

# CULLEN SEATOWN

CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL



**moray**  
council



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# Summary

Planning Authorities have a statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 to designate as Conservation Areas parts of their areas which are of special historic or architectural interest the character and/or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance. These areas may range from a small group of buildings to a large part of a town or village centre. Scottish Planning Policy recognises the value of the historic environment and views it as a key cultural and economic asset that can play a role in creating successful places. It requires that Planning Authorities should designate and review existing and potential Conservation Areas, which should be supported by Conservation Area appraisals and management plans. As part of a review of Moray's Conservation Areas, the Planning and Development section has completed a character appraisal of the Cullen Seatown Conservation Area.

The Cullen Seatown Conservation Area is a fine example of a traditional Seatown settlement in Moray. Located in the spectacular Cullen Bay, it contains numerous listed buildings that display traditional architectural styles that all combine to create its unique "sense of place." The area was granted Conservation Area status in order to protect the key components that makeup Cullen's character from inappropriate development so that its built heritage can be enjoyed by future generations. A character appraisal is an important tool to identify and understand Cullen's rich architectural heritage and townscape. It aims to provide an understanding as to why traditional styles and building materials are essential to maintaining Cullen's "sense of place" and how inappropriate materials and designs could be detrimental to the character of the Conservation Area. Conservation area status should not be seen as a hindrance to development but as a means of encouraging good design that is respectful of the traditional character of its buildings and surrounding townscape.



The document will be structured into three sections with the following aims;

## **Part 1** **Conservation Area Character Appraisal**

This section will identify the key components that contribute to Cullen's special character and understand the main threats to the Conservation Area. This will be achieved by researching its historical development and by undertaking a thorough townscape analysis which will highlight the key architectural styles and materials used.

## **Part 2** **Management Plan**

The Management Plan will identify any potential enhancement opportunities and highlight the key threats and challenges facing the Conservation Area.

## **Part 3** **Design Guidance**

Drawing from the appraisal this section aims to provide design guidance for development proposals within the Conservation Area. It can act as guidance for development proposals to ensure that the key components and materials that are essential to the character of Cullen are respected

Additional information on the Scottish Government's policy and guidance regarding the management of the historic environment is set out in the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) 2011 and also by the publication of a series of leaflets providing non statutory guidance on individual issues called 'Managing Change in The Historic Environment'. Proposals to Listed Buildings and development within Conservation Areas will be assessed in line with these policies and guidance notes.

### **Moray Local Development Plan 2015**

The Moray Local Development Plan 2015 contains a number of policies designed to protect Moray's built heritage. The following policies will need to be adhered to for any proposal within a Conservation Area or to a listed building.

#### **Policy BE2: Listed Buildings**

#### **Policy BE3: Conservation Areas**

#### **Policy BE4: Micro-renewables and Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas**



# Part 1

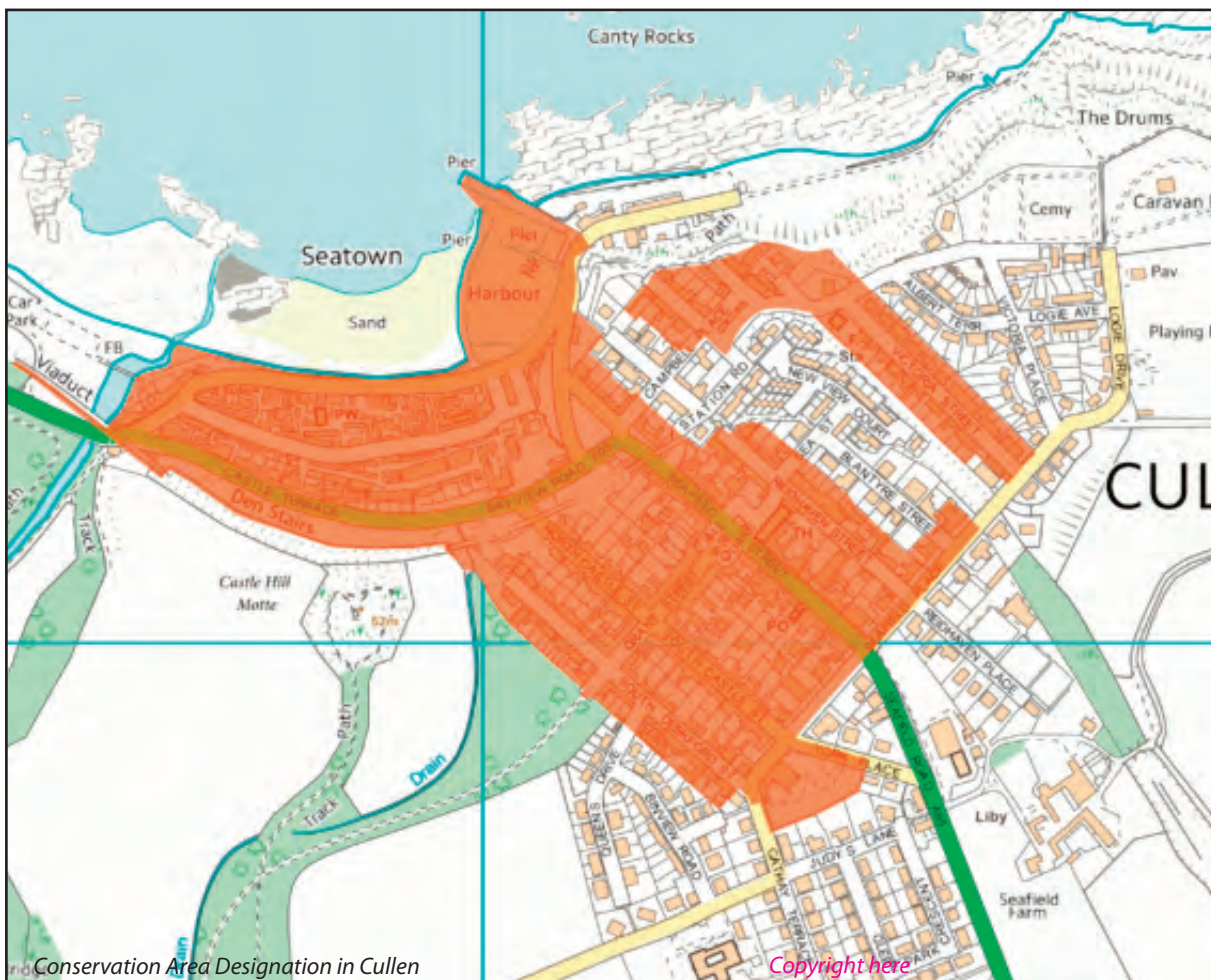
## Conservation Area Character Appraisal

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Conservation Area Status – What does this mean?**

The Scottish Government and Planning Authorities are required by law to protect Conservation Areas from any development that would be detrimental to the character of the area as well as improving the character and appearance of areas that are of historical interest.

Conservation area status is designated on the basis that it is not just individual listed buildings that are of historical importance but the overall townscape. Open spaces between buildings are just as important to the character of a Conservation Area and the designation aims to protect and enhance ALL of these aspects.





Designation does not mean that any new development cannot take place, but simply that any new development must be of high quality design and use materials that are sympathetic to the surrounding Conservation Area.

Planning Authorities have been granted control to manage all of the different aspects that contribute to a Conservation Areas character. The Scottish Government issued an amendment called the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2011 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992. This came into force on 6th February 2012 and restricts householder permitted development rights within Conservation Areas.

If you own a property within the Conservation Area you will need to apply for permission to do certain work to your building and to trees.

Consent will be required from the Council for:

- Works to listed buildings. As well as planning permission, listed building consent will also need to be granted for works or alterations to a listed building
- Demolitions
- Extensions and alterations to properties
- Removal of, or works to trees
- Advertisements and signs
- Erection of ancillary buildings

### Location and Setting

Cullen is the most Easterly settlement within Moray and is dominated by its coastal location on the Moray Firth. The settlement is located on the A98 which runs from Fochabers to Fraserburgh, which is the main arterial route along the coast of the Moray Firth.

The settlement sits on the coastline and is nestled in the middle of Cullen Bay. It sits in between two prominent headlands, Logie Head to the East and the headland containing Portknockie to the West.

The land rises quickly and steeply from the shore with the early Seatown and harbour being situated on the lower level and the later “Planned Town” sitting on higher ground. The Seatown is enclosed by steep grassed slopes which develop into dramatic cliffs on each side of the bay. This sense of enclosure is further emphasised by the impressive former railway viaduct built in 1886 by the Great North of Scotland Railway. This provides Cullen Bay with a unique townscape feature, spectacular backdrop, and reinforces Cullen’s historical “sense of place”.





## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It is thought that a fishing community existed in the Seatown area as long ago as 600 A.D. and possibly even earlier than this. A motte style of fortification was sited on Castle Hill, overlooking the Seatown during the 12th century, but its existence was short lived. During this period William the Lion granted the Burgh its first charter, but it was not until 1455 that King James II granted the original settlement of Inverculan its original Royal Burgh Charter. Inverculan was thought to have been located between Castle Hill and the mouth of the Cullen Burn and it is thought that the Seatown is now built on this location.

By 1762 there were 29 houses in the Seatown, but there appears to have been little growth until the fishing boom years later on in the 19th century. However, better harbour facilities at Buckie led to the eventual decline of Cullen as a fishing port. The original harbour was designed in 1736 by William Adam for the Earl of Findlater. It was subsequently built and extended between 1817 and 1819 by William Minto to a design by Thomas Telford. An additional quay being added in 1834 by William Roberston. This expansion of the harbour would coincide with the early developments of the Planned Town.

The 5th Earl of Findlater introduced linen manufacturing in 1748 and for several decades was a flourishing industry. However, due to industrialisation and the mechanisation of production the Burgh was no longer able to compete.

With the Burgh in decline in the late 18th century, the Earl of Seafield commissioned a plan for a New Town in 1811 by George MacWilliam which would later be altered by Peter Brown in 1817. This saw the beginning of the expansion of the town on much higher ground and in a more regular and organised grid iron street pattern. This involved the clearing of the old village of Cullen which lay adjacent to Cullen House. The market cross, which dates from the 17th century, was re-erected in the square of the new village in 1872. This street pattern was in stark contrast to the informal layout Seatown and the juxtaposition provides an insight into the historical evolution of the town.

One of the most striking features to come out of the development of the town in the 19th century was the railway viaduct. The railway viaduct was completed in 1886 by the Great North of Scotland Railway and is currently category B Listed. It provides a spectacular and unique backdrop to the town as well as the arches providing “framed” views of Cullen Bay. The Viaduct severs the Seatown from the planned town which reflects the historical evolution of the settlement. The viaduct closed in 1968 and now forms a coastal footpath and Sustrans national cycle path.

While the “Planned Town” is physically removed from the Seatown the two combine to provide Cullen with its “sense of place” which is closely tied in with its historical development and subsequent contrasting townscape features.



## TOWNSCAPE APPRAISAL AND ESSENTIAL CHARACTER

### Character Areas

For the purpose of this appraisal and to aid with the subsequent analysis, the Conservation Area is going to be divided into two character areas. This is based on historical development; street and plot layout; building styles; and uses and activities. For the purpose of this appraisal they will be referred to as the Seatown and the Planned Town. While the appraisal highlights two character areas that show distinct characteristics, the two inter-relate together to form Cullen's unique character and appearance. An in depth analysis of both will be provided in this appraisal.

#### The Seatown

This area forms the most Northerly part of the Conservation Area and is critical to its designation due to the high numbers of listed buildings located within it. It extends from the Harbour Bay back to the Viaduct and Castle Terrace, which severs the character area from the rest of the Conservation Area. This distinct edge and the dense urban grain give the character area a sense of "containment" within the Conservation Area. The character of this

area is very much determined by the early development of Cullen as a small fishing village and the historic buildings and informal street layout reflects this.

#### The Planned Town

The area known as the Planned Town developed later on in the early 19th century and leads off the Seatown to the South East. It gathers its name due to planned nature of the grid iron pattern and subsequent uniform plot sizes. At the heart of the Planned town is Seafield Street and the Square, which is surrounded by some of the grandest buildings of the Conservation Area. This area is the busiest part of the Conservation Area due to it being the main retail area and Seafield Street being the main road through the town. The area is characterised by a mixture of building types which all front the pavement that provides a strong building line and is a key feature of the townscape.

*Photograph 1: Aerial Photograph of the Conservation Area. The Seatown is situated at the top while the Planned Town is in the middle of the picture. Notice how the Seatown is "self-contained" and separated from the Planned Town by the steep topography, the viaduct, and the A98. The long, straight streets of the Planned Town are also apparent.*

*Source: RCHAMS*





## Topography/Views

The Conservation Area is situated at the heart of Cullen Bay and the boundary covers both the low lying Seatown and the Planned Town. One of the most contributing factors to the character of the Conservation Area is the spectacular views created as a result of the steep topography.

As has been highlighted, the Conservation Area can be divided into two character areas. The steep topography upon which the settlement has been built upon and the historical evolution of the town play a key role in defining these. The two character areas are physically separated due to the topography, with the earlier Seatown situated on the lower land by the harbour with the Planned Town sited higher up the hill. This contrast in height offers picturesque views of Cullen Bay and the surrounding townscape.



*Photograph 2: This photograph shows the low lying nature of the Seatown. Notice how it is “nestled” into the bay which is emphasised by the viaduct, steep hill and cliffs in the background.*



*Photograph 3: View from the West looking towards the Conservation Area. The low lying Seatown is in the foreground while the Planned Town is situated on higher ground behind the viaduct. The viaduct, the church steeple, and cottages with their gables fronting the sea are all visible and are integral characteristics to the character and townscape of the Conservation Area.*

The wide straight streets of the Planned Town are aligned with the hillside providing spectacular views of Cullen Bay, the harbour, and the Seatown. This is further enforced by the arches of the viaduct that acts as a “frame” for many of these views, notably from Seafield Street and North Castle Street. Many views are also guided and framed by the strong building line and position of buildings at either side of the street.

The viaduct also provides an attractive entrance to the Conservation Area from the West. These views are an integral component of the townscape and help to create Cullen’s unique “sense of place” and identity.

*Photograph 4: View from North Castle Street looking towards the Seatown and Cullen Bay emphasising the steep topography. The long straight roads that flow down the hill combine well with the strong building line to guide the eye towards the spectacular views.*



*Photograph 5 & 6: This is where the viaduct crosses Seafield Street. The arch acts as a “frame” looking across the bay towards Portknockie creating a picturesque view. It also acts as an entrance way into the Planned Town.*



*Photograph 7: Entrance to the Conservation Area from the West. The viaduct provides a unique and attractive entrance into Cullen. From this view the Seatown is visible through the arches providing juxtaposition of Cullen’s historical evolution.*



The viaduct combines well with the steep topography to create an attractive backdrop to the Seatown that is unique to Cullen.



*Photograph 8: View of the Seatown from the East. The Viaduct dominates the skyline and provides an attractive backdrop to the town. Notice how the small cottages have their gables fronting the sea which is a common characteristic for fishing towns in the North East and reflects the Seatown’s fishing heritage.*

Views within the Seatown are limited due to the enclosed nature and dense pattern of development. The topography does allow for limited views between buildings of higher ground and the Planned Town.

The steep topography not only allows for spectacular views of Cullen Bay but also some exceptional views of the Seatown’s buildings and diverse roofscape. This is most prominent from the A98 and the area of open space where Bayfield Road meets Seafield Street. Some of the most prominent and visible views are of the roofscape. It is important to recognise that the rear elevations of many properties are also visibly prominent from several key locations. It is important that these views are recognised as an integral part of the character of the Conservation Area as they make a significant contribution to the “sense of place” of Cullen. It is important that any development to the roofscape or to the rear of properties is not detrimental to these views.





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*Photograph 9: View looking out towards Cullen Bay from Bayfield Road. Roofscape details such as dormer windows and rear elevations of properties are all visually prominent. Notice how a box dormer, with its flat roof and horizontal emphasis, can disrupt the continuity and traditional appearance of the roofscape.*

## Essential Character

- The steep topography creates picturesque views of Cullen
- Limited views from within the Seatown
- The viaduct is a landmark and prominent feature of the townscape
- The roofscape and rear elevations of properties within the Seatown are visually prominent and essential to the character of the Conservation Area. New development has to respect the importance that views have to the character and “sense of place” of Cullen.





Figure 1: Map from the Great Reform Act Plans and Reports, 1832. This map of the early development of Cullen highlights the contrasting nature of the Seatown and Planned Town and how the town can be divided into two character areas. The Seatown is very organic with no planned layout. In contrast grid iron layout of the Planned Town is very structured with regular uniform rectangular plots, buildings fronting the pavement, with private back gardens. This is a key characteristic of the Conservation Area. Source: NLS

## Street & Plot Pattern

The core street pattern of Cullen has remained unaltered for over a hundred years and is fundamental to the character of the Conservation Area as it provides the skeletal framework from which the town has grown from. The following streets form the main settlement framework for Cullen;

- Seafeld Street
- North & South Castle Street

- North & South Deskford Street
- Bayview Road
- Castle Terrace

The plot pattern varies within the Conservation Area and differs significantly between the Seatown and Planned Town. This is a result of the historical evolution of the settlement and is reflected by the contrasting street patterns.



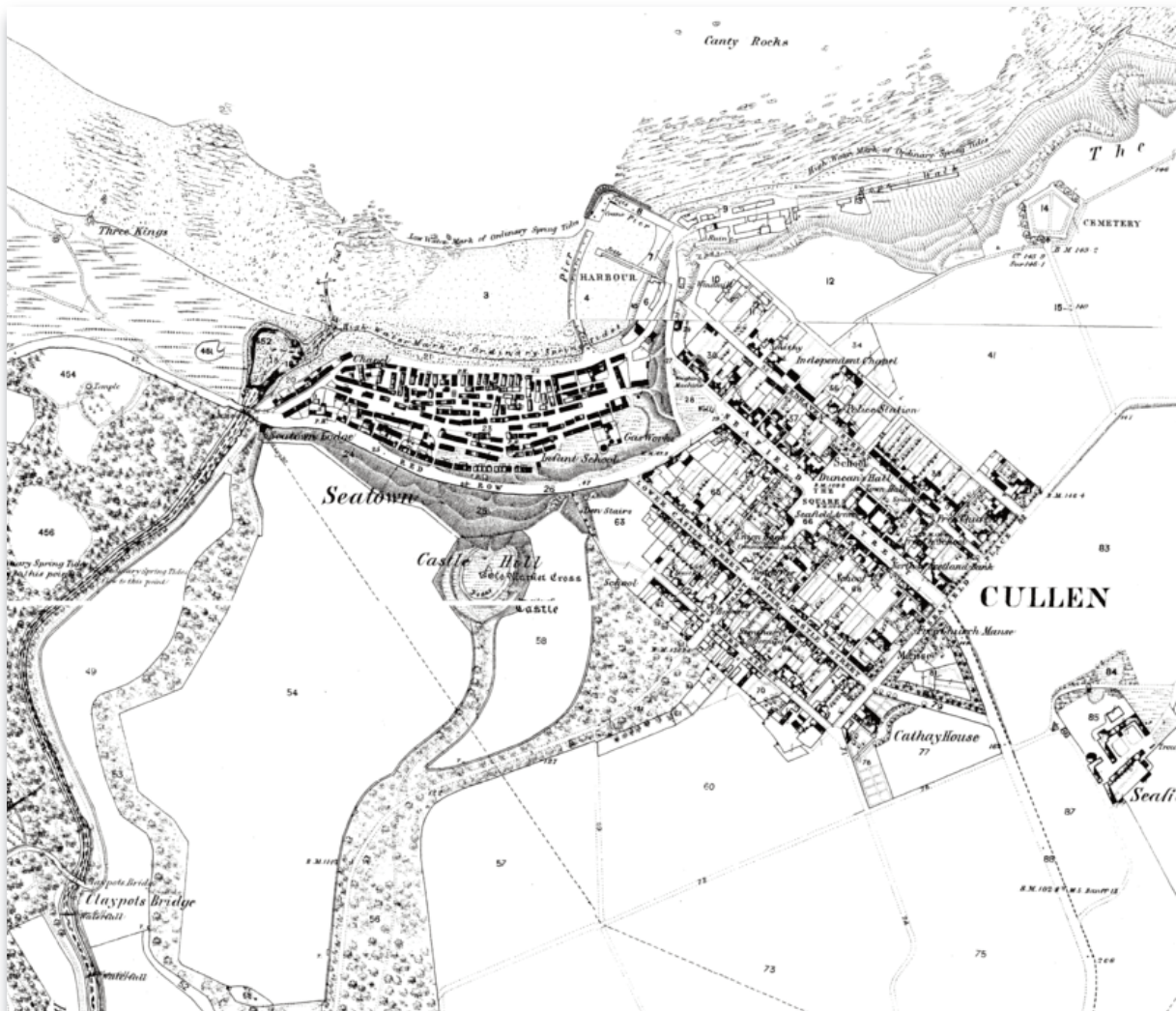
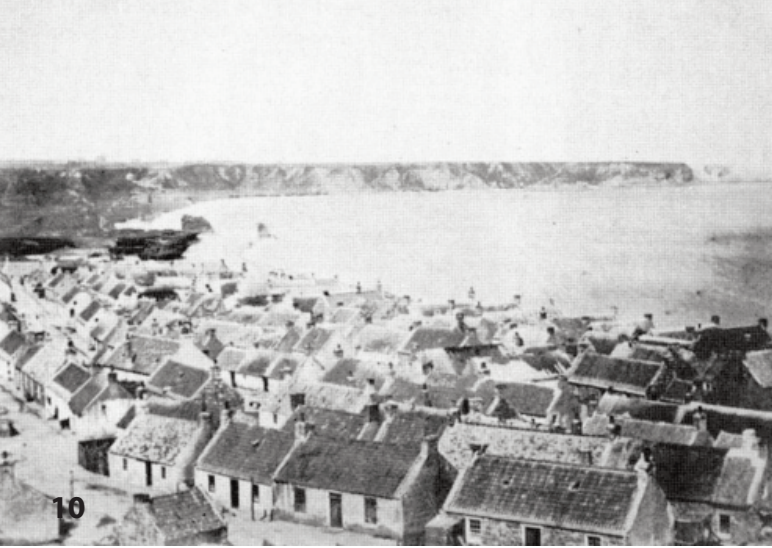


Figure 2: Ordnance Survey Map of 1866. By the mid 19th century Cullen had expanded. The Seatown has a significant number of new properties and has become very compact. Although growth has an organic feel there it is possible to establish an East/West alignment of properties. Development in the Planned Town continued to grow around the grid iron street pattern with the strong building line becoming more prominent. Seafield Street is the largest and dominant street and contains the Square. Source: NLS

The layout of the Seatown is very organic and compact with most of the buildings being sited extremely close to one another and having relatively small plot sizes. The predominant building type is small 1- 1 ½ storey properties but there are also larger properties. The small cottages either have extremely small rectangular plots, or plots that consist only of the footprint of the building. The lack of domestic curtilage means that buildings front directly onto the pavement or street which emphasises the feeling of “enclosure” and dense

urban form. This is further emphasised by a series of informal lanes and wynds run off a larger street that runs horizontally adjacent to Castle Terrace through the Seatown. This dense urban form combined with the winding and narrow character does not lend itself well for vehicular traffic.





Photograph 10: View of Cullen Seatown in 1869. Small single storey buildings are densely packed together. Notice how there are no roof dormers, which are now a common architectural feature in the Seatown. Source: NLS



Photograph 11 & 12: Examples of small informal lanes that characterise the Seatown

While the Seatown is characterised by its informal layout and small plots there are distinct characteristics to the urban layout. There is a clear North/South alignment of the buildings that are closest to the sea. These buildings are predominantly characterised by being grouped closely together and have their gables facing the sea to offer protection and shelter from the weather.

Photograph 13: An example of traditional cottages with gables fronting the sea



This is a common characteristic for coastal settlements of this type throughout Scotland and adds significant townscape value to the Conservation Area and reflects the settlements historic past. Sitting behind these properties to the South, the urban grain becomes dominated by an East/West alignment of terraced buildings. This alignment allows for the maximisation of light into the buildings.

Photograph 14: This view from the East of the Conservation Area highlights that there is a certain amount of uniformity in the layout of the Seatown. Although the Seatown is characterised by small plot sizes and informal lanes, it is clear that there is a definite East/West alignment of the properties that lie behind the cottages that have their gables fronting the sea.





The 19th century maps show that the street pattern in the Planned Town is one of the oldest urban features of Cullen and has remained largely unaltered for over 100 years. The street pattern in the “Planned Town” is formal in its design and consists of a grid iron pattern. The grid iron layout consists of three streets – Reidhaven Street, Seafield Street, North/South Castle Street & North/South Deskford Street – aligned on a North West/South East axis which is intersected by Grant Street which runs on a North East/South West axis.

Seafield Street is the main thoroughfare through the Conservation Area and forms part of the A98, which is the main arterial road along the Moray Coast. The road acts as the spine of the Conservation Area and provides one of the main links between the Seatown and the Planned Town. It was one of the earliest roads to be constructed in the Planned Town from which the settlement would later expand around. Seafield Street also contains the Square which acts as a hub and focal point for this part of Cullen. It is located where it intersects Grant Street and contains the Market Cross and several key notable buildings.

The nature of a grid layout provides rectangular blocks for which development can take place and allows for the uniform division of plot sizes. The “Planned Town” is characterised by long rectangular plots with buildings fronting directly onto the pavement with large private gardens to the rear.



*Photograph 15: A characteristic of the grid iron street pattern is straight, narrow lanes that run between larger streets. It highlights how the regular, planned street pattern creates private gardens and is the main contributing factor as to why the Planned Town has very little open space.*

The fronting of buildings directly onto the pavement reinforces the street pattern, provides a strong building line and creates a sense of enclosure. This has been a key characteristic of the townscape since its creation and gives the streetscape its continuity and character.



*Photograph 16: View from North Castle Street. Notice how the properties front directly onto the pavement providing a strong building line.*

#### Essential Character

- **The historic street pattern of the Planned Town is one of the oldest planned urban features of Cullen and has remained unaltered for over a 100 years. There is limited scope for any development or regeneration proposals that will alter or erode this historic pattern. New development should maintain and reinforce this street pattern.**
- **Seafield Street is the spine of the Conservation Area and is the main thoroughfare through the Conservation Area.**
- **A strong building line provides the townscape with continuity and is a defining characteristic of the Planned Town. This helps to reinforce the street pattern and enhance views both in and out of the Conservation Area. Any new development should not be detrimental to this townscape feature.**
- **The informal lanes that are prevalent throughout the Seatown should be respected and maintained. New development should not attempt to change the informal nature of this area.**



## Circulation and Permeability

The A98 is the largest and principle road within the Conservation Area and is the main arterial road for traffic travelling along the Moray Coast. The road is named as Castle Terrace and Bayview Road in the Seatown, and Seafield Street in the Planned Town.

Seafield Street is the main commercial street within the Conservation Area as it contains residential properties, shops, public houses, church and a hotel. It also contains the market square where a significant amount of vehicular parking is available. This mixed use generates the highest amount of pedestrian and vehicular activity in the Conservation Area. The nature of the grid iron street pattern is extremely permeable and allows pedestrians to walk to all parts of the planned town easily. The steep downward topography, combined with the long straight streets and views towards the Seatown and the Bay helps to “open up” the town and encourages pedestrian exploration to other parts of the Conservation Area. Seafield Street which contains the Square acts as a routeway between the Planned Town and the Seatown.

The Seatown has a dense urban form and properties are primarily for residential use which does not lend itself well for vehicular traffic. The irregular nature of the Seatown does lend itself well for users to explore and understand Cullen’s “sense of place” by being surrounded by traditional architecture and spectacular views of Cullen Bay.

## Open Space

Open space plays an important role in “inter linking” individual buildings and the townscape together and improving the relationship between the two can significantly enhance the attractiveness and unique qualities of the Conservation Area. The dense and compact nature of the Seatown and structured plot pattern of the Planned Town means that there is very little open space within the Conservation Area. This puts a stronger emphasis on making sure that what open space there is, is utilised effectively to benefit the community while at the same time ensuring that no inappropriate development occurs.

Due to there being a limited amount of open space within the Conservation Area it is important that it is regarded with equal importance as the built environment. Poorly maintained open space can be detrimental to surrounding buildings and the overall character of the area.

The most prominent area of open space is situated where Bayfield Road meets Seafield Street. This triangular plot of land is situated high above the Seatown and offers some of the most spectacular views of Cullen Bay and the townscape. This area of open space can be described as being “neutral” as it neither enhances nor detracts from the Conservation Area. The area is currently grassed over and underutilised, with very few seating facilities available in relation to the spectacular views on offer. As a neutral area there is scope for potential enhancement opportunities that could benefit the community and make the Conservation Area more attractive.



*Photograph 17: View from the largest area of Open Space within the Conservation Area. Notice there are very few facilities for people to enjoy the space and views of Cullen. It is much understated but has the potential to significantly improve the appearance of the Conservation Area due to its prominent location.*



The appraisal has highlighted that the Viaduct and surrounding hills provide an attractive backdrop to the Conservation Area. This area of open space that runs along the old railway line behind the Seatown is covered by an ENV designation in the Moray Local Development Plan 2015 which protects it from development unless the development is for community use. It is important that this area is well maintained and that no inappropriate development occurs that could damage the setting and character of the Conservation Area.

#### Essential Character

- **The Conservation Area designation aims to protect open space**
- **The street pattern of the Conservation Area creates very little open space. Where there is open space there is limited capacity for new development. There are opportunities for enhancement but it is essential that any proposal benefits the community and is respectful of its prominent location.**

#### Shopfronts

The role of traditional and sympathetically designed shopfronts can significantly contribute to the overall character of the Conservation Area. Improving the quality of shopfronts can play a vital role in creating a more attractive area for shoppers and visitors, creating a more vibrant street which in turn has potential economic benefits.

Seafield Street is the commercial focal point of the Conservation Area and contains a number of original shopfronts ranging from hand painted timber signs to more corporate designs. The general condition of the current shopfronts appears to be relatively good although some signs are beginning to look worn. Any surviving, original elements of shop frontages should be safeguarded and used as the basis for any new shopfront design. The use of traditional signs provides continuity throughout the streetscape and helps strengthen the traditional character of the area.

Inappropriate signs and shopfront design can be detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Shopfronts need to be sympathetic in terms of fascia, positioning, colour, detailing, and should not be too imposing. The introduction of modern shopfronts and inappropriate signs will be detrimental to the Conservation Area's character.

Further information relating to historic shopfronts can be found in the Elgin CARS (Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme) Traditional shopfront guide ([www.elgincars.co.uk](http://www.elgincars.co.uk))

#### Essential Character

- **Traditional handpainted signs and shopfronts provide a sense of history. It is important to retain the individual variety of shopfronts to retain the proportion, balance, and architectural continuity of the frontages**
- **Unsympathetic designs, colours, and signage can erode the traditional character and will be resisted when considering new shopfront proposals within the Conservation Area**



## BUILDINGS AND TOWNSCAPE

### Architectural Character

#### Building Types

The buildings of Cullen are of significant architectural interest and the Seatown Conservation Area contains a high number of Category A, B & C listed buildings. The listing recognises the national, regional and local architectural importance of these buildings which gives them the same protection irrespective of category.

The different building types of Cullen reflect the historical evolution of the town. The earliest buildings in the Conservation Area are in the Seatown where the predominant building type is small single storey cottages that either stand alone or are in a terrace. The stand alone cottages are generally found to the North of Conservation Area with their gables facing the sea, while the terraced properties are to the South and have their frontages facing North. Several properties have had roof dormers installed to make use of attic space and is a common architectural feature.

There is irregularity in terms of the informal street and plot pattern, as well as diversity in architectural detail, texture and colour of individual properties. However, there is continuity in terms of building height, massing, and materials used, which provides a cohesive, unified, and traditional character to the townscape of the Seatown. The main palate of materials used for buildings in the Seatown are; stone walls, slate roofs, smooth render, coloured paint and timber windows. There are also vernacular architectural details such as pantile roofs and sneck harling which are common in the Seatown.

The planned town contains a high number of 19th century listed buildings with several being category A & B listed which signifies their national and regional importance. Seafield Street is characterised by buildings that are generally between two and two and a half storeys in height and contains several of the Conservation Area's grandest buildings,

particularly around the Square. Of note are the Seafield Arms Hotel and the Town Hall which are both category A listed.

Buildings are characterised by having slate roofs, stone construction, with many having hipped or gable ended roof dormers which adds character to the roofscape. Seafield Street is the main commercial street within the Conservation Area and subsequently many properties have ground floor shops.

Running parallel to Seafield Street are North & South Castle Street and North & South Deskford Street. These streets contain smaller single storey buildings with a variety of architectural detailing that contribute to the character of the Conservation Area. Deskford Street was formed into a cul de sac with the introduction of the railway and several buildings are not listed. In particular, Grant Street which runs perpendicular to Seafield Street contains a significant amount of unlisted buildings that add value to the townscape. The continuity that these buildings provide in terms of scale, massing and architectural detail, is essential to the overall character of the Conservation Area.

#### Essential Character

- **High concentration of category A, B & C listed buildings throughout the Conservation Area**
- **The main palate of materials used for buildings in the Seatown are; stone walls, slate roofs, smooth render, coloured paint and timber windows.**
- **Seafield Street and the Square contains the Conservation Area's grandest buildings**
- **Different styles of architecture and building type reflects the historical evolution of Cullen.**
- **While there is a variety in architectural detail throughout the Conservation Area, the continuity of building form in terms of massing, height, colour, and materials creates an interesting townscape**
- **Unlisted buildings add intrinsic value to the overall character of the townscape and need to be protected**



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*Photograph 18: An example of two cottages in the Seatown with Sneck Harling. Notice how only the larger stones are visible creating a finish that adds visual diversity to the townscape.*

## Building Materials & Styles

### Walls

Most properties in Cullen are built of stone; this consists principally of coursed rubble with dressed stones around windows. There are also examples of late 19th century buildings which have smooth polished and square stonework known as ashlar. Several properties in the seatown have a smooth render finish which is often “lined out” to replicate an ashlar finish. .

Harling is a form of roughcast that is widely used on traditional buildings throughout Scotland, and is prevalent within the Conservation Area. It is a mixture of an aggregate (usually small even sized pebbles) and a binding material (traditionally sand and lime) and is dashed, or harled onto a masonry wall. Lime mortars were commonly used due to its excellent waterproofing ability as it is able to deal with the complex movement of water which allows

the wall to “breathe”. This provides the building with warmth and dryness and avoids any damage to the stonework.

Sneck harling is a common surface finish in the Conservation Area and is common throughout the North East of Scotland. The finish is characterised by the partial harling or rendering of a wall (namely the snecks or pinning stones) with any larger stones remaining uncovered. It is thought that this finish may have derived from the partial weathering away of a full harl coating leaving larger stones exposed. There is also debate that it may have derived from the lime mortar being cast into the hollows from large field boulders which were used in construction during the first stage of agricultural improvements in the 18th century. It is a distinct vernacular architectural detail that adds visual variety and “sense of place” to the townscape.



Numerous properties throughout the Conservation Area have a smooth render applied to their walls. Often it has been “lined out” to imitate the jointing of ashlar masonry and can create an attractive finish. It is important that when using this type of finish that all of the lines are truly horizontal and that they are aligned correctly with stone details such as window margins. This is to ensure that they follow the rules of a real masonry building. It is also important that this finish is used subtly as traditional stone buildings rarely have right angles in their construction.



*Photograph 19: An example of sneck harling that has had the render “lined out” to imitate ashlar blocks. If this finish is used it is important that the lines are horizontal.*

Pointing is the exposed mortar finishing between stones in a wall. Its primary function is to provide a bed for the stones to sit on and to prevent water penetrating into the core of the wall. It achieves this by providing an easier route for the absorption and re-evaporation of moisture and therefore encouraging the preferential decay of the mortar rather than the stone. It is important that the correct mortar is applied and in general it should always be softer than the surrounding stonework.

*Photograph 20: Lime mortar is a traditional material that allows for the effective control of moisture movement in stone walls. Notice the small filler stones referred to as “snecks” or pinning stones which are added to make the larger stones securer in the wall.. Snecks are often covered when a sneck harling finish is adopted which is common throughout the Conservation Area.*



Unfortunately there are instances where inappropriate materials and finishes have been used. The use of dry dash and cement renders are not traditional and are detrimental to the Conservation Area’s character. Cement renders can also be damaging to the stonework as moisture becomes trapped behind the render which does not allow the wall to absorb and evaporate moisture effectively. The result is that the water has to escape via the stone which can lead to significant damage.

*Photographs 21 & 22: Examples of inappropriate mortar and pointing. The use of dry dash render is not a traditional finish and it detrimental to the traditional character of the Conservation Area. Cement render is harder than the stonework which encourages the absorption and evaporation of moisture through the stone which increases erosion.*



There are also several examples of properties that have had their harling removed to reveal the stonework underneath, often to create a “picturesque” effect. While the underlying backing wall may be of coursed stonework or stone rubble it is not a traditional finish and makes the stonework and pointing more susceptible to erosion from the elements. Where there is evidence that a building had originally been harled, the harling should be reinstated where possible. A harled wall is not only the traditional and most historically authentic finish, but it also provides protection for the stonework from the weather.

## Windows

Sash and casement windows are a traditional feature of Scotland’s historic buildings and are a key component to their architectural integrity and character. They also add character to our historic streets, spaces and Conservation Areas. Sash and case windows became popular from the 18th century onwards, whereas before windows were often very small and unglazed. The development of this style of window is closely related to the improvement in glass production. Early sash and case windows were often divided into smaller 6 pane windows by wooden glazing bars called astragals. This is a traditional and attractive feature of the Seatown. The subdivision and the size and shape of the astragals form a key part of the character of the window and building into which it is fitted. Early astragals tended to be thick and chunky without much detail. However, by the mid 19th century improvements in production and joinery saw the introduction of sash and case windows with much larger glass panes, and more detailed astragals.

Throughout the Conservation Area the use of timber sash and casement windows in their various subdivisions is the predominant style and is a key feature of the traditional character of Cullen. Windows are vertically proportioned with the individual design and style reflecting the age and style of the building. Traditionally sash and case windows used a sliding mechanism to open by the use of weights and pulleys and were traditionally set back from the building. This aided in providing protection from the elements as well as providing depth to the elevation, and adding architectural detail and value. Several windows have dressed margins and are often coloured which contrasts the surrounding stonework and is used to frame an opening. The traditional finish for sash and case windows is paint and the use of varnish and wood staining is not a traditional or appropriate finish. Margins are usually raised, which was adopted when the building was to be harled, but it can also be used as a decorative feature.



As well as sash and casement windows there are also a number of original window styles prevalent in the Conservation Area. These designs are generally found on later 19th century buildings within the Conservation Area. These architectural details enhance the village townscape and reflect how the village has changed and developed over different periods of time.



*Photograph 23: An example of Oriel windows on Seafield Street that add character to the streetscape. However, the wood staining on the sash and case windows is not a traditional finish.*



*Photograph 24: Ovoid Bullseye windows can be found on the Seafield Arms Hotel which is category A Listed. This shows architectural flair and adds variety to the streetscape.*

Unfortunately, there are examples of inappropriate windows where modern materials and inappropriate materials have been used. Windows are the “eyes” of a building and these inappropriate changes can have a serious detrimental effect on the character of a building. uPVC and aluminium is not a traditional material and is an unsuitable material finish for use in historic buildings. uPVC windows are often crudely detailed, and the size of frame is usually much larger than that of a traditional window, giving uPVC windows an obtrusive, ‘chunky’ appearance. The shiny and modern finish uPVC and metal windows is also out of keeping with traditional materials and is inappropriate for use in historic buildings. If uPVC windows are permitted on an unlisted building within the Conservation Area it is essential that they reflect traditional styles and proportions.



*Photograph 25: An example of how the removal of a traditional window can have a negative effect on the appearance and visual balance of a building. It also highlights the important role that astragals have to the visual character of a building.*

### **Roof Dormers**

Roofs dormers are a dominant architectural feature in Cullen, with many buildings having them incorporated into their design or being added on at a later date. The small cottages in the Seatown never intended to have attic accommodation and the photograph from 1869 reflects this with no properties having dormers. Many dormers were probably added towards the end of the 19th century where occupants were looking to add more space to

their properties without the need to extend upwards which could make the property look imbalanced.



*Photograph 26: Early photograph of the Seatown. Notice how there are no roof dormers prevalent.*

There are a variety of different styles of roof dormers that are constructed using different materials. Dormers not only enhance the visual character of the roofscape, but it is also a practical means of allowing more light to enter buildings. As roof dormers are such a predominant visual feature throughout the Conservation Area it is important that their design is in keeping with and is visually subordinate to the roof upon which it is set.



*Photograph 27: Roof dormers in their various styles are prevalent throughout the Conservation Area and streetscape.*

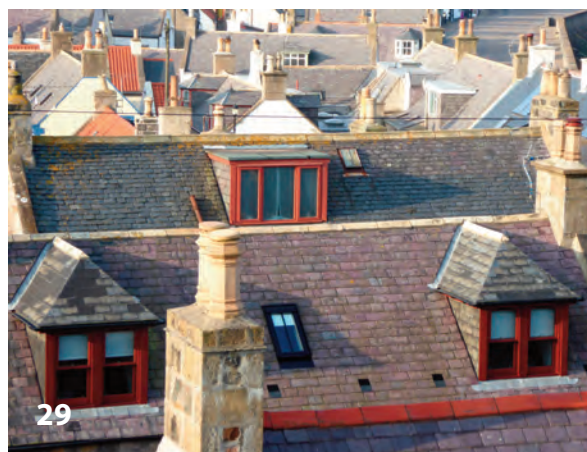
The traditional designs that are predominant within the Conservation Area are gable fronted pitched roof dormers and piended roof dormers. The traditional style of window used for roof dormers is sash and case with a variety of glazing patterns which can often reflect the age of the building. Dormers are usually timber constructed with slate roofs and can have architectural details such as

slated haffits. Bargeboards are also common which can be painted to add visual character to the roofscape.

There are numerous examples of inappropriate box dormers that incorporate modern non traditional designs. This is often where maximising floorspace is the key design consideration rather than the visual appearance of the building. Inappropriate designs, materials, or dormers that dominate the building can have a detrimental impact to the character of the Conservation Area.



*Photograph 28: Inappropriate flat roofed box dormers in the Conservation Area disturb the continuity and rhythm of the roofscape. Modern window designs also detract from the traditional character of the Conservation Area.*



*Photograph 29: Due to the prominent visibility of the Seatown's roofscape, inappropriate box dormers can be seen from several key vantage points.*



## Doors

The most common door design within Cullen is the traditional timber panelled door and the timber vertical panelled door. The combination of these traditional doors adds to the interesting character of the Conservation Area. Where modern designs replace these traditional doors there is a risk that the character of the Conservation Area could be eroded.

## Roofs

Cullen has a complex roofscape that adds visual character to the Conservation Area. It can be viewed from many vantage points within the Conservation Area as a consequence of the steep topography and “low lying” nature of the Seaton. This makes it a key feature to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and it is essential that this is protected from inappropriate development.

The majority of the buildings have steep, 40-45 degree, slated pitched roofs. Several buildings retain their original Scottish slate which is often set in diminishing courses. The use of slate lends a distinct character and texture to the roofscape. Scottish slate is prevalent within the Conservation Area as it came into common usage at the end of the 18th century. It can be differentiated from Welsh slate by being darker and smaller in size than the more regularly dressed blue Welsh slate. Scottish slate is no longer quarried in Scotland and the main source of it now is from second hand demolition. Later 19th century slate is also prevalent and is recognised by being dressed to a more regular shape and size.

Missing, slipped, or broken slates should be promptly replaced to match the original to avoid roof leaks. A small leak can lead to progressive damage to the structure of a building and should be prioritised for repair.

The use of inappropriate roofing materials and styles can be particularly damaging especially when being used in a terrace or row of properties as it disrupts the visual continuity and appearance of the roofscape.



*Photograph 30: Non traditional flat roofs disrupt the visual flow of the roofscape and are detrimental to the character of the townscape*

Throughout the Conservation Area several properties have pantile roofs, which add visual interest and character to the roofscape. The use of pantiles is a vernacular style of architecture to the North East of Scotland, and was in widespread use in the 17th century. It is thought that they originally arrived in many North East coastal fishing towns from the continent, most notably Holland. They were commonly used where cheaper well ventilated roofs were required.

The first three or four courses of a pantiled roof are often in slate. These are known as easing courses and these help to prevent lower tiled courses being uplifted by the wind. It also aides in dispersing the channels of water formed in the pantiles allowing for the more effective collection of rain water.

Masonry details such as skews, skew putts and date stones are prevalent throughout the Conservation Area. They are important features within the townscape and add visual character and a historical sense of place to the Conservation Area. They should never be removed.



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### Colours

A variety of colours are used within the Conservation Area, particularly in the Seatown, which adds visual character and distinctiveness to the Conservation Area. Many of the cottages have their walls smooth rendered and distinctively painted, with surrounds to windows, doors and quoins picked out in contrasting colours.

*Photograph 32: An example of how colours can be used to emphasise architectural details such as quoins and margins which helps to add variety to the townscape and contribute to the distinct "sense of place" of the Seatown.*



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The use of colour to highlight these details is a feature of Cullen and should be encouraged. However, care needs to be taken when applying paint as it could damage the stone. The painting of unpainted materials should not be encouraged. Any paint applied to natural materials needs to be porous to avoid moisture being trapped which could damage the stone. Ideally a lime harl that uses natural pigments should be used to add colour to the external walls of properties.



*Photograph 31: An example of a Seatown cottage with a pantile roof. This vernacular architectural detail not only adds visual character and diversity to the roofscape but also contributes to the Conservation Area's historical "sense of place". Notice the coursing of slate to aide with rainwater collection.*

### Essential Character

- **The Conservation Area has visual variety due to the different architectural styles, colours and materials. However, the use of traditional materials provides the townscape with a cohesive and well defined character giving the area a feeling of permanency and sense of history.**
- **The use of stone, harling, and slate contribute to the unified architectural character and provides the Conservation Area with its historical and traditional "sense of place".**
- **The roofs are predominantly covered in slate although the use of pantiles is a vernacular style associated with the North East of Scotland. The uniformity of roofing material enhances the roofscape and visual continuity of the Conservation Area.**
- **Sash and casement windows are an important traditional feature and contribute significantly to the character and appearance of individual buildings and the overall character of the Conservation Area. Inappropriate styles, finishes, and materials can have a serious cumulative detrimental impact to the character of the Conservation Area.**
- **Roof dormers are an intrinsic architectural feature of the Conservation Area and add variety to the roofscape. It is important that they are constructed in traditional styles, use correct proportions, and use sympathetic materials.**
- **The use of colour to highlight architectural detail is a common feature throughout the Conservation Area.**



## Listed and Unlisted Buildings

There are many listed buildings within the Conservation Area. The majority and highest concentration of listed buildings can be found in the Seatown, where most buildings are either category B or C listed. This dense mix of listed buildings is essential to the rich traditional character of the Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area also contains many unlisted buildings of townscape merit. Although these buildings are unlisted they make a positive contribution to the character and visual coherence of the Conservation Area, particularly the buildings on Grant Street. Most of the buildings display many of the key architectural characteristics of several of the listed buildings by having stone walls, slated roofs and traditional windows.

### BUILDINGS AT RISK - PRIORITY BUILDINGS

There are a number of buildings and areas that could be deemed to have a negative effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in their current state. Vacant buildings in prominent locations can be blight to the Conservation Area and their deterioration will only get worse over time, particularly if the building is no longer wind and water tight. Finding an appropriate use for these high risk buildings should be a priority for any potential future heritage led funding scheme. However, other buildings within the Conservation Area would also be applicable for funding.

The buildings at risk register, is maintained by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland on behalf of Historic Environment Scotland. There are currently three properties on the register that fall within the Cullen Conservation Area. In their current state may be deemed to have a negative effect on the appearance of the Conservation Area.



**1-3 North Castle Street – C Listed building constructed between, 1820-1830**

**Condition:** The building is in fair condition but is showing signs of stone decay, which could possibly be exacerbated by missing or broken guttering. The roof to the rear is poor and is missing slates. It has recently been granted consent to bring the previous two semi-detached properties into one residential dwelling with repairs to the facade



**47, 47A, Seafeld Street Cullen – B Listed, early 19th century**

**Condition:** The building is in poor condition. There is structural movement to the walls and the chimney heads appear to be unsound. The roof is also deteriorating.

**5 North Castle Street – B Listed, 1820-1830**

**Condition:** The single storey cottage is in fair condition but with a very poor roof to the rear with signs of significant structural movement.

As well as individual buildings there are gap sites that are detrimental to the townscape. These sites offer the potential for new development as long as it is done in a sympathetic way that reflects the traditional character of the Conservation Area that has been identified in this appraisal. The Council will be proactive in its approach and will contact owners regarding these negative sites regarding potential development opportunities

# Part 2

## Management Plan

### INTRODUCTION

This management plan and design guidance is intended to aid in the protection and enhancement of the character of the Conservation Area and assist in managing change without compromising the unique and special qualities of Cullen. The management plan seeks to protect the best architectural features and the essential character that has been identified in the appraisal. It will highlight those features that contribute positively and are worthy of retention as well as those which make a negative contribution or which have a neutral impact. It will also form the basis for design guidance for encouraging sympathetic repair and alteration as well as assisting in rectifying inappropriate changes and provide high standards for new development.

### ASSESSMENT OF KEY FEATURES

Having completed an assessment of the townscape character and buildings of the Conservation Area it is possible to understand the key features that contribute to the area's historic and architectural interest. The following is a summary of the features which contribute to the "essential character" of the Cullen Seatown Conservation Area which should be carefully protected and where necessary enhanced. This list is not exhaustive and only identifies the more obvious principal elements which make up the Conservation Area's character.

The key features for each character area are highlighted below;

#### Seatown

- Earliest part of the town set around the harbour and reflects Cullen's links to its fishing history
- Large numbers of category B & C listed buildings
- Informal street pattern with a series of lanes and wynds
- Small plot sizes and an informal street pattern with buildings facing directly onto the street creates a dense urban townscape
- Use of traditional building materials and architectural styles. Buildings are constructed out of stone with a smooth render that is often "lined out". Slate roofs, timber sash and case windows, and roof dormers help to provide interesting character and visual interest. Traditional materials give the area a feeling of permanency, distinctiveness, and sense of history.
- Roofs generally have a steep 40/45 degree pitch
- Vernacular details – pantile roofs, sneck harling and gables fronting the sea are all prevalent throughout the North East of Scotland
- Small 1 – 1 ½ storey buildings
- Very little open space
- The low lying, "nestled" nature of the Seatown is enhanced by the Viaduct and cliffs of the bay which provides a scenic backdrop
- The use of colour enhances the visual character of the townscape



### Planned Town

- This is the latter part of the town to be developed which is reflected by the formal grid iron street pattern and large plot sizes.
- The street pattern is one of the oldest features of the town and has maintained its historical integrity for over 100 years. This is reinforced by a consistent building line that directly fronts the pavement.
- Contains the main commercial street and civic square
- Steep topography provides scenic views of the bay and in particular the roofscape of the low lying Seatown. The Viaduct acts as a frame for several of these views looking Northwards and is a unique and intrinsic part of the townscape
- Key listed and landmark buildings add historic value to the townscape
- Mixture of 1 – 2 ½ storey properties. Seafield Street predominantly has the larger buildings relating to the later development of this part of the town.
- The planned town is dominated by the use of traditional materials and architectural styles.
- Very few trees and open space
- Traditional shopfronts help give the area its traditional character

### KEY CHALLENGES

As well as highlighting the key features and essential character of the Conservation Area, the appraisal has also highlighted a number of key challenges facing the Conservation Area. These form the basis for the enhancement opportunities and the design guidance.

- Improving, repairing and reinstatement or original architectural detail.
- Several buildings on the buildings at risk register
- Several unattractive areas on the streetscape
- Open space is not being utilised to its full potential
- The civic square is overly dominated by car and does not function as a pedestrian friendly “hub” or useable space for the community.

### ENHANCEMENT & PRESERVATION OPPORTUNITIES

The Moray Council has a statutory duty to prepare schemes for the protection and enhancement of the Conservation Area under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. It is considered important that the Council adopts a proactive approach to enhancement and this can only be delivered by engaging with the local community. Cullen has a fantastic Conservation Area and provides the town with its unique “sense of place” that needs to be protected and conserved and at the same time grow and adapt to create a successful sustainable community. It is important and there is thorough local engagement to maximise the environmental, social and economic benefits that improving Cullen’s historic legacy can provide.

Potential enhancement opportunities have therefore been identified that may be appropriate in this context. This can ensure that the management of the Conservation Area reinforces the wider objectives of regeneration, placemaking and building sustainable communities.

### IMPROVEMENT, REPAIRING AND REINSTATEMENT OF ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL

Original architectural detail makes a defining contribution to the character and traditional appearance of Cullen. The challenge is to retain and repair what still exists and where necessary reinstate and prevent the unsympathetic replacement of original windows, doors, roof coverings, rainwater goods and dormers. It is important that buildings are repaired and maintained using traditional materials and techniques that respects the architectural authenticity of the built heritage, so that it can be safeguarded and enjoyed by future generations. Where traditional materials or styles are not used, it is important that they are of an appropriate material finish. The Council can advise homeowners on appropriate design, materials and colours for works to properties within the Conservation Area. Further advice and information

can be found from Historic Environment Scotland's series of guidance notes "Managing Change In The Historic Environment."

The majority of buildings within the Conservation Area are traditionally built, and with the exception of a few properties, are in a structurally sound condition. There are two issues facing the Conservation Area. These are;

- The deterioration of historical fabric through decay and lack of maintenance and;
- The use of inappropriate materials and loss of original architectural details

The cumulative build-up of small inappropriate changes could lead to the dilution of the special character of the Conservation Area. Small changes made by homeowners, often with good intentions, may only affect one building, but many over time can be detrimental to the character of the whole area.

There are examples where original windows have been replaced in favour of modern replacements with non-traditional finishes. Original windows add intrinsic architectural value to individual buildings and the overall Conservation Area and once any element of a building loses its original fabric its authenticity begins to be eroded. The replacement of original windows should always be a last resort. Modern replacements often do not have the same proportions, opening methods, or finish of traditional timber windows and have a detrimental effect on the appearance and historic authenticity of the building.

For listed buildings, there is always a presumption in favour of retention and repair over replacement, or if necessary replaced on a "like for like" basis. uPVC windows on unlisted buildings will only be acceptable if it is an appropriate traditional style and is not located on a principle elevation or an elevation on public view. However, the fundamental test will be if the replacement will have a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Traditional windows are often one of the first features to be replaced as many homeowners believe that traditional windows are not energy efficient and often beyond repair. It has now become easier and more cost effective to upgrade traditional windows to modern standards reducing the need to lose architectural detail and historic character. Timber in traditional windows is usually of higher quality than modern timber and can be patch repaired which is often cheaper than wholesale replacement.

Where timber windows are beyond repair, replacements should match the original in terms of materials, mouldings, astragal sections, patterns, and decorative finishes. Reinstating original patterns of windows where they have been lost should be considered in the interests of preserving the authenticity and character of the Conservation Area. The introduction of a mixture of patterns on a building can have a negative effect of the character and appearance of a building.

The appraisal highlighted that the roofscape of the Seatown is visually prominent from several key locations and is essential to the character of the Conservation Area. It is important that any future development proposal respects the roofscape and the views that it generates. There are examples of inappropriate modern day box dormers throughout the Conservation Area and they have a detrimental effect on the overall character of individual buildings and the whole roofscape. As the appraisal highlighted, rear elevation of properties are visible and as much protection needs to be given to them as principle elevations. These views must be safeguarded

There are several instances where a layer of protective harling has been removed from walls to reveal stonework. It is often done by homeowners as it is perceived to portray a more attractive up market finish. This not only reduces the historical authenticity of the building but it also leaves the stonework and pointing open to erosion from the weather.



Potential future funding for heritage led schemes has the potential to offer grants and education to homeowners to help improve their properties. Routine maintenance programmes can significantly enhance and preserve the character and appearance by pro longing the life of buildings in the long term. Such schemes have many benefits as they not only improve the character of the Conservation Area and individual properties, but also provide education about traditional materials and why it is important that they are used.

## NEW DEVELOPMENT

### Key Principles For New Development

The principles of conservation need to be understood for potential new developments within a Conservation Area and there is often a misunderstanding that conservation in fact means preservation and that it “stifles” new development by requiring a development proposal to fully imitate neighbouring properties to create a “pastiche”. There is scope for contemporary new development within the Conservation Area as long as it is sympathetic to its surroundings and is reflective of the key architectural components that are essential to the character and appearance of Cullen. An appropriate, sympathetic contemporary design can add value and character to the townscape and still respect the architectural authenticity and character of the built heritage.

New development opportunities are generally limited within the Conservation Area. There are some fine examples of new development that show that contemporary buildings can be integrated into as well as enhancing the Conservation Area.



*Photograph 33: An example of new development in the Seatown. An example of how new development can be contemporary but still respect the traditional appearance of the Conservation Area. The massing and height is respectful of the surrounding townscape and the use of traditional materials reflects the traditional character of Cullen. The use of colour around the windows is a characteristic that was identified as enhancing the appearance of the Conservation Area.*



*Photograph 34: An example of new development at the harbour front of the Seatown. The site previously contained ruined commercial properties from the Seatown’s commercial fishing past. The wall from the existing building was incorporated into the principle elevation of the new development, which maintains links to the historic past as well as adding character to the townscape. Notice how the building also reflects the building line, height and massing so that it does not disrupt views of the streetscape. A good example of how new contemporary development on a gap site can enhance the Conservation Area.*

In order to achieve high quality new development within the Conservation Area any development proposal will have to comply with The Moray Council's Local Development Plan policies on the built environment. Proposals will also have to demonstrate that they comply with the following key principles set out below, and the subsequent design guidance set out in Part 3 this document. The key principles for any development within the Conservation Area are;

- 1** To encourage and enhance the quality of development within the Conservation Area the Council will support development which respects the local character and architectural detail of the surrounding townscape, uses high quality materials, and makes a positive contribution to the essential townscape character identified in the appraisal.
- 2** Any proposed development needs to respect the identified "essential character" in its design in terms of;
  - The building height, massing, street pattern and plot ratios
  - The density of the development in relation to the surrounding townscape
  - Respecting traditional architectural styles and detailing, with appropriate proportions of key features such as windows and roof dormers on both principle and rear elevations.
- 3** The intended material finish and design for any proposed development must reflect the historic authenticity of traditional buildings in the Conservation Area in terms of;
  - Material type, window frames, doors, roof dormer styles, roof materials, and wall materials and finishes
- 4** New development and alterations to existing buildings will also need to comply with Policy H4: House Alterations and Extensions to ensure that there are no adverse effects to the amenity of any neighbouring or adjoining property.

- 5** Contemporary designs within the Conservation Area can have a positive effect on the townscape and will be encouraged as long as the design complies with the relevant Moray Local Development Plan 2015 policies, the key principles set out above and the subsequent design guidance.

## PUBLIC REALM OPPORTUNITIES

### Civic Square

The Square was one of the first features to be built in the Planned Town and was "the hub" upon which the rest of the development was built around. It is located in the centre of the planned town with Seafield Street running through it, which is the primary retail street and main thoroughfare through the Conservation Area.

It is the main area of civic space within the Conservation Area and contains the Market Cross. The Market Cross dates from 1692 and previously stood in Old Cullen. It was moved to Castle Hill in 1820 and then subsequently to its present location in 1872.

It is important that active uses are found for this space that encourages the movement of people through the historic environment and would allow this space to be at the heart of the community for which it was originally designed for.

The Square is currently dominated by the car, with two car parks situated at either side of Seafield Street. The domination of the automobile is further enhanced by the placement of the two bus stops at this location, which does not make it an appealing or safe place for pedestrians to use. On approach from the North, the market cross is hidden behind a bus shelter and it is not apparent that one is entering "the heart" of the settlement.





*Photograph 35: The Square is meant of be the civic hub of the community with the category Grade A Listed Town Hall is in the background. Notice how it is dominated by cars in a sea of tarmac making it a pedestrian unfriendly space. An improved design could see the Square being reclaimed by pedestrians while still incorporating sensitive car parking. This could have the potential to use the space as a civic hub as it would have originally been designed for, rather than for the sole function for car parking.*

*Photograph 36: The Square's current function is solely used for car parking, is unattractive, and underutilised as a civic space.*



The use of poor materials, a lack of soft landscaping, and poor street furniture, means that the Square is devoid of life and vitality other than for the sole use of a car park and bus stop. There are also a number of key listed buildings that look out onto the Square and the current civic space devalues the civic space and “sense of place” created by the status of these buildings and surrounding townscape.

The Square is a large area and there is an opportunity to create a “shared” space that integrates pedestrians and traffic together to create a space that is user friendly and restores the civic function of the Square. Improving the street furniture would help to encourage users to use the space and if a place making approach is adopted could also improve the attractiveness of the Square.

Improvements to the Square could be a target for financial investment of any potential future conservation-led regeneration programme such as a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS). This could be combined with improvements to the shopfronts on Seafeld Street to create a vibrant and attractive hub in the community as well as reinforcing Cullen’s “sense of place”. As it is the largest area of public space within Cullen it is important that the community is engaged and consulted about any future proposals.

## OPEN SPACE

### Bayview Road

The appraisal identified that there is very little open space within the Conservation Area mainly due to the compact urban form of the Seatown and the regular street pattern of the planned town. Open space can make a positive contribution to the townscape and it is important that what open space is available is used in a positive manner to enhance the character of the Conservation Area.

The most prominent area of open green space that the appraisal identified is located where Bayfield Road meets Seafield Street. This triangular shaped plot of land is covered by an ENV designation which classes it as amenity greenspace in the Moray Local Development Plan 2015. This designation protects open space from inappropriate development unless it is for a public use and there are minimal adverse impacts on recreational amenity.

The appraisal identified that this area is a “neutral space” as it neither enhances nor detracts from the character of the Conservation Area. Due to its prominent location there is potential for this area to enhance the character of the Conservation Area. The space is visually prominent from parts of the Seatown and the Planned Town, and is adjacent to the A98 which is the main route through the town. It is fundamentally important that any proposal takes this into account and is not detrimental to any of these views.

There is potential for future landscaping and planting improvements to this area to make it more attractive and create an attractive gateway into the heart of the settlement. This could also be combined with an improvement in seating facilities that would increase the recreational amenity value of the space, which would encourage people to frequent this space and take advantage of the spectacular views on offer. It could also be an appropriate location for potential visitor interpretation boards that could be used to inform visitors of Cullen’s heritage and subsequent development.

The location of the space is situated between the Square on Seafield Street and the Seatown. The improvement of this space could act as a natural “link” between the two areas and has the potential to encourage people and visitors to visit all parts of the Conservation Area, thus improving the vitality of the town. The steep topography and the linear nature of Seafield Street, which runs right through to the Seatown, means that the open space is partly visible from the Square. This naturally encourages pedestrians to move towards the open space and explore other area of the Conservation Area.

## CONTROL OF UNLISTED BUILDINGS

The appraisal identified that there are a number of unlisted buildings within the Conservation Area that add value to the townscape. In general, these buildings add value and continuity to the appearance of the Conservation Area in terms of their massing, height and architectural detail.

Similar to listed buildings there is a presumption in favour of their retention. Conservation Area status gives Planning Authorities power to control the demolition of unlisted buildings. This recognises the important role that minor or “less important” buildings play in the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Any development proposal that involves the demolition of an unlisted building within a Conservation Area needs to comply with Policy BE3 in the Moray Local Development Plan 2015. Proposals will be refused unless;

- The building is of little townscape value
- Its structural condition rules out retention at a reasonable cost, or its form or location makes its re-use extremely difficult. This should be accompanied by a structural condition report.
- Where redevelopment is proposed, consent to demolish will only be granted where there are acceptable proposals for the new building

## CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY

The appraisal established that the historic layout of Cullen has remained largely unaltered for over 100 years. The existing conservation area boundary currently covers the historic layout and there is no reason to alter the boundary at this time.



# Part 3

## Design Guidance

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The appraisal has identified that Cullen has a diverse historic environment that reflects the historical evolution of the settlement and that it has a rich townscape with traditional architectural styles that all contribute to its “sense of place”. The Seatown Conservation Area displays many of the key characteristics of a traditional Seaside town with the majority of its buildings listed. Many buildings require the repair and maintenance of their walls, doors, windows and roofs. It is essential that the repair, extension and improvement of properties continues, and that it is carried out in a manner which enhances rather than detracts from the appearance of the Conservation Area. If modern materials and architectural styles were permitted in the Seatown or Planned Town of Cullen, then there is a danger the identity and attractiveness of the town would be eroded and reduced. If the character of the Conservation Area is to be maintained and enhanced, which is the reason for its designation, then it is essential that all building works and alterations are well designed, are reflective of the surrounding townscape, and use appropriate materials.

### ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS

Where repairs or alterations to a building are required every effort should be taken to use the same materials as the original. Where this is not possible every effort should be made to find an appropriate substitute that has an acceptable material finish. The replacement or restoration of works that use traditional designs/materials will be looked on favourably. The character appraisal has identified a palate of materials that are prevalent throughout the Conservation Area and should be used as a guide for any development proposal.

Where buildings have been subjected to poor alterations and finishes in the past, the opportunity should be taken to reinstate more appropriate design and finishes. Where there is clear evidence that a building has originally been harled, the harling should be reinstated even though the backing wall may be of coursed stonework or stone rubble construction. Harling or render is often removed to leave what is perceived to be a “picturesque” finish but it can lead to damage and decay to the stonework and mortar in the future. Inappropriate dry dash or cement render are not traditional finishes and can damage the stonework that they are applied onto. Where possible they be removed and replaced with a traditional lime based render.

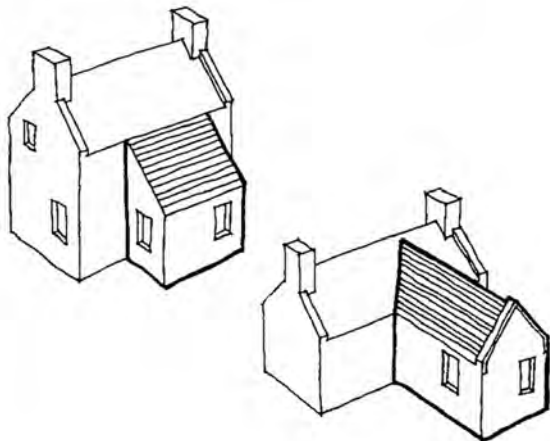
Stonework that has been given a white smooth render and “lined out” is prevalent throughout the Conservation Area to represent ashlar masonry. The use of painted smooth rendered walls with contrasting margins is appropriate in the Seatown as long as an appropriate render is used and all of the lines truly horizontal and that they are aligned correctly with stone details such as window margins. Less prominent walls, and walls to the rear of buildings are often harled and this practice should be continued.

Generally speaking roofs should be slated with either new or second hand slates, although natural red clay pantiles may be used in the Seatown on certain types of single storey properties. If slates are not used then an appropriate material that has a material finish that respects the historical authenticity of the building must be used.

## EXTENSIONS

New extensions or alterations should reflect and enhance the individual building and character of the Conservation Area. It should be subservient to the existing building in terms of size, scale, and massing, which is especially important if it is in view. Where possible the proposal should try to match the original dwelling in terms of the materials used and should be sympathetic to it in terms of design, architectural styles, and proportions.

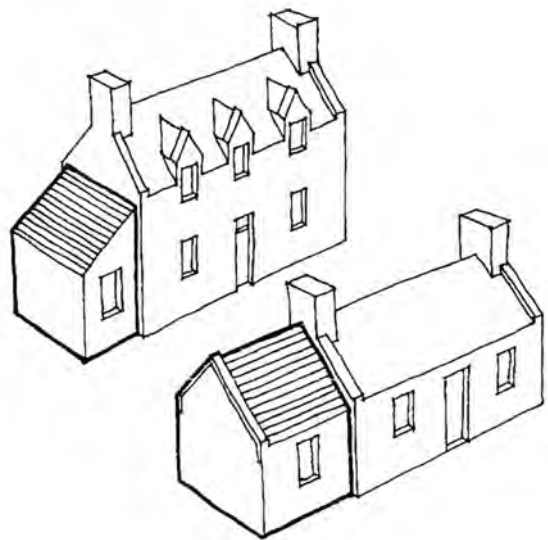
In the Planned Town, with properties built to the edge of the pavement, extensions will normally be positioned to the rear. "Lean to" or gable ended pitched roof extensions would be deemed acceptable and would fit in with the fabric of the town. The "lean to" form of an extension would be suitable where the existing eaves height allows for the necessary fall on the new roof. Roofs should be slated and standard pitched roof extensions should be terminated with a skew coping.



*An example of the type of extensions that would be appropriate in the planned town*

In the Seatown it may be possible to extend a property to the rear or the side. Unlike the Planned Town, where often extensive back gardens can accommodate large extensions, most Seatown properties have limited space available for additions. The steep topography and layout of the Seatown

means that extensions are not always hidden from view and many rear elevations are visible from several key vantage points. Careful consideration has to be given to their design and position so they do not detract from any key views of the townscape. Roof extensions may be slated or pantiled depending on the size and finish of the original Seatown dwelling. Walls may be finished with a smooth painted render or a lime harl, coloured to match (or contrast) the original property. Where extensions are small, vertical timber boarding may be used to add visual variety.



*An example of the types of extension that would be appropriate in the seatown*





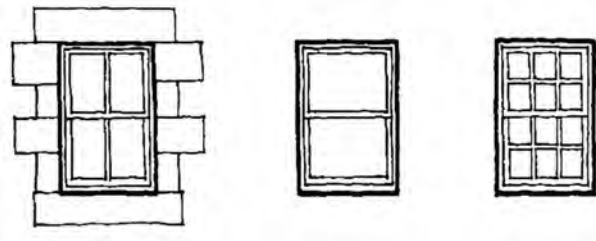
## WINDOWS

Original windows are a key feature of Cullen's Conservation Area and enrich the townscape. For listed buildings there is always a presumption in favour of the retention and repair over replacement. Original windows should always aim to be retained and repaired, or if necessary replaced on a "like for like" basis. uPVC windows are never acceptable on listed buildings and should always be timber as an insensitive replacement can have a damaging impact on the architectural authenticity of the building.

The installation of uPVC windows on an unlisted building within the Conservation Area may be deemed acceptable if it is of an appropriate traditional style and is not located on a principal elevation or on an elevation on public view. Sash and case 'lookalike' windows may be deemed acceptable. However, the fundamental test will be if the replacement will have a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Modern day standards of insulation can be applied to historic buildings whilst minimising changes to the character of the listed building. The replacement of original windows will only be accepted where a condition report states that the repair of the original windows is not possible.

Where the repair of windows is no longer viable, replacement windows need to be respectful and appropriate to the age and character of the building and replicate the original in every aspect. It is essential that any replacements match the original in terms of the proportions, materials, design and reflect traditional styles by having a vertical emphasis and the same method of opening. Many of the older Seatown cottages have windows with astragals (sub divisions) which constitute an attractive feature. Double glazed wooden sash and case units that have the historically correct astragal width and painted finishes are considered acceptable as replacements.



*Examples of traditional window styles that are appropriate within the Conservation Area*

Traditional sash and case windows will normally have a painted finish with white being an appropriate colour. Staining and varnishing is not a traditional finish and should not be used on any listed building or unlisted building within the Conservation Area. The stained finish may be seen to be an improvement from aluminium or metal windows but it is still not an appropriate material finish for historic buildings.

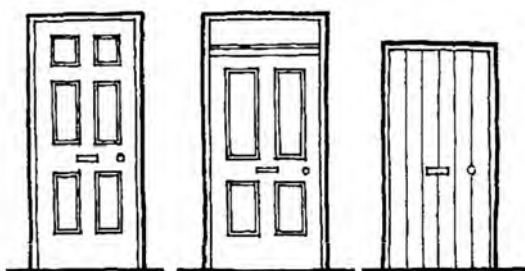
### **Additional information required with the submission of an application for replacement windows:**

- In order to facilitate an assessment on the suitability of replacement windows a condition report must be undertaken on the existing windows and submitted with an application prior to a decision being made.
- A standard detail sheet showing horizontal and vertical sections through the windows at 1:5 scale. This should show how the external face of the casement/frame and timber sill relates to the stone/rendered reveal and should replicate the existing.
- A sectional drawing of the astragal/glazing bar at 1:1 scale indicating the glazing unit and method, where applicable.
- Copies of elevational drawings to a scale of 1:100 are required to be submitted showing the existing and proposed windows to be replaced or repaired.



## DOORS

Doors should be kept simple in appearance. Some of the early single storey cottages may be fitted with doors of vertical timber boarding, otherwise panelled doors would be appropriate. Replacement doors should be made to fill the original opening and the insertion of narrower doors with fixed glazed side panels should be avoided as they are not a traditional style. Wide doorway opening should always be fitted with double doors. Day-lighting to hallways is often provided by a fanlight above the doorway, and where applicable this feature should be retained. The use of mass produced panelled doors with integral fanlights should be avoided as they are usually unsuitable in style and size for use in Conservation Areas.



*Examples of doors that would be appropriate within the Conservation Area*

## ROOF DORMERS

Roof dormers are a common and integral architectural feature in both the Seatown and the Planned Town. Roof dormers should be visually subordinate to the roof slope and be set away from gables and be positioned below the roof ridge. When utilised on the front of a building they should be positioned directly above the ground floor windows or door openings. This is so that they complement the existing building and do not detract from its original character or symmetry of the building.



*An example of how roof dormers should be positioned to be respectful of a building*

To maintain the traditional appearance of the Conservation Area they should be the same proportion and style as those which characterise the area. They should be either hipped or pitched gabled and be positioned in a way that does not affect the symmetry or proportion of the existing building. Traditional roof dormers generally have slate roofs and often have slated haffits. Wide flat roofed dormers can drastically alter the form and scale of pitched roof buildings and are not acceptable. The infilling between dormers will also not be permitted.



*Examples of traditional dormers styles that are prevalent throughout the Conservation Area*





No dormers will be permitted on the smaller Seatown cottages where roof dimensions are severely restricted. The rear elevations of the roofscape are visible from key points in the Conservation Area. These views make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and proposals for the addition of dormers to the rear elevation of a property in the Seatown need to be respectful and aware of this.

In the planned town, traditional sized and styled dormers would be appropriate on the front elevation of properties and there may be opportunities for wider varieties to the rear.

## ROOF ALTERATIONS

Where a roof requires altering or repaired, permission will normally only be given if the proposed materials are appropriate and respect the architectural style and period of the existing roof finish of the building. Within the Conservation Area slate is the predominant material used. New proposals should aim to have slate roofs and where this is not possible an acceptable slate substitute that respects the architectural authenticity of the building should be used. The original roof form and pitch should be maintained, even in cases where the roof needs rebuilt.

While the roofscape of the Planned Town is dominated by slate roofs, several smaller single storey cottages in the Seatown have pantile roofs. Natural red clay pantiled roofs, with lower courses of slate known as “easing courses” is a vernacular architectural detail that is common in the North East of Scotland and may be used in the Seatown on certain types of single storey cottages. Care needs to be taken if an original pantiled roof is being replaced. The replacement of pantiles for slate could make the new roof surface sit low in relation to skews and copes because of the significant reduction in the overall depth of the roof cladding.

Chimney heads and stacks contribute greatly to the profile of the building and should be maintained. Chimney pots should also be retained and if not in use should be capped with a flue vent. Architectural masonry details such as crow steps, skews and skew putts add intrinsic value and character to the townscape and should never be removed.

## SOLAR PANELS

Normally, solar and PV panel installations fall under Permitted Development rights meaning that they would not require planning permission. Planning permission will be required for the addition of solar panels to both listed buildings and unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas. When fitting solar or PV panels to a building in a Conservation Area or a listed building, care should be taken to make sure that the character of the building is maintained and any historic fabric is not disturbed or destroyed.

It is important to consider not only the impact that installation of solar panels will have on the building they are fitted to, but to the overall streetscape. To this end, planning permission can be denied on the basis that an installation would set an inappropriate precedent, increasing the likelihood of similar installations nearby.

In the Seatown the roofscape is highly visible from a number of vantage points and is deemed an essential component to the character of this area. The installation of solar panels, particularly on rear elevations, will be highly visible and could be detrimental to these views.

In the planned town the addition of solar panels to a wall or roof on a principal elevation may be detrimental to the character overall townscape.

As a general principle solar panels should be installed on an inconspicuous area of the roof such as the inner slopes of a roof valley. However, the fundamental test will be if the addition of solar panels will have a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

## PAINT AND COLOUR

The painting of previously unpainted materials will not normally be permitted as inappropriate painting can cause damage to traditional materials. The painting of window margins in a contrasting colour is a feature of the Seatown and will be encouraged where appropriate. Care needs to be taken to select a paint that will not damage the stone. Downpipes and other rainwater goods should be painted in unobtrusive colours such as black or slate grey. The varnishing and staining of timber windows is not a traditional finish and is not acceptable on any building within a Conservation Area.

## SHOPFRONTS

Most of the shop premises in Cullen are situated on Seafield Street or Grant Street within the Planned Town. Original shopfronts make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the townscape.

Original shopfronts should be protected and original details should be reinstated and used as the basis for new design. Any new or alterations to shopfronts should be designed on an individual basis to take account of and reflect the materials, proportions, age and style of the building and the streetscape into which they are set. In general, traditional shopfronts should incorporate painted timber fascia boards and stall risers into their design.

Modern designs will be deemed acceptable if the proposed design adheres to the above design criteria and uses quality materials. They should aim to incorporate traditional shop front features and be sympathetic to the character of the individual building and Conservation Area. Illuminated signs will not be accepted.

Additional guidance on the principles of good shopfront design can be found in the Elgin CARS: Traditional Shopfront Improvement Guide.

## VISTAS AND VIEWS

The appraisal highlighted that views both in and out of the Conservation Area are essential to the character of the Conservation Area. Development proposals need to give regard to their potential visibility from different parts of the Conservation Area. In particular the roofscape of the Seatown is visibly prominent from several key locations and is essential to its traditional character. Development proposals that affect key views and vistas will not be looked on favourably.





## Do I need permission?

### Listed buildings (either within or outwith conservation areas)

- Repairs to original windows and doors in listed buildings will not require listed building consent providing the repair work exactly matches the original in terms of design, materials and profiling.
- The installation of double glazing within existing frames in listed buildings will require listed building consent. If a listed building is also located within a conservation area, planning permission may also be required. Clarification from the planning authority should be sought.
- The installation of secondary glazing in listed buildings will require listed building consent.
- The removal or replacement of windows and doors in listed buildings will require listed building consent. If a listed building is also located within a conservation area, planning permission may also be required.
- Material changes to windows and doors in listed buildings will require listed building consent i.e. alterations to the design, material, size, opening mechanism or proportions as well as blocking up windows and doors. If a listed building is also located within a conservation area, planning permission may also be required. Clarification from the planning authority should be sought.
- Reinstatement of an original window or door in a listed building will require listed building consent. If a listed building is located within a conservation area planning permission will also be required.

### Unlisted buildings within conservation areas

- Repairs to original windows and doors in unlisted buildings within conservation areas will not require planning permission providing the repair work exactly matches the original in terms of design and materials.
- The removal or replacement of windows and doors in unlisted buildings within conservation may require planning permission if there is a material change and constitutes development. The Council places strong emphasis upon fully exploring the possibility of undertaking repair work to original windows and doors before considering replacement.
- Material changes to windows and doors in unlisted buildings within conservation areas, including repair work, may require planning permission. Clarification from the planning authority should be sought.
- Reinstatement of an original window or door in an unlisted building within a conservation area will require planning permission.







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