

**South Ayrshire Council**

**Report by Director of Housing, Operations and Development  
to South Ayrshire Council  
of 26 June 2025**

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**Subject: Girvan Conservation Area Management Plan**

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**1. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to hold a public consultation on the Girvan Draft Conservation Area Management Plan (CMP).

**2. Recommendation**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Council:**

**2.1.1 agrees to public consultation on the draft Girvan Conservation Area Management Plan set out in Appendix 1, and that delegation be given to make appropriate typographical changes, if required; and**

**2.1.2 agrees that a further report will come back to Cabinet on 28 October 2025 which will detail the consultation findings and seek Cabinet approval to adopt the finalised and potentially modified Girvan Conservation Area Management Plan.**

**3. Background**

3.1 Conservation areas are defined by the Scottish Government as ‘areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.’ Section 61 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 requires planning authorities to determine the parts of an area which are of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and designate such areas as conservation areas. Girvan Conservation Area was designated in July 1988.

3.2 A Conservation Area Appraisal for Girvan was undertaken in 2024 as a management tool to identify the special interest and changing needs of the area. It also supported the ongoing work for the Girvan’s Story project to regenerate Girvan town centre. The Appraisal recommended a number of extensions to the boundaries of the conservation area. Following a public consultation, Cabinet of 21st May 2024 approved the finalised Girvan Conservation Area Appraisal, including the boundary revisions. These came into effect on 18th June 2024.

3.3 Cabinet of 21 May 2024 also agreed to the preparation of a draft Conservation Area Management Plan to support the implementation of priorities outlined in the

Appraisal and the Girvan's Story funding application. In particular, it is intended to help define priority buildings for funding and repairs and make recommendations for any training and learning opportunities necessary to sustain a conservation-led approach to managing the area over a longer term. A draft of the Management Plan has been prepared by consultants for the Council and is set out in Appendix 1.

3.4 The aim of the Conservation Area Management Plan is to provide a viable guidance strategy for the conservation of the Girvan Conservation Area. The document aims to:

- understand the heritage of the town and why it is important;
- assess how it is currently managed;
- identify risks to the heritage;
- Decide on the management and maintenance aims;
- Make a maintenance plan;
- Identify costs and resources.

3.5 The Management Plan will set out guidance and strategies, which will guide the conservation of the core town centre buildings, and will help inform all subsequent conservation decisions.

3.6 The document initially provides an analysis of the Conservation Area to understand the heritage, including the preparation of a survey of all the buildings in the Conservation Area and a Materials Audit. This examined the detail of all the buildings in the Girvan's Story Area - an area slightly beyond the boundaries of the Conservation Area. This section also provides a summary of historical research on the development of the town.

3.7 The Management Plan then provides a brief townscape analysis primarily looking at Streetscape and building character, architectural characteristics, materials, and the public realm.

3.8 A comprehensive overview of statutory controls and guidance is also provided. This includes existing planning policies and legislation that apply to the conservation area, to understand the context for making decisions within the area.

3.9 The analysis then moves on to identifying key risks and challenges for the conservation area, including buildings at risk, areas of dilapidation or requiring improvement works. Longer term threats to the character of the area are also highlighted, such as poor maintenance of some buildings, inappropriate alterations and loss or original features. Eight key buildings are noted as being at risk or of current concern, including the Former Post Office at 22 - 24 Dalrymple Street, the Former Royal Bank at 14 - 18 Dalrymple Street, and the former Davidson Cottage Hospital.

#### **4. Proposals**

4.1 It is recommended that the Council approves the Draft Girvan Conservation Management Plan set out in Appendix 1 as the basis for public consultation. Council is asked to note the following key aspects of the Plan.

- 4.1.1 The Conservation Strategy, which sets out a range of conservation objectives, including a list of priority repairs to buildings around the town centre. These are designed to align with the intended work of the Girvan's Story project to direct the allocation of the funding being sought, and include repairs and restoration work to Stumpy Tower, McKechnie Institute, and 14- 18 Dalrymple Street. Other potential areas noted for improvement include public lighting, signage, and public realm.
- 4.1.2 A Maintenance Plan, to ensure the successful ongoing management and maintenance of properties in the conservation area. This Plan highlights areas for focus, for example maintenance of roofs, gutters, use of appropriate, sympathetic materials and products for repairs and alterations. It also sets out steps to work with and raise awareness within the local community, residents, retailers, and property owners. Suggestions for small grant schemes and further advice and guidance to owners are set out; again, to align with the 5-year programme of Traditional Skills Training and Heritage Activities also being developed as part of the Girvan's Story project.

## **5. Legal and Procurement Implications**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 The cost of procuring consultants to prepare the Conservation Area Management Plan was £4000, which was jointly funded from the existing budgets of the Planning Service and Special Property Projects. The Conservation Area Management Plan sets out priorities for improvements to Girvan town centre which will have financial implications. Another report to Council on 26 June 2025 relates to recommendations for Girvan Regeneration projects that include some of the projects identified in the Girvan Story project. The projects may also be dependent on a successful bid for national funding by the Girvan's Story project. Other recommendations in the Management Plan for maintenance and enhanced management of the conservation area will be dependent on sufficient resources being available within service budgets, or additional funding awards from other bodies.

## **7. Human Resources Implications**

- 7.1 There are no human resources implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report. Any additional work arising from the recommendations of the Conservation Area Management Plan will be met via external funding should the Girvan's Story funding application be successful, with ongoing maintenance of the Conservation Area managed within existing staff resources.

## 8. Risk

### 8.1 ***Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations***

8.1.1 There are no risks associated with adopting the recommendations. However, some actions are dependent on sufficient resources and budgets being available with Services, as noted in the Management Plan.

### 8.2 ***Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations***

8.2.1 The risks associated with rejecting the recommendations are that the draft Management Plan could not be approved, and as this document is an essential requirement for the Girvan's Story project funding application, the funding bid would likely fail, and the project not progress. Without the Management Plan, it would also be more difficult for the Council to identify and prioritise buildings and areas of the Girvan conservation area for repairs and regeneration, and there would be no additional guidance to inform the determination of planning applications.

## 9. Integrated Impact Assessment (incorporating Equalities)

9.1 An IIA has not been undertaken as the proposal is in relation to recommendations for future actions and building repair projects, and for the maintenance of the conservation area. The findings and feedback from the proposed consultation may feed into potential IIA(s) if required, for finalised projects.

## 10. Sustainable Development Implications

10.1 ***Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)*** - This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.

## 11. Options Appraisal

11.1 An options appraisal has not been carried out in relation to the subject matter of this report. This is because the only alternative to the proposals is to not take forward a Conservation Area Management Plan, which would risk the failure of the Girvan's Story project funding application.

## 12. Link to Council Plan

12.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to Priority One: Spaces and Places and Priority Three: Civic and Community Pride of the South Ayrshire Council Plan 2023-28

## 13. Link to Shaping Our Future Council Yes No

13.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to the Council's transformation priority area(s): our assets; our delivery model and will deliver qualitative benefits.

## 14. Results of Consultation

14.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this report.

14.2 Consultation has taken place with Councillor Chris Cullen, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, and Councillor Alec Clark, Portfolio Holder for Tourism, Culture and Rural Affairs, and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

## 15. Next Steps for Decision Tracking Purposes

15.1 If the recommendations above are approved by Members, the Director of Housing, Operations and Development will ensure that all necessary steps are taken to ensure full implementation of the decision within the following timescales, with the completion status reported to the Cabinet in the 'Council and Cabinet Decision Log' at each of its meetings until such time as the decision is fully implemented:

<b><i>Implementation</i></b>	<b><i>Due date</i></b>	<b><i>Managed by</i></b>
Consult on the draft Conservation Area Management Plan	Summer 2025	Service Lead – Planning and Building Standards
Report to Cabinet the consultation findings and seek agreement to adopt the finalised Conservation Area Management Plan, with any modifications.	28 October 2025	Service Lead – Planning and Building Standards

**Background Papers**     [Planning \(Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas\) \(Scotland\) Act 1997](#)

[PAN71 \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

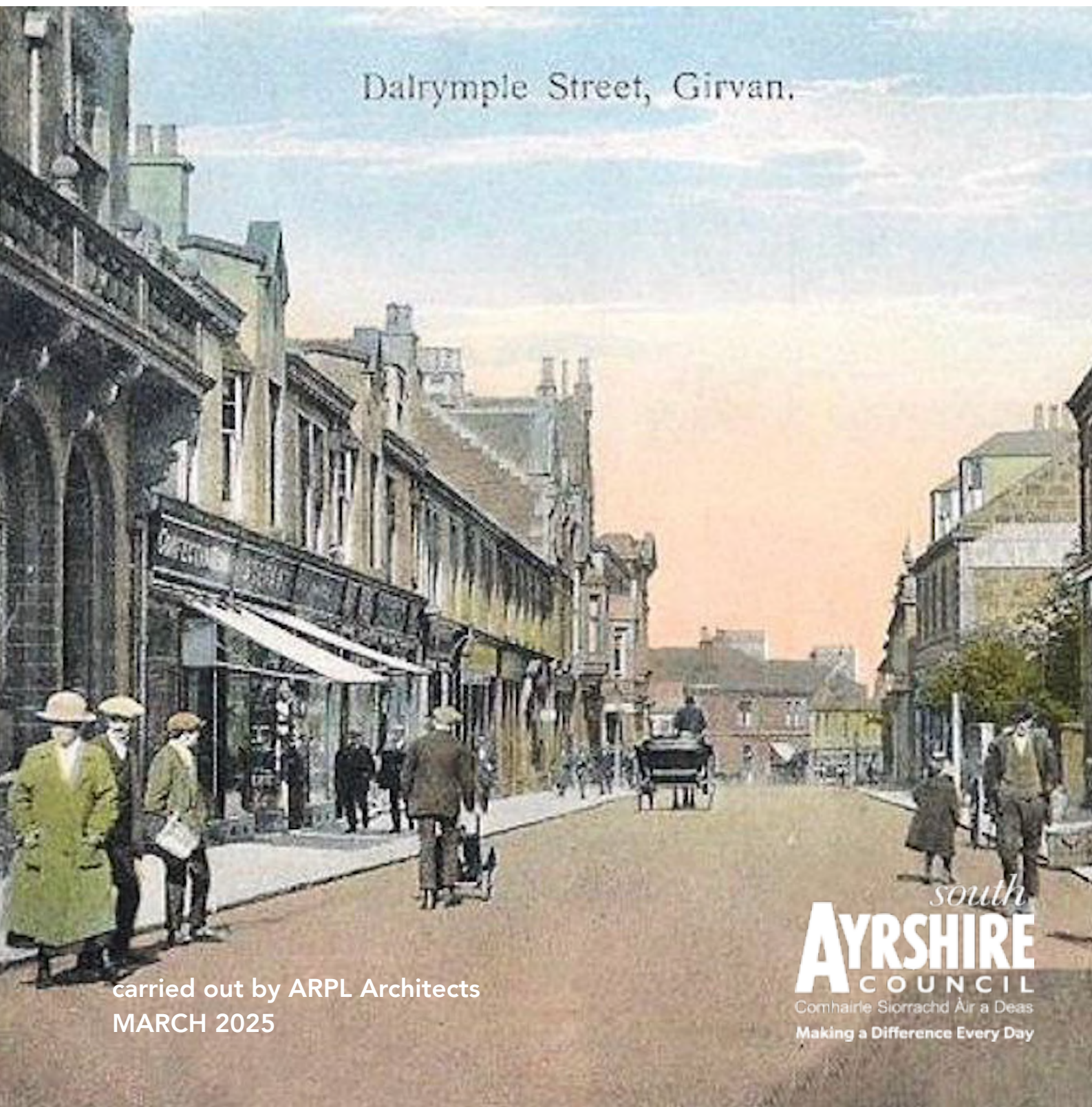
**Person to Contact**     **Craig Iles, Service Lead – Planning and Building Standards**  
**County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr, KA7 1DR**  
**Phone 01292 616 417**  
**Email [craig.iles@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:craig.iles@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)**

**Date: 18 June 2025**

# GIRVAN CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

for South Ayrshire Council

Dalrymple Street, Girvan.



carried out by ARPL Architects  
MARCH 2025

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- B Townscape Analysis
- C Shopfront Exemplars
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- E Gazetteer

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION



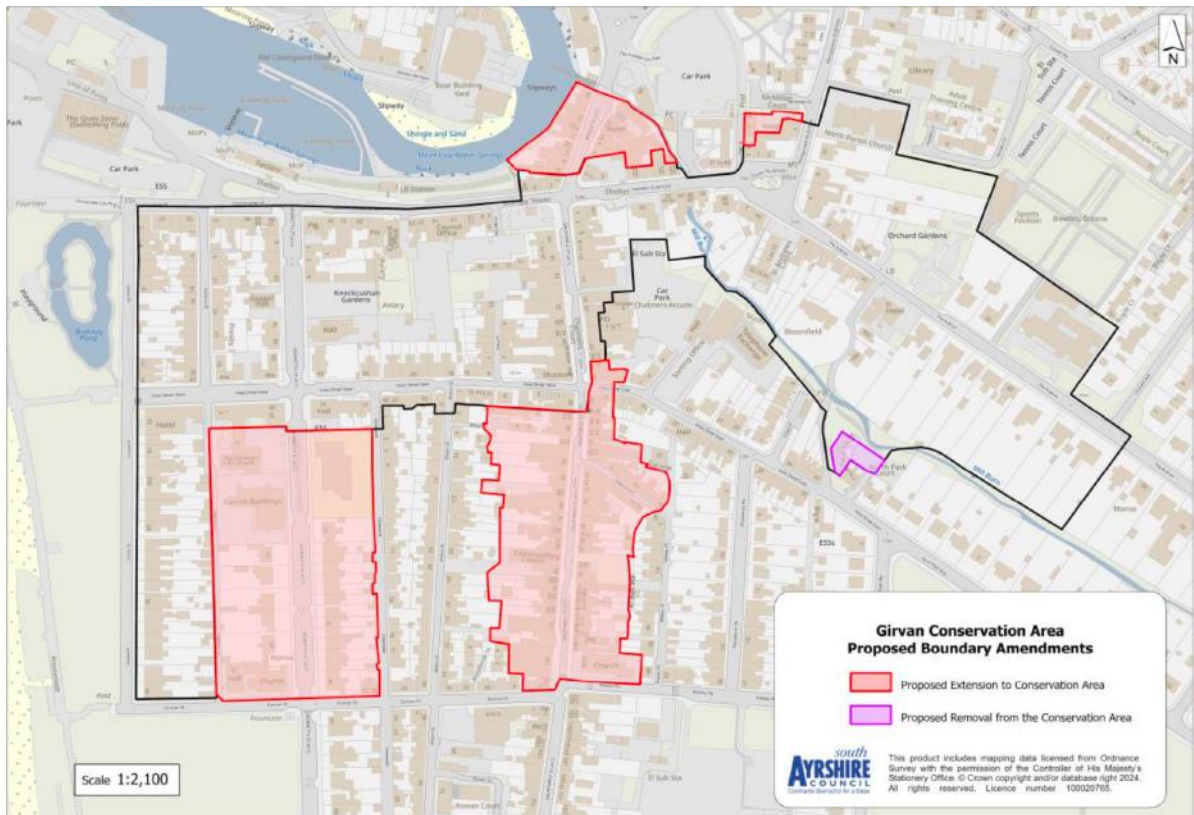
## 1.0 Introduction and Objectives

1.1 ARPL Architects were commissioned to prepare a Conservation Area Management Plan for the Girvan Conservation area by South Ayrshire Council. This was part of a range of studies aimed at supporting grant applications for the town centre regeneration project in Girvan. Girvan's Story is a Community Led Regeneration Project developed by South Ayrshire Council in partnership with the local community. The project is a Heritage and Place project funded through Historic Environment Scotland's and the National Lottery Heritage Fund to develop a regeneration scheme.

The Heritage and Place programme aims to contribute to the development of a vibrant and sustainable place in Girvan, through this community-led regeneration of the historic environment. Decisions on how best to care for the built heritage need to be based on a full understanding of its historical, architectural, and wider value. This Management Plan is therefore underpinned by South Ayrshire Council's Conservation Area Appraisal of 2024. The appraisal explored issues including historic development, street pattern, architecture, and building materials.

The programme has a number of key aims

- Enable the Girvan community to prioritise investment in their local historic environment assets
- Renew their appreciation of their local historic environment and its sense of place.
- Strengthen the resilience of historic environment assets in Girvan



- build some capacity of communities to continue to maintain the conservation area assets.
- Build a sustainable base of traditional skills for the local area

Alongside the Conservation Area Management Plan and Maintenance Action Plan an Architectural Gazetteer have been prepared to provide detailed guidance on the regeneration project. A Materials Audit has been developed examining the detail of the buildings in the Girvan's Story area.

- 1.2 The project has received first stage approval from Historic Environment Scotland's Heritage & Place Programme and the National Lottery Heritage Fund to develop a Regeneration Scheme involving conservation work to a range of significant buildings in Girvan, and a programme of activities & training to encourage engagement with the heritage and the development of traditional skills.
- 1.3 Girvan's Story is a heritage - led regeneration scheme providing property owners, within the Girvan Conservation Area, with the opportunity to apply for grant funding for building repairs, re-instatement of architectural detail and shop front improvements.

The careful repair and improvement to historic buildings is of fundamental importance in the maintenance of the quality and character in the town.

The restoration of the key priority buildings combined with a small grants scheme is hoped to enhance and maximise the cultural and heritage assets in the town and aid the development of the economic and human potential of the town centre.

The Conservation Area Management Plan (CAMP) is intended to establish a planning and management framework for maintaining the special character of Girvan Conservation Area, and for taking forward enhancement proposals within the constraints of available resources. The Management Plan draws on the Girvan Conservation Area Appraisal, which identified the key elements that contribute to the special historic and architectural character of the area.

#### **1.4 Conservation Philosophy**

The aim of the current study is to implement a viable guidance strategy for the conservation of the town centre Conservation Area. By enhancing building exteriors and condition to a high standard within the framework of the South Ayrshire Council policies, the safeguarding of the heritage of Girvan's historic centre to align with National guidelines of PAN71 can hopefully be achieved.

The conservation repair works identified for the priority buildings in the core,, will be implemented according to internationally recognised conservation policies and practices identified for Scotland through the Stirling Charter and the Burra Charter, as formulated by the International Council on Monuments and Sites and the British Standard BS7913

*Guide to the Principles of Conservation of Historic Buildings*. These documents are widely accepted and adopted as the standard for heritage conservation practice.

This document is to identify the overall policies and strategies, which will guide the conservation of the core town centre buildings, and will form the basis for all subsequent conservation decisions.

This will address the following points:-

- Define a management structure through which the conservation policy is capable of being implemented for the long-term care of the buildings in the town centre
- Identify the most appropriate way of caring for the fabric of the townscape and character.
- Identify a strategy for prioritising and administering a small grants scheme for the care and appropriate upgrade of shops, business premises and dwellings in the Conservation Area. To be delivered on a rolling programme
- Set guidelines for future proposals.
- Identify and develop opportunities for traditional building skills and heritage and cultural education.

## **1.5 Process**

The process for preparing a Management Plan is broadly as follows:

- Understand the heritage and why it is important
- Assess how it is currently managed;
- Identify risks to the heritage;
- Decide on the management and maintenance aims;
- Make an maintenance plan
- Identify costs and resources.

The aim of this is then to

- adopt proven traditional building techniques based on analysis of the causes of defects and an understanding of the historic development of the building.
- avoid unnecessary damage and avoid replacement of sound historic fabric.
- restore architectural detail and heritage features based on appropriate evidence.
- safeguard the future of the building with regular maintenance.

# 2.0 METHODOLOGY

PAN  
71



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE  
Development Department

preserve

enhance

appraisal

manage



Planning Advice Note

# conservation

Area Management

## 2.0 Methodology

Preparation of the Conservation Area Management Plan developed in a step by step process.

### 2.1 Review and Survey Work

- The initial work centred around an analysis of the Conservation Area and the preparation of a survey of all the buildings in the Conservation Area and a Materials Audit .This examined the detail of all the buildings in the Girvan Story Area - an area slightly beyond the boundaries of the Conservation Area.
- Historical research on the development of the town
- Alongside the work on the Materials Audit the Gazetteer, which forms part of the CAMP, was developed and recorded. This consisted of a detailed survey of the buildings in the Central portion of the Conservation Area. This primarily focussed on Dalrymple Street, Bridge Street Hamilton Street and Knockcushan Street. Following the survey work on the preparatory documents ARPL carried out a townscape analysis primarily looking at

Streetscape and building character

Architectural Characteristics

Public realm



## **2.2 Review of current documentation and guidance**

A review was carried out of the current statutory guidance on the management of Conservation Areas and a Review of the Girvan Conservation Area Appraisal (2024)

This examined the current statutory controls, implementation of these and the effectiveness in the successful management of the area.

Planning Permission  
Listed Building Consent  
Article 4 Directive

## **2.3 Assessment of Risks and Opportunities**

An overview was taken of the risks to the qualities of the Conservation Area and the buildings within it. ARPL looked to identify the factors which impact on the character of the CA, the nature of the risks involved in this and the potential for these to be addressed.

The future of the Conservation Area is dependant on the successful management of these risks.

## **2.4 Establishing of Management Strategy**

The approach of solely relying on statutory control of the conservation area will not be sufficient to maintain the character of the CA. The current condition and decline in standards demonstrates that a wider ranging approach is required engaging more fully with the local community and building owners through a process of support and information.

The approach suggested involves engaging at three levels

- STATUTORY MANAGEMENT
- COMMUNITY BASED GROUP MANAGEMENT
- INDIVIDUAL OWNER MANAGEMENT

By suggesting an approach to all three of these management tools the maintenance of the conservation area can be managed in a more successful and comprehensive way.

# 3.0

## UNDERSTANDING THE HERITAGE



### 3.0 Understanding the Heritage

#### 3.1 Conservation Area boundary

The Girvan Conservation Area boundary encompasses three key character areas in the town centre

- the historic centre originally around Bridge Street, Hamilton Street and High Street
- the Georgian new town planning to the South West
- the Victorian villas along the Avenue

This brings together the key character and amenity areas of the town

- the town centre
- harbourfront
- promenade frontage and park and
- the villas area to the east

The area includes the main areas of the town developed through the 18th and 19th centuries which define the character of Girvan today.



Fig. 2 Dalrymple Street 19th C

### 3.2 History and development of Girvan

The town of Girvan lies in the South-West of Scotland, 21 miles south of Ayr and 12 miles north of Ballantrae. The town sits at the mouth of the Water of Girvan, one of the few safe anchorages on the Carrick coast, the original basis for a settlement in this location.

The early village originally known as Invergarven developed on higher ground to the east above one of the curves in the river in the location of the current old churchyard and High Street. A Burgh charter originally granted to Robert Boyd of Ballochoul in 1668 was only put into execution in 1785 by which time the superiors were the Dalrymples of Bargany.



Fig. 3 George Taylor and Andrew Skinner 1776

They imagined a new town with a roughly grid plan on lands to the south-west of the old town. This was populated by weavers and seafarers and provides the main identity and character of the town today, a small regional town of approximately 6,400 people and the principal town of South Carrick.

The town is laid out predominately to the south of the river. This layout was primarily developed throughout the 19th Century with the Georgian gridded layout providing the

foundation for what is still the current street pattern for the 19th and 20th century buildings.

The major development of buildings through the 19th century and early 20th century provide the basis for the conservation area buildings.



Fig. 4 William Johnson 1802- 1840

### 3.3 Historic Development

There is evidence of early prehistoric and Roman activity in the region around Girvan with Scheduled sites recorded at Gallow Hill settlement and Girvan Mains enclosure to the north; Houdston Hill enclosure to the east; and Mote Hill burial site, Dow Hill Fort and Shalloch Hill enclosure to the south of the present town.

The actual settlement of Girvan however most likely dates from the medieval period. The parish church, dedicated to St Cuthbert, was situated in the graveyard on Old Street, was referred to in 1296, confining the medieval basis for the town.

Girvan remained a small village up until the end of the 18th Century, and start of the 19th Century, primarily based on its fishing, tanning, weaving and as a local market. The village at this time was based around the Flushes, between Old Street and High Street,

The new superiors, the Dalrymples of Bargany, had plans to lay out a new town, on a broadly grid pattern, on the lands of Doune to the south of the old village. This substantial expansion of Girvan commenced in the last years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The new town largely developed around the streets of what is now the conservation area, with Louisa Drive, Henrietta Street and Dalrymple Street the principal north-south streets; and Knockcushan Street, Hamilton Street, Ailsa Street and Duncan Street running east-west. Hamilton Street and Ailsa Street had eastward extensions at The Avenue and Ailsa Street East (formerly Plum Street) respectively.

The layout of the new town first appears in maps of the early 19th Century



Fig. 5 Ordnance Survey 1856- 7

The development of the various streets has resulted in clear distinction between the character of different areas. Dalrymple Street became the main commercial street in the town, while Knockcushan Street provided access to the harbour. Louisa Drive and Henrietta Street become the location for Victorian townhouses and semi detached homes while the Avenue to the East provided a location for Girvan's best 19<sup>th</sup> century villas. In the areas between the main streets ,the lesser streets, such as Harbour Street, Greenside and Wilson Street, established a strong identity as a cottage community that still exists with a recognisable character, separate from the rest of the town.

The coming of the railway to Girvan in 1860 marked the start of the town's new identity as a seaside resort. The original passenger terminus was situated adjacent to the goods

station at Bridge Street but, as it was not possible to extend the line from the original station towards Stranraer, a second station was opened at the site of the current station in October 1877 by the Girvan and Portpatrick Junction Railway (G&PJR). Girvan was also connected to Glasgow by weekly steamer sailings.

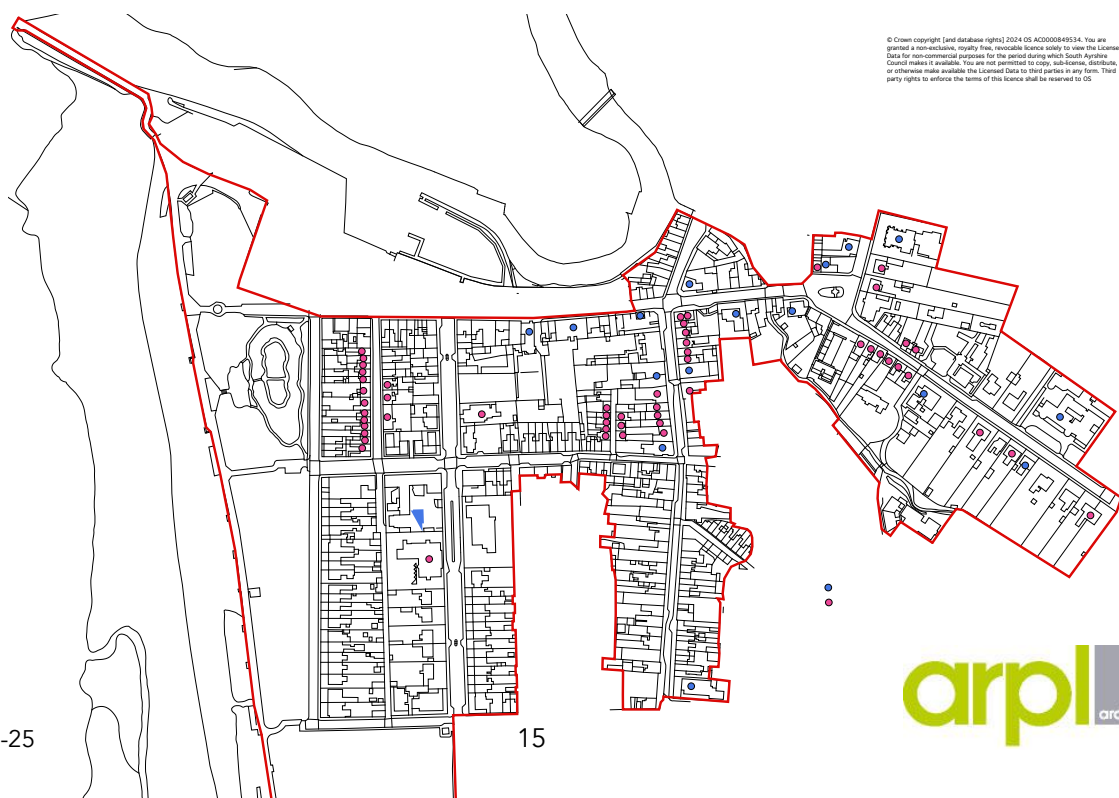
The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw continued improvements to the town's community infrastructure with the formation of Stair Park, local merchant Thomas McKechnie funded the McKechnie Institute in 1888. The parish church was rebuilt on Montgomerie Street between 1882 and 1884, replacing the old kirk at Church Square. By the time of the Ordnance Survey mapping of 1904 the town had taken the form which is visible today. The original old town to the east of the river has mostly disappeared with the town centre now formed around the gridded Georgian plan on the flat fields to the south-west. This is the street pattern which gives the character and quality of the town today with a range of buildings from the modest early 19th-century cottages through to the formally composed commercial and cultural buildings of the latter half of the 19th century.

The development of the town from its modest beginnings to a significant regional resort is reflected in the changing the use of materials and in particular the predominant but varied types Sandstone used to build the streets of Girvan.

Girvan has been a safe anchorage, a fishing port, a market town, a weaving town, and a Victorian seaside resort. Although no longer a mass holiday destination for urban west of Scotland, Girvan remains a significant town of some character.

The town now contains 51 Listed Buildings of grade B and C comprising 69 properties. These generally date from the 19th century with the exception of the Davidson Hospital from 1919 - 22 and the late 18th century farmhouse at 11- 17 the Avenues.

There are no A listed buildings in Girvan.



# 4.0

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE



## 4.0 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of Girvan Conservation Area primarily relates to the overall qualities of the townscape and how this reflects the historical development of this coastal town.

The area of the core conservation area has been identified as being most significant as it reflects the development of the town, as evidenced by the historic maps that have been examined. Whilst some of the buildings may have been replaced over the centuries the area still reflects the historic development of the town centre.

Increasing the significance of the core area is the high concentration of listed buildings within the area. While the buildings are Category B or C(S) they present a unified frontage together to form a distinctive character to the core area. This is particularly evident in Dalrymple street and the cross at Stumpy Tower

Further increasing the significance of the core area is its relative completeness regarding intact street frontages and well-defined boundaries. There are very few gap sites and SAC may consider respectful infill developments for these sites. Any new infill development should be carefully controlled to ensure it sits harmoniously within the make-up of the core area.

In addition to the Core Area the surrounding streetscapes are significant contributors to the character of the conservation Area.

### 4.1 Townscape and Street Pattern

The conservation area consists of three main character areas

- the original historic core focussed Bridge Street, Hamilton Street and the original High Street
- The Georgian New Town planned at the end of the 18th century to the South West of the town centre
- the Victorian suburb of the Avenue with its fine villas

The buildings and structures within these areas predominately still reflect this pattern of Georgian and Victorian development overlaid onto the weaving and fishing town.

The street patterns of the loose topographical streets of the original core, the gridded Georgian town planning and the generous Victorian avenue are all a clearly visible setting for the town buildings

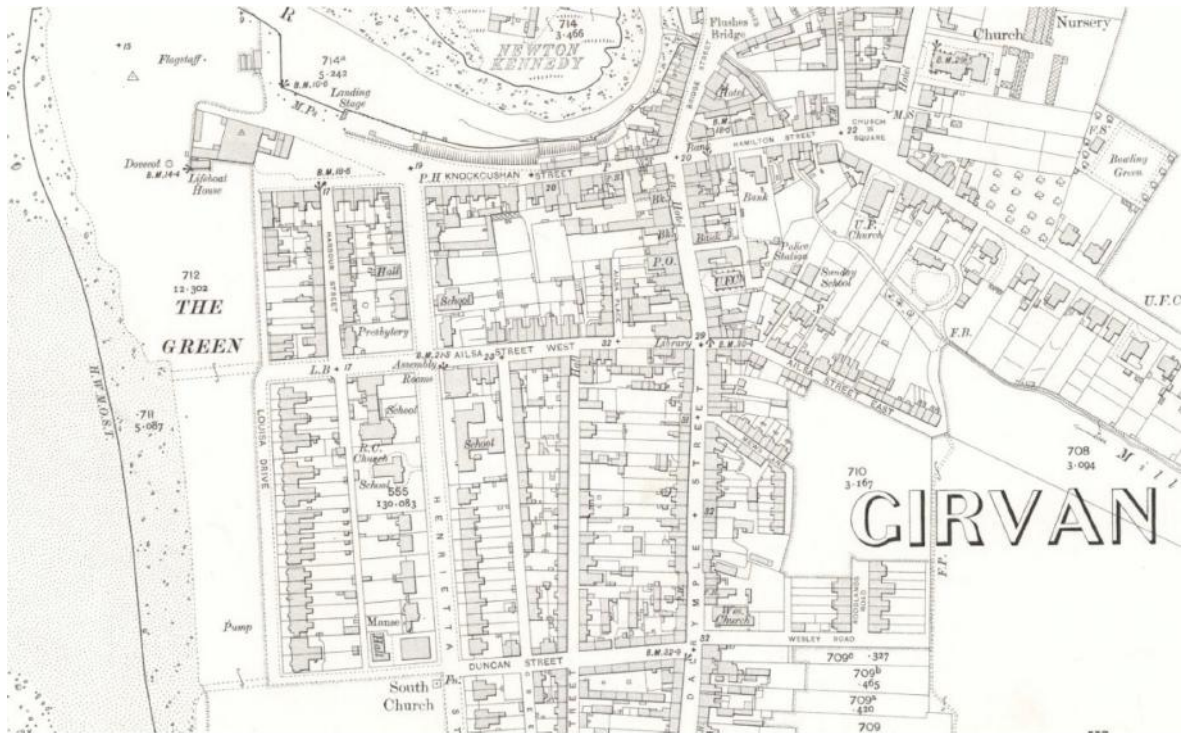


fig. 6 Ordnance Survey map 1904

## 4.2 Architectural Features.

Within this overall street pattern a range of architecture features help define the town centre character.

The landmark qualities of Stumpy Tower and the McKechnie Institute mark the key points of the main commercial thoroughfare, Dalrymple Street. The North Parish and Methodist churches provide key wider context markers on the journey through the town. The residential and commercial building then provide clear range of street frontage buildings defining the public realm of the predominately 19th century town.

## 4.3 Open Space

The Conservation Area is then bounded by the major open spaces of the River Girvan, the beach frontage and the two major parks, Stair Park and Victory Park. This open outlook completes the special qualities of the town and its Coastal Character

## 4.4 Conservation Area Management Objectives

The principle aims of the conservation area management will be to ensure the preservation and enhancement of this historic townscape and the buildings which contribute to this.

# 5.0

# STATUTORY GUIDANCE AND CONTROL



County Buildings Wellington Square Ayr KA7 1DR Tel: 01292 616 107 Email: [planning.development@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:planning.development@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)

Applications cannot be validated until all the necessary documentation has been submitted and the required fee has been paid.

Thank you for completing this application form:

#### ONLINE REFERENCE

The online reference is the unique reference for your online form only. The Planning Authority will allocate an Application Number when your form is validated. Please quote this reference if you need to contact the planning Authority about this application.

### Type of Application

What is this application for? Please select one of the following: \*

- Application for planning permission (including changes of use and surface mineral working).
- Application for planning permission in principle.
- Further application, (including renewal of planning permission, modification, variation or removal of a planning condition etc)
- Application for Approval of Matters specified in conditions.

### Description of Proposal

Please describe the proposal including any change of use: \* (Max 500 characters)

## 5.0 Statutory Guidance and Controls

### 5.1 Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 sets out current legislative framework for the designation of conservation areas, defining Conservation Areas

“as an area of special architectural or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.”

Planning authorities are required to periodically determine which parts of their district merit designation as a Conservation Area. Designation offers statutory protection of conservation areas in order to protect their special character.

There are twenty three designated conservation areas in the South Ayrshire Council area of varying character.

The designation of a conservation area also provides control with current legislation dictating that Conservation Area designation automatically brings the following works under planning control:

- Demolition of buildings
- Removal of, or work to, trees
- Development involving house extensions, roof alterations, windows, stone cleaning or painting of the exterior, satellite dishes, provision of hard surfaces, the erection or alteration of gates, fences and walls, and;
- Additional control over ancillary buildings (such as sheds/garages) and raised decking/platforms.

These controls are outlined within the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 (As amended). Updated Guidance is given in Planning circular 1/2024 regarding permitted development including in Conservation Areas.

Amendments to permitted development rights regarding window replacement is of significant importance in the context of the Girvan Conservation Area.

The designation of a Conservation area does not preclude any change or development , but seeks to ensure that any new development is handled with care and will not

“harm the character or appearance of the area. ”

Additional guidance is included in Scottish Government’s Planning Advice Note *PAN71 - Conservation Area Management* which complements national policy supplying further advice on the management of conservation areas.

## 5.2 Listed Buildings and Listed Building Consent

Buildings or structures which are deemed to be of special architectural or historical interest may be listed by Historic Environment Scotland under one of three categories, noted below. They are classified according to their relative importance in order to provide additional statutory protection.

Listing applies to both the interior and exterior of the building.

**Category A** listed buildings are considered to be of national or international importance, or fine little altered examples of some particular period, style or building type.

**Category B** listed buildings are of regional or more than local importance, or major examples of some particular period, style or building type which may have been altered.

**Category C(S)** listed buildings are of local importance, lesser examples of any period, style, or building type, as originally constructed, or moderately altered; and simple traditional buildings which group well with others in categories A and B.

Any work to Listed Buildings either internal or external – other than basic maintenance on a 'like for like' basis – will typically require Listed Building Consent, even where Planning Consent may not be required.

There are currently 15 Category B Listed Buildings and 35 Category C(S) Listed Building in Girvan. There are no Category A listed buildings.

Refer to Appendix A for the locations of these buildings.

## 5.3 Article 4 Directions

Additional controls may be applied to changes within Conservation Areas through Article 4 Directions. The purpose of an Article 4 Direction is to provide protection for certain types of development within a Conservation Area – usually relatively minor works - that would otherwise not require planning permission. This may include the replacement of doors and windows, the erection of fences or the installation of satellite antennae, or other such works that could threaten the character of the area. Article 4 directions are location specific.

In order to safeguard and enhance the qualities of the conservation area, restrictions to the following classes of permitted development rights in Girvan Conservation Area apply by means of an Article 4 Direction:

Class 1 Enlargement, improvement or other alterations to a dwellinghouse.

Class 3 Provision or alteration of buildings or enclosures within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse.

Class 7 Construction or alteration of gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure.

Class 8 Formation, laying out and construction of a means of access.

Class 14 Provision on land of buildings, moveable structures, works, plant or machinery required temporarily in connection with the duration of operation being carried out on land adjoining that land.

Class 15 The use of land (other than a building or land within the curtilage of a building) for any purpose, except as a caravan site or an open air market, on not more than 28 days in total in any calendar year, and the erection or placing of moveable structures on the land for the purposes of that use.

Class 30 The erection or construction and the maintenance, improvement or other alteration by a local authority of any building not exceeding 4 metres in height or 200 cubic metres in capacity; and lamp standards, refuse bins, public shelters and similar structures.

Class 39(1) Development for the purposes by a gas supplier.

Class 40(1) Development by statutory undertakers for the generation, transmission or supply of electricity.

Class 41(1) Development required for the purposes of any road transport undertaking.

Class 43 Development required for the purposes of the Post Office.

Class 67(1) Development by a telecommunications code system operator.

Any of the above items within the Conservation Area will require consent applications to be submitted once the Article 4 proposal is approved.

#### **5.4 Tree Preservation Orders**

A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) is made by the local authority, and its purpose is to protect individual tree(s), groups of tree(s) or woodlands which have particular amenity value, historic or cultural significance as well as tree(s) which make a significant contribution to the landscape or townscape or because there may be a potential threat to the trees.

There are currently no Tree Preservation Orders applicable to Girvan

#### **5.5 Planning Guidance**

Local Councils are required to produce Local Development Plans (LDP) which are the starting point for making decisions on planning applications. Development plans should be up to date, succinct and map-based, reflecting the unique characteristics of the places and communities they cover and enabling planning authorities to deliver the right development in the right place. South Ayrshire Council's Local Development Plan (LDP) can be accessed at <https://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/article/28782/Local-development-plan-2>

Planning permission is usually required for any new building works or major changes such as extensions to existing properties, or changes of use to a building. In certain situations small building works may be classed as 'permitted development' and not require planning consent, however, permitted development is restricted in Conservation Areas, and can be further controlled by Article 4, see below. General maintenance work does not usually require planning permission if carried out on a 'like for like' basis

Planning permission is not required for internal work to an unlisted building.  
Planning guidance relevant to Girvan Conservation Area is available on the following topics:

*Planning Policy No.7 – Dormer Windows (1994)*

*Planning Policy No.12 – Sunshades & Canopies on Commercial Frontages (1981)*

*Planning Policy No.13 – Advertisement Signs General (1982)*

*Planning Policy No.14 – Velux Rooflights (1982)*

*Planning Policy No.19 – Satellite Receiver Dishes (1987)*

*Planning Policy No.24 – Shopfront Security (1994)*

*Planning Guidance: Open Space and Designing New Residential Developments (2010)*  
(provides detailed guidance in respect of public and private amenity spaces when considering proposals for residential development).

*Planning Guidance: Historic Environment (2015)* (provides detailed guidance on principles of development affecting built heritage resources, conservation area appraisals and management plans and policies giving guidance on specific types of development).

Design Guidelines for Advertisements and Commercial Signage (2014)

# 6.0 RISKS



## 6.0 Risks

The risks to the character of the conservation area generally fall into three main categories

- loss or deterioration of key buildings at risk
- the general overall degradation which occurs through multiple smaller scale poor quality changes to the historic buildings.
- gradual degradation due to lack of maintenance of building fabric

### 6.1 Buildings at Risk

There are currently three buildings in Girvan town centre which are on the Buildings at Risk register.

- The Davidson Cottage Hospital , the Avenue, grade B listed from 1921
- Nos. 6- 8 High Street grade B listed early 19th century stables building
- Church Hall , Wilson Street an unlisted former Methodist Chapel from 1823



The three buildings are on the periphery of the core town centre.

In addition there are a number of significant buildings on Dalrymple Street whose condition is of increasing concern.

- Former Post Office 22 - 24 Dalrymple Street, mid 19th century commercial building
- Former Royal Bank 14 - 18 Dalrymple Street, three storey mixed use building
- 48 Dalrymple Street, two storey 19th century building now a roof less shell as a result of a fire.
- 91 - 95 Dalrymple Street, two and a half storey mid 19th century building showing significant distress

- 13 Ailsa Place, a single storey cottage in a street of listed buildings

All these buildings are at risk of significant deterioration without timely intervention.



## 6.2 Degradation through small scale alterations

The biggest overall risk to the character of the conservation area lies in the gradual deterioration as a result of multiple small scale changes to the street frontage buildings. This will eventually lead to an overall major decline in the historical quality of the area.

This is a process which has already significantly impacted on the conservation area through multiple unauthorised alterations to the building in the conservation area. Approximately 80% of the windows in the conservation area have been replaced with mixed modern style windows.

The use of modern and inappropriate shopfronts and commercial signage has a similar debilitating impact.

Further decline of this nature will result in a poor quality environment. In particular if any of the buildings at key locations, such as the cross at Knockcushan Street / Dalrymple Street are altered this will have a heightened impact on the perception of the town centre.

An approach to management which reduces the incidence of inappropriate unauthorised alterations is an important step



## 6.3 Degradation through lack of maintenance

In a similar way to the decline of the conservation through small scale alterations , the cumulative impact of poorly maintained buildings has a significant effect on the perception of the conservation area.

Typical elements of the building which are visually degrading are

- leaking and poorly maintained rainwater goods,
- deteriorating stonework
- poorly decoration windows and doors
- chimney stacks in need to repair
- vegetation growth



Putting a regime for regular maintenance in place would bring a significant improvement to the street frontages. This is primarily an issue with the commercial buildings in the Conservation area. The solely residential buildings are generally looked after to a better degree.

#### **6.4 Typical areas of concern**

Key risks to the heritage were identified as:

- Loss of traditional features – particularly original windows and doors

- Deteriorating shop frontages

- Deteriorating stonework to facades

- Vacant shop units.

- Inappropriate commercial signage.

- Modern inappropriate shopfronts

- Low quality pavements in a poor state of repair.

- Lack of public / green spaces & outdoor seating.

The aim of the Maintenance plan is to try to address these concerns and suggest a strategy which will deliver improvements to the approach of building owners.

# 7.0

# MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

## 7.0 Management Strategy

The management of conservation areas involves a wide range of issues (planning, economic development, transport, street maintenance etc.) and people (local and national public authorities and agencies, voluntary and amenity bodies, businesses and individuals etc.). The Appraisal attempts to identify particular issues that currently impact adversely on the condition or character of the Conservation Area, and to suggest possible means of improvement.

Management within the context of this document includes 'all of the activities that can keep heritage in a good condition'

The principal approach to a future management strategy involves recognising that the management and maintenance of the conservation area cannot be left solely to the use of statutory controls

The approach suggested involves engaging at three levels

- STATUTORY MANAGEMENT
- COMMUNITY BASED GROUP MANAGEMENT
- INDIVIDUAL OWNER MANAGEMENT

By suggesting a strategy which engages with all three of these management tools the maintenance of the conservation area can be managed in a more successful and comprehensive way.

## 7.1 Conservation strategy

The conservation strategy set out below has been designed to preserve, maintain and enhance the cultural, economic, historic and architectural values of Girvan Conservation Area.

### **STRATEGY 1 - PRIORITY BUILDINGS**

The principal objective of the conservation and repair of the buildings within the conservation area is to ensure the most significant buildings are in a structurally secure condition and to slow the rate of future deterioration. Work to the priority buildings is a key major step.

### **STRATEGY 2 - STATUTORY CONTROLS**

The designation of the conservation area provides additional controls over development in the area. In addition to the more generic requirement for planning permission consent, via an Article 4 direction, is also required for

- Demolition of buildings
- Removal of, or work to, trees
- Development involving house extensions, roof alterations, windows, stone cleaning or painting of the exterior, satellite dishes, provision of hard surfaces, the erection or alteration of gates, fences and walls, and;
- Additional control over ancillary buildings (such as sheds/garages) and raised decking/platforms.

Engagement with the local community as to the benefits of protecting the conservation area through these statutory controls will help develop a higher standard of development particularly with regard to smaller scale alterations.

A positive approach to supporting appropriate development through the use of this process will help in establishing a consistently high standard of work within the area.

This would be especially beneficial for control over advertising and commercial signage, replacement of rainwater goods, doors and windows, through the withdrawal of permitted development rights for dwellinghouses.

### **STRATEGY 3 - SMALL GRANTS SCHEME**

Through the Small Grants Scheme there is an opportunity to help fund improvement of the building detail, signage and shopfronts and implement the detailed design guidance set out.

### **STRATEGY 4 - OWNER ENGAGEMENT**

Engagement with individual owners to encourage maintenance as a visual and value benefit is a key issue.

Extensive vegetation growth is evident in eaves gutters, chimneys and wallheads throughout the conservation area. Many of the buildings will benefit from the removal of this vegetation and if carried out as a single exercise along a section of street the costs are likely to reduce due to the economies of scale. High-level access available while removing vegetation will also provide an opportunity for consultants to carry out close inspections of high-level fabric and prepare detailed proposals based on the results of these inspections.

Successful engagement over the longer term can be delivered through this process being led by community based groups such as Girvan's Story or the local business association.

## **STRATEGY 5 - CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS**

Encourage through education and engagement the use of best practice in construction, maintenance and alteration works. Development of local skills to ensure availability of suitable tradesmen knowledgeable in historic buildings materials and work.

Best practice conservation techniques should be employed to ensure robust and sympathetic detailing of repair work. This will assist in securing the long-term viability of the historic fabric.

## **STRATEGY 6 - PUBLIC REALM**

Inappropriate street furniture and signage detract from the setting of the conservation area. This should be extended throughout the conservation area. Careful consideration should be given to design and placing of street furniture and signage.

## **STRATEGY 7 - PUBLIC LIGHTING**

Following on from inappropriate street furniture, lighting is another issue that would benefit from careful consideration and rationalisation. Careful selection of a number of fitting styles, for various situations, should be implemented. The use of feature lighting on the priority buildings can add significantly to the nighttime quality of the conservation area and identity of the town.

The feature lighting to the Stumpy Tower landscaped area is the first example of this to be implemented.

## **STRATEGY 8 - INFILL DEVELOPMENT**

Although there are few gap sites within the conservation area where these do existing consideration can be given to promoting infill developments. Sites where development should be encouraged include

- the shell at 48 Dalrymple Street
- the gap site at 89 Dalrymple Street currently planned as a small park by SAC
- the gap site at 8- 10 Hamilton Street
- undeveloped frontage on Louisa Drive
- gap site at 11 Henrietta Street

Infill development in these locations will provide a continuing regeneration of the town centre avoiding sites developing into major eyesores.

# 8.0 MANAGEMENT PLAN

## 8.0 Maintenance Plan

### 8.1 Management principles in Conservation

Maintaining quality is a key aim of good stewardship and involves the following considerations:

- proper repair and maintenance of the historic environment is generally the most sustainable course of action;
- management, and any proposed alteration or change of use, should be appropriate and follow best conservation practice;
- to retain historic character and future performance of older buildings it will be important to use appropriate and compatible materials and construction techniques;
- it is important that new developments are sensitive to historic character and attain high standards in design and construction, while recognising the portfolio of original building materials;

It is recognised that some conflict can arise between the sustainable management of the historic environment and actions that are considered sustainable in other respects. Replacement high performance windows is a typical example of this. It is also possible that the impact of proposed actions on the historic environment will be uncertain. In these cases the risk of potentially damaging actions should be minimised by following these key principles:

- ensure that existing and intended management or use is appropriate and based on best available knowledge;
- ensure that any proposed change is necessary;
- use appropriate assessment methodologies to determine the full impact of any proposed management, use or development;
- avoid change wherever its effects cannot be adequately assessed;
- where change is to proceed, adopt strategies to mitigate its impact and keep any interventions to a minimum;
- ensure that management or alteration, including remedial work, is sympathetic to historic character, using compatible materials and construction techniques.

## 8.2 Approach

To deliver the successful management of the conservation area cannot rely on just statutory management by the South Ayrshire Council planning department. The current position on unauthorised alterations suggests the statutory approach requires additional support through initiatives involving grant support and a voluntary approach to building and conservation area management.

Local residents and property owners also have a major role to play in protecting and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area by ensuring that properties are regularly maintained and original features retained or reinstated.

This secondary approach will require a range of additional initiatives alongside the enforcement of statutory controls

Opportunities to protect and enhance the heritage suggested are :

- Tighten implementation of current regulations to offer more protection to the Conservation Area ,and to disseminate this guidance.
- Provide grant assistance for reinstatement and repair to historic fabric and detailing
- Target the buildings with remaining historic architectural features and target the building owners by making them aware of the grant opportunity.
- Provide education regarding building maintenance.
- Encourage local events around improvements to buildings
- Build upon the community interest by encouraging engagement with the process, and ongoing responsibilities
- Provide support to community group joint action on maintenance e.g. gutter cleaning
- Provide guidance on window replacements including exemplars
- Provide specific guidance on shopfront replacement covering proportions, signage, materials , security

## 8.3 Conservation, Maintenance and development strategy

The implementation of a town regeneration strategy will be carried out over a number of years and works will be carried out in a number of headings. The recommendations are

### Heading 1 Priority buildings

Work with owners/ occupiers of buildings identified as Priority buildings and implement comprehensive repairs. These buildings are the most significant within the core conservation area.

Building currently identified as priority buildings are

Stumpy Tower  
McKechnie Institute  
14- 18 Dalrymple Street

with potential back up buildings of  
Former Post Office 22 - 24 Dalrymple Street  
Former Bank 17 Dalrymple Street  
Townhouse, formerly Knockcushan House, 25 Knockcushan Street

## **Heading 2      Small grants / shopfronts**

Identify buildings which have shopfronts which would benefit from upgrade and renewal using historical models. In the initial stage focus could be on the stretch of Dalrymple Street between Stumpy Tower and the McKechnie Institute to provide a focussed approach

## **Heading 3      Repair and Maintenance**

Target owners/ occupiers of buildings identified as needing assistance with external repairs decoration, minor repair works, window repairs, gutter upgrades and clearing .

This may include an overall street wide programme of gutter clearing and high-level vegetation removal to the core conservation area as a whole, to benefit from the economies of scale

### **8.4 Specific issues identified affecting condition of buildings**

The surveying has highlighted a series of specific issues that are having a detrimental impact on the character and quality of the buildings. Many of these are due to lack of maintenance, poor design and lack of awareness of the significance of the buildings value to the historic character. Quite a few of the unacceptable alterations can be reversed with substitution of replacement elements that are more appropriate in colour, design and traditional detail . Particular problems identified may be improved on with financial assistance of a Small Grants Scheme.

#### **ROOF LEVEL PROBLEMS**

Slipped and missing slates, blockages and vegetation growth in gutters, skews and parapets, missing ridge tiles, decayed chimneys, moss growth on slates are all recurring problems within the Conservation Area.

#### **LONG TERM NEGLECT AND DECAY**

Cracks and missing pointing, spalling masonry, flaking paint, damage and graffiti, weather staining and moss, leaking gutters and downpipes, are all symptoms of long-term neglect, which can lead to serious problems of rot and decay.

### **INAPPROPRIATE FABRIC REPAIRS AND MATERIALS**

The use of modern materials like non-breathable paints, cement mortars or concrete can accelerate decay of stonework. Pieced in odd slates or replacement concrete tiles can add stress to old structures.

### **VACANCY OR MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY**

Without occupants a building can quickly develop problems and no general maintenance is carried out, placing some Buildings at Risk. Co-ordinating multiple tenants and owners can make full repair difficult to achieve.

Boarded up buildings attract further vandalism and theft of materials.

### **UNSYMPATHETIC TO CONSERVATION AREA**

Widespread use of upvc rainwater goods and replacement windows is unsympathetic to historic and traditional buildings. Many shopfronts have poorly sized and positioned fascias and signage and many are crudely made or temporary

### **DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT PLANNING CONSENT**

In a number of situations unlawful development has taken place with extensions, dormer windows, change of materials, replacement of windows and doors, erection of additional of "clip-on" technology.

It may be that some building owners in the Conservation Area are not aware of the planning controls and permitted development ground rules, and enforcement action to correct this has often not been feasible or practical. This can partly addressed by promotion through summary guidance pamphlets, public meetings etc that may be associated with the launch of a Small Grants Scheme.

### **COMMERCIAL INFLUENCE TO IMPROVEMENT OF THE CONSERVATION AREA**

There are some good examples of well thought out and responsive shopfront and commercial designs in the Conservation Area.

Good business promotion should be encouraging a clean and tidy shopfront. Carefully selected use of lettering styles and colour help with commercial identity – it is possible for large chain stores and national businesses to modify their branding to suit local identity. Use of the buildings own features to set up a framework for the shopfront design can produce a high quality of design. The positioning and sizing of fascias and signs, with discrete lighting and integrated security shutter should be considered.

A Town Centre Design Guide could make detailed and useful comments.

## 8.5 Action

The actions proposed to manage the improvement upgrade and maintenance of the conservation area are set out in the following table

Heading	Action	lead party	
Timescale	Ongoing throughout period		
1 STATUTORY			
1.1	Local information exchange on Conservation Standards and statutory requirements.	SAC	
1.2	Development control review application against aims of Conservation Area management	SAC development control	
Timescale	Year 1 - Initial grant start up period		
2 GRANTS			
2.1	Inaugurate small grant scheme	grant officer	
2.2	Promote Grant scheme through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- social media</li> <li>- local events</li> <li>- community group meetings</li> <li>- business groups</li> <li>- individual targeting</li> </ul>	grant officer, Girvan Story small grants steering group	
2.3	Exemplars/ Pilot Projects  Identify key properties in core area which would benefit from intervention and seek to engage with owners to bring project forward.  Promote exemplars as best practice	grant officer, Girvan Story small grants steering group	
2.4	Quick wins Identify properties where improvement works required are limited but impact would be significant. Engage with owners to seek early implementation of upgrade scheme.	grant officer, Girvan Story small grants steering group	
Timescale	Annual		
3 MANAGED REPAIRS			

3.1	<p>Work with local business groups to establish combined approach to maintenance. This is particularly applicable to high level repairs- chimneys and gutters</p> <p>1st visit to carry out gutter repairs and replacements- high level work.</p> <p>Ongoing visits to carry out annual gutter cleaning</p>	Local business group	
Timescale	Year 1		
<b>4 GUIDANCE</b>			
4.1	<p>Raise awareness of need for maintenance through local events/ talks</p> <p>Emphasise financial benefits of well maintained buildings</p>	grant officer	
4.2	<p>Experts Roadshow</p> <p>Organise advice days when free advice on repairs and maintenance is given to local residents.</p> <p>Possible attendance by acceptable suppliers</p>	SAC architects builders window suppliers?	
4.3	<p>Guidance information</p> <p>Publish and deliver guidance notes to building owners</p> <p>Simpler version of HES Inform guide for example</p>	SAC conservation specialists	
4.4	<p>Advice web page</p> <p>Provide web page giving simple guidance to building owners as to best practice approach to building maintenance.</p>	SAC	
Timescale	Year 1		
<b>5 SKILLS</b>			
5.1	<p>Skills training workshops on key building tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- joinery</li> <li>- stonework</li> <li>- roofing</li> <li>- sign writing</li> <li>- tiles</li> </ul>		



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- Girvan Conservation Area Appraisal, South Ayrshire Council

## 10.0 Appendices

Listed Building Map

Townscape Analysis

Shopfront Exemplars

Window Exemplars

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