

## Planning in Small Towns

### *Planning Advice Note PAN 52*

April 1997

### PLANNING SERIES

- NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY GUIDELINES (NPPGs) provide statements of Government policy on nationally important land use and other planning matters, supported where appropriate by a locational framework.
- CIRCULARS, which also provide statements of Government policy, contain guidance on policy implementation through legislative or procedural change.
- PLANNING ADVICE NOTES (PANs) provide advice on good practice and other relevant information.

Statements of Government policy contained in NPPGs and Circulars may, so far as relevant, be material considerations to be taken into account in development plan preparation and development control.

### INTRODUCTION



Small towns are important in Scotland. Almost 2 in 5 of the population live in towns with a population of between 1000 and 20,000. Some have grown and prospered; others have experienced stagnation or decline. However, some development that has taken place, in terms of scale or design has not been particularly sympathetic to the character of the towns; as a result, their identity has been eroded. This Planning Advice Note (PAN) is intended to encourage local councils, the enterprise network, Scottish Homes and Historic Scotland and other organisations involved in small towns to work together with local community and business groups to:-

- retain, restore and enhance what is best
- remove, improve or rehabilitate what is worst



The overall aim is to provide the context within which opportunities for positive change can be identified and promoted to help reinforce the character and identity of small towns. The PAN should be seen as complementary to the recently announced Small Towns Initiative which aims to boost local businesses and enhance the environment of small towns across Scotland.



The White Paper Rural Scotland People, Prosperity and Partnership (Cm 3041) set out the Government's policies for the rural communities of Scotland and gave a specific commitment to issue advice on planning for small towns. For the purposes of preparing the advice small towns were defined as settlements with a population of 1000-20,000; some of the advice will be relevant to towns which fall outwith this population range. The advice has been informed by work undertaken by Gillespies with additional contributions from JMP Consultants Ltd on the traffic and transport issues arising in small towns and Halcrow Fox on development funding. The consultancies were funded jointly by The Scottish Office and Scottish Homes. Discussions with a number of local authorities have also had a significant influence on the content of the Planning Advice Note.

The Advice Note seeks to meet a number of objectives:-

- promote awareness of the valuable legacy of small towns
- identify factors which threaten that legacy
- raise aspirations about the need for quality in new development
- encourage co-ordinated working to secure quality
- provide best practice in planning for small towns

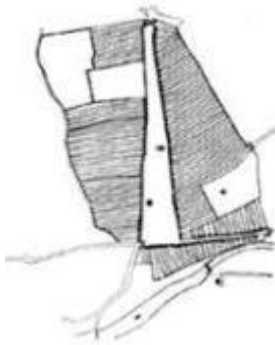
The PAN illustrates how the character of many small towns has not always been respected by recent development and indicates how the planning system can better assist in delivering quality in new development. The advice recognises the different characteristics of small towns in Scotland; it does not seek to offer off-the-shelf or prescriptive solutions. Instead general principles and approaches are set out which need to be adapted in the light of local circumstances so that new opportunities for development can be identified which are not only compatible with the character of individual towns and their surroundings but are also likely to prove sustainable.

## **SMALL TOWNS: THE LEGACY**

Scotland has over 400 small towns which contained 38% of the country's population in 1991. These towns are a distinctive feature of the settlement pattern and provide a wide range of facilities; they are the focus for many community activities; and they contain some scheduled monuments, a significant proportion of Scotland's historic buildings and more than half of the total number of conservation areas. They are also an important element in Scotland's appeal to visitors and potential inward investors.



## Haddington



Plan of Haddington in the 12 th Century



Plan of proposed extension to Cullen 1825. Photograph courtesy of the Earl of Seafield

Many of the towns lie in the Central Belt but there are also significant numbers in the Borders and the North East. Diversity is the hallmark of these towns. The particular 'feel' of a place is dependent on many considerations: size, scale, geographic location, climate, underlying topography, plan form, building materials, and architectural styles are all important factors. However, periods of prosperity also help define the character of a town as well as the type of local industry or agriculture. Most of Scotland's older settlements were medieval burghs; the successful ones had well-chosen sites, usually on ridges for good drainage and close to rivers or streams. The pattern of a main street, widening in the centre to accommodate a market and narrowing at the ends to allow entry to be controlled, is a distinctive feature in many towns and can still be traced in, for example, Montrose. As towns expanded, parallel streets and cross streets were introduced, giving complex plans like St Andrews, with 3 principal streets, or Kelso, with 2 main streets and a market square. Later town development became more geometric. This is reflected in a significant number of the eighteenth century planned towns such as Inverary, Ullapool, Fochabers and Newcastleton. It can also be seen in additions to towns, for example in Cullen and Kirkcudbright.

In the older towns, land was generally divided into strips running back from fairly narrow street frontages. In the medieval burghs these 'burgage plots' or 'rigs' tend to be long and narrow; in later towns they were broader and shorter. Building back from the street frontage was common, giving a dense pattern of wynds and closes. Where the rig gardens or back buildings (back lands) survive they merit care and attention. In older towns these areas may well contain archaeological deposits of importance. Into the historic street patterns created by medieval and later planning, more modern buildings have been introduced, often giving a rich architectural mix, as in Haddington and Montrose. Close to the town centre are often Georgian and Victorian terraces or villa "suburbs" which have their own distinctive qualities of carefully considered planning and characterful architecture. Many of these may be or may deserve to be conservation areas. This legacy needs to be carefully nurtured. Not all Scottish towns, of course, have an architectural heritage comprising fine buildings and good urban spaces; this may be because quality has been eroded over many years or simply because it was never there. However, even in historic towns

whose heritage is less obvious, important archaeological evidence might still survive beneath modern buildings and thoroughfares.



Montrose

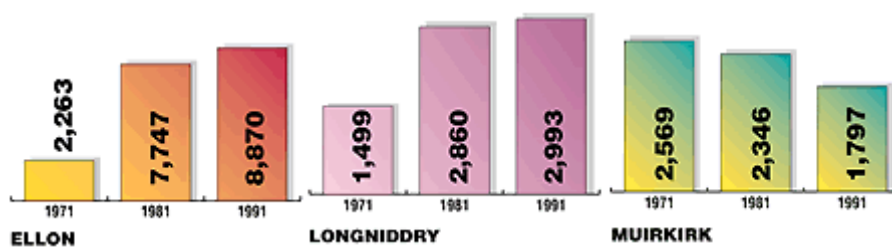
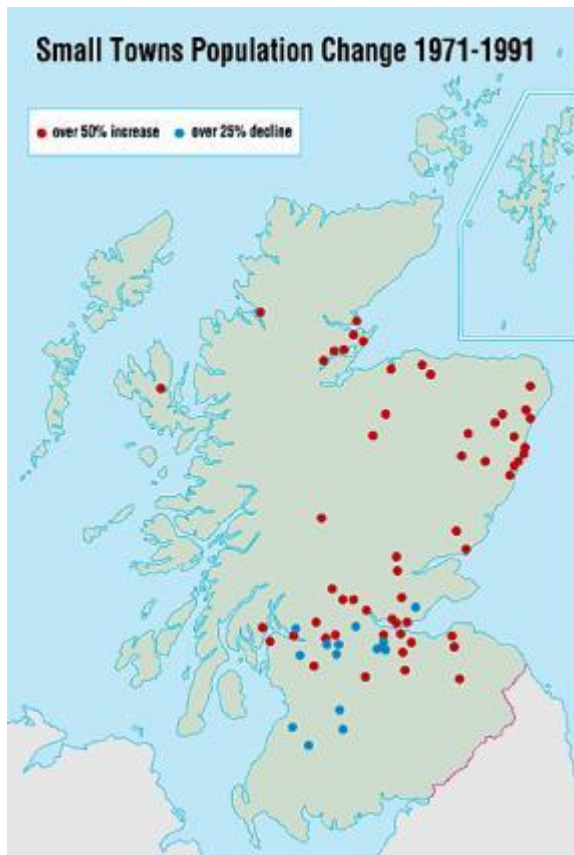
## **SMALL TOWNS: A LEGACY UNDER PRESSURE**

Small towns in Scotland are important from an economic, social, environmental and historic viewpoint but, in many areas, their distinctive character and quality is under pressure from:

- population change
- economic restructuring
- concentration of employment and services
- traffic growth
- insensitive development.

### **Population Change**

Between 1971 and 1991 the percentage of Scotland's population living in small towns increased from 36% to 38%. A significant number of towns experienced major population growth; these included a number of the towns around Aberdeen, along the Moray Firth and Speyside as well as commuter towns in the Central Belt. Towns in the north and north-east generally grew as a result of population increase stemming from employment related in-migration while in the Central Belt pressures arose through households choosing to move out of cities in search of a better quality of life. Many small towns were perceived to have lower house prices, higher quality education and other community facilities, lower crime rates and safer environments which explains their attraction.



Expansion on the urban edge has, in some places, damaged the setting of the town, while population growth has, on occasion, put major strains on local infrastructure and community facilities. Even towns whose population has not grown significantly have, because of changes in household structure and the growing demand for owner occupation, experienced suburban expansion. In contrast, there has been significant population decline in a number of small towns, with some having lost over 25% of their population in the past 20 years.



Physical effects of economic change: Haddington



Changes in retailing have affected small towns



Traffic problems

### **Economic Restructuring**

As a result of new competition, new technology and changing markets the economy of many small towns has undergone major change and some have high levels of unemployment. The physical consequences of economic change are all too visible in vacant mills, maltings, etc. Towns which owed their *raison d'être* to their agricultural hinterland or to fishing and boatbuilding are having to adapt to new roles; the demise of deep mining has had a profound effect on towns such as Muirkirk; other towns such as Invergordon and Fort William have had to adapt to the closure of major employers and the changing nature of leisure and recreation has had a significant impact on the economies of, for example, settlements on the Clyde Coast. In the Central Belt or close to Aberdeen and Inverness, many towns have become largely dormitory settlements.

### **Concentration of Employment and Services**

While population has become more dispersed, jobs and services have become increasingly concentrated in or around the larger centres. For example, in 1991 Edinburgh had just under 60% of the population of the former Lothian Region, but had 73% of the employees in employment. The major centres have traditionally exerted a strong pull on shopping, particularly for comparison goods; this now includes not only the city centres but also off- or out-of-centre locations. The same is also true of entertainment facilities where, for example, the number of cinemas in small towns has undergone a major decline; in the area of the former Lothian Region there are no commercial cinemas outwith Edinburgh. As a result of these changes many small towns have become less independent and more reliant on major settlements; local shops have closed and many smaller centres have consequently lost much of their distinctiveness and vitality, particularly where new uses have not been found for vacated premises.

## Traffic Growth



The continuing rise in vehicle numbers along with the growing reliance on major centres for employment and services has led to a significant increase in traffic between many small towns and larger settlements; this has often resulted in congestion at various points on the road network. The centres of small towns, particularly those which have not been by-passed where the historic street pattern has remained largely intact or which are subject to seasonal or periodic visitor pressure, have suffered particular traffic problems. Balancing accessibility for motorists and the provision of parking, with safety for pedestrians, efficient means of delivering goods to/from local traders and businesses while retaining environmental quality has not been an easy task. In some towns standard traffic engineering solutions have proved to be out of scale with the form and character of the area.

## Insensitive Development

As well as the problems posed by expansion on the town edge there has been, in more recent years, the desire to create larger ground floor areas for retailing which has sometimes resulted in disruption of the original urban form, for example by the extension of shop fronts across several buildings, altering the character of the predominantly vertical division of street frontages. Intrusion of large standardised multiple store fascias has also contributed to a reduction in the quality of small-town streets and to a loss of local identity and sense of place. Solutions to congestion and conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians have often involved major road building and the creation of large car parks, which have sometimes been disproportionate to the scale of the problem, severed important linkages and obliterated historic street and land use patterns. Moreover, well-intentioned 'streetscape improvement' has often removed important features and introduced alien materials and colour while lack of attention to the amount, design and positioning of new street furniture has introduced clutter and a sense of artificiality into pleasing urban spaces.

Small towns are therefore experiencing significant change. The effects of these changes, individually and collectively, are evident in many towns. The scale of population growth in some settlements has under mined their identity while new development has generally not been sensitive to the sense of place or character of towns. The traditional role of many of the towns has been altered by general changes in the employment structure and through specific changes in local economies. The fabric of most small towns has suffered from the general growth in traffic and, in a number of towns, particularly those of historic or architectural merit, the conflict between vehicles and pedestrians can be particularly acute. Moreover the general process of change and adjustment in small towns is reflected in buildings falling into disuse which invariably results in demolition and the appearance of ugly gap sites if viable alternative uses are not found. There are, however, situations where pressures and threats have been recognised, addressed and resolved. These positive examples need to be built on.

## PLANNING FOR SMALL TOWNS: GENERAL APPROACH

The future for small towns does not involve turning the clock back but it should involve an appreciation of their historical development and an understanding of how market forces and social trends can be harnessed. Planning for small towns should be underpinned by 3 elements:-

- examining and, if necessary, redefining their key functions
- identifying, safeguarding and reinforcing sense of place and local assets
- involving local communities and business organisations in decision making.

### Function

Some small towns have grown and prospered in recent years; others have stagnated or declined. Prosperity in one era is not, however, a guarantee of well-being in another; the economic or locational factors on which prosperity was based may no longer be relevant. Communities can, however, recover from the adverse effects of changes in the local economy. A key task for local councils, in partnership with others, is to consider the current role and future prospects for towns in their area. This should provide a basis for the identification of suitable policies and projects to secure or improve their welfare. In some towns a process of this nature is already underway. Arbroath, for example, like many seaside towns in Scotland, experienced a significant decline in its traditional holiday market from the mid 1960s; tourism is, however, worth around £7 million to the local economy. Redevelopment of the seafront, involving upgrading existing facilities and providing new attractions aimed particularly at families and improving the perceptions of the quality of the town began in 1993. As a result the number of visitors has increased significantly.

### Sense of Place

The importance of local identity is being increasingly recognised but there is a need to understand the elements that contribute to this. A townscape audit can assist in identifying the assets of a town from which its character is derived. This is more than an architectural inventory; it is a systematic attempt to describe and understand the elements which define its identity. It is, however, particularly important that the audit identifies groups of buildings or spaces that merit special attention, for example through designation as a conservation area if this has not already been done. Planning authorities are, of course, required to draw up and publish, from time to time, proposals for the preservation or enhancement of conservation areas. The objective is not to stifle innovative or imaginative development but to ensure that investment in development and regeneration, including environmental improvement, has regard to its landscape setting and respects local traditions in building form and design. The audit is discussed more fully in Annex A.



### Community

The most important resource in a small town is its people. The importance of early and regular community involvement and commitment to shaping the future of their town cannot, therefore, be



overstated. Effective public involvement should lead to a better understanding of the consequences of action (or inaction) and a greater willingness to participate in the management and implementation of change; in fact individuals, groups or organisations may wish to be at the forefront of projects or initiatives which contribute to the well-being of their town. An important first step is to identify who can best represent and articulate the community interest; community councils, local traders and business organisations, amenity groups and societies are the obvious starting point but wider participation may bring additional benefits. The form of community involvement also needs to be considered. While press advertisements and public meetings have their place in informing local communities, less formal means such as workshops or group discussions should be considered. Councils will also need to consider how best to present information and alternative strategies / policies / proposals; lengthy reports and 2-dimensional plans are likely to be less effective than photographs, sketches and other 3-dimensional material.



## DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Structure and local plans have an important part to play in addressing the economic, social and environmental issues facing small towns and can contribute to the process of achieving sustainable development by:-

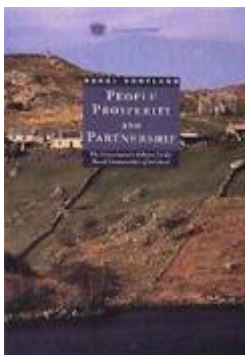
- defining the town's role in relation to the surrounding area
- engaging other agencies such as the enterprise network, Scottish Homes and Historic Scotland in formulating policies, identifying proposals and implementing projects
- providing a framework for investment in regeneration and expansion
- identifying priorities for action.



### Structure Plans

A key function of structure plans is to set out a long term and integrated settlement and development strategy for an area. This will involve assessing an area's current performance, the scale of change that is likely to occur over the plan period and identifying, in general locational terms, where that change is to be accommodated and at what rate. As a result development prospects for a town can be considered and set in a wider context. The key task for structure plans is to identify opportunities for housing business, industry and retail development which reflects national policy as set out in National Planning Policy Guidelines. It is important in terms of scale, location and design that new development does not overwhelm the existing community or irreparably damage the character of a town.

### Local Plans



The local plan process should provide significant opportunities for individuals, local groups and organisations to generate a shared vision of how their town will evolve and to influence the direction and quality of change. It is important that local plan policies promote opportunities for development which increase the economic, social and physical well-being of areas but they should also guarantee the stability required for community, business and investor confidence. In addition, local plans should set out the objectives and criteria for influencing the design of new development, in order to protect an area from inappropriate development and to enhance environmental quality.

## SPECIFIC ISSUES

The White Paper on Rural Scotland indicated that the advice on small towns would cover in particular:-

- provision for regeneration and expansion
- town centres
- transport issues
- townscape quality.

Although these issues are considered separately, addressing how they inter-relate in terms of policy and on the ground is central to achieving the regeneration and development of towns in a sustainable manner.

### **Provision for Regeneration and Expansion**

Vacant and derelict land or buildings are generally perceived to be a characteristic of older industrial towns. This is certainly true for Scotland but gap

sites or decaying buildings, particularly if they are in prominent locations, can have a serious blighting effect on the environment of a small town and reduce confidence in its future. Nor are such problems restricted to less prosperous towns; the process of change and adjustment applies to thriving communities although, in these settlements, the strength of the property market makes it more likely that problems will be turned into opportunities relatively quickly.

A key task for planning authorities is to consider the potential contribution which vacant or derelict land and obsolete or redundant buildings can make towards meeting development requirements. This will involve:-

identifying the location and nature of vacant, derelict or underused land and buildings  
establishing the archaeological implications of any development or redevelopment  
considering their potential for reuse, conversion, rehabilitation or redevelopment  
outlining the steps that need to be taken to realise that potential  
defining the priorities for action.

Sites should not be seen in isolation but, instead, should form part of an integrated approach to regeneration related to the needs and opportunities in the town as a whole and respecting local setting, character and sense of place

An initial survey should aim to establish the following information on brownfield development opportunities:-

- site area and description
- ownership
- presence of listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and other recorded archaeological sites
- history (previous uses, planning consents, etc)
- known constraints (flooding risk, potential presence of contaminants, etc).

This should enable a systematic understanding of vacant and derelict land as well as buildings at risk to be established; this should provide baseline information for monitoring the physical condition of the town. Regular monitoring should allow early identification, particularly of buildings at risk. The longer buildings lie empty the more likely their condition is to deteriorate as a result of failure to carry out maintenance or repairs and the greater the likelihood of vandalism. As a result the cost of rehabilitation can rise, often to the extent that reuse or conversion becomes

increasingly uneconomic. Buildings at risk should be notified to the Scottish Civic Trust, which maintains and distributes to a wide variety of potential developers, an Industrial Register of Buildings at Risk. It is also important not to forget the potential role of Building Preservation Trusts which have been active in a number of towns, for example, Hawick and Dalkeith.



Decaying buildings in key location: Arbroath



Gap site: Perth



Rehabilitation: Haddington

Matching the supply and requirement for development land in a town is not a precise science and the ability of the planning authority to direct new uses and activities to locations where they will support and strengthen the physical fabric will depend, to a large extent, on market perception of and investor confidence in an area. It is, however, not sufficient to rely on the development

industry to identify and bring forward projects. Planning authorities can adopt a positive approach to promoting development and redevelopment through:-

- setting out positive policies in structure and local plans to guide change
- identifying areas where planning authorities will be supportive of opportunities for investment
- implementing a positive site marketing strategy
- preparing development briefs for key sites
- establishing a co-ordinated action programme of site clearance and, where appropriate, site preparation.

Planning authorities should have a clear view of priorities in order to determine early action projects and to identify the measures required to find new activities for land and buildings which have fallen into disuse. A site which is free of constraints and in single ownership, particularly if it is in the public sector, should be capable of being readily marketed. Other sites may have to be brought within a single ownership or may require investment in site preparation; in other cases, to unlock a potential development opportunity, it may be necessary to invest in improvements to the surrounding area. The sum of isolated improvements is, however, likely to amount to significantly less than the results of an integrated approach to area regeneration. In identifying priorities it is important, therefore, to consider how and when the reuse and redevelopment of land and buildings can be supported by environmental work, traffic management and other measures to upgrade the general quality of an area.



Conversion for housing: Stonehaven



Housing refurbishment: Newtongrange



Infill housing: Kirkcudbright

The policy of securing development on brownfield sites applies with the same force in small towns as it does in larger settlements. While brownfield sites, in their various forms, can make a significant contribution to sustainable development, land to meet current and likely future requirements will also be required in edge of town locations. In the case of housing, the main urban land use, there is likely to be a continuing requirement to allocate land to meet demand in an area. Government Policy is that structure plans should make provision to meet the full demand for housing land although assessments of demand should not be the sole consideration and authorities may give greater weight to environmental, amenity and infrastructure considerations. As NPPG3 Land for Housing indicates:-

"In small towns and villages there is a particular need to ensure that their character and landscape setting is not affected unacceptably by the scale or location of new housing developments, and does not lead to over-development."

Planning Advice Note 44 Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape indicates how the layout and design of new housing can be more sensitively integrated into the surrounding area. This advice should be of assistance to planning authorities in selecting sites for new development, although fit in the landscape will require to be considered along with other factors such as impact on the built and natural heritage and on the form and structure of the town, availability of services and access arrangements. This is best considered as part of the process of preparing a local plan. In some cases planning authorities may wish to consider the preparation of a brief setting out the main considerations which a development proposal should address. This might identify areas which should remain undeveloped, key views which should be safeguarded, access points and links to the town, tree and shrub planting which should be retained or strengthened and new areas for planting as well as giving advice on density, building heights, materials and colour. The objective is to secure development that runs with the grain of the town rather than cutting across it.



Proposals for edge of town development require careful handling

## **ANALYSIS CHECKLIST**

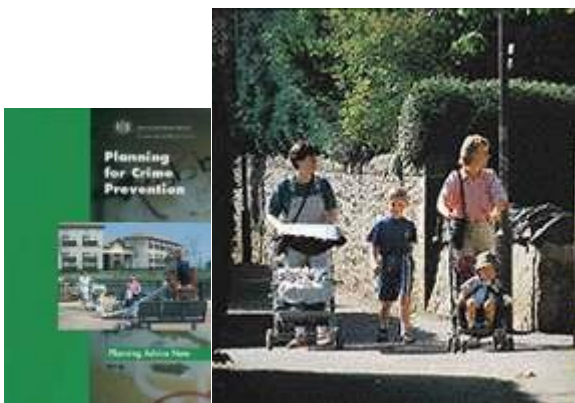
- Ascertain Land Ownership
- Refer to Local Plan
- Examine Landform, Slope and Contours
- Undertake Landscape Analysis
- Define Landscape Character
- Undertake Visual Assessment
- Make Photographic Record
- Compile Climatic Information
- Identify Vegetation around Site
- Establish Ground and Subsoil Conditions
- Refer to Existing Services Information
- Confirm Developers' Requirements

Source: PAN 44 Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape

## **DESIGN CHECKLIST**

- Establish Landscape Capacity
- Define Development Concept
- Determine Scale and Density
- Establish Structure and Layout
- Determine Height and Massing
- Develop Planting Framework
- Integrate Access and Parking
- Consider Orientation Implications
- Compile House Types and Plot Studies
- Develop Sketch Layouts
- Ongoing Testing of Proposals
- Prepare Masterplans

Source: PAN 44 Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape





Provision should be made for safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists

New development should aim to support existing facilities and services; good links between new development and the town centre and other key facilities such as schools and medical centres should therefore be provided. This could involve the extension of existing footpaths or cycleways or the creation of new links; in developing or strengthening links between new development and existing centres or facilities particular attention should be paid to public safety and crime prevention issues, such as maintaining good visibility, high standards of lighting, landscape design and maintenance. Advice on planning for crime prevention is contained in PAN46.

Provision of land for housing is unlikely, in itself, to secure the well-being of a community; access to jobs is also a key requirement. New jobs will come from a variety of sources; in some areas prospects exist for new general industrial and business development while, in others, new employment opportunities will most likely be generated in service industries such as tourism, retailing, leisure and recreation. Increasing the number of locally available jobs can contribute to sustainable development by reducing the need to travel to work by car or by increasing local spending power which can support improvements in the range and quality of local shops and services; as a result, this should assist in reducing dependency on larger centres for shopping, entertainment and other facilities. Not all towns, however, have the potential to generate significant numbers of local jobs.



Industrial development: Newtowngrange

Development plans provide a locational framework within which realistic opportunities for economic development and regeneration can be identified and taken forward. While planning authorities are not always best placed to identify the economic development potential of an area, local enterprise companies, Chambers of Commerce and other local business organisations can make a valuable input. The knowledge and expertise of the business community is an important resource and provides a basis for identifying and evaluating options for stimulating the local economy. It should also be recognised that the potential of an area to attract new investment may



be dependent on improving the environment of an area; in other areas the economic well-being of a town may be based on its character, quality and setting which planning policies should seek to maintain and enhance.

NPPG2 Land for Business and Industry, requires structure plans to provide a marketable supply of general industrial and business land over the period of the plan. This does not mean that every settlement must allocate land for business and industry as physical, environmental and infrastructure constraints, as well as marketing obstacles, may restrict the possibilities in some towns. Planning authorities should seek to provide a sufficient supply of land and buildings for business and general industry locally; however, where economically viable or environmentally acceptable options do not exist in a town the aim should be to ensure that suitable provision is available within easy commuting distance and readily accessible by public transport. As well as catering for the needs and opportunities for the development of indigenous business and general industry the quality of environment in and around some small towns may also provide scope for identifying high amenity sites of an appropriate size for inward investment. The aim should be to promote and secure development of a high design standard which can be used to positively promote the town.



Photograph courtesy of Highlands and Islands Enterprise



Not all small towns can offer viable opportunities for general industrial and business development. Tourism, leisure and recreation development based on the built and cultural heritage of a town and its surrounding area may offer better prospects; the Scottish Mining Museum at Lady Victoria Colliery in Newtongrange and the Lighthouse Museum at Fraserburgh are examples of projects which have provided direct and indirect local employment and helped restore community confidence. For other towns opportunities can be based on the particular characteristics of the area: the National Water Sports Centre at Largs, links golf in East Lothian, East Neuk of Fife, Angus and Ayrshire are examples. Of course, for many towns, it is their architectural heritage that is their prime asset. There may be particular benefits in promoting linked facilities/attractions based on specific themes or which lie within the same general area. An important objective is to encourage visitors to spend longer in an area which could bring important benefits for local businesses. Issues such as the conservation of the town's heritage, vehicular and pedestrian

access, parking provision, the quality of local facilities and the perceived safety of an area will all need to be addressed if local economic benefits are to be maximised.



Heritage offers opportunities for economic development

### **Town Centres**

Active, lively and vibrant town centres are important to the well-being and confidence of a community and planning policies must be aimed at sustaining and creating healthy and vibrant centres in order to:-

- ensure the provision of a wide range of everyday needs locally
- conserve and maintain the built fabric, particularly in historic towns
- generate community pride and confidence
- provide opportunities for new uses.



### **Callendar**

The regeneration of town centres will not, however, happen by chance; it requires a shared vision, positive planning policies and carefully targeted investment in new development, redevelopment, refurbishment and environmental improvement, including the management of traffic. Development plans and focused management of town centres are important vehicles for taking these issues forward in a co-ordinated manner and with local community and business involvement. Although the appointment of a town centre manager may sometimes be appropriate, it is unrealistic to expect small town centres to have managers; there may, however, be scope for several town centres to share a manager. Local councils, along with local enterprise companies, business and traders' organisations may wish to investigate town centre management arrangements as part of the process of maintaining or improving the competitive position of towns in their area.

Vibrant town centres are characterised by a range of uses which encourages activity throughout the day; retailing is of particular importance. Changes in the retailing industry and in the pattern of consumer behaviour have, however, had a significant impact on the range and type of shops in many small towns.

The larger centres and the major retailers have increased their market share which, in relation to small towns, has resulted in:-

- reduction in the number and variety of shops
- decline in the number of locally owned shops
- increase in the number of non-retail uses.

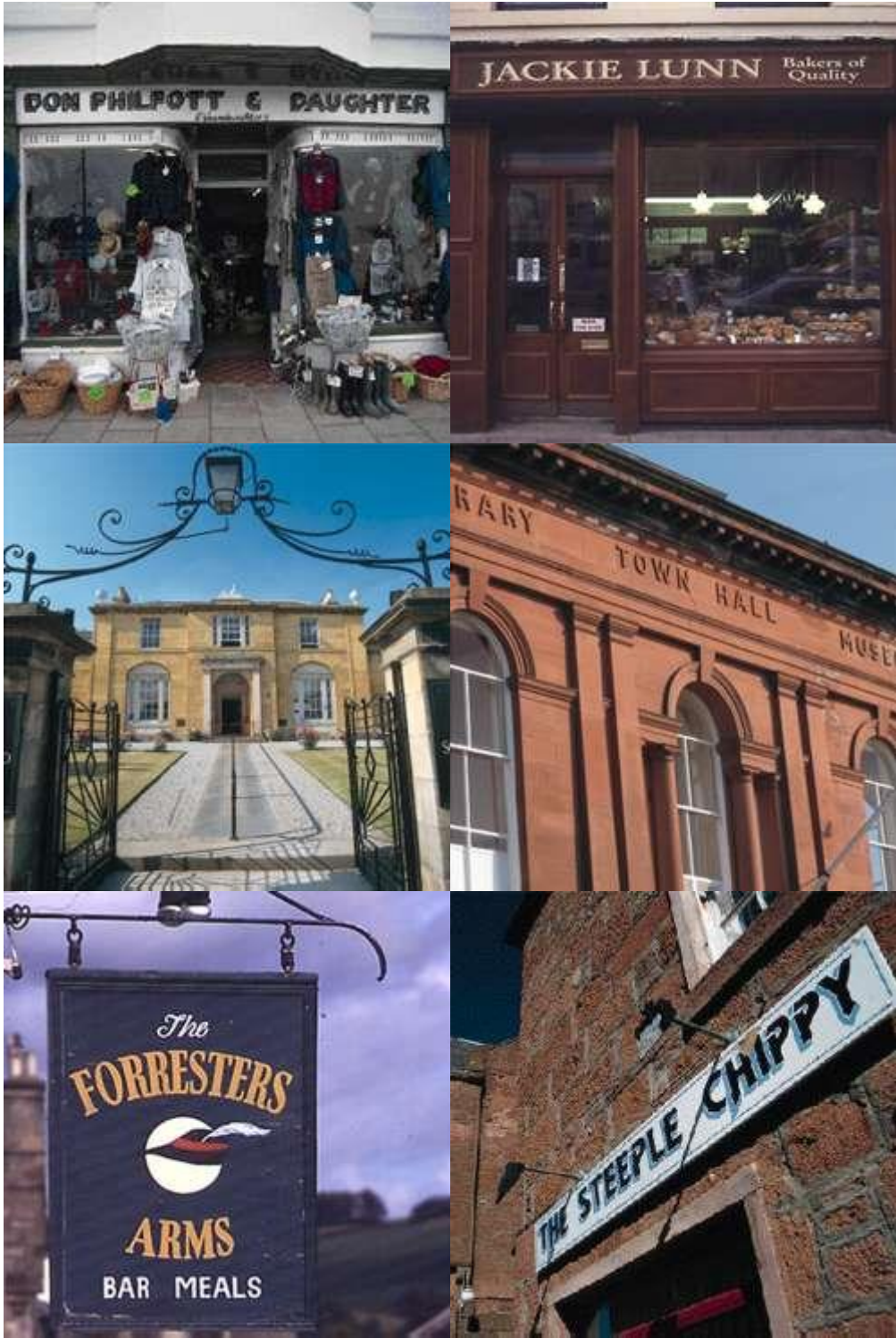
As a result many small towns have seen an important element of their character undermined, their vitality eroded and the choice of shops for less mobile households reduced.



Supermarket: Elgin



Supermarket: Turriff



Diversity of use is important in town centres



Potential for reuse of upper floors needs to be addressed

Innovation in retailing can increase the choice available to many consumers but equally it is important that a range of shopping facilities should be available to all sectors of the community and small town centres are particularly important in this regard as they are a natural focus for a wide range of services and activities which meet the needs of local communities. The importance of town centres is recognised in NPPG8 Retailing which indicates that, in relation to new retail development, a sequential approach to selecting sites should be adopted:-

"First preference should be for town centre sites, where suitable sites or buildings suitable for conversion are available, followed by edge-of-centre sites, and only then by out-of-centre sites that are, or can be made, accessible by a choice of means of transport."

New retail development should, therefore, normally be directed to locations in or adjacent to the centre of small towns, where it can support other facilities and activities. To achieve this retailers may have to adopt a flexible approach to the size and design of new stores. There should however be a realistic assessment of the environmental capacity of the centre to absorb new development. In circumstances where an appropriate site is not available, or the development would adversely impact on the centre or cause unacceptable traffic problems, an edge of town site may be acceptable, provided it does not undermine the viability and vitality of the existing centre.

Such matters should initially be assessed within the strategic framework provided by the structure plan, which should set out the scope for new retail development and a general indication of where it should be located. It is also important for structure and local plans to outline the priorities for action on town centre enhancement and improvement.

In more affluent settlements or in areas where tourism based on activities such as angling or golf is important, there may be scope for the establishment or expansion of specialist shops, but in other towns planning policies may have to encourage alternative non-retail uses if shops are not to remain empty for a prolonged period and blight the appearance of the town.

The growing number of smaller households may find living in or close to the town centre attractive and indeed preferable to an edge of town location. Considerable potential exists for the reuse or conversion of vacant and underused floorspace above shops or other commercial premises while, in many towns, there is scope to redevelop gap or infill sites for a range of house types and tenures. These opportunities should be identified and actively taken forward. A Technical Information Paper on the reuse of upper floor town centre property is available from Scottish Homes.



Approaches to small towns can be improved



In small towns standard traffic engineering solutions can be inappropriate

While large scale business or general industrial development is unlikely to be appropriate in the centre of small towns, the requirements of small firms for start-up or expansion can often readily be provided on sites in or adjacent to town centres. This could include:-

- provision of office or studio accommodation on a permanent or temporary basis in former shop units or, subject to appropriate environmental safeguards, in the space above shops
- reuse or conversion of existing buildings
- construction of new units with flexible floor areas to accommodate the changing needs of firms

The local enterprise network and other business organisations have an important role to play in assessing the general requirements and specification for new and converted floorspace.

It is important not to consider uses or activities in isolation; individually they may appear insignificant but collectively and cumulatively they are essential to lively and bustling town centres. More activity in a town centre should generate more people in the area for longer periods of the day and help reduce the fear of crime and increase community safety. Shops benefit from people living and working close to the town centre; some businesses benefit from a high level of passing trade; and the community as a whole benefits from accessible local facilities and services. The juxtaposition of uses and activities may, on occasion, pose environmental problems but clear planning policies, good design and the skilful use of planning conditions can go a considerable way to ensuring that the value of a diverse, thriving and safe town centre outweighs any potential amenity disbenefits

## Transport

Efficient and effective transport is required to support economic growth in small towns. For example accommodating lorry traffic is essential for delivery and supply to/from shops and businesses; ways to minimise nuisance to locals and visitors still, however, need to be found. While the role of transport in sustaining the economic well-being of towns is recognised, carefully considered policies, initiatives and projects can also contribute to their environmental quality. The design, use and maintenance of roads and footpaths, the impact of parking, signs and street equipment all affect the appearance of an area.

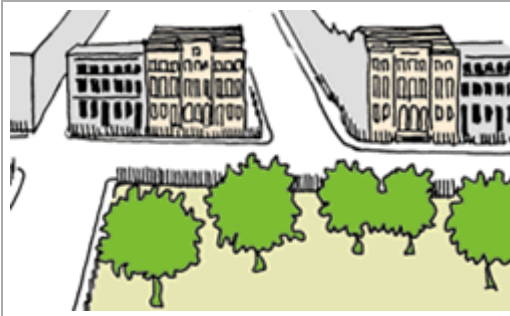
Just as there is not a standard small town, so there are no standard traffic engineering and environmental solutions to the transport issues they present; these can range from construction of a town bypass or local relief road to physically reducing traffic speed in a town by changing the width or alignment of roads. Solutions will therefore involve any one or a combination of physical or legislative measures. Local authorities have a pivotal role as they carry out a broad range of activities which, when co-ordinated with each other and the activities of other agencies, can enhance the quality and environmental standards in small towns. By reducing the need for heavy vehicles to penetrate the centre of a town, encouraging the wider use of public transport and providing sensibly located car parking, traffic density can be more closely equated to the environmental capacity of a street to the extent that it becomes a pleasure to walk or cycle.

It is important, in the first instance, to recognise the relationship between planning and transport at the strategic level; in a number of local authorities responsibility for planning and transport lie within the same department which provides particular opportunities for the co-ordination of policy and action. Development can be guided to locations which minimise the need to travel by car while providing opportunities to use other means of transport. Development plans can assist in achieving these objectives by:-

- encouraging the re-use for housing of redundant buildings, vacant and derelict sites in the larger towns
- avoiding incremental expansion of housing in small towns where travel needs to larger urban centres are unlikely to be well served by public transport
- ensuring that opportunities for local economic development in small towns are identified and promoted
- promoting new development of an appropriate scale within or adjacent to the centres of small towns
- identifying priorities for action to relieve traffic and parking problems.

In small towns there is considerable scope to encourage means of transport other than private cars. The improvement of local environmental conditions by managing traffic includes reducing or removing through traffic, slowing it down in places where it creates a hazard, improving road safety and amenity through traffic calming and giving priority to those who walk and cycle. In addition, therefore, to supporting the local economy, transport can be organised to reduce the number of short car trips, alleviate stress, encourage a more healthy life style, support community safety, reduce pollution and contribute to a greater appreciation of a town and its setting.

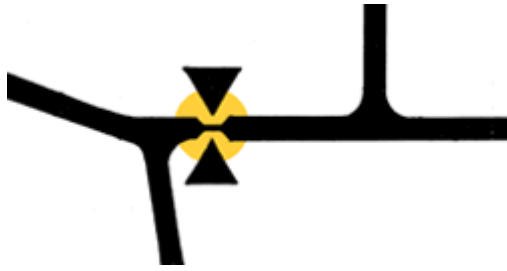
**The historic, architectural and landscape characteristics of a street whether this is a formal geometric layout from a Georgian or Victorian era (left) or an informal, organic pattern (right), should be respected in the design of traffic calming measures.**



Formal architectural layout



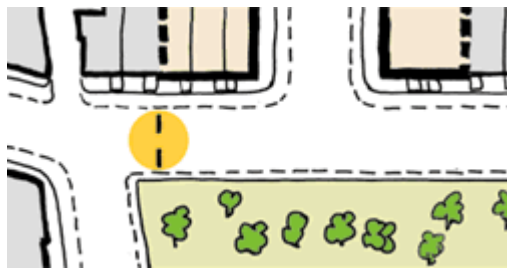
Informal organic pattern



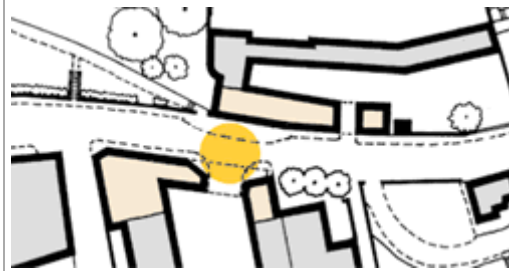
Traffic calming diagram: a gateway



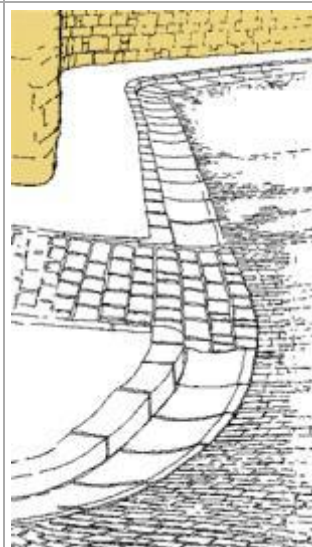
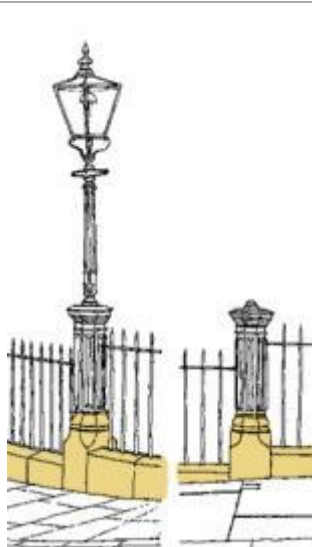
Traffic calming diagram: road narrowing



A gateway to calm traffic is positioned at the edge of a formal group of buildings



The road is narrowed at a point where the existing buildings form a visual restriction



Materials and the way they are used not only in new designs, but also in



maintenance or improvement works, should relate to the traditions of the surrounding area.

Public transport can be organised in a way which is supportive of small towns to enable those without access to private vehicles to take a greater part in a town's activities and allow limited road space to be used more effectively. While some aspects of public transport provision are outwith the control of local councils they can lobby effectively, particularly in association with local community and business groups, on issues such as timing and frequency of services, routes, etc; information on these matters should be readily available. Councils do, however, have a direct influence on the siting and design of bus stops which would allow, for example, passengers to be brought right into the centre of a town. Bus halts, signs and shelters can also be positioned and designed so that they are co-ordinated with the overall street scene. The need for easy, safe and attractive pedestrian linkages between bus and rail stations or halts and the main facilities in the town should not be forgotten.

It is hard to establish the precise point at which the environmental capacity of a street is reached although high volumes of heavy lorries on narrow streets would generally be regarded as intolerable. Assessing this capacity will, however, involve a comparison of traffic in terms of volume, speed and size of vehicle in an area with an assessment of street widths and height, the use of adjacent buildings and pedestrian flows

Traffic calming is the term used for changes to the carriageway and its environment that require drivers to exercise more consideration for people; these changes should ideally appear as though they are part of the original road design rather than as an alien addition. The historic, architectural and landscape characteristics of a street whether this is a formal geometric layout from the Georgian or Victorian era or an informal, organic pattern, should be respected in the design of traffic calming measures. Streets intended for use by both pedestrians and vehicles need to be designed so that drivers understand their obligations to treat pedestrians with respect. Keeping the original proportion of carriageway width to pavement is a key element in retaining the architectural character of an historic street. Materials and the way they are used not only in new designs, but also in maintenance or improvement works, should relate to the traditions of the surrounding area.



Safe pedestrian links should be provided



### Small towns benefit from car-borne trade

Most small towns benefit from trade brought by drivers; both short term as well as longer term parking is therefore needed. Short term parking spaces within a town centre allow the centre to be used on a regular basis by local people. Long term car parks, often further away from shops, need to be linked by pleasant pathways; particular attention must be paid to their design and maintenance so that people are attracted to using them. In designing improvements the needs of groups such as the disabled, the elderly and the young must also be met; the positioning and design of grip rails, dropped kerbs and ramps need to be carefully considered. Long term car parks are more likely to be used by infrequent visitors and so should be especially welcoming, clean and tidy and have some easily understood guide to the facilities of the town. Well designed information boards and signs are essential requirements in towns intent on attracting tourists and day visitors.

Service areas need enough space to allow large vehicles to manoeuvre; however large barren back yards can be particularly out of character with many small towns. This issue requires careful handling so that business efficiency can be assisted without undermining environmental quality. This might involve restricting views into the yard entrances and providing boundary walls and solid gates where this is characteristic of the town. A substantial boundary wall combined with appropriate planting can be more acceptable visually and may also be effective from a crime prevention point of view. Where it is not possible to provide dedicated service areas for local businesses other measures should be considered such as staggered hours for delivery or the use of hand trolleys to take goods a short distance from a lorry parking area.

Surface materials need to be durable to withstand expected hard wear. However the choice of material should, where possible, be guided by the design and construction traditions of the area. The engineering requirements for streets carrying vehicular traffic means that there is likely to be more scope to follow local traditions in pavement design. Pavements should, however, be regarded as part of the total street scene and over-elaborate or lavish schemes which do not relate to surrounding buildings should be avoided.



Direction signs for drivers need to be simple, tidy and conform to national standards; on the outskirts of some towns and in other key or sensitive locations a plethora of signage has appeared over time. There is considerable scope for local councils to reduce the visual clutter and rationalise the number and design of signs, offering benefits to drivers and improving the appearance of an area. Pedestrians, however, have longer to look for and at signs than drivers. This provides greater opportunities for signage which fits the particular character of an area; there is also scope for a more innovative approach to design.



Signage: Scope for rationalisation





Signage should be simple, tidy and conform to national standards

Proposals which affect the movement of traffic, the provision of parking and services can have a significant effect on the economy and environment of a small town. Consultation with the local community, businesses, amenity organisations and specific interest groups representing, for example, the disabled, is essential in the evolution and implementation of proposals.

### **Townscape**

For many small towns the physical features which distinguish them from other places can be one of their most important assets; but these features are a fragile commodity that can be easily eroded. Great care, including considerable attention to detail, is required if the inherent townscape qualities of a town are to be retained and enhanced over time. Isolated physical changes are, however, not enough. Change needs to be planned and managed within an agreed planning and urban design framework aimed at securing the physical, economic and social well-being of the town. A townscape audit can assist in this by:-

- describing the physical and environmental characteristics of a town
- identifying elements which help define the town's character, including important cultural, historic or natural heritage considerations
- pinpointing those developments that diminish or erode the quality of the place
- setting out guiding principles for developers
- suggesting priority areas for improvement and regeneration



The audit can be important in promoting a dialogue with developers and local communities and should be seen as a key input to development planning, development control and project implementation. The involvement of Historic Scotland can be particularly useful not only in appreciating the value of buildings and spaces in a town, but in advising on appropriate policies for inclusion in development plans and on potential funding for schemes of repair and enhancement.

The action following an audit will vary according to the nature and scale of the problems and, of course, the availability of resources; as a general principle, where resources are strictly limited, it is preferable to carry out a limited scheme to a high quality of design and construction rather than

a more extensive scheme using inferior materials which may weather badly and need frequent maintenance or replacement. In some towns modest repairs to buildings and surfaces may be all that is required but careful selection of materials or colour schemes and attention to detail in design and construction are important if investment is to retain or enhance the quality of an area.



Elements which define townscape quality need to be understood

An important townscape issue is the amount, location and design of street furniture. As a general rule, less is better but the safe, efficient and effective functioning of areas requires the provision of lighting, litter bins, seats, etc. In some towns there will be scope to remove street furniture to reduce clutter; this might involve removing lamp columns and fixing lighting to buildings or by combining traffic sign posts and bollards. Indeed removing pavement obstructions can assist the safe movement of pedestrians, particularly those with disabilities. Care, particularly in historic towns, should be exercised in relation to the use of "heritage" furniture which can introduce an identity which is essentially artificial. Where it is thought desirable to reintroduce period light fittings and street furniture, these can be modelled on surviving street furniture or old photographs which may be available in local libraries or in the National Monuments Record

for Scotland. The design of new street furniture should therefore reflect local traditions if it is to complement and enhance the appearance of an historic space.



New development should enhance local identity



Attention must be given to the amount, location and design of street furniture



Planning authorities are not, however, always principally responsible for initiating change but they can increase awareness of the need for quality in development and ensure that this principle is reflected in their development control decisions. Designating a conservation area or seeking the

removal of permitted development rights are not in themselves sufficient to raise standards. The planning authority needs to identify the elements in the built environment which should be respected and give a clear lead on the standards it expects development to observe in particular locations. This can be done through:

- preparation of design briefs for key development opportunity sites, both within and on the edge of the urban area, dealing with issues such as scale, massing, materials, colour, access, parking and boundary treatments
- formulation of design guidance in relation, for example, to shopfronts, window replacements, advertising and signage
- provision in association with other organisations, of financial assistance to shopkeepers and, if appropriate, other small businesses to upgrade their premises
- establishment of local awards schemes to demonstrate the standards that have been achieved and generate increased awareness of the planning authority's attempts to secure better quality development.

Achieving quality in new development is not an end in itself. By enhancing local pride it can reinforce a sense of community; by helping to retain a higher proportion of spending locally and by attracting more visitors it can help support local business and encourage additional investment in regeneration.



Infill development should respect its surroundings

## **DEVELOPMENT FUNDING AND CO-ORDINATION**

Development plans need to provide a context within which investment decisions can be taken by a wide range of public and private sector interests. This requires an understanding of the resources which are potentially available in an area. Local councils will, therefore, need to work in partnership with the private sector, key public sector agencies and the local community to:-

- identify funding sources
- evaluate proposal/project viability
- appraise funding sources
- relate funding to proposals/projects
- secure co-ordinated action

Proposals for new housing or retail development in areas of high demand and, therefore, strong market interest are likely to be implemented by the private sector without pump-priming or other forms of support from the public sector. Other projects, such as schools or libraries, may be realised entirely by the local authority. However, for many - if not most - projects a variety of funding sources - public, private and voluntary sectors - will require to be harnessed. As well as

local sources of finance, some areas may be eligible for support from the European Union as well as various types of national funds, such as the Town Schemes, which are administered jointly by the local authorities and Historic Scotland. These have proved valuable for conserving the built heritage in many historic burghs such as Cullen, Banff, Kelso and Lauder.

The process of plan preparation should identify opportunities for market led change and other development requirements, including traffic management and environmental improvement, in an area. An initial assessment of the feasibility or viability of a project should be undertaken before including it as a policy or proposal in a development plan. Where planning policies or proposals in plans have no or only limited prospects of being realised their inclusion in a development plan can create uncertainty and possible blight. It is not for development plans to set out detailed programmes of investment but they should provide a clear steer on priorities and the scope for co-ordinated action.

The wide range and disparate nature of funding sources requires a systematic approach to recording their characteristics. The following information, which can be updated on a regular basis, should be recorded:-

• <b>Broad Objectives of Fund-</b>	<b>description of activities covered by the fund</b>
• <b>Nature of fund -</b>	<b>grant, loan, etc</b>
• <b>Funding Cycle -</b>	<b>frequency of submission, key dates, etc</b>
• <b>Level of Support -</b>	<b>minimum, maximum, possible conditions etc</b>
• <b>Funding availability -</b>	<b>current commitments, level of possible under subscription, etc</b>
• <b>Eligibility Criteria-</b>	<b>identify who can apply, possible requirements for partnership, etc</b>

As a result of this process the nature and scope of a project may need to be reconsidered. It is, however, important not to overlook organisations with relatively small budgets. The cumulative contributions from these sources can make up a significant element of the overall funding package. It is our intention to issue further advice on this approach.

Having established the potential availability of funds, these should be related to the proposals or projects in a plan or initiative. Potential primary and secondary funding sources should be identified as early commitment can be central to the success of projects. Early dialogue is, therefore, important to establish the degree of interest, particularly from the private sector, and the information required to reach a decision on funding. This could include details of construction and running costs; the level of interest from other groups and organisations; demonstrable economic, environmental and other benefits; and the timescale for implementation.

The processes of identifying and describing funding sources and relating these to potential projects should assist in the delivery of co-ordinated action. Local councils will, however, need to put in place arrangements which will achieve co-ordination; this cannot be left to chance. Setting out an agreed programme with clear identification of key actions, responsibilities, decisions and deadlines is essential and progress has to be monitored to ensure that projects are delivered on time, within budget and to the desired quality.





## SMALL TOWNS INITIATIVE

At the beginning of 1997 the Secretary of State announced that a Small Towns Initiative would be established. The initiative aims to boost local businesses and enhance the environment of small towns across Scotland. In discussion with partner organisations a number of local enterprise companies have already selected small towns for inclusion in the initiative; these towns are Hawick, Alloa, Montrose and Brechin. In other areas the local enterprise network has embarked on a process of consultation to identify towns for the initiative. To stimulate the local economy and improve the environment of the selected towns a partnership approach involving the enterprise companies, local authorities, Scottish Homes, Historic Scotland, local tourist organisations, Chambers of Commerce is required. But it is also essential that local communities are fully involved. This PAN should be regarded as complementary to the Small Towns Initiative and provides a useful reference document for all those involved in the process of regeneration in small towns.



## CONCLUSIONS

This Planning Advice Note recognises the importance of small towns to the history, culture and economy of Scotland; their well being is also of prime importance to the 38% of the people of Scotland who live in them. Many of the towns have experienced or are undergoing significant change; but this needs to be handled with care if their inherent qualities, which makes them distinctive, are not to be eroded. Retaining these qualities, building on them and attempting to restore the traditional vitality of small towns are therefore key tasks which cannot be undertaken by planning authorities acting alone or working with an agency; the involvement of local community and business organisations is essential in understanding the town, considering the scope for change and setting out a co-ordinated programme of action. Vision, imagination and urban design skills are also essential ingredients if small towns are to respond to rising expectations and the demands of the modern economy while safeguarding their built heritage. The quest for viability, vitality and quality is never easy but the potential for raising the quality in the environment of small towns in Scotland is considerable and planning has an important role in realising that potential



## **Annex A**

### **TOWNSCAPE AUDIT - MAIN ELEMENTS**

The purpose of the townscape audit is to better understand a town's physical characteristics, that is the features and details which give it its identity; it should serve as a major input to the management of change in a town. The audit should comprise 3 inter-related elements:

- Desk Study - to identify the basic land uses, the historical development of the town and the pattern of activity including focal points where people congregate, key buildings, areas of likely archaeological sensitivity, prime shopping streets, public open spaces and the linkages between such places.
- Site Study - to observe how the town works and is used to determine the key features such as landmarks, vistas, views, enclosure, to establish patterns of movement, to identify local design detail including use of colour and materials, to locate areas at risk and opportunities for change.
- Public Involvement - to gain an understanding of local concerns, aspirations and priorities, to verify or amend the findings of the studies and to establish a consensus on what needs to be done.

Public involvement is central to understanding the components and workings of the town and material assembled in the course of the audit will need to be presented in an easily understood manner. Plain English, clear graphics, simple plans, sketches and other illustrations should be used.

The main elements of a townscape audit are set out below; these draw heavily on the consultancy report commissioned from Gillespies:

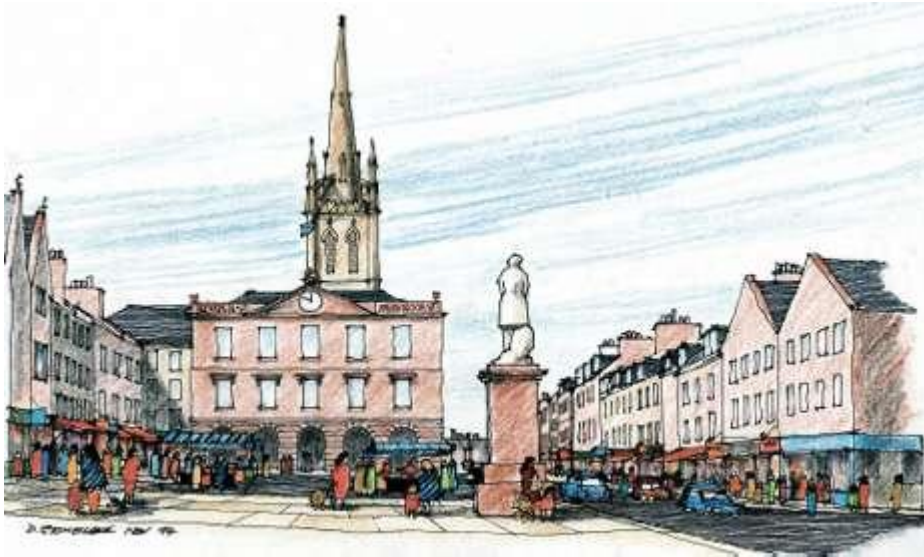
### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

- population size and structure
- local economy
- linkages with adjoining areas
- dynamics of change

Townscape should not be regarded as separate from or considered independently of an appreciation of the town's function. An understanding of the town's role in relation to its hinterland is also important. Key facts therefore need to be established; the socio-economic characteristics of the town described; and the main elements driving change identified.



Courtesy of Alex Fraser



## SETTING

- climate
- topography
- landscape
- skyline and landmarks
- approaches

The layout of historic towns and the design of traditional buildings are, in large part, a direct response to local climatic conditions. Narrow wynds, closes and courtyards create shelter and enclosure which is important in settlements which are regularly exposed to severe weather. The relationship between the town and the surrounding countryside is a crucial consideration, as is the scale of the settlement. Topography and landscape help frame the town and are an important part of its identity; contrast, for example, towns like Tillicoultry or Alva which nestle below steeply rising hills with Montrose which is located on a rising spit of land on the coast. Scale and setting in the landscape are key areas to address in considering the scope for and possible direction in which a town could expand and what form development should take.

From a distance landmark buildings or structures can be easily identified including those which appear out of character; the positive features should act as a reference and control on the height, massing and scale of future development.

The approaches to a settlement can suggest a town of historic interest or architectural quality, but there may be scope for improvements at the town edge through removal of roadside clutter,

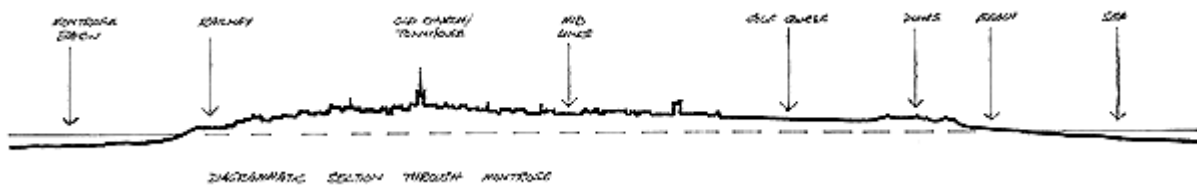
improved positioning and clarity of signage, new planting, artwork, etc to mark an entry or arrival point.



Ullapool



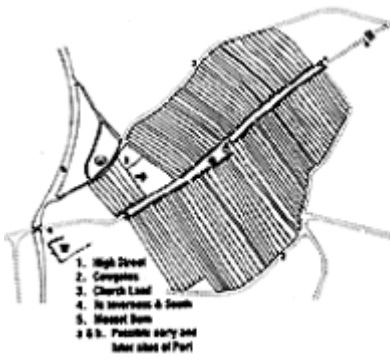
Alva



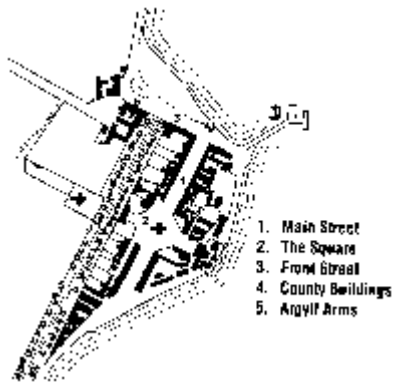
## HISTORIC BACKGROUND

- archaeological potential
- town origins
- historic development

Understanding the past is an important element in planning for the future. Many historic towns have been examined by the Scottish Burgh Survey; a full list is at Annex B. Where they exist, burgh surveys will be an important starting point for understanding the development of the town and its underlying archaeological potential. The history of the town is reflected in buildings and spaces although, because of familiarity and/or the effects of unsympathetic development, specialist knowledge may be required to raise awareness of the significance or potential of the legacy. An historic perspective will, however, assist in explaining the form of the town, the pattern of streets and spaces and the value of particular buildings or building groups and in defining local identity.



Forres



Inverary



Haddington



Stonehaven



Elgin

Crown copyright Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland

#### URBAN STRUCTURE

- street pattern
- building enclosure
- hierarchy of spaces
- visual experience

Drawing the pattern of streets as a series of solids (buildings) and voids (spaces) is a useful and informative way of representing the structure of the town. The distinctive and coherent medieval street pattern of central Montrose can be readily contrasted with the more formal layout of a planned town such as Grantown-on-Spey or the fragmented pattern of post war development in Aviemore.

Axonometric sketches are particularly helpful in conveying the shape and proportions of streets, squares and other spaces, and their relationship to surrounding buildings.

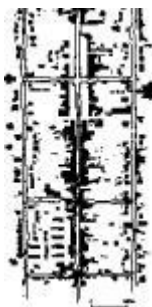
Analysis of this nature helps provide a context for considering the potential impact of proposals, particularly larger projects such as inner relief roads or new foodstores, on the form and scale of the town.

Drawings, sketches and photographs can be used to understand how the town is seen from fixed points or in moving along streets or paths. As well as identifying key landmarks these techniques can be used to reveal contrasts in style and texture between different parts of a town; awareness should also be raised about the importance of building detail to the overall scene or indicate how new development, often of a minor scale, such as shopfront alterations, window replacements or new street works, has affected the character of the town.

Views and vistas can be broken down into those which should be preserved and those in need of enhancement. This involves not only views into the town but also, in some cases, views out which might be important in order to retain a visual link between the town and its setting.



Montrose

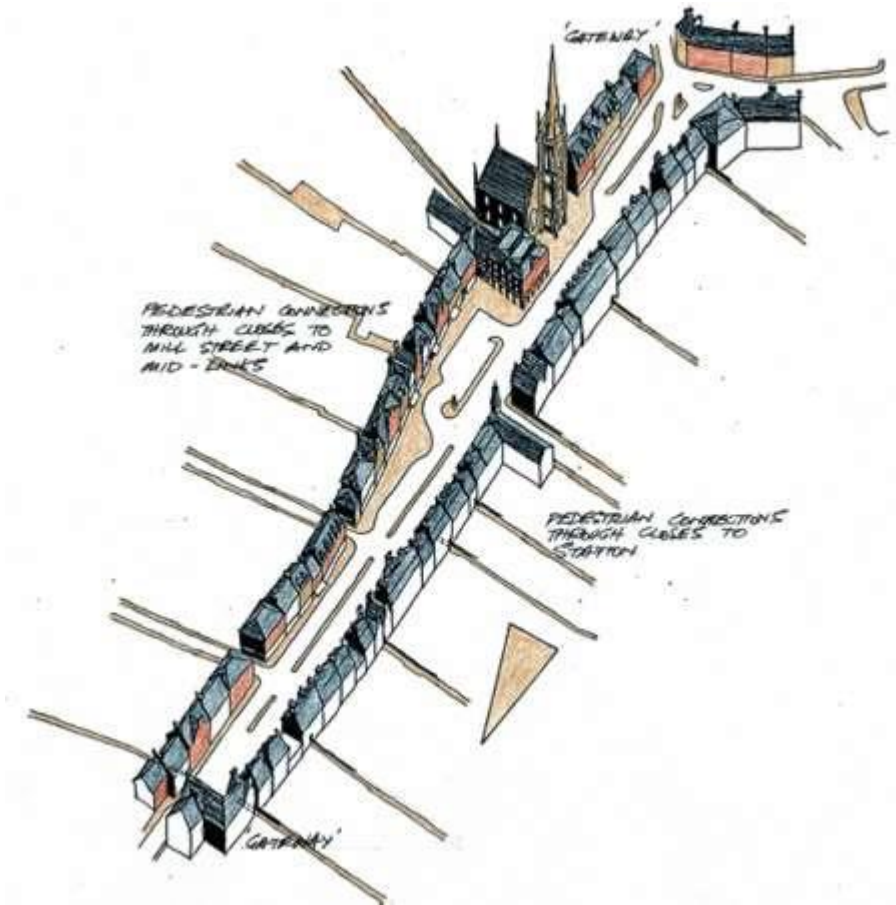


Granton





Aviemore



Montrose

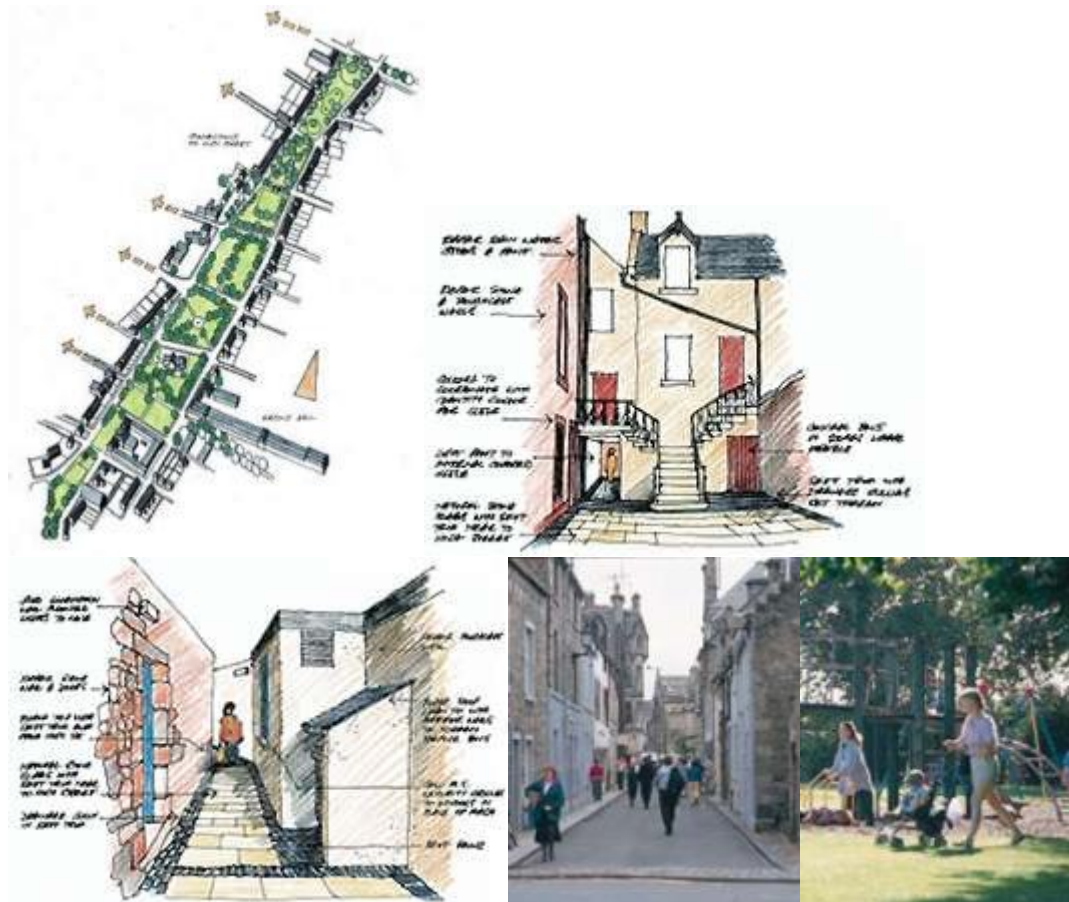
#### PUBLIC SPACES

- streets
- closes and wynds
- squares
- parks and other open space

Spaces around and between buildings can be as significant and, in some cases, more important than the buildings. These spaces serve a variety of functions; they cater for the movement of vehicles and people; they are meeting places or the focus of activities; and they provide a setting for buildings, monuments, etc. In some cases the different functions can conflict; heavy lorries in narrow streets can make life intolerable for shoppers or residents.

It is important to analyse the characteristics and functions of the spaces in the town and consider how they can be used to best effect. This could involve, for example, the protection of important areas of open space; putting in place arrangements for improved maintenance or, in some cases, redesign of parks, streets or squares; or upgrading wynds or closes by, for example, removing graffiti, improving sight lines or introducing better lighting to increase their usage.

The aim, essentially, is to understand how spaces in the town are used and how their social function and environmental quality can be enhanced.



## BUILDINGS

- individual buildings
- building groups
- traditions in design and construction
- materials
- colour

Buildings of architectural or historic merit need to be identified as do groups of buildings which, individually, may not be of great interest but may be extremely important in defining the character of the town. It should also be remembered that historic standing buildings may contain archaeological remains, both beneath their floors and concealed within their structures. The condition of these buildings, the effects of unsympathetic or inappropriate alterations, extensions or signage should be recorded and the scope identified for improving their setting, better maintenance or the need for refurbishment or even redevelopment. The possibilities for floodlighting of key buildings may also be explored.



An appreciation of local building traditions, for example in relation to the design of doors and windows, or the type of material used for roofs, walls or street surfaces is essential in establishing what is distinctive about a place. Some features are consistently used in a town and can be easily identified but, in some towns, the variety of detail, often from different periods, helps establish local identity.



## CIRCULATION

- vehicle/pedestrian balance
- linkages

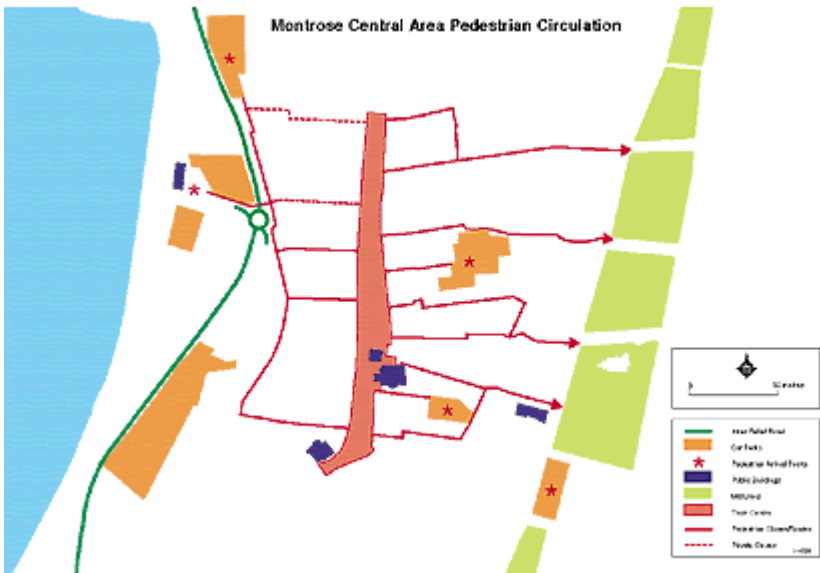
Understanding the pattern of circulation is an important element of the audit. It is not, however, just a study of traffic flows. The objective is to identify how vehicle movements impact on the built

environment and affect the quality of life for residents and visitors. This can be seen, for example, in:-

- problems for pedestrians in crossing wide roads
- narrow footpaths creating risks to public safety, particularly for the young and the elderly
- important pedestrian linkages severed or restricted as a result of high traffic volumes.



Vehicle access is required to enable local businesses to function but through a variety of measures including traffic management, improved signage, clear safe and convenient pedestrian linkages to/from car parks and sensitive streetscape works the balance can be tipped in favour of pedestrians who should be able to appreciate the quality of a town in greater comfort, safety and security.



The examples in the following pages demonstrate how this approach and the principles set out in the PAN can be applied

**DRUMLANRIG'S TOWER, HAWICK**

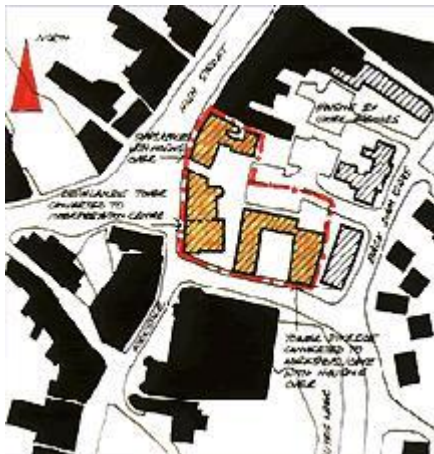
Hawick, the largest Borders town, population 15,719, has been the centre of the Scottish knitwear trade for 2 centuries. The former Tower Hotel was located at the foot of the High Street near the confluence of the River Teviot and the Slitrig Water, the meeting place of the roads into Hawick from Edinburgh, Newcastleton and Carlisle. It was named after the mediaeval (16th century) Drumlanrig's Tower, which became enveloped within the hotel as it was gradually developed and extended.

In 1981, the 'B' listed Tower Hotel ceased trading and, after several attempts to reopen it as a business, in 1985 Roxburgh District Council acquired the property in order to secure its future. Meanwhile, following much public debate the principles of redevelopment were formulated and agreed, with the Regional Council, as the Planning Authority, taking the initiative to acquire

adjoining properties in order to facilitate comprehensive redevelopment. The Conservation Area was also revised and extended and deemed to be 'outstanding'. Scottish Historic Buildings Trust were then invited to tackle the south west part of the site as the flagship of the Hawick 2000 regeneration initiative promoted by the Regional Council. By 1989, the various phases of acquisition, site assembly, and selective clearance, were completed, with the Scottish Development Agency (later Scottish Borders Enterprise) providing financial assistance. Gray, Marshall and Associates of Edinburgh were appointed as architects for the Tower Hotel and soon completed a Design Study which was developed into proposals shown in the photograph of the modal. The housing restoration, and new building works along Backdamgate, were carried out by Eildon Housing Association, with funding from Scottish Homes, to a design prepared by local architects, Aitken and Turnbull.

Gray, Marshall and Associates were able to prepare designs for the restoration and redevelopment of the Tower Hotel property and Tower Dykeside in 3 phases:

- 2-6 High Street was restored on behalf of the Scottish Historic Buildings Trust to provide shop and office space at ground level, with residential flats and maisonettes for sale on the upper 3 floors.
- Tower Dykeside was restored to provide 4 craft workshops and exhibition space for the Regional Council, grouped around a central courtyard, with residential flats for sale on 2 upper floors.
- Historic Drumlanrig's Tower itself was exposed and converted into the Drumlanrig's Tower Visitor/Interpretation Centre for Roxburgh District Council with the former hotel building fronting Tower Know providing a Tourist Information Centre, clubrooms and caretaker's flat.



The restoration and redevelopment work retains the main building frontages, and reveals, for the first time since the early 19th century, the historic tower on 3 sides. The project has achieved the aim of the restoration and renewal of an important part of the central historic and social fabric of Hawick.

Additional external landscape works by Borders Regional Council has now created a paved setting of natural materials for the building and neighbouring properties.

This project demonstrates:

- the successful completion of a multi agency partnership project through joint planning, funding and land acquisition
- the identification and successful delivery of appropriate new uses for an important landmark/building group in the centre of Hawick
- the retention of an important historic quarter in the heart of Hawick which, focused on the Tower Hotel, has played a central role in the town's growth

- the sensitive reuse of outdated building fabric to meet modern requirements.

**Clients:**

Scottish Historic Buildings Trust  
 Roxburgh District Council  
 Borders Regional Council

**Completed:** 1995

**Sources of Finance for:**

Scottish Office, Historic  
 Scotland, Borders Regional

**Overall Scheme:**

Council, Scottish Development  
 Agency/Scottish Borders Enterprise,  
 Roxburgh District Council, European Union (PERIFRA II), Scottish Homes, plus loans through the  
 Architectural Heritage Fund

**Value of Scottish Historic Buildings Trust Contact:** £2,534,000

**Architects:**

Gray, Marshall and Associates, Edinburgh  
 Aitken and Turnbull, Hawick



TANPITS LANE, KIRKCUDBRIGHT

Kirkcudbright, on the Dee Estuary, has changed little since the turn of the century. Its clear light, wide streets, wynds, busy closes and old buildings became popular with artists leaving to the town a legacy in the use of colour on buildings.

Tanpits Lane runs through the heart of the town and is an important pedestrian link between housing and shops. Several small areas of semi-derelict land off the lane were recognised by the local authority in the local plan as an ideal location for sheltered housing being close to the towns amenities. The site assembly involved the purchase of an Edwardian Villa and the relocation of the local Pipe Band Headquarters. The final site area provided space to accommodate 49 flats.

The design was undertaken by Stewartry District Council Architects Department. Pre submission discussions ensured that the development reflected the surrounding townscape both in layout and house design, and led to an early decision.

Formal, stone faced and carefully detailed flats sit alongside the Villa facing the Victorian Gothic Church and the main road, whilst to the rear, a more relaxed layout of individually designed houses in 2 informal squares are connected by the Tanpits Lane. Off these squares are the small closes and surprise views across the townscape characteristic of Kirkcudbright.



The designers gave considerable attention to detail with many references to the rich legacy of traditional buildings. A high standard of materials was adopted throughout the project. Local whin and sandstones, Welsh slate, granite setts and colour tarmacadam are enhanced with the use of bright colours as elsewhere in the town. The 4 phases of the project ran in parallel but slightly offset in programme and of a size small enough to be handled by local companies.

The project fits comfortably within Kirkcudbright's historic townscape and has generated a favourable response from residents and visitors.

**Client:** Stewartry District Council

**Completed:** 18 July 1995

**Contract Value:** £538,240

**Source of Finance:** Stewartry District Council

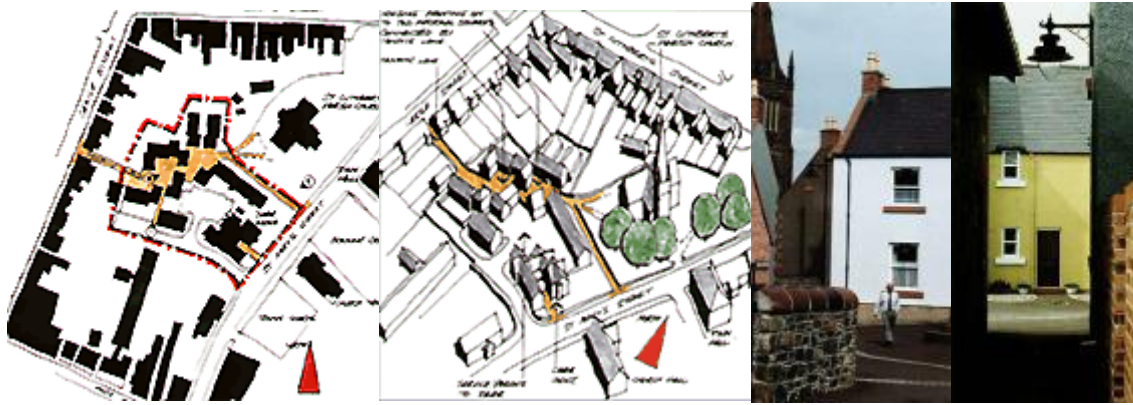
**Designers:**

Stewartry District Council,  
Department of Architects

**Awards:**

RIAS Regeneration Design Award - Commendation (as part of Kirkcudbright Central Development)  
Civic Trust Commendation





## SCOTLAND'S LIGHTHOUSE MUSEUM, FRASERBURGH, ABERDEENSHIRE

Scotland's Lighthouse Museum at Kinnaird Head demonstrates how the reuse of an abandoned facility may act as a catalyst for physical, economic and cultural regeneration, not only locally but also within the wider region.

Kinnaird Head Lighthouse was the first of the lights built by the Commissioners for Northern Lights in 1786 on the site of a former prominent headland castle. The Lighthouse was automated in 1988 and the former Grampian Regional Council, realising its importance in Scottish maritime history contacted the Lighthouse Board with a view to conversion into a museum, established a working group and appointed Morris & Steedman for the design and implementation.

The completed project consists of 3 main elements:

- The lighthouse itself has been refurbished and interpreted by Historic Scotland to explain the work and history of the Scottish Lighthouse Service
- A former Council depot near the Lighthouse has been refurbished and enlarged to provide exhibition display and auditorium space to interpret the history of Scottish lighthouses. Restaurant and retail facilities are included.
- The headland around the complex. Control of this spectacular landscape ensures the appropriate management of the setting to the lighthouse museum.
- Funding for the projects included a partnership of 6 authorities and agencies. The Museum is managed by the Kinnaird Head Trust Ltd, a charitable body comprising 6 members of the local business community.

This project demonstrates the following points:

- use of major projects to act as a catalyst for reuse and regeneration of disused facilities
- excellent site planning, the landscape setting of the lighthouse complex has been conserved with the visitor approaches and car park contained within imaginatively converted industrial buildings
- a commitment to work in partnership with a wide variety of public bodies, with the private sector and with the local community
- the involvement of local businessmen and the private sector
- a contribution to local civic pride and identity in Fraserburgh, providing the incentive for further initiatives
- a stimulus to tourism in the town and the north east of Scotland
- the retention of an important artefact of Scottish history within a small town

**Client:** Kinnaird Head Trust Ltd

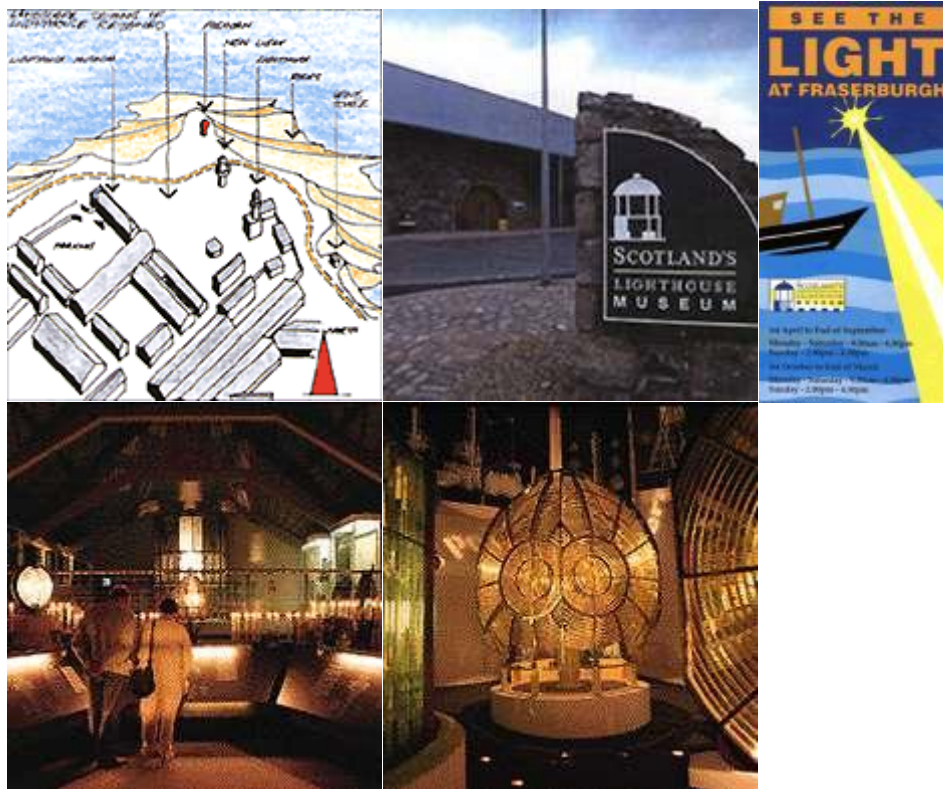
**Completed:** June 1996

**Total Cost:** £1,903,000

**Sources of Finance:** Grampian Regional Council, Banff & Buchan District Council, Grampian Enterprise Ltd, National Heritage Memorial Fund, Scottish Tourist Board, ERDF

**Architects:** Morris & Steedman, Edinburgh

**Awards:** 1996 - RIAS Regeneration Award Commendation



### LOGIES LANE, ST ANDREWS

Logies Lane runs from north to south linking 2 of St Andrews principal streets, Market Street and South Street. The northern half in a narrow pedestrian lane (3m) with small shops on both sides. Halfway along, the Lane opens out into a larger space (15m) which continues the Lane and also acts as the setting and formal entrance to the Holy Trinity Church. A second Lane runs east around Holy Trinity to Church Street (see plan). These lanes are important pedestrian routes which link major streets, a number of shops, a local library and an important Church. Improvement of these spaces was identified in the 1980s in the local plan.



The overall aim of the project was to improve pedestrian links, recover public space and improve its quality. Initial ideas favoured a design solution involving concrete paving slabs and clay pavers, but ultimately these were rejected in favour of granite setts for vehicle surfaces and Yorkstone paving, for pedestrian surfaces. Initial designs were worked up and illustrated and used in public consultation to evolve the design taking account of the needs and wishes of the local population. The project was constructed to a high standard of engineering performance by Fife Regional Council, Engineering Department working in close collaboration with Gillespies as designers and with planners from the District Council. The completed project was highly commended in the 1993 Streetscape Design Awards and is popular with the public, particularly in the summer months.

A successful example, which provides:

- a better balance in favour of pedestrians over vehicles
- improved pedestrian links
- retained and enhanced facilities for businesses and public facilities
- recovered public space for informal activity (eg sitting, eating), without extinguishing vehicle access
- design evolved through public consultation

**Client:** Fife Regional Council

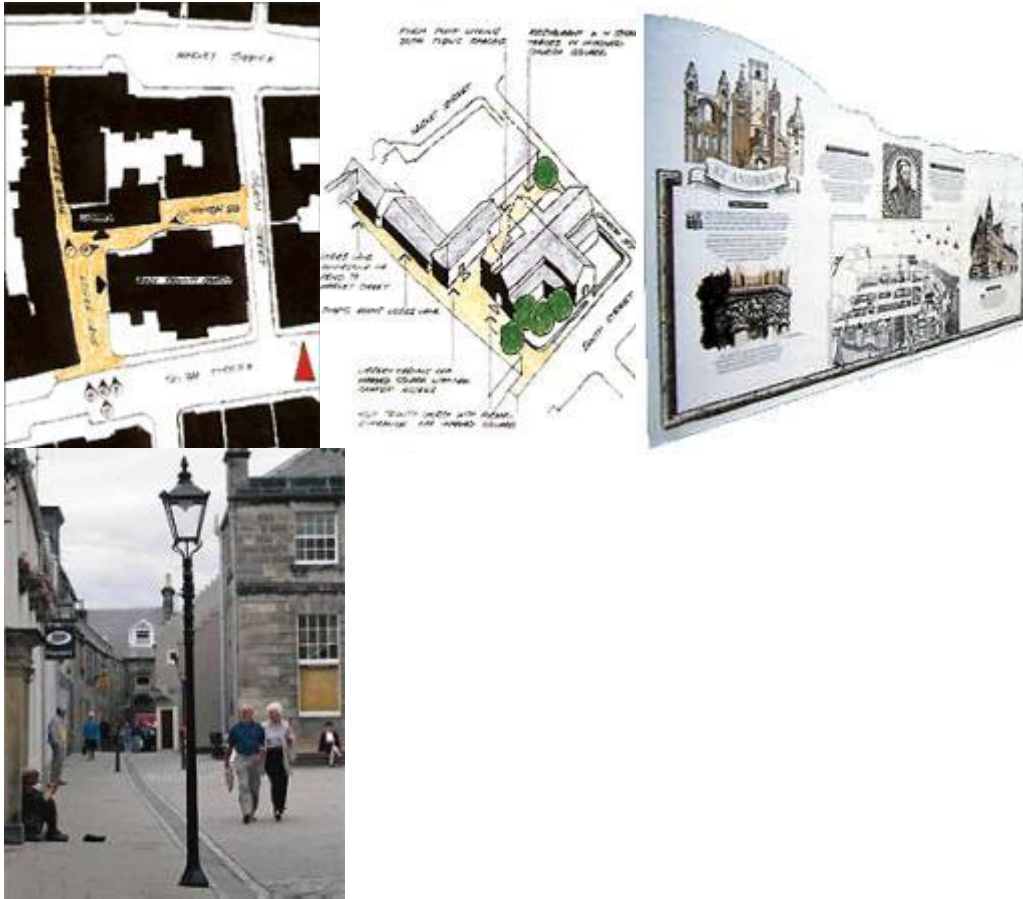
**Completed:** 1992

**Contract Value:** £134,000

**Source of Finance:** Fife Regional Council and North East Fife District Council

**Consultants:** Fife Regional Council and Gillespies

**Awards:** 1993 Streetscape Design Awards: Highly Commended



## Annex B THE SCOTTISH BURGH SURVEY

The Scottish Burgh Survey will be an important source of background material for many historic burghs. Its primary aim is to examine the history and archaeology of Scotland's historic burghs on a burgh-by-burgh basis. Each book describes the origins and growth of the burgh, its medieval and later history, its geography and topography, the archaeological which might survive beneath its modern streets, buildings, parks and open spaces as well as within the fabric of its historic standing buildings, and the meaning of its street names.

As well as the published series, some 56 burghs were surveyed in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Although these are rather out of date, sample copies may be obtained from Historic Scotland. For some of these previously surveyed burghs, updated information is available in summary form; and colour-coded archaeological maps have recently been produced for most surveyed burghs.

*Aberdeen (1997)	Jedburgh (1981)
Alloa (1983)	Kelso (1980)
Annan (1981)	Kilmarnock (1981)
Arbroath (1982)	Kilwinning (1981)
Auchtermuchty (1981)	Kinghorn (1981)

Ayr (1977)	*Kirkcaldy (1995)
Banff (1977)	Kirkcudbright (1978)
Brechin (1977)	Kirkwall (1977)
Crail (1981)	Lanark (1981)
*Cumnock (1995)	Lauder (1980)
Cupar (1981)	Linlithgow (1981)
Dingwall (1982)	Lochmaben (1980)
Dornoch (1982)	Montrose (1978)
Dumfries (1977)	*Musselburgh (1996)
Dunbar (1981)	North Berwick (1981)
Dundee (1988)	Paisley (1982)
Dunfermline (1978)	Peebles (1978)
Duns (1981)	Perth (1982)
Edinburgh, Canongate and Leith (1981)	Peterhead (1982)
Elgin (1982)	Pittenweem (1981)
Forfar (1981)	Renfrew (1981)
Forres (1982)	Rothesay (1978)
Glasgow (1990)	Rutherglen (1978)
Haddington (1978)	Selkirk (1980)
*Hamilton (1996)	St Andrews (1981)
Hawick (1980)	Stirling (1978)

Inverkeithing (1981)	Stonehaven (1978)
Inverness (1977)	*Stranraer (1995)
Inverurie (1977)	Strathaven (1983)
Irvine (1980)	Wick (1983)
	Wigtown (1981)

(\* = published by Historic Scotland in association with Scottish Cultural Press, Unit 14, Leith Walk Business Centre, 130 Leith Walk, Edinburgh EH6 3DT)

### **Forthcoming Publication Titles**

Coupar Angus

Dalkeith

Dumbarton

Dunblane

Forfar

Linlithgow

Melrose

Nairn

North Queensferry

Stornoway

### **PLANNING FOR SMALL TOWNS: SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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The Scottish Office	1994	<b>National Planning Policy Guideline 5: Archaeology and Planning</b>
The Scottish Office	1996	<b>National Planning Policy Guideline 3 (revised): Land for Housing</b>
The Scottish Office	1996	<b>National Planning Policy Guideline 8: Retailing</b>

The Scottish Office	1989	<b>Planning Advice Note 35: Town Centre Improvement</b>
The Scottish Office	1994	<b>Planning Advice Note 42: Archaeology</b>
The Scottish Office	1994	<b>Planning Advice Note 44: Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape</b>
The Scottish Office	1994	<b>Planning Advice Note 46: Planning for Crime Prevention</b>
Adams I H	1978	<b>The Making of Urban Scotland Croom Helm</b>
Naismith R J	1989	<b>The Story of Scotland's Towns John Donald Publishers Ltd</b>
Gillespies	1997	<b>Scotland's Small Towns. Towards a Better Understanding (Unpublished Consultancy Report to The Scottish Office)</b>
Halcrow Fox	1997	<b>Development Funding Consultancy Report to The Scottish Office (in preparation)</b>
Historic Burghs	1997	<b>The Health of Historic Towns in Scotland HBAS Research Paper No 1</b>
Association of Scotland	1991	<b>Re-use of Upper Floor Town Centre Property</b>
Scottish Homes		<b>Technical Information Paper 1</b>
Civic Trust English/ Historic Towns Forum	1993	<b>Traffic Measures in Historic Towns. An Introduction to Good Practice</b>
The City of Edinburgh Council, Historic Scotland, LEEL, ENTCC and EOTRT	1995	<b>Edinburgh Streetscape Manual</b>
Countryside Commission	1996	<b>Village Design. Making Local Character Count in New Development</b>

Scottish Civic Trust	1979	<b>The Reuse of Older Buildings</b>
Historic Scotland	1995	<b>Memorandum of Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas</b>