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Forres Area Community Trust



Friends of The Falconer Museum



**FORRES in BLOOM**



Forres Conservation Area

Part 3: Conservation Area Action Plan

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November 2013

## Forres Conservation Area

### Part 3: Conservation Area Action Plan

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<b>Contents</b>		<b>Page no</b>
<b>0</b>	<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1	Purpose of the document	
1.2	Project team	
<b>2</b>	<b>Scope of the action plan</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1	Preamble	
2.2	Priority projects	
2.3	Action in the medium term	
2.4	Action in the longer term	
<b>3</b>	<b>Outline scope of work for priority buildings and notes on costings</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1	Outline specifications and limitations	
3.2	Priority building: the Market Cross	
3.3	Priority buildings: 81-121 High Street	
<b>4</b>	<b>Notes on costings</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Summary of costings</b>	<b>16</b>

## 0 Executive summary

The Action Plan for the Forres Conservation Area is derived from the Conservation Area Management Plan (Part 1) and is the third of a suite of four related documents linked to a number of strategic economic initiatives which are being developed for Forres.

The Action Plan for the conservation area should be read in conjunction with the Conservation Area Appraisal (Part 1) and the Conservation Area Management Plan (Part 2). It sets out a menu of costs for dealing with problems identified in the conservation area identified in both documents and focuses on the town centre where the most urgent problems were identified. In addition, a range of possibilities for enhancement are promoted, such as improvements to shopfronts and fascias and to the public realm at the heart of the historic townscape. Priority projects have been identified which offer the prospect of having the greatest impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Action required now consists of creating greater conservation awareness of the value of the outstanding historic buildings that make up the conservation area, and how to care for them. Raising levels of conservation awareness will not be successful on its own, however, without putting in place effective measures by which property owners are incentivised by seeking expert advice and drawing down allocated funding for carrying out repairs and the enhancement of their own properties. The programme has the potential to restore civic pride.

In the Conservation Area Appraisal (Part 1), and the Conservation Area Management Plan (Part 2), a number of problems were identified with high level fabric throughout the conservation area. These problems are not new, and the study of historic photographs confirms that they have been afflicting the conservation area for many years. In some cases they have resulted in considerable change to the individual structures, and to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The Action Plan identifies a range of properties for which repairs might be identified at an early date if appropriate funding sources can be secured, and they have been prepared with that in mind should the Council proceed, for instance, with lodging applications for a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS, administered by Historic Scotland), or a Townscape Heritage Initiative scheme (THI, administered by the Heritage Lottery Fund).

In less detail, an estimate is given of the cost of the backlog of repairs and improvements that require to be tackled in the longer term. It should come as no surprise that this amounts to a sizeable sum, and this only confirms the extent to which it is worthwhile taking a long term view and investing locally in traditional building construction skills.

It should be noted that the Action Plan cannot address all of the ills that have been identified within the conservation area. The need to maintain and enhance the key buildings within the townscape, and avoid them falling into neglect, must be considered as part of the programme if the wider aims and objectives of creating a vibrant town centre, which visitors will want to come and enjoy, are to be achieved.

## **1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Purpose of the document**

1.1.1 This document is the third of a suite of four documents focused on the Forres Outstanding Conservation Area. The documents have been commissioned by a consortium of bodies led by the Moray Council, given the name of the Forres Conservation Area Working Group. The client group is represented by the Moray Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), the Forres Heritage Trust, Forres Action in the 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 Heritage Trail Interpretive Plan

1.1.2 The document should be read in conjunction with Parts 1 and 2 of the suite of documents. Its primary purpose is to set out costs and priorities for tackling the issues identified in those documents and in such a way in that funding schemes – such as a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) (Historic Scotland), or a Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) scheme (Heritage Lottery Fund) - can be applied for by the Council in the short term.

1.1.3 It is accepted that while short term programmes can be invaluable in making a difference to how the conservation area is perceived, they cannot address the deficit in a catalogue of maintenance and improvements from which the whole of the conservation area would benefit in the longer term. Hence broad budget costs have been evaluated for a range of repairs and improvements that might be addressed in both the medium and longer term. Costs are presented as a menu of options from which schemes may be selected dependent on the requirements of the funding programmes and, in some cases, the willingness of property owners to participate.

### **1.2 Project team**

1.2.1 For the preparation of this document the lead consultant has been Andrew PK Wright, with the costings prepared by John Mackay of McLeod & Aitken, quantity surveyors and cost consultants.

## 2 Scope of the Action Plan

### 2.1 Preamble

2.1.1 The guidance set out in Sections 3, 4 and 5 of the Conservation Area Management Plan (Part 2) would be expected to meet the requirements of Historic Scotland, tailored to the specific needs of Forres if the town centre area were to be successful in attracting a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS). The guidance coincides with that set out in Historic Scotland's advisory publications for property owners, and has been used as the basis for evaluating repairs to the fabric of the buildings identified as priority projects. A description of possible priority projects is set out in the following paragraphs.

### 2.2 Priority projects

2.2.1 Priority projects have been selected for the impact they are likely to have on an appreciation of the wider conservation area. Some are chosen because they have been recorded as Buildings at Risk (BARs), having a negative effect on surrounding buildings which may otherwise be in reasonable repair. For this reason the redundant property behind the empty shop at 105 High Street is included.



The historic photograph of the Market Cross c1875 reveals how much of the architectural detail of the monument has been removed during the constant repair programmes of the late twentieth century

2.2.2 Other properties may make a significant contribution to the historic townscape which would be the poorer if the buildings were to suffer continuing damage through ongoing problems of decay. The Market Cross is an important monument at the heart of the town centre and continues to make a strongly positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area despite the continuing problems of decay, and the fact that it has been mutilated by inappropriate sandstone repairs in the past and from the removal of the majority of the decorative pinnacles to the upper stages of the tower. The history of repairs to the structure can be well documented from the evidence of historic photographs of which the earliest can be dated with certainty to the late nineteenth century.



Properties on the High Street identified as being recommended as priority projects for repair and enhancement

- 2.2.3 A full street block of properties on the north side of the High Street, running from Gordon Street to North Street, has been identified as having considerable potential to benefit the conservation area from their enhancement. All of the properties date to the period from the mid-eighteenth century to the late nineteenth century, and they appear regularly among the most photographed properties in the town centre because of their central location and the contribution they make to the historic townscape. The street block consists of approximately twelve of the original burgage plots, although the number of individual properties is much greater with some in multiple ownership or occupancy at the upper levels. The focus of the exercise is on the foreland properties, and in general where properties have been extended rearwards into the wynds includes the fabric to the rear of the building to the first of the gable chimneyheads. Normally properties within the wynds are excluded from being considered as priority projects – a number incorporate modern buildings and in some cases buildings have modern extensions. It should be noted that in view of the fact that access to the some of the wynds is gated, and restricted in a number of cases, it is not always possible to be precise about the nature of any repairs which may be needed of fabric which cannot be seen.

- 2.2.4 The exceptions to the foregoing would be considered in respect of the redundant structure within the wynd to the rear of 105 High Street (as noted above), and the range of traditional houses on the old burgage plot behind at 115 High Street, terminating at Leask Road. These buildings have

charm, and high levels of authenticity which can be preserved and enhanced by undertaking sensitive conservation work.

- 2.2.4 While some of the properties have been well maintained within this street block many of the problems encountered throughout the town centre can be seen. External funding would help resolve problems of, for instance: stone decay; bulging and leaning chimneyheads; roofing and problems with rainwater goods; the insertion of modern dormer windows; the insertion of modern non-matching windows; external redecoration; structural movement at openings in external walls; dense cement pointing contributing to stone decay; and countering the visual impact of ungainly modern shopfronts which have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. A more detailed account of the conservation issues to be addressed in relation to each of the property addresses is given in 3.3.



Disjointed finishes from serial improvements at the Plainstones, poor materials and street furniture suggest a more creative solutions can be devised to improve the public realm at the heart of the old burgh

- 2.2.5 Priority projects for enhancing the public realm have been identified for the same location at the heart of the town. The repairs and restoration of missing architectural features at the Market Cross would be matched by improvements to the public realm which could include the introduction of lighting to the principal features of the Plainstones. Consideration might be given to reintroducing the stone pillars which once defined the Plainstones from the carriageway, and which were in existence until the early nineteenth century. A more rigorous design than the present, tired, layout would be pursued for hard landscaping which would take its cue from the buildings surrounding the space, with materials of a quality to match the importance of the location and its potential to be used for public events and displays. The improvement of the public realm at the Plainstones would be matched by the introduction of paving of a comparable quality for the same street block on the opposite side of the High Street to capitalise on the improvements to individual properties, and in particular to the range of shopfronts.
- 2.2.6 The former Castlehill Church has not been developed in detail at this stage as a priority project for a potential CARS programme, largely on account of the high cost of carrying out the repairs needed and because the end use has not yet been confirmed. Given its importance within the historic townscape, and the quality of the building, there is considerable support for

seeking permanent solutions in order to stave off the risk of demolition as the building deteriorates.



Interior of the former Castlehill Church (February 2013)

2.2.7 Several properties were identified during the audit work which would benefit for general repair grants for the enhancement of individual properties. Given the size of the conservation area, and the interest expressed in the community for making improvements, it is likely that the demand will be high and due consideration of this will need to be taken into account should an application be prepared for the CARS programme.

2.2.8 A number of shopfronts have been identified which would benefit from a dedicated programme of improvements. Some of these shopfronts occur within the street block where the priority projects have been identified.



A mixture of historic and tired modern finishes to the surfaces of the wynds

2.2.9 In addition to the public realm works set out in 2.2.5 above, there would be considerable merit in setting aside funding for the repair and enhancement of the entries and hard landscaping to privately owned wynds, and to improving lighting. Fine examples of historic surfaces exist within wynds of the street block identified for the priority projects.

2.2.10 While the centre of the town has been identified as the focus for priority projects, the use of Grant Park is acknowledged in the Conservation Area Appraisal as being of considerable benefit to the wider community and to the economy of the town for those events taking place within it. Accordingly

an allowance is included in the costings for upgrading the vehicular access points into the park, and for improving disabled access which at present is substandard in places.



Makeshift vehicular access to the Grant Park for public events

### **2.3 Action in the medium term**

2.3.1 While the priority projects set out in the preceding section will have an immediate beneficial impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area, they cannot be expected to resolve the full extent of the problems that have been identified from the audit work. There will be an ongoing requirement to put in place financial incentives to encourage property owners to care for their properties, and to undertake appropriate repairs to appropriate conservation standards.

2.3.1 The Council has identified funding opportunities that extend beyond CARS and THI schemes, and is alert to the opportunities they present. The longer term objectives set out in the initiatives presently underway for the town centre will certainly be of considerable benefit to the regeneration of the conservation area, and may give rise to further schemes of enhancement and of securing more sustainable uses for historic buildings.

### **2.4 Action in the longer term**

2.4.1 As noted in the foregoing clause, the scope for undertaking repairs and improvements throughout the conservation area is almost limitless. It is clear from the audit work that problems are coming to a head from a combination of factors. These include: original materials or components which are coming to the end of their lives; from a catalogue of repairs not having been carried out; from the damage caused by inappropriate repairs, or even the total loss of the feature. There is evidence to suggest that repair standards throughout the conservation area have, with some notable exceptions, been disappointingly low. Unfortunately, in too many cases the efforts have been misguided and have served only to exacerbate the problems of the fabric.

2.4.2 Fabric which may appear sound at the present time may be on the threshold of being subject to decay in the years to come, requiring high levels of intervention in the future.

2.4.3 There is consequently a need for targeted conservation awareness courses for property owners, for tradesmen, contractors, and also for professionals involved in the care of historic buildings within the conservation area. While guidance set out in the Conservation Area Management Plan (Part 2) will provide a valuable baseline for improving standards, well organised training

courses can offer lasting value. There would appear to be opportunities for beginning the process in the shorter term through either the CARS or THI schemes, and these should be embraced.



The heritage of Forres at risk: a soft blonde sandstone quarried in the early twentieth century for which dense cement pointing to the square snecked rubble is increasing the rate of decay, while the carved mouldings of the pediment are beginning to disappear. The rybats have also been given a dense coating of cement render with the consequential loss of the roll moulding preventing the underlying masonry to breathe

- 2.4.4 Improving the knowledge and skills of local tradesmen and contractors at work in the conservation area can provide long term solutions to the problems of the fabric from the adoption, and promotion, of appropriate repair techniques. Moreover, given the extent of the problems that have been recorded, this has the potential to provide those with the requisite skills with a distinct commercial advantage over those who may not possess them, and it will be of considerable lasting benefit - not only to the long term character and appearance of the conservation area, but to the wider community in Moray.
- 2.4.5 It should be noted that it is notoriously difficult to provide precise costs for elements of work to be carried out in the future across the whole of the conservation area without a detailed survey being undertaken for each of the properties, of which there are several hundred within the boundaries as they are presently designated. This would be a time-consuming and costly exercise. The methodology by which outline costs have been arrived at is set out in the following sections.

### **3 Outline scope of work for priority buildings and notes on costings**

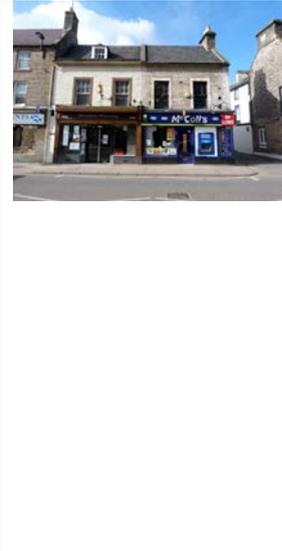
#### **3.1 Outline specifications and limitations**

- 3.1.1 The costings set out in Section 4 for the priority buildings are based on outline specification notes relating to conservation issues identified from the walk round survey. It should be noted that the assumptions are based on a preliminary examination of the fabric from ground level only and are not intended to be exhaustive. For instance, observations made from ground level may suggest that roof coverings are sound and capable of being repaired, while on closer inspection problems may be uncovered relating to the condition of the sarking boards, the deterioration of the slating nails, or to the type of slate having reached the end of its useful life. Similarly there can be no guarantees that chimneyheads are sound until the masonry can be inspected at close quarters, and on all exposed sides. As noted elsewhere much of the fabric is hidden from view and at this stage only preliminary allowances can be made. Levels of contingency reflect the limited nature of the fabric survey.
- 3.1.2 The surveys were limited to the exteriors of the property. No interiors were inspected and it is not known if there are structural issues relating to any of the properties affecting the external fabric, or whether there are problems associated with timber infestation caused by conditions of prolonged dampness from a failure of roofing or rainwater goods, or caused by other reasons.
- 3.1.3 In order to overcome the limitations of the preliminary survey information, for each property a full survey of the condition of the fabric will be required to be undertaken and a schedule of work or bill of quantities with specifications prepared prior to seeking competitive tenders from competent contractors prior to the work commencing. In some cases – for instance, where lead gutters or flat roofs may require to be relaid in accordance with current guidance – drawings will be required to accompany the scheduling notes.
- 3.1.4 In all cases the guidance set out in Section 3 and 4 of the Conservation Area Management Plan (Part 2) should be observed. Levels of costing assume that repairs will be undertaken to a full conservation standard.
- 3.1.5 Depending on the nature of the conservation issue to be addressed it is feasible that specialist reports may have to be commissioned in order to identify the most suitable methods for the repair of the fabric. For instance, reports to be prepared by conservators would be advisable in respect of consolidating or repairing carved stonework, or for the repair of stained glass or leaded lights. Reports may be commissioned on the most suitable source of stone for repairing a façade of a building, in terms of its durability in the longer term, porosity, and close colour and texture match having regard to the availability of matching quarried stone. Historic lime mortars or harls may require to be analysed and advice sought on the most suitable replacement mortars, working methods and protection.

### 3.2 Priority building: the Market Cross

	<p><b>Market Cross (1844)</b> Thomas Mackenzie, Architect (B listed)</p> <p>Several attempts have been made to repair the structure which lies at the heart of the historic burgh. While the more recent repairs have proved satisfactory, some of the earlier repairs have been damaging to the fabric of the monument and its long term stability. The structure has been denuded by the removal of carved pinnacles of which only one now remains <i>in situ</i>. The upper stages of stonework may require to be taken down and rebuilt with stainless steel dowels and cramps, with the cast iron balustrading set in lead where in contact with the masonry and firmly constrained with stays. Missing pinnacles are assumed to have been lost and will require to be replaced with matching carved detail. A conservator's report should be sought for the carved detail and consolidation of friable stonework undertaken, for which it is assumed that the most decayed stonework will require some replacement. For the remaining ashlar masonry all plastic repairs carried out in dense cement should be carefully removed and indents inserted in matching stonework. The horizontal surface at the plinth at the base of the monument should have the cement infill removed and polished sandstone slabs laid down. The whole of the structure should be repointed in lime mortar, for which a specialist report should be sought. Appropriate lighting of the monument should be considered as part of the public realm works.</p>
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### 3.3 Priority buildings: 81-121 High Street

	<p><b>McColls and Rowlands Chemist, 81-83 High Street</b></p> <p>Early 19thc with modern shopfronts inserted. Reset cope of north gable chimneyhead where bulging. Overhaul slates and replace lead and clay ridges respectively with new lead ridge. Insert new dormer at No 81 to maintain symmetry of the façade. Overhaul window joinery and replace missing astragals to lower sashes of first floor windows. Overhaul cast iron rainwater goods and install new downpipe at east end of roof. Remove paint finish from walls, repoint masonry in lime mortar and apply unifying limewash finish to the wall. Gild the mortar and pestle sign and redecorate supporting bracket and remove all unused brackets to the façade. Replace the shopfront and fascia at No 81 in accordance with the evidence of historic photographs. Reset alarm sounders at fascia level. Redecorate the harled wall to the gable at North Street and overhaul cast iron rainwater goods.</p>
	<p><b>The Washington, 85 High Street</b></p> <p>Mid-19thc, with modern shopfront extending the full width of the façade where two separate shops existed previously. Roof reslated with Welsh purple slate: replace clay ridge with lead. Take down and rebuild west chimneyhead and repoint gables in lime mortar; at east chimneyhead remove bricks and indent with matching stone. Remove dense cement pointing from</p>

	<p>the façade and repoint ashlar where defective in lime mortar. Consider strengthening the openings where affected by structural movement which has resulted in cracked lintols. Remove surplus brackets and embedded fixings. Relocate the alarm sounder at fascia level. Replace modern windows at first floor with 12 pane traditional sash and case windows and consider the same for the top storey windows. Insert new traditional shopfront.</p>
	<p><b>Images, 89 High Street</b> Mid-19thc, with modern shopfront inserted. Overhaul the slates and replace clay ridge with lead. Replace PVC guttering to the dormers with cast-iron; rationalise and overhaul the rainwater goods with replacements in cast iron and increase the diameter of the downpipe. Take down and rebuild the leaning chimneyhead shared with No 91. Remove all surplus fixings and dense cement mortar and repoint in lime mortar. Replace modern windows with traditional sash and case windows to match historic precedent. North gable chimneyhead appears to be bulging and may require taking down, rebuilding and harling. Insert traditional shopfront and remove cement from the pilaster adjacent to the entry at the wynd.</p>
	<p><b>Cluny Estate Agents, 91 High Street (B listed)</b> Early 19thc with modern shopfront and original sash and case windows at first floor; modern flat-roofed dormer. Take down and rebuild the leaning chimneyhead shared with No 89. Take down and rebuild the leaning west chimneyhead. Remove modern flat roofed dormers and replace with rooflights, or reinstate the pattern of original dormers which had been slated and piended. Assume the overhaul of the leadwork to the parapet gutter. Overhaul the slates and replace the clay ridge with lead. Overhaul and redecorate the sash and case windows. Insert traditional shopfront in accordance with historic precedent and replace the end pilaster in stone ashlar. Overhaul and redecorate cast iron rainwater goods.</p>
	<p><b>Gardner Financial Services and Clear Pharmacy, 95-99 High Street (B listed)</b> Late 18thc/early 19thc frontage with opening to the wynd off centre; both shopfronts are modern insertions. Take down and rebuild east and west chimneyheads, replacing decayed stonework in matching stone. Remove slates and strengthen roof – sagging at ridge and from weight of the angled dormers which are later (the original dormers had been 3 in number and slated and piended and strong consideration should be given to replicating them). Reslate roof with stone ridge, using salvaged material and replacement material to match. Overhaul cast iron rainwater goods and install additional downpipe at the east end of the façade. Replace windows with multipane sash and case windows in accordance with historic precedent. The frontage is leaning backwards from first floor level, and there are signs of structural distress: assume that localised rebuilding may be required at the window opening at first floor at the right of the façade. Paint finish to one half of the structure should be removed and the façade repointed in lime mortar. Unification of the façade is</p>

	<p>likely to result in the application of a pigmented limewash finish. Both of the shopfronts are modern, and at No 95 an ungainly projecting security shutter box has been fitted: consideration should be given in both cases to inserting traditional shopfronts. The mortar and pestle sign should be gilded and the supporting bracket redecorated. All redundant fixing brackets should be removed, and the security alarm sounders relocated at shop fascia level.</p>
	<p><b>DE Shoes and redundant shop unit (formerly Victoria Wines) and structure to rear, 101-105 High Street (C listed, 1883)</b>  Frontage with 3 storeys of extended height, with much of the original cast iron frontage at No 105 intact; this frontage, together with the monopitch-roofed building to the rear, is redundant and on the BARR. Check over slating and overhaul, and check soundness of the pointing to the tall chimney stalks; assume some resetting of the copes will be required to the rear of the east chimneyhead. Repoint open joints to rubble masonry at the east gable. Overhaul decorative cast iron rainwater goods and redecorate, and in particular check the efficiency of the arrangements at fascia level for disposal. Redecorate external joinery. Overhaul cast iron gate at entry to the wynd and redecorate. Encourage the installation of a new shopfront at No 101 to match the adjoining shop at No 105, or an earlier known design. Remove the security shutters at No 105. Remove dense cement pointing from the rear wall and repoint in lime mortar. Overhaul the slated roof and lead ridges to the dormers to the building at the rear, and repoint where defective in matching lime mortar. Repair and redecorate sash and case windows and reinstate the missing windows at ground floor.</p>
	<p><b>Wrights Home Hardware, 107-111 High Street (c1820, attributed to John Paterson, B listed)</b>  Impressive double frontage with rock ashlar base and original shopfront openings; extensive later structures added on to the rear which appear less well maintained. Overhaul slates to the roof of the principal façade and replace clay ridge with lead. Remove the grilles and brackets at parapet level and assume repairs required to the concealed lead parapet gutter. Indent matching new stone where masonry is decayed at the west chimneyhead. Check over cast iron downpipes and redecorate. Remove redundant brackets and fixings to the ashlar masonry. Relocate the security alarm sounder at fascia level. To the roofs at the rear overhaul slating and cast iron rainwater goods, replacing sections where renewed in PVC; renew lead ridges where defective. Further work may be required here which cannot be verified from ground level.</p>
	<p><b>Smiths Jewellers and properties to rear, 113-115 High Street (C listed)</b>  Early 19thc frontage with later cast iron shopfront in close to original condition; the range of houses in the wynd to the rear is in separate ownership and understood to be used as holiday cottages. The houses at 115A and 115B have high levels of authenticity in the surviving fabric. Check slates and lead ridging for soundness to the front property</p>

	<p>(assume replacement of the latter). Take down the upper section of the east chimneyhead and rebuild, replacing any decayed stones with matching stonework. Assume repairs required to the concealed lead gutter at parapet level. Replace the cast iron downpipe to match the original patterns including decorative holderbatts. Remove cement pointing and repoint in lime mortar. Consider removal of the modern shop blinds and reinstate the blind box at fascia level; reset the shop sign so that it occupies the lintol to the cast iron shopfront and allow for redecoration. Assume patch repairs to the harling at the rear and repairs to the chimneyhead at the north gable; apply coats of limewash to the harling. Replace modern window over the pend with traditional sash and case window. Overhaul and redecorate rhones and downpipes. At the cottages on the wynd assume that 3 chimneyheads require to be taken down and rebuilt, the north chimneyhead in matching brickwork finished with limewash. Strip all slates and reslate in matching material over breathable felt and ensure that the stone ridging is preserved and relaid in hydraulic lime mortar. Renew lead to dormers. Overhaul cast iron rainwater goods and redecorate. Repair sash and case windows and redecorate. Reduce the width of the ground floor windows where altered to reinstate the original fenestration. Repair harled surfaces and apply coats of limewash. Remove cement pointing at the gables and reharl in lime with an applied limewash finish.</p>
	<p><b>R&amp;R Urquhart, 117-121 High Street (C listed)</b>  Prominent corner building in the townscape at the corner of Gordon Street, mid-18thc and later; despite many alterations, including Victorian cast iron shopfronts, high levels of authenticity meriting higher than the C listing. Well maintained. Front wall leaning inwards from first floor and while some structural movement observed it may not be progressive. Remove dense cement pointing at 3 chimneyheads: assume that on close inspection 2 may require taking down and rebuilding (leaning and bulging), replacing decayed stones and pointing up in hydraulic mortar. Repoint open joints at the crowsteps and replace only the worst affected decayed stones. Lift and rebed stone ridging on hydraulic lime mortar, replacing clay tiles with stone to matching profile. Overhaul slating and replace cement hips with lead rolls at the 2 storey wing. Renew lead ridges to dormers and assume that all lead valleys should be replaced with disturbance to the slating. Reinststate missing ball finial to the central High Street dormer. Consider removing the modern tyrolean cement render at the Gordon Street elevation and replacing it with an ashlar render to match the High Street elevation. Replace two modern windows on the Gordon Street elevation with traditional sash and case windows in accordance with historical precedent. Consider taking down the modern mild steel railings and gate at the corner with Gordon Street and replacing with more substantial railings or, alternatively consider improvements to the public realm on the street corner.</p>

## **4 Notes on costings**

4.1 As already stated, the absence of detailed surveys of each of the several hundred properties located throughout the conservation area to - firstly, assess their present condition and, secondly (and more importantly), to establish the scale of repairs required to remedy any problems encountered - severely impacts on the level of cost advice that can be provided at this stage. However to allow the necessary funding applications to progress guideline costs, summarised in Section 5, have been recommended for the possible remedial works identified during visual surveys of the entire conservation area. This assessment has been carried out by McLeod & Aitken under the guidance of Andrew PK Wright.

4.2 The costing mechanisms adopted to suit the level of information available with regard to the various elements of the overall Action Plan are as described below.

### **Priority Projects - buildings**

4.3 A spreadsheet highlighting budget costs for each of the selected buildings is attached to Section 5.

4.4 Costs assume that fabric repairs extend to the rear elevations to the wynds, and incorporate those parts of the foreland properties within the wynds which are inseparable from one another. It should be noted that, at this stage, there has been no access to the interiors of the properties and so it is not known whether there are problems associated with, for instance, structural defects, or arising from timber infestation.

4.5 An allowance has been made for restoring lost detail on the Market Cross and for repairs to be undertaken to the fabric to full conservation standards.

### **Priority Projects – Historic Shop Frontages**

4.6 Costs allowed for assume that approximately 15 shopfronts, of various sizes, require replacement and enhancement.

### **Priority Projects – Shop Fascia Signage**

4.7 Costs allowed for assume that approximately 25, of various sizes, require either replacement or enhancement.

### **Priority Projects – General Fabric Repairs**

4.8 As already highlighted in Section 2 there are hundreds of buildings and groups of buildings within the conservation area each of which may be suffering from various degrees of disrepair. The wide variance in the scale of remedial works, especially those at high level, that might be required, allied to access problems for both the erection of scaffolding and the subsequent removal of defective materials specific to each property, makes it virtually impossible to provide realistic costs at this time. As such the sums highlighted in regard to the repairs of stonework, chimneys, parapet gutters etc. are based simply on assumed averages for each of these elements, these averages having been assessed from the information gathered during the visual surveys.

- 4.9 Several hundred uPVC window units, timber windows which are not of traditional design and appearance, and aluminium windows of varying sizes and at all floor levels, were identified during the examination of the conservation area. The sum provides an indication of the cost of replacing these units with traditional timber sash and casement windows and repairs to internal finishes in connection with this work. It would be unrealistic, of course, to anticipate that all windows of modern appearance would be replaced.

#### **Public Realm Improvements - Restoration of Historic Wynds**

- 4.10 The historic closes, around twenty-five in total, vary greatly in style, length and overall area. Costs to restore the finishes within the closes associated with the priority buildings have been included under that specific section. For the remaining closes an average allowance of £10,000 per close has been allocated. In addition to the upgrading of the hard surfacing and lighting within each close this allowance includes for the replacement of missing gates and the laying of slabs with carved close names at entry points. Problems with drainage would be resolved.

#### **Public Realm Improvements – the heart of the town centre**

- 4.11 The costs shown are based on improved surfacing to the pavement running from Gordon Street to North Street, corresponding to the street block selected for the priority projects for the buildings and associated shopfronts.
- 4.12 Costs are also shown for improving and enhancing the area surrounding the Market Cross, corresponding to the old Plainstones.

#### **Public Realm Improvements – Lighting**

- 4.13 Provisional sums have been allowed to cover the cost of lighting to the groundscape and buildings within the area designated as the Plainstones, along with a contemporary lighting scheme for the Tolbooth.
- 4.14 Figures set out in the above will require to be tailored to suit applications for identified funding packages.
- 4.15 Medium and long term repair costings as set out in 5.4 would be spread out over a number of years, for which priorities would need to be reviewed on a regular basis.

## 5 Summary of costings

### 5.1 Priority projects

The Market Cross	£72,240
81-83 High Street	£80,345
85 High Street	£108,345
89 High Street	£100,845
91 High Street	£118,035
95-99 High Street	£238,050
101-105 High Street	£150,765
107-111 High Street	£89,930
113-115 High Street	£225,160
117-121 High Street	<u>£89,930</u>
	£1,273,645

### 5.2 Priority projects – general repair and improvements

Historic shop frontages	£172,500
Shop fascia signage	£82,650
General fabric repairs (short term)	<u>£500,000</u>
	£755,150

### 5.3 Public realm improvements

Enhancement of historic wynds	£330,625
Paving etc. at the Plainstones	£50,000
Paving etc. to pavement fronting 81-121 High Street	<u>£40,000</u>
	£420,625

### 5.4 Medium and long term fabric repairs – indicative costs

Stone repairs	£1,250,000
Chimney repairs	£1,150,000
Slating repairs	£200,000
Repairs to lead parapet gutters	£125,000
Repairs to cast iron rainwater goods	£25,000
Replacement of PVC rainwater goods	£25,000
Repairs to traditional windows and doors	£75,000
Replacement of UPVC windows and doors	<u>£600,000</u>
	£3,450,000

### 5.5 Exclusions

The above figures include professional fees. No allowance has been made for inflation, Value Added Tax and other exclusions noted in Section 3 and 4.