training in conservation

9.3.1 A programme for conservation awareness among property owners should be matched by a programme for improving skills for those working on historic buildings, and in providing targeted helpful advice on the procurement of specialised materials, such as building limes, castings for rainwater systems, matching clay chimney cans or on the selection of building stones appropriate to the conservation area. There are a number of organisations operating in the historic environment sector which could be called upon to assist with this initiative.

9.4 Extension of the conservation area

9.4.1 Recommendations are set out in the Conservation Area Appraisal (Part 1) for the extension of the conservation area as it is presently designated. On the basis that these recommendations are accepted, while some of the

issues identified in the Conservation Area Management Plan will be relevant, the character and appearance of the area proposed for the extension may differ. An addendum to the Parts 1 and 2 for the Character Appraisal and Management Plan prepared for the conservation area, based on an audit of the buildings, should be commissioned as supplementary guidance.

9.5 Promotion of the conservation area

9.5.1 Guidance is given in the Interpretation Plan (Part 4) on the potential for improving understanding of the history of the town through enhanced interpretation of its history and development, and of those who shaped it in the past. An effective heritage trail for the principal attractions of the town centre could build upon the few local history publications that have been prepared on the town in the past.

9.6 Review: arrangements within the Moray Council

9.6.1 Review of Parts 1 and 2, of the Conservation Area Appraisal and the Conservation Area Management Plan respectively, should be instigated in the first instance by the managers of the committees listed in the following clause (or their equivalent in any new administration). It should take into account feedback from the conservation area monitoring group referred to in 9.1.5 above, and an evaluation of agreed performance indicators as set out in 9.1.2 and such other relevant indicators as the group may decide.

9.6.2 Recommendations following any review should be considered by the Planning and Regulatory Services Committee, and by the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee of the Council, or their equivalents, at the time when the review is carried out.

9.7 Frequency of review

9.7.1 In accordance with good governance the Conservation Area Appraisal (Part 1) and the Conservation Area Management Plan (Part 2) should be reviewed on a regular basis. It is suggested that this should be quinquennially, or timed to suit the preparation of a new Local Plan, or any change in historic

environment legislation, to ensure that the advice contained therein remains relevant.

Appendix

Glossary of terms

Glossary of architectural and building terms

AGGLOMERATE	Building stone composed of smaller stones such as pebbles bound with a sand matrix and fused together by volcanic activity
AGGREGATE	Pebbles or sand used in mortars or concrete mixes as a binder
ANNULET	Horizontal rings around a column shaft
ANODISED	Treatment to aluminium frame members to improve weathering; allows the introduction of colour
ARCHITRAVE	Moulded surround to an opening or recess based on classical architecture
ARMORIAL PANELS	Decorative panel of carved stonework, often carrying the arms or insignia of the institution, family or families, and also monograms and dates
ASHLAR	Fine rubbed sandstone or other stone to provide walling of great precision
ASHLARED RENDER	Smooth render finish to masonry, with pointing lines added to resemble finished stonework
ASTRAGAL	Wooden glazing bar between window frames, usually moulded on the inner face
BACKLANDS	Land behind 'foreland' properties, set out on the pattern of the old medieval burgage plots – may refer to ground occupied by buildings or undeveloped land
BALUSTERS	Shaped posts of timber or stone at regular intervals supporting a handrail
BARGEBOARD	The end board of a roof occurring at gables, normally overhanging the wall
BEADED PANELLING	Panels, often in doors or window shutters, with a fine applied moulding inset from the framing moulding to emphasise the design
BOLECTION	Applied moulding to a wooden panelled door, projecting beyond the surface
BOOTSCRAPER	Iron bar, often found within a masonry recess at the principal entry into a dwelling or tenement

BOSS	Knob, or projection, which may appear on a string course of a wall, or in a vault at the point where ribs intersect
BOW	An arched opening
BOX DORMER	A large continuous flat-roofed dormer, often built directly off the wallhead to give height to attic rooms
BRATTISHING	Decorative metalwork, normally of cast-iron, found at roof ridges, parapets, bay windows or porches at wallheads
BURGAGE PLOTS	Long strips of land defined at the time of setting out the medieval layout of a historic burgh for accommodating phased development to the rear of a property on a principal street
CASEMENT	Side, or top-hung window
CAST-IRON	Brittle metal formed into complex mouldings by casting on sand beds
CAT-SLIDE	Describing the sloping roof of a dormer which is built into the roof, set at a slightly lower pitch than the main roof
CAVETTO	A hollow moulding, with its moulding a quadrant of a circle, used principally in cornices and early 19th century chimney copes
CEMENT	Used in building mortars to achieve a rapid set; from the mid-19th century the term normally relates to Portland cement which gradually replaced lime as the set is faster and has greater initial strength
CHAMFERRED	Angled surface, often appearing around wall openings to provide a more elegant margin
CHERRY COCKING	From 'caulking': a decorative treatment given to mortar joints consisting of small stones laid within the pointing to the wall, normally for better class work
CHIMNEY CAN	The clay pot at the head of the chimney
CHIMNEYHEAD	Masonry structure for carrying flue gases from internal fireplaces
CILL	Horizontal piece of stone or timber at the base of a wall opening

CLAY RIDGE TILES	Fired red or yellow clay formed into profiles for roof ridges or hips; later examples will often have a black surface treatment
CLOURED	Masonry hammer-dressed back to a plain surface
CONCRETE	Building material set within timber moulds or shutters, of Portland cement and aggregates of sand and pebbles, reinforced with steel bars or mesh
CONSERVATION	All of the processes of looking after a site or building so as to retain its cultural significance
CONSERVATOR	Highly trained and skilled craftsperson with expert knowledge of the conservation of works of art; in historic buildings the skills may relate to sculpture, carved architectural detail, ceramic tiles, or decorative and stained glass
CONSOLE (BRACKET)	Decorative bracket supporting a cornice or entablature, often appears on shop fascias to support the cornice and box for the awning
CONTOUR SCALING	The loss of the face of building stones from weathering, caused by weaknesses within the sedimentary beds, exposing layers of the underlying material on the surface
COPE	Flat, or moulded stone or concrete at the head of a wall or chimneyhead
CORBEL	Projecting stone supporting walling or a beam
CROCKET	Decorative leaf pattern moulding applied to vertical features such as pinnacles or spires
CROWN GLASS	Glass blown into large circular discs and cut into panes
CROWSTEPS	Stepped stones at a gable wallhead
DELAMINATION	A tendency for sandstone to weather along its natural bedding planes
DORMER	Window projecting above the roof slope or wallhead
DOUBLE MARGIN	Usually found in doors of 2 middle stiles separated by a parting bead
DOUBLE PILE	Appearing mainly from the early eighteenth century onwards, a plan form of two rooms in depth sometimes resulting in two gables of identical appearance at each of the side elevations of the building

DROVED	Chiselled ashlar, finished in fine lines which may be vertical, horizontal, or angled
DRY DASH	Cement rendered finish to walling, to which small pebbles or aggregate may be thrown to form a coloured or decorative finish
DRYSTANE	Walling constructed of rubble stone without mortar
DUTCH GABLE	Gable with a decorative profile of curved sides
DYKE	Stone boundary wall, often of drystane construction (see above)
EAVES	The head of a wall
EAVES BOARD	Projecting board at wallheads, usually of timber
ENCAUSTIC (TILES)	Decorative floor tiles, popular in Victorian times, achieved by colouring, glazing and setting by heat
ENTABLATURE	From classical architecture, the moulded cornice and frieze above columns or pilasters
FANLIGHT	Glazed panel above a door
FASCIA	Horizontal panel, normally of timber, applied to wall surfaces for receiving shop names; early examples were often painted stone string courses
FIELDED	Panel in a door or in wall panelling raised to be flush with the rails and stiles
FINIAL	Decorative feature terminating of the head of a wall, gable or spire
FORELAND	Property occupying the head of a medieval burgage plot, fronting a principal street of a historic burgh
FRETWORK	Open decorative carving to bargeboards
GABLE	The end wall of a building; may also appear on the front walls of buildings (see tympan gables); a small gable at a wallhead is known as a GABLET.
GRANITE	Hard, metamorphic rock, normally grey or pink in colour
GRP	Abbreviation for Glass Reinforced Plastic, a material capable of being moulded into profiles
HAFFIT	Vertical panel, for instance of a dormer window
HAMMER-DRESSED	Dressed stone with a roughened finish applied by hammer in the stone quarry
HARLING	Traditional method of coating walls applied in layers to finish surfaces and repel water; originally of lime but,

	from the 20th century, increasingly cement-based, finished normally with aggregate applied wet before the surface has set and to give a roughened appearance
HIPPED	Angled roof pitch
HOLDERBATT	Bracket for fixing cast-iron downpipes
HOOD MOULDING	Decorative moulding above windows or doors
HORNS	Appearing late 19th century, extension of the upper stiles of sash windows to strengthen joints with the introduction of larger panes of glass
HYDRAULIC LIME	Term used for a naturally occurring building lime with inherent strength once carbonated; the term 'hydraulicity' refers to its ability to achieve an early set
JAMB	The side of a window or door opening in a wall
JETTIED STOREY	A storey of timber construction projecting over the face of the wall below
LIME MORTAR	Mortar based on lime and mixed with aggregate, for which the lime provides the hydraulic set
LIMEWASH	The application of whitewash based on slaked lime to wall surfaces, common in the 18th and 19th centuries
LINTOL	The flat beam at the head of a wall opening supporting the wall above
LUGGED	Extending beyond the line of the moulding
MANSARD	Roof with four pitches in section, often introduced to incorporate additional height in attic storeys; the front section slopes away from the wallhead
MARGIN	Raised section of walling, with a smooth surface to provide a decorative edge
MASS (CONCRETE)	Concrete cast in moulds without reinforcement where the structural strength relies on the bulk of the material once the shutters have been struck
MITRED PIENDS	Or 'close-mitred piends', where slates are cut on an angle to abut one another tightly at a change in roof slope, without hip tiles or sheet lead coverings
MOULDING	Decorative feature derived from classical architecture to embellish surfaces
MUDSTONE	A grey sandstone, easily cut and carved, but prone to early decay in exposed or persistently damp locations as the binding sand matrix breaks down

MULLION	Structural pillar dividing two or more windows; normally of stone, but applies also to the dividing member of a timber window
MUNTIN	Central vertical member in a frame, normally refers to doors
OGEE	Double curved decorative moulding composed of 2 curves in opposite directions without a break, found often in cast iron gutter patterns
PANELLED	Framed doors most often with a central mullion, or muntin
PANTILE	A curved S-shaped red clay roofing tile
PEBBLEDASH	Dry dash finish to cement rendered wall coating, finished with decorative marble or stone chips before the surface has set
PEDIMENT	From classical architecture, a low-pitched triangular gable or feature applied to wall surfaces or to dormers
PIENDED	Angled, or hipped roof
PILASTERS	From classical architecture, flattened columns applied to wall surfaces
PLATE TRACERY	Window patterns commonly found in ecclesiastical buildings in which the decorative glass is accommodated in openings punched through flat stonework
POINTING	Mortar for finishing off the appearance of joints between masonry units or bricks within a wall, for which the style of pointing may vary considerably; historically lime based
POLYCHROMATIC	Applies to brickwork, in contrasting colours, normally red and yellow
PUNCHEONED	Stone dressed with a blunt pick, or with a pointed chisel
PVC	Applies to plastic products moulded from polyvinyl chloride, and variants of this material such as unplasticised PVC (uPVC)
QUOINS	The shaped corner stones of a building
REINFORCED	Applies to concrete, where the introduction of steel reinforcement increases strength and allows the section size to be reduced

RENDER	Finish applied in more than one coating to wall surfaces, from the 20th c normally cement-based; often applies to a smooth render, or one finished with a woodfloat
RHONES	Cast iron gutters
RIDGING	Finish to the head of a pitched roof: may be stone ridging, clay tiles, lead or zinc
ROCK-FACED	Ashlar dressed to look as though it is natural, and straight out of the stone quarry
ROOFLIGHT	General term applying to roof windows following the roof pitch
RUBBLE	Walling material of undressed or roughly shaped stones; in better work may be laid as coursed or square-snecked rubble
RUSTICATED	Ashlar, of which the courses may be grooved or channelled to emphasise the face of the stone
RYBAT	Stone at window or door jambs forming the wall opening
SASH AND CASE	Vertically sliding windows, historically always of timber
SANDSTONE	A common building material from sedimentary rock, normally easy to shape into mouldings and carved with precision; durability will vary depending on the quarry source and the degree of exposure
SKEWS	Flat stones at the head of gables to prevent water penetration
SKEWPUTT	The stone at the foot of the skews, sometimes carved, to prevent them from slipping off the wallhead
SKYLIGHT	Historic cast-iron roof light
SLATES	Thin stone roofing units from metamorphic rock, easily split; colour, face size, and texture will vary according to the quarry source and how the material is dressed
SNECK HARLED	A form of pointing or harling to a rubble wall in which the faces of the largest stones are left exposed
SPANDRELS	Wall panels of slender masonry between the lintols of windows and the cills on the storey above
STAINED	Modern proprietary wood stained finish
STAINED GLASS	Coloured glass, set into lead or rolled zinc framing

STALL RISER	In shopfronts, the area below the shop window and the pavement
STILE	The vertical frame member at the edge of a door or window
STRING COURSE	Horizontal decorative band in walling
STUCCO	Smooth render finish, normally of proprietary cement based fine-grained materials to provide a decorative treatment to masonry, favoured in the late18th/early 19th centuries
STUGGED	The face of a stone dressed roughly with a pointed chisel
SYMMETRICAL	Design replicated to either side of the centreline, for instance, of an elevation
TABLING	Plain, or moulded, stone projecting from the wall face at the head of the wall
TERRACOTTA	Decorative moulded treatment using the medium of unglazed baked clay, commonly used in the mid-late 19th century
THACKSTANE	Projecting stone found on the front and rear walls of chimneyheads to protect the head of thatched roof finishes
TILES	Roofing units for pitched roofs, normally other than slates
TYMPAN (GABLE)	Central gable, or gablet, appearing on a principal elevation, built direct off the wallhead
uPVC	See PVC
VARNISHED	Clear finish, mainly for wood
VERMICULATED	Rustic work in stonework, with wavy lines in heavy relief, giving the impression of having been worm eaten
VOUSSOIRS	Radial stones making up the curved profile of an arch
VITRIFIED	Strengthening of finishes – either glass or clay – by intense heat avoiding the need for an applied glaze
WET DASH	Applies normally to harling and the application of a final coat of small graded chippings mixed with cement
WITHES	Bridging pieces of thin slabs of stone to segregate flues terminating in a chimneyhead

WYND	Often termed a 'close' or 'pend': a lane or street at right angles to a principal thoroughfare in a traditional Scots burgh