

Caring for the ***Built Environment***



Conservation Area Guidance



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This document gives guidance and advice on how development within conservation areas should proceed. It also sets out the approach that the Council will adopt in its stewardship of conservation areas, through the planning control process or by direct investment in road and other schemes. The leaflet Conservation Areas in Dumfries and Galloway outlines the legislative background and gives an introduction to how conservation areas are designated, what designation means and what general controls on development apply.

This guidance whilst applying generally will also underpin Conservation Area Character Appraisals that are being prepared on a priority basis for individual conservation areas.

Aims and Objectives

The primary aim of this guidance is to help ensure that new development and work to older buildings in the conservation area enhance or preserve the character or appearance of the area. The purpose of this is to generate attractive towns and villages that are economically stable, have a sense of place and about which the residents can be justifiably proud and that visitors can truly enjoy.

Public involvement in the long-term guardianship of the area is encouraged to support this primary aim. This can be achieved in a variety of ways including promoting economic activity, in developing a maintenance strategy for individual buildings and in establishing a public forum for discussion on further development where appropriate.



The Environment and Infrastructure Committee has approved this Conservation Guidance as part of the design guidance being developed in accordance with the policies in the Local Plans.

Conservation Philosophy

Development in conservation areas needs to be carefully focused to ensure that there is a balance between good conservation practice and a realism that recognises modern needs and pressures. Failure to achieve this may alienate those who wish to upgrade and modernise their properties or are in general less supportive of their historic environment.

The basis from which a conservation-led approach must start is that of accepting the character and qualities described in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal noting those elements that are essential to that character and developing policies that retain those elements.

New work should be encouraged. It should be innovative but not so out of character or scale that it harms the area. It is important for the future well-being of any settlement that it is not just preserved but that sensible and sensitive new development is promoted. The conservation philosophy must embrace a forward-looking attitude to new development.

The conservation guidance is founded on the following principles

- Development of the town or village should proceed through evolution;
- Repair is better than replacement and buildings should be regularly maintained;
- Repairs should respect the fabric, forms and technology of the original and not be experimental or innovative;
- New work should complement the surroundings and not be an inopportune attempt at parody or pastiche.

These principles are enshrined into policies that should help to ensure that the broad aims are met.

Main Policies

It is important to ensure that any work we do adds to and complements the fine qualities of the conservation area so that it may be passed on, undamaged, to future generations.

To that end the following sections outline the Council's Policies (shaded) and offers guidance to assist in the preparation of detailed proposals giving, where appropriate, the general design principles that should be adopted on new work. These Guidelines also refer to repair work and the general approach that should be adopted.

General development within and adjacent to the conservation area will be directed in accordance with the Policies in the Local Plan.

The Council when considering applications for development proposals that have a direct impact on the Conservation Area will have regard to the Policies and Design Guidance in the Local Plan, the Conservation Area Character Appraisal, the Caring for the Built Environment Booklet and National Guidance.

In dealing with proposals that affect principal architectural or streetscape elements or in considering repairs and other initiatives the Council will also have regard to the following more detailed guidelines.



Design Guidance and Detailed Policies

The following considers those elements of buildings and development proposals that can have a significant impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.



Roofs

Roofs should continue to be slated and encouragement given to return concrete covered roofs to slate. Slates should generally match existing. On many roofs the slates are graded and this differentiation in slate size should be retained.

New buildings and extensions to existing buildings should for the most part be designed with roofs that have a steep pitch to match those in the area and covered in natural slate.

Slate is the dominant roofing material throughout Dumfries and Galloway. Welsh and Cumbrian slates were widely used in coastal locations.



This has led to great variation in texture, thickness and colour. Many roofs are laid with the slates reducing in size towards the ridge. This grading should be retained. New roofs and repairs to existing roofs should follow local traditional finishes. New slates should be of the same type, or if these are unavailable, should be closely matched for thickness, colour and texture.

Some buildings have been re-roofed with concrete tiles and it is the intention that these should revert to natural slate. Because it is not known what preceded these concrete tiles, replacement slate can be from any appropriate source ensuring durable, more textured, thicker grey or grey-green slates similar to those generally found in the area are selected. More recently thin, blue, Welsh slates have been used which have a uniform character that is inappropriate; these should not be used further.



Bats may be present in roofs and are a fully protected species. Before undertaking any work, including timber treatment, which might disturb bats, advice should be sought from the local office of Scottish Natural Heritage.

Similarly provision should be made for nesting swifts to ensure that they are not disturbed and that nest sites are available after works have finished.

Ridges, Skews and Chimneyheads

Ridges, skews, chimneys and chimney cans should be retained and reinstated as appropriate. Further removal of chimneys will not be permitted

Ridges should be retained as found; stone, zinc or lead. Decorative fired clay ridges are also present and should be retained or repaired like-for-like. In exposed locations it may be acceptable for zinc ridges to be replaced with lead.



Skews should be kept and repaired in matching stone. They are an important part of the architecture of buildings and in terraced groups



help to define separation between individual buildings.

Chimneyheads and chimney cans are an important feature of the varied and interesting roofscape in the conservation area. There is a tendency for redundant chimneystacks to be removed and the roof slating carried over. This will, if allowed to continue, eroded the character and attractiveness of the skyline. Missing chimneyheads and cans should be replaced. Redundant flues need to be properly capped and vented top and bottom to ensure a flow of air through the stack.

New development, designed on traditional lines, should incorporate chimneys and skews where appropriate.

Dormers and Rooflights

New dormers will only be permitted where they are necessary for the proper and viable use of the building and where their design is based on good examples of traditional dormers appropriate to the age and style of the building on which they are to be placed.

Traditional iron rooflights should be retained where they presently exist. New rooflights will only be permitted where they are of an appropriate design based on traditional sizing and detailing.

Though most buildings do not have dormers many traditional dormers can be found. These should be retained and repaired to their original specification. However, in areas where the plain uncluttered

roofline dominates it should be retained and new dormers will not normally be permitted unless there is a clear need for them. In those cases they will need to be of a design that draws from the detailing and proportions of traditional dormers.



Some properties have large box dormers that are out of character and scale. Their replacement with smaller more traditionally detailed and proportioned dormers should be encouraged.

Large modern rooflights are intrusive and detract from the character of the roofscape. Some properties retain traditional iron rooflights that are small and blend in well.



Rainwater Goods

Repairs or replacements should normally be undertaken using cast-iron rhones and fall pipes. Ogee and profiled rhones, decorative brackets and other details should be retained. Where parapet gutters exist these should be appropriately repaired, usually with lead sheet using proprietary expansion joints.

Traditional rhones and down-pipes, often in cast iron, are important to the character of individual buildings. Many are plain half-round though some buildings have decorative profiled rhones and brackets. Modern PVC replacement rainwater goods are inappropriate and detract from the character of the building.

Too many pipes, particularly waste pipes from bathrooms and kitchens, on the external walls of old buildings can be unsightly: this problem is exacerbated in buildings that have been converted to multiple occupation. Where possible these pipes should be re-routed internally when other alterations or repairs are being carried out.

Walls

Buildings that are of durable whin stone or granite will normally require little work to the stone itself. More vulnerable sandstone buildings or sandstone dressings on the other hand may require more detailed work.



Eroded stonework can sometimes simply be dressed back to sound material and left. But if the erosion is likely to affect structural stability or weathering of surrounding stones then proper repairs using matching stone, bedded correctly should be undertaken.

It is important to preserve as much as possible of any existing tooled faces; including carved work, fine ashlar, or the textured finishes



to facing stone. Replacement or dressing back should not be undertaken lightly. All new stone should be worked and tooled in the same manner as that is being replaced.

Cement patching and plastic repairs should, for the most part, be avoided. Occasionally resin repairs and pinning pieces of stone together will be appropriate and will qualify as legitimate conservation work.



Cleaning of stonework should generally be avoided. Any proposal to clean should include a detailed report prepared by a stone conservation

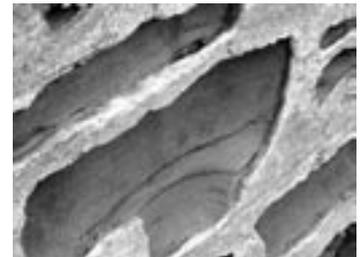
specialist which should set out the methods that might be acceptable in the particular case if cleaning is warranted. Abrasive methods will not be permitted.

Cleaning and/or paint removal and the application of any inappropriate treatment such as silicone, linseed oil, etc. in an attempt to preserve or waterproof the stone should not be attempted. Stone cleaning and painting may need formal consent.

Pointing

The effect on the appearance and character of pointing on a building can be significant and needs to be undertaken very carefully. Wholesale re-pointing should not be undertaken unless absolutely necessary. Only joints where older mortar has failed and can easily be raked out should be re-pointed.

Pointing must always be weaker than the surrounding stone. The photograph shows the erosion of the adjacent



stones caused by hard cement pointing. For these reasons details of proposed re-pointing must be accurately specified and agreed. Traditional mortars based on lime are more permeable and more flexible than cement mortars and must be used in all conservation work.

Detailed advice notes on mortar and pointing are available. (Please check with the Area Planning and Building Control Office.)

Harling or Rendering

Harling or rendering of un-harled stone buildings will only be permitted where it is necessary for the proper preservation of the building or where it can be shown to have been the original and appropriate finish. Modern cement-based and dry-dash renders will not normally be permitted.



Traditional stone walls should not be covered in hard, dense or waterproof coatings, either render or paint. These will trap water in the body of the wall, which then can only move to the interior, causing damp penetration problems. Walls must be able to “breathe” allowing the wetting and drying cycle to function properly.

Harling (or wet-dash) and rendering should only be applied where it exists as a traditional and appropriate finish. In exceptional circumstances it may be a remedy to very porous stone facings though limewash treatment should first be considered.

As this is a specialist area of work it is important that it is only undertaken by competent tradespeople experienced in traditional techniques and materials. Further more detailed advice should be obtained if necessary.

It is unlikely that the main frontage of any building in the principal streets will be considered for such treatment.

Modern pebble-dash or dry-dash finishes are unacceptable. Encouragement will be given to remove such treatment, and if found necessary their replacement with traditional harl.

Painting Buildings

Painting of unpainted stone buildings will not normally be permitted. Where it can be shown to have been the original and appropriate finish, lime washing or painting in an approved, breathable paint may be considered.

Repainting of buildings should only be undertaken after a careful reappraisal of the existing paint and in accordance with further advice on methods and materials. Paint removal will only be permitted where it can be shown that the underlying stone work will not be detrimentally affected and where the retention of paint would be likely to lead to deterioration in the stonework due to moisture entrapment.

Though painting of building has become more widespread, particularly in the latter half of the 20th century this is not necessarily a traditional feature of urban buildings. Limewash, possibly with tallow, may have been more widespread before the 19th century.

Further painting of stone buildings will be resisted. Existing painted buildings will need to be monitored to determine whether or not the paint is having a detrimental effect by trapping moisture behind the surface. Paint removal may not be fully effective. Where this is attempted a traditional limewash or an appropriate microporous paint could be applied to provide some measure of weather protection and to mitigate some of the visual effects of paint removal.

Where repainting of currently painted buildings is agreed the correct use of colour will need careful consideration. There is little evidence to suggest that strong colours were used traditionally. In general colours should be from the natural stone and cream ranges or the more subdued and paler variations based on blue or green palettes. The introduction of too great a variation in colours is likely to detract from the simple harmonious appearance of the main town frontages by drawing the eye and making individual buildings dominate.

Some suggest that greater latitude in painting and colours should be allowed yet it is also important that the traditional local character of the conservation area is not lost. Further extension of the palette of colours presently used in the area will not normally be permitted

On individual buildings no more than two colours should be used. Where window and door openings are architecturally defined, possibly by dressed stone margins, these can either be painted in a contrasting shade drawn from the same palette of colours used for the main façade with the margins being the darker of the two colours or using, for example, a complementary lighter colour such as cream against a green-based background.

Repainting will usually require consent.



Windows and Doors

Further losses of traditional or original windows or doors will not be permitted. Modern replacement windows or doors of inappropriate design or materials will not be permitted on any principal street elevations or where the windows or doors are visible from public areas.

Windows and doors are fundamental to the character and appearance of buildings and hence the conservation area. Many windows retain astragals and there is evidence that the traditional Georgian-proportioned astragaled window (six over six), or lying-panes, were the principal styles in Dumfries and Galloway. As there are variations in the detailing and profiles of the joinery, any existing details



should be kept and faithfully reproduced in replacement joinery. Standard stock mouldings will not be acceptable.

Some of the larger paned windows, in earlier buildings, retain the scars from jointing where astragals have been removed from sashes. Where such evidence exists, or where existing windows retain astragals, repairs and replacements should be undertaken that retain or re-instate astragals.



Buildings that date from the latter part of the 19th century are more likely to have had single panes (or two panes) of glass to each sash. These should be repaired in an appropriate manner.

Older glass has a rippled appearance and a high sparkle. This special reflective quality adds greatly to the character and interest of the street scene. If a window, or individual sashes, have to be replaced then the existing older glass should be kept for re-use where possible.

Double glazing is generally not compatible with traditional sash and case windows. The requirements for the sealed units usually results in a change to the joinery often resulting in over-large astragals which are detrimental to the appearance and character of the window. Secondary glazing will be encouraged where a greater degree of insulation is required.

Traditional doors, particularly on principal elevations were four or six-panelled. There is a fine variety of traditional doors and doorcases in the area. These should be retained or, where lost, reinstated based on nearby traditional designs. Lesser doors, to pends or more modest houses are likely to have been vertically boarded.

Replacement should have regard to the age and design of the building. Modern "off-the-shelf" joinery is not acceptable. All new joinery details should be developed by reference to good traditional remaining examples to ensure appropriate dimensions, cross sections and constructional details are used.





Additions and Extensions

Extensions should be designed to complement existing architectural features and materials. Their form, proportions and overall size will also need to relate to the original building's form, massing and general arrangement.

Extensions to properties need to be carefully considered to ensure that they do not detract from the general character or appearance of the original buildings, that they do not dominate or otherwise have an adverse impact on the townscape. (It should also be recognised that the rear of many properties can make a significant contribution to the character of the area where they are viewed from public areas, back lanes or paths.)

In the older Burghs the traditional form of backland development is of relatively narrow buildings running back from the main frontage and having pitched roofs. Where they exist, older burgage plots should be respected and individual buildings confined within plot boundaries.

In shops, where a large sales area is required, it may be more appropriate to consider the use of two adjacent buildings. This should be done in a manner that ensures their separate external, architectural identities are retained. The creation of large extensions to the rear which neither respects the form of the building or the layout of the site will be resisted. In some cases it will be appropriate to consider "rows" of outbuildings on the land at the rear but again these must be carefully considered in terms of site coverage, layout and design.

Innovative use of traditional materials will also be considered as it is not the intention of this guide to prevent good modern development.

Shop Fronts and Security Grilles

Where the restoration of traditional shop fronts is not feasible any new proposals for shop fronts should be appropriately designed and proportioned having regard to the age and

form of the building, its architectural character, appearance and setting.

External security shutters will not be permitted within the conservation area. Where security is an overriding concern alternative means such as laminated and toughened glass or internal grilles should be considered.

Shop fronts not only have an important impact on the appearance of buildings and streets but also represent the face of the conservation area as a significant visitor attraction. Good traditional shop fronts, which are often quite simple in their detailing, should be retained. Some shops simply have enlarged window openings, set off by stone surrounds. These should be used as the starting point for the design of new shops fronts. The



simpler, traditional shop fronts typically found, can be set off to good effect by careful use of colour and signage.

New fronts need to be individual yet retain a sense of proportion and character that complements the character of the conservation area. Relief and interest can be added through the addition of fascias and consoles. They should be appropriately designed and proportioned having regard to the age and form of the building, its architectural character, appearance and setting.

A few later, more elaborately detailed shop fronts, with fascias and pilasters typical of the Victorian or Edwardian period, are found. Occasionally it may be appropriate to include a full framed "Victorian"



front, with pilasters, on new work but these should be used circumspectly and only if the design and age of the building suggests this approach. Where such fronts are considered acceptable their design



and construction should be based on traditional joinery techniques.

Roller security shutters and grilles, particularly solid metal types, can be unsightly

and damage the character and appearance of the street. External security shutters will not be permitted within the conservation area. Where security is an overriding concern alternative means such as laminated and toughened glass or internal grilles should be considered.

Advertisements and Shop Canopies

Advertisements should be carefully designed using matt surfaces and traditional materials. The number and size of signs should not be excessive and they should respect the form proportions and appearance of the building on to which they are being placed.

Retractable blinds of a traditional character will be permitted where it can be shown that they are necessary and are of an appropriate design having regard to the shop front, the architectural qualities of the building and the general street scene. Modern “Dutch” canopies and those carrying advertising will not be permitted.

The number and size of signs should not be excessive and they should respect the form proportions and appearance of the building on to which they are being placed.

Box signs and box fascias, particularly internally illuminated, will not be permitted.

New signs should be traditional in appearance using matt surfaces and traditional materials. and will, for the most part, be hand painted.

Applied lettering or individual lettering will be considered in appropriate situations where the materials used are not intrusive or too reflective. The layout of signs and their design, including the size and style of lettering should be carefully thought out to avoid brash, intrusive signage.



Individual lettering applied directly onto the building may be considered in appropriate situations where the materials are not intrusive or too reflective and the architectural character and appearance of the building is not compromised. Corporate images, logos and detailing that fall outside these principles will not be permitted.

Projecting signs should be individual and responsive to the nature of the business yet should generally be based on traditional hanging signs. If illumination is required external floodlights can be used.

Where retractable canopies are proposed they must be of a traditional form and necessary for the proper use of the shop, such as protecting perishable produce from excessive sunshine. Canopies should form part of the construction of the shop front must be capable of successful integration with the architecture and style of the building and the shop front.



Public Realm

The Council will make resources available within the normal budget for repairs and improvements within

conservation areas, having due regard to the special character of the conservation area using appropriate



materials and detailing.

Street lighting and other functional structures, such as bus shelters, can have a considerable impact on the character and quality of a conservation area. Consideration will be given to appropriate period or modern styles when replacement or new work is undertaken having regard to the nature, scale and character of the area.

Consideration will be given to the discreet use of other street furniture, such as bollards, litter bins and seating. This will only be installed where necessary and will be of a design that is appropriate to the location. In some situations modern implementations of street furniture will be more appropriate than nondescript "Victorian" replicas.

Conclusion

These Guidance and Conservation Policies should be read in conjunction with the relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisal, where it has been prepared, and the relevant Local Plan. The former describes the character of the Conservation Area and draws out elements that need to be considered when any form of development is proposed if the present attractive qualities are to be retained or enhanced.

The Local Plan on the other hand sets out specific development guidelines and the Council's planning policies on the built heritage.

These notes complement those policies adding a further level of detail. It is intended that these notes will be updated and extended periodically to refine the Council's policies and to provide a sound basis for the further development of the conservation areas in Dumfries and Galloway.

Detailed guidance notes are being prepared for individual topics such as pointing. Please check with the area planning office for availability.

Area Office Addresses

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GLOSSARY

AGGREGATE

Small stones or rock chippings used in mortar for harling

ASHLAR

Finely worked stone, where the blocks are cut to even faces having a square edge.

ASTRAGAL

Commonly the glazing bar between window panes. It is also a classical moulding

CHIMNEY

Stone or brick structure carrying the smoke from an internal fireplace.

CHIMNEY, CAN

The pot, usually clay, at the head of the chimney; they come in many shapes and sizes.

CORNICE

Mostly used to refer to the decorative junction between the walls and ceilings. It is also a classical architectural feature and a projecting band of stonework to mark an upper storey of a building.

DAMP PROOF, MEMBRANE

Permanent waterproof membrane in a wall to prevent water movement. Older buildings have slate or pitch while modern buildings use synthetic materials.

DAMP PROOFING, INJECTED CHEMICAL

Waterproofing chemicals injected into the fabric of the wall to prevent moisture movement.

DORMER

Window projecting from the roof slope. Dormers can be wall-head or wholly in the roof.

DYKE

Low wall of stone or turf.

DYKE, DRY STANE

As above but without the use of mortar.

FANLIGHT

The small window or glazed area immediately above a door.

FLASHING

Strip of water-proof material sealing the joint between two parts of a building such as between the roof and chimney. Usually flashings are formed in lead sheet. They are fixed to the stonework by ragging (see below).

GABLE

Peaked external wall normally at the end of a pitched roof, also usually at right angles to the front wall.

GRANITE

Dense, crystalline rock used for building. Main source in Dumfries and Galloway is Dalbeattie and Creetown; both are of a distinctive grey colour.

HARL

Scottish form of roughcast, external finish to walls. It consists of lime and aggregate and thrown or "dashed" against the wall. Also known as wet dash.

HIP, HIPPED ROOF

Hips or piends are the sloping ridges where two sloping roofs meet. A hipped roof has four sloping planes instead of two planes as in a gabled roof.

HOOD MOULDS

A projecting moulding over window openings that helps to throw the water off the face of the wall and window.

HORNS

On window joinery the projecting styles used as larger panes of glass were introduced to help strengthen the joints.

LEDGED AND BRACED

Form of construction of early plank doors. The ledges and braces form the support and strengthening while vertical planks form the main body of the door.

LIME PUTTY

Lime mortar before the addition of sand or aggregates. It is made by slaking quick-lime in water.

LYING PANE

Divisions in window glazing where the panes of glass are wider than they are tall.

MARGIN

The framing in stone of window and door openings. Sandstone was most commonly used as it could be worked to give good even and flat surfaces against which the joinery could fit.

MORTAR

Traditionally made from lime putty and sand or other aggregate is used to bed building stones.

OGEE

Decorative moulding using a double curve; sometimes seen in the profile of cast-iron gutters.

PANELLED

Form of joinery construction used in later and higher quality doors with timber framing panels. Doors are commonly 4 or 6 panelled.

PENDS

Openings or passageways through or between buildings from the street to rear courts or yards.



PIENDS

The sloping ridges at the corners of hipped roofs.

POINTING

The visible part of the mortar used to bed building stones and includes the treatment of these joints in masonry or brickwork.

POINTING, RIBBON OR STRAP

A form of pointing where the mortar is made to stand proud of the wall surface. This is not appropriate, may cause damage to the stonework and should be avoided.

RAGGLING

To cut a groove in stone or in the joints of wall to receive flashings.

RAIL

Horizontal member in window sashes and doors. Meeting rails are the two elements that meet, usually at the centre, when sash and case windows are closed. (See STYLE below.)

RAKE OUT

Clean out loose and friable mortar from a joint prior to re-pointing.

RENDER

Smooth coating, usually on external, walls. Usually refers to cement mortar render a modern and cheaper alternative to stucco.

RESIN

Synthetic binder and strengthening used in timber and stone repairs. Not normally recommended for conservation work.

RHONE

Gutter or channel to carry rain water from roofs.

RIDGE

The apex or upper meeting between two roof slopes.

ROOF-LIGHT

Small glazed iron framed window lying in the plane of the roof.

SANDSTONE

One of the main building stones of the area ranging from deep red to light buff and grey. It is mostly of a high quality and can be carved to produce fine architectural details.

SASH AND CASE

Traditional form of window with two sliding sashes balanced by weights in the timber case.

SECONDARY GLAZING

Inner glazing fixed separately from the main window to provide insulation and sound proofing

SKEW

Part of a gable wall which is above the roof slope, it is usually capped by flat bedded skew stones.

SKEWPUTT

The bottom most stone of a line of skew stones. It is sometimes decoratively finished and usually projects from the wall,.

SLAISTER

Form of flush pointing where the lime mortar is spread thinly across adjacent stonework. Usually seen on rural buildings that are lime-washed.

SLATES

Thin flat stones used to cover roofs and used as hanging to walls and dormer sides.

SLATES, GRADING

The method of laying slates in diminishing sized courses up the roof slope. One advantage is that the larger, thicker, slates having fewer joints are at the lower part of the roof.

STUCCO

Fine grained, hard plaster used for precise decorative finishes to walls.

STYLE

The vertical side element of window sashes and doors. (See RAIL above.)

THACKSTONE

Projection in a chimney head to provide a weathering and protection for the roof, originally found over thatched roofs.

VALLEY

The lower meeting point of two roof slopes, usually lead lined, designed to carry rain water away from the roof to a hopper or spout.

WHIN

A hard, grey building stone of fine grain but not easily worked. Used mainly for rubble and coursed walling, often with dressed sandstone for window margins.