

From mountain to sea

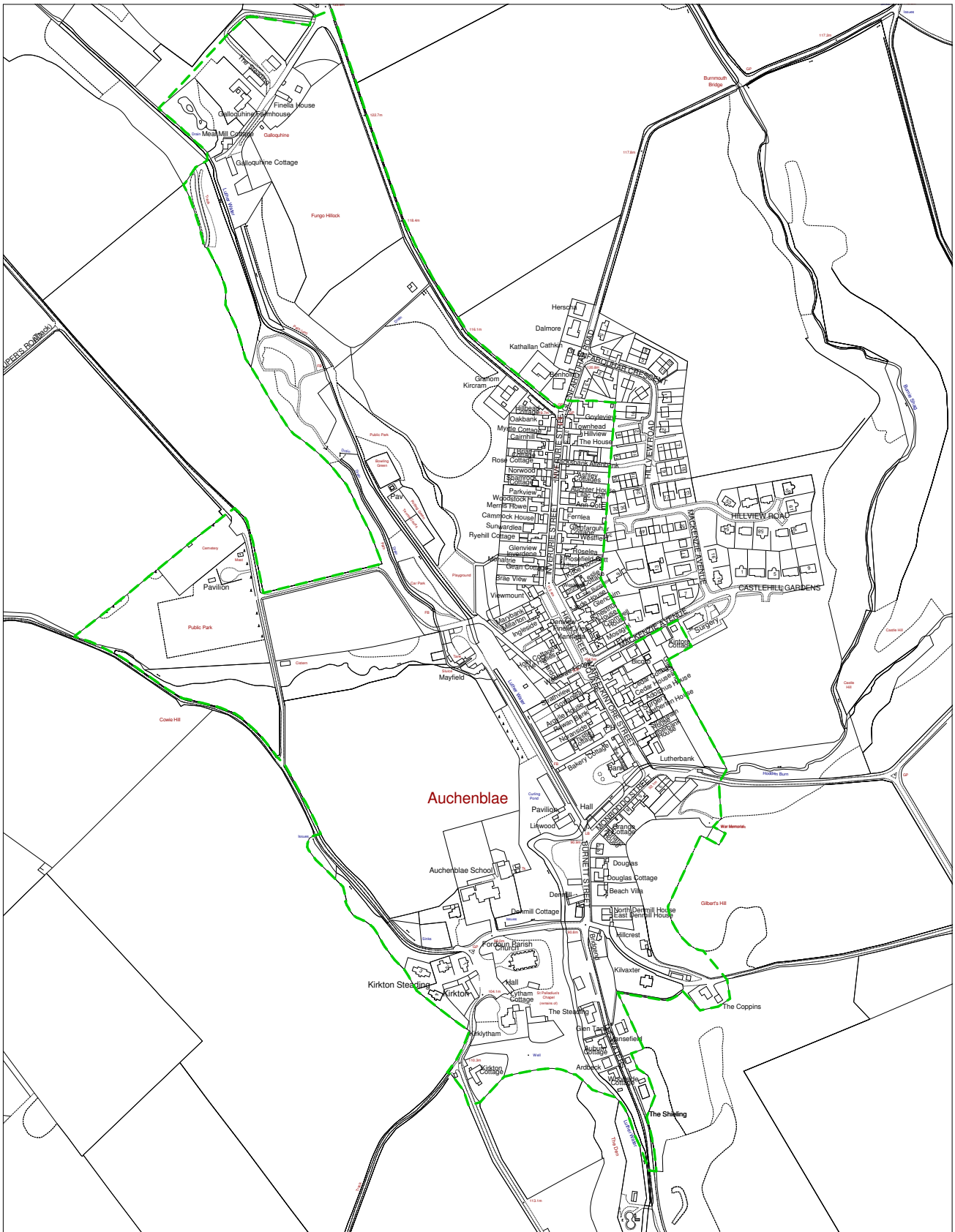
Auchenblae

Conservation Area Management Plan

November 2016



Development Management & Building Standards



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 What is a Conservation Area?

Conservation Areas were first introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 provides the current legislative framework for the designation of conservation areas. A conservation area is defined as 'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.

All planning authorities are required by the Act to determine which parts of their area merit conservation area status. Aberdeenshire currently has over 40 conservation areas varying in character from central Stonehaven to the small coastal settlement of Pennan.

1.2 What is the purpose of a Conservation Area Management Plan

Following the formal designation of Auchenblae as a conservation area on 28th October 2014, Auchenblae Conservation Area Management Plan has now been produced. This document is designed to act as a supportive document to the Auchenblae Conservation Area Appraisal produced as part of the designation process.

The Auchenblae Conservation Area Management Plan identifies opportunities and priorities for enhancement and sets out the policy framework for the determination of development proposals. It further sets out the design standards expected when developing or making alterations to land and premises within the conservation area. The Auchenblae Conservation Area Management Plan should be regarded as supplementary guidance to the policies set out in the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan.

1.3 Why did Auchenblae become a Conservation Area?

Auchenblae developed out of two quite distinct settlements which help define its special character. Kirkton of Fourdon, (although historically going by a different name) has roots as a religious settlement dating back to the 7th century AD. The medieval kirk has records as early as the 12th century and remained in use until 1828 when its roof collapsed and the new St. Palladius was constructed. The kirkton became a free burgh of barony in 1554 during the reign of Mary Queen of Scots and the kirkton went on to prosper as a market town.

Fourdon has managed to maintain its informal layout and setting without the usual plethora of harsh boundary treatments, pavements, street signage and lighting associated with more modern developments.

Auchenblae itself developed as an early planned mill town of the late 18th century. Its original plan laid out in 1770 by the Earl of Kintore developed as a separate settlement until its merger in the late 19th century with the more informal Kirkton of Fourdon.



The form of the original planned town has been well preserved and its unique setting amongst the hills and waterways still remains. Unlike many planned towns which are characterised by uniformity, Auchenblae benefits from a variety of architectural styles, periods, forms and detailing. Many of which are already identified as of interest in the 75 listed buildings within the settlement.

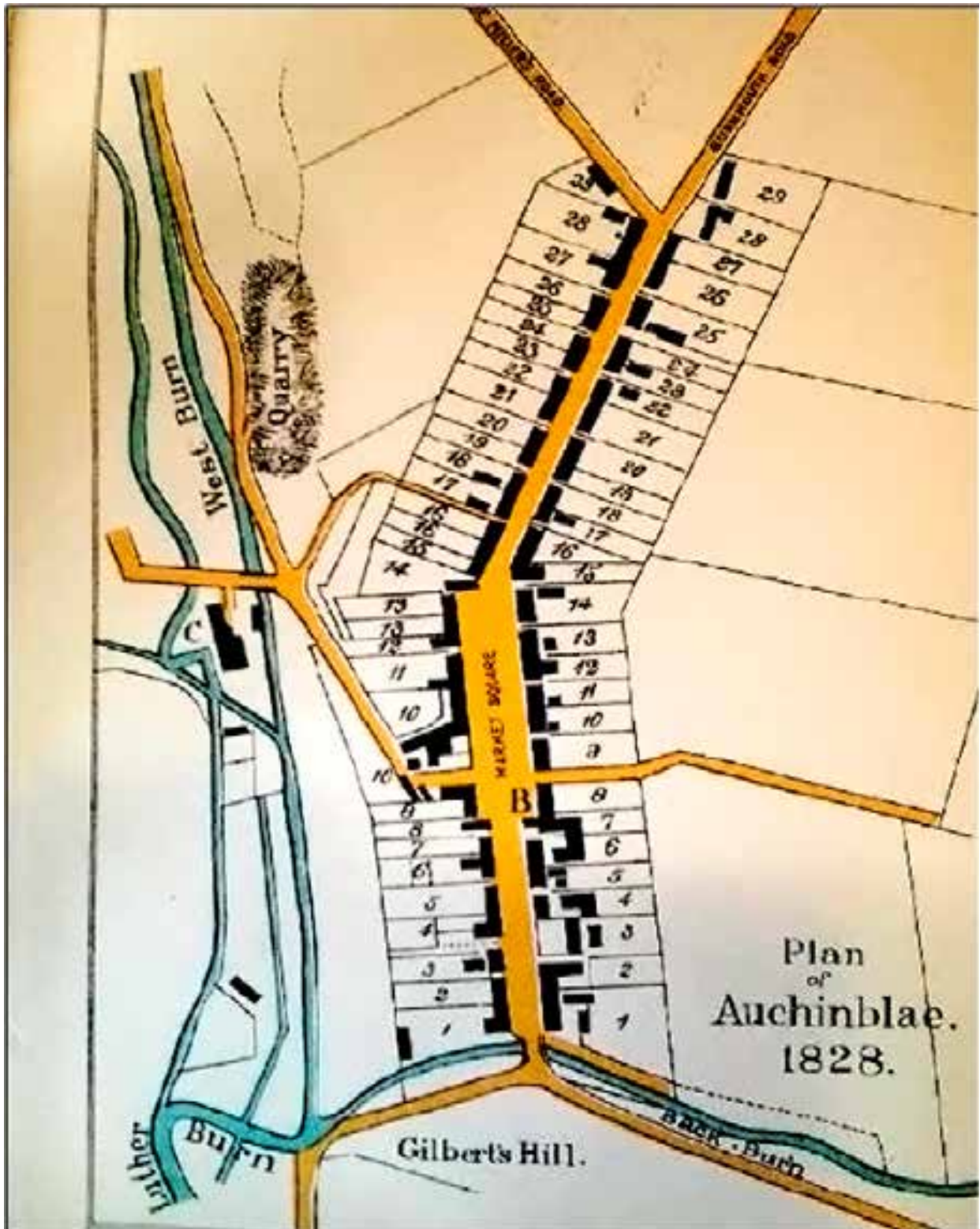


It is these distinct and contrasting forms of development which help define the special character of Auchenblae in addition to the variety of architectural design and detailing which extend to the boundary treatments within the settlement.

Like many small settlements in Aberdeenshire, there is a growing demand for new development. Conservation area status enables the planning authority to effectively manage the opportunities for new development, to ensure it compliments or enhances the character of the village.

A number of buildings in the village are already protected by listed building status, which means that many alterations already require Listed Building Consent. Conservation area status gives greater protection over the development and redevelopment of sites within the village, so greater care can be given to the relationship between new and old.





Plan of Auchenblae 1828

2.0 Policy Context

2.1 Statutory Powers and Policies

Applications for any form of development or redevelopment will be considered on their own individual merits having regard to the most up to date Aberdeen City & Shire Strategic Development Plan, the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan and any other supplementary documents produced by the local authority.

2.2 General Policy

Within the conservation area it will be the policy of Aberdeenshire Council to protect and preserve, by development management measures, all those buildings, views and other aspects of the environment that make up the character of Auchenblae. Furthermore, to enhance the area by encouraging appropriate development and landscaping, together with the removal of those elements which are deemed to have a detrimental impact on its appearance. The following criteria for design will be applied in the determination of any future planning applications located within the conservation area:-

(i) The position of the building on its site will be determined by its relationship with adjoining buildings and/or open space.

(ii) The materials to be used shall be appropriate to the area and sympathetic to the adjoining buildings.

(iii) The mass of the building shall be to scale and harmony with the adjoining buildings and the wider area as a whole.

(iv) The design of the building shall be such that the proportions of the parts relate to each other and are appropriate to the adjoining buildings. The highest possible standard of professional design will be required wherever new buildings and alterations to existing buildings are permitted. In certain exceptional cases normal planning standards may be relaxed in order to achieve the best visual results.

2.2.1 Conservation Areas

We will refuse planning permission and/or conservation area consent for any development, including change of use or demolition, which would have a detrimental effect on the special character or setting of a conservation area.

We will only approve new development wholly or partly within a conservation area, subject to other policies, if:

- all details are provided under cover of an application for full planning permission;
AND
- the design is of the highest quality, and respects and enhances the architectural, historic and visual qualities that give rise to the designation;
AND
- any trees that contribute to the conservation areas setting and character are retained.

The aim is to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas, in order to safeguard the long term management of these areas in accordance with current guidance and legislation.

Conservation areas form an important physical record of the architectural development and historical growth of an area. They are an irreplaceable cultural and economic resource that contributes to the distinctive character and unique quality of Aberdeenshire and therefore must be protected.

2.2.2 Listed Buildings

We will protect all “listed buildings” contained in the statutory list of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest and we will encourage their protection, maintenance, enhancement, active use and conservation.

We will refuse planning permission and/or listed building consent for any works, including demolition, which would have a detrimental effect on their character, integrity or setting.

We will only approve alterations or extensions to listed buildings or new development within their curtilage, subject to other policies, if:

- they are of the highest quality, and respect the original structure in terms of setting, scale, design and materials;
- AND
- the proposed development is essential to securing the best viable use of the listed building without undermining its architectural or historic character, or its setting.

The aim is to protect listed buildings against detrimental works, in accordance with current guidance and legislation. Aberdeenshire’s built heritage is irreplaceable and must be preserved and conserved for present and future generations.

Listed buildings make a significant contribution to the character and amenity of Aberdeenshire. The fact that a building is obsolete for a period of time is not in itself a justification for unsympathetic change.

3.0 Conservation Area Management Plan

3.1 Auchenblae Conservation Area Supplementary Guidance

When effectively managed, conservation areas can; anchor thriving communities, sustain cultural heritage, generate wealth and prosperity and add to quality of life. The challenge is to ensure that all new development respects, enhances and has a positive impact on the area.

These guidance notes seek to provide supplementary advice to ensure that any future development compliments or enhances the wider character of the Auchenblae Conservation Area.

Planning Permission in Principle

Planning Permission in Principle will only be considered by the Planning Service when they are accompanied by a sketch scheme (layout and elevations) which clearly show the design, construction and material finish of the proposed development.

An application for Conservation Area Consent will be required for the demolition of any unlisted building located within the Auchenblae Conservation Area and it must be supported by a written justification for the proposed works along with detailed plans of both existing and replacement buildings.

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



The majority of properties located within the Auchenblae Conservation Area have natural slate roofs which significantly shape the character and appearance of the settlement. The Planning Authority will therefore seek the retention of these traditional treatment and will insist that both repair works and any new roofs replicate the original construction.



Dormers



A wide variety of traditional dormers can be found within the Auchenblae Conservation Area, with a mixture of timber fascia and finials decorating the pediments. These dormer details not only significantly shape the character of the buildings upon which they are attached but the wider appearance of the streetscape. The Planning Authority will seek the retention of these traditional elements.

New dormers should be appropriately designed and located with care. This should include replication of the proportion, opening method and materials of the more traditional style dormer.

Large box dormers that are out of character and scale with the conservation area and their replacement with smaller more traditionally detailed and proportioned dormers will be encouraged.

Rooflights



The Planning Authority will seek the retention of original cast iron rooflights but will concede their replacement for conservation based models provided they replicate the design and size of the original units. The local authority will also support the introduction of new rooflights provided they are true conservation units and not the large standard models which are somewhat more intrusive and detract from the character of the roofscape.

Rainwater Goods

Traditional gutters and downpipes play a significant role in shaping the character of individual buildings and any repairs or replacement fittings should be undertaken on a like for like basis. Modern PVC replacement rainwater goods are inappropriate and will not be approved for properties located within the conservation area. Where appropriate black aluminium, cast-iron look downpipes may be acceptable on non-listed traditional properties within the conservation area.

Ridges, Skews and Chimneys



Chimneys are an important feature within the conservation area and the local authority will therefore seek their retention and not support any proposal to remove them from a property. The existing stone skews, clay ridge tiles and ceramic chimney pots also have a significant impact on the townscape and should be retained or replaced on a like for like basis if considered beyond repair.

Doors



Door furniture including decorative glasswork and ironmongery makes a significant contribution to the character of the Auchenblae Conservation Area. The local authority will therefore promote the retention of all traditional doors and seek that any replacements match the originals not only in terms of design and construction but also in external treatment and ironmongery detail.

Windows



Windows are an important element in the building's design and a fundamental component which shapes the character and appearance of the conservation area. Auchenblae benefits from a variety of traditional window styles including sash and case and lying panes.

The Planning Service will insist that replacement units replicate the design; construction and material finish with the original windows. It will also seek the reinstatement of the original design where an applicant proposes to replace later unsympathetic windows.

Boundary Treatments



The numerous boundary treatments found within Auchenblae make a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area. The age and construction of these various elements all contribute to the interest of the streetscape of Auchenblae and the Planning Service will therefore seek the retention of any traditional boundary treatments as well as support any proposal to reinstate missing architectural elements.

Micro Renewable Equipment and Satellite Dishes

These items can often seriously disfigure a building and greatly diminish the wider quality of the conservation area and should therefore only be installed where it is possible to do so without affecting in any way the wider appearance of the streetscape. The fact that a property is set well back from the road is not a relevant consideration in appraising the installation of equipment and the applicant should always be advised to locate any such fixtures in a position not readily visible from the public carriageway.

Extensions



Proposals to extend a property located within the conservation area should not be considered in isolation but in context to the wider streetscape to ensure it respects the character, scale and proportions of neighbouring buildings. Any new extension should also follow the established building line of the street and use detailing and materials which are distinctive or complimentary to the settlement.

Street Furniture



The sensitive nature of Auchenblae merits designs that reflect the settlement's distinctive individuality with lamp standards, litter bins and seating to acknowledge the unique character of the settlement. Consequently, the bland standardised street furniture and the normal plethora of traffic signage will not be considered acceptable within the Auchenblae Conservation Area.

Shop Frontages

Any new shop frontages will require consent and should be designed to complement the wider character of the settlement with special consideration given to the design and scale of fascia boards, hanging signs and display windows.

3.2 Enhancement Opportunities

Redevelopment sites

There are a number of properties within Auchenblae that are currently lying vacant or in a semi derelict state, which detracts from the unique character of the area. It would be beneficial to see the adaptive reuse of these sites so they enhance the area rather than detract from it. These include;

- Drumtochty Arms Hotel;
- The two properties on the Buildings at Risk Register - Argyll House and Thistle Inn;
- Vacant buildings on the main street - former butchers and village store, and Kirkton Inn.



Repair and Maintenance

The best means of preserving the character and appearance of a conservation area is through routine maintenance; architectural elements such as dormers, gutters and external railings all need regular attention to not only to secure the future of the buildings but also their setting.

Street Lighting

The current standardised lamp standards do little to differentiate the conservation area and it would be advantageous to consider a long term strategy to introduce more distinctive lighting that compliments the wider appearance of the designated area.

Pavements and Roads

The roadways and pathways play a significant role in the overall appearance of the village, especially in light of the dominance of the main street. It would be beneficial to ensure that any works carried out by utility companies are controlled to ensure that repair works do not detract from the character of the area.



4.0 Additional Controls within the Auchenblae Conservation Area

4.1 Changes in Legislation

In February 2012 the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2011 came into force. This removed householder Permitted Development Rights within conservation areas. Owners of Domestic properties within the boundary of a conservation area now need to apply for planning approval for changes to their external appearance including windows, roof materials and painting external walls. This does not apply to like for like repairs and maintenance. Please check with the planning department if you are unsure if consent is required.

In June 2014 the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2014 came into force this removed permitted development rights for many non-domestic properties including shops, schools, office buildings and the creation of access ramps outside non-domestic buildings. Please check with the planning department if you are unsure if consent is required.

4.2 Article 4 Directions

In addition to the controls above it is proposed to add additional controls within the Auchenblae Conservation Area. This will put additional restrictions on groups such as Statutory Undertakers, Local Authorities and Telecommunication operatives as a means to bring their obligations more in line with those of the owners of domestic and non-domestic properties and provide consistency in decision making within the conservation area.

These restrictions are applied in the form of Article 4 Direction and within Auchenblae will include the following;

PART 8 - INDUSTRIAL AND WAREHOUSE DEVELOPMENT

Class 23
Class 24
Class 26

PART 10 - REPAIRS TO SERVICES

Class 28

PART 12- DEVELOPMENT BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Class 30
Class 31
Class 33

PART 13 - DEVELOPMENT BY STATUTORY UNDERTAKERS

Class 36
Class 38
Class 39
Class 40
Class 43

PART 20 - DEVELOPMENT BY TELECOMMUNICATIONS CODE SYSTEM OPERATORS

Class 67

5.0 Monitoring and Review

Legislation provides for the regular appraisal of conservation areas, which may result in new Article 4 Directions, supplementary guidance or planning advice. As part of the mechanism for review and monitoring, a photographic record has been undertaken as a means to record change. This will act as an important tool in the management of the conservation area by providing an indicator of the impact of development and form the basis of future reviews.

For further information concerning the contents of this document,
contributions for its improvement or any matters concerning
conservation areas or listed buildings, contact the Environment Team.

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