

*City Hall, Perth.*



# **PERTH CENTRAL** CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

Perth & Kinross Council – **Consultation DRAFT June 2026**

# CONTENTS

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<b><u>1. INTRODUCTION</u></b> .....	<b>3</b>	Trees.....	64
What is a Conservation Area.....	3	Climate Change and the Historic Environment .....	64
What is a Conservation Area Appraisal.....	3	Article 4 Direction.....	65
What does Conservation Area Designation mean for Owners and Residents? .....	4	Advertisements .....	65
Perth Statement of Significance.....	5	Monitoring and Review.....	66
Location of Perth.....	6	<b><u>9. APPENDICES</u></b> .....	<b>67</b>
<b><u>2. ARCHAEOLOGY</u></b> .....	<b>9</b>	<b><u>10. APPENDIX 1 – DRAFT ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION</u></b> .....	<b>68</b>
<b><u>3. SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT</u></b> .....	<b>11</b>	<b><u>11. APPENDIX 2 – REGULATION 11 ORDER 2010</u></b> .....	<b>70</b>
<b><u>4. MOVEMENT &amp; STREET PATTERN</u></b> .....	<b>16</b>	<b><u>12. APPENDIX 3 – USEFUL INFORMATION</u></b> .....	<b>71</b>
<b><u>5. CHARACTER AREAS</u></b> .....	<b>19</b>		
Character Area 1: City Centre .....	20		
Character Area 2: City Mills.....	26		
Character Area 3: George Street / Rose Terrace .....	31		
Character Area 4: Tay Street & Greyfriars .....	39		
Character Area 5: Marshall Place.....	45		
Character Area 5: A.K Bell Library & Railway Station.....	51		
<b><u>6. TRADITIONAL BUILDING MATERIALS</u></b> .....	<b>55</b>		
<b><u>7. THREATS TO THE CONSERVATION AREA</u></b> .....	<b>60</b>		
<b><u>8. MANAGEMENT PLAN</u></b> .....	<b>62</b>		
Repair and Maintenance.....	63		
New Development and Alterations to Existing Buildings .....	63		
Street Furniture.....	64		

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA?

- 1.1 The statutory definition of a conservation area is set on in Section 61 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 as an *“area of special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”*.

Designation of a conservation area recognizes the unique quality of the heritage of that area. The quality does not relate solely to buildings but also other features including topography, materials, thoroughfares, street furniture, open spaces, trees and landscaping. These all contribute to the historic character and appearance of an area, resulting in a distinctive local identity and sense of place.

- 1.4 The appraisal is informed by:

- Site visits
- Desktop survey
- Literature review
- Primary and secondary historical information
- Guidance from stakeholders and consultation process
- Planning policy and legislation

- 1.5 It is recognised that the successful management of conservation areas can only be achieved with support and input from stakeholders, in particular residents and property owners.

## WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL?

- 1.2 A conservation area appraisal is a management tool that identifies the special interest and changing needs of a conservation area.
- 1.3 The purpose of this document is to evaluate the architectural and historic interest of the area, with a view to its future management and enhancement.

*Our heritage – whether tangible or intangible, cultural or natural – enhances our quality of life and is hugely valuable economic, social, environment, and cultural resource. We owe it to future generations to leave them assets that they can value, enjoy, and benefit from it just as we do today ([Scotland, Our Past, Our Future 2023](#))*

In summary, the purpose of a conservation area appraisal is:

- To propose a new conservation area or review a current designation.
- To highlight the significance of an area in terms of its streetscape, architecture and history.
- To identify important issues affecting the area.
- To identify significant trees and green space.
- To define the character that merits protection.
- To identify opportunities for development and enhancement.
- To stimulate interest and participation in protecting and enhancing the area.
- To provide a framework for conservation area management.
- To assist the local planning authority in meeting requirements to preserve and enhance the area.

## WHAT DOES CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION MEAN FOR OWNERS & RESIDENTS?

- 1.6 The historic built environment has economic, environmental and social benefits to residents, with research finding that close engagement with historic buildings and areas is associated with greater life satisfaction and quality of life ([HES \*The Links between Scotland's Historic Environment and Wellbeing\*, 2020](#)). Studies have also found that property values in conservation areas tend to be higher ([LSE \*An Assessment of the Effects of Conservation Areas on Value 2012\*](#)). Conservation area designation recognises and protects the unique sense of place that is associated with these socio-economic benefits.
- 1.7 The local planning authority is required by law to protect conservation areas from development which would be detrimental to their character. Consequently, most changes to the external appearance of buildings in the conservation area will require planning permission.
- 1.8 Demolition or substantial demolition of a building in a conservation area will require conservation area consent. Proposed works to a tree in a conservation area must be notified to the Local Planning Authority at least six weeks in advance.
- 1.9 Article 4 Directions may remove some of the usual rights to make changes without planning permission. Details on this can be found in the Management Plan.
- 1.10 More information is available on the council website: [Heritage conservation - Perth & Kinross Council](#)

## PERTH STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

1.11 Perth is historically significant in a national context as an early trading centre and focus of the royal administration in medieval Scotland.

1.12 The key positive characteristics which contribute to this significance are:

- The distinctive herringbone street pattern with small vennels between key east-west routes, illustrating the medieval origins of the settlement
- The picturesque wider setting of the North and South Inches, the River Tay, and woodland and hills to the east
- The extent and completeness of Georgian terraces expanding the settlement to the north and south in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century
- The diverse roofline viewed from the river and outside the conservation area to the east
- The variety and quality of city centre civic, commercial and residential architecture, including tenements, focal corner buildings dating to the Victorian era with ornate stone detailing, and the landmark late medieval St John's Kirk, with its unique herringbone lead spire

*Figure 1 – Perth trade tokens 1797 - 1798*

*Source: Licensed by University of Dundee Archive Services (Records of the Scottish Cultural Resources Access Networks (SCRAN), Edinburgh, Scotland).*

## LOCATION OF PERTH

- 1.13 Perth is situated on the River Tay, 32.5km west of Dundee, and 76 km north of Edinburgh, and is the main settlement in Perth and Kinross. The current Perth Central Conservation Area, encompassing the city centre, was designated in 2008.
- 1.14 Perth is situated at a fording point of the Tay, as well as the highest tidal navigational point and, until Victorian times, the lowest bridging point. The original settlement would have been based on the slightly raised area of Watergate, bounded by marshland and the river itself, and approached by either a main causeway from the west or the river. The position would have meant that the site was easy to defend, and well-placed to develop into a trading centre.



Figure 2 – Perth 1821 from across the Tay  
Source: © [Culture Perth & Kinross](#)

- 1.15 Perth is also strategically close to the important early royal centre of Scone, crowning place of the Kings of Scotland; the Pictish centre of Forteviot, and the religious centre of Dunkeld. The burgh seems to have taken over from Scone by the 12th century, and was represented in parliament in the 14th century, illustrating its importance despite not being the official Scottish capital.
- 1.16 The city is itself based around the Medieval Parish Kirk of St John's, the siting of which is thought to pre-date the foundation of the Royal Burgh. The first recorded mention is from an 1126 grant to the Benedictines of Dunfermline. The Kirk has, since the 1300s, given Perth the alternative name of St. Johnstoun, now used for the city's football team (St. Johnstone).

Figure 3 – St John's Kirk 1822 by Alexander McLauchlan  
Source: © [Culture Perth & Kinross](#)

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*Figure 4 - Perth located on the east bank of the River Tay opposite Perth © Crown copyright and database rights (2026)*

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*Figure 5 – Perth Conservation Area (not to scale)*

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGY

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2.1 Perth city centre is archaeologically sensitive due to its waterlogged ground over time. This low, wet ground creates anaerobic conditions, which means that organic material survives to a much greater extent than elsewhere in Scotland. Extensive survival of the city's medieval archaeology has been attested by various urban excavations during the 20th century.



Figure 6 – Archaeological site at the present Perth Concert Hall (2003)

- 2.2 Early prehistoric finds from the city itself are scant, though the wider landscape has substantial evidence of occupation from the Mesolithic onwards.
- 2.3 There is a great deal of evidence for Roman activity around Perth, with a gravelled Roman road known to have led from Falkirk to Ardoch and along the Gask Ridge to Bertha where it crossed the Tay and continued to Cargill. Traditionally the Roman settlement of Bertha is supposed to have been situated to the north of Perth, although no physical evidence of it has yet been found. Perth itself is more likely to have begun as a Pictish settlement.
- 2.4 There is one scheduled monument in the conservation area; the site of Cromwell's Citadel in the north-east corner of the South Inch.



Figure 7 – Excerpt from *An Exact Plan of the Town and adjacent parts of Perth as it was fortified and possess'd by the Rebels in Scotland till they were driven thence by the Victorian Arms of King George, 1715.*.. C identifies the location of The old Fort built by Cromwell.  
Source: © [2026 National Library of Scotland](#)

- 2.5 If development is likely to affect an area where there may be archaeological remains, work may need to be carried out beforehand to protect them or record what is found. Information on non-designated monuments and archaeology can be found in the Perth and Kinross Historic Environment Record (HER). Enquiries should be directed to the HER Officer at Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust.

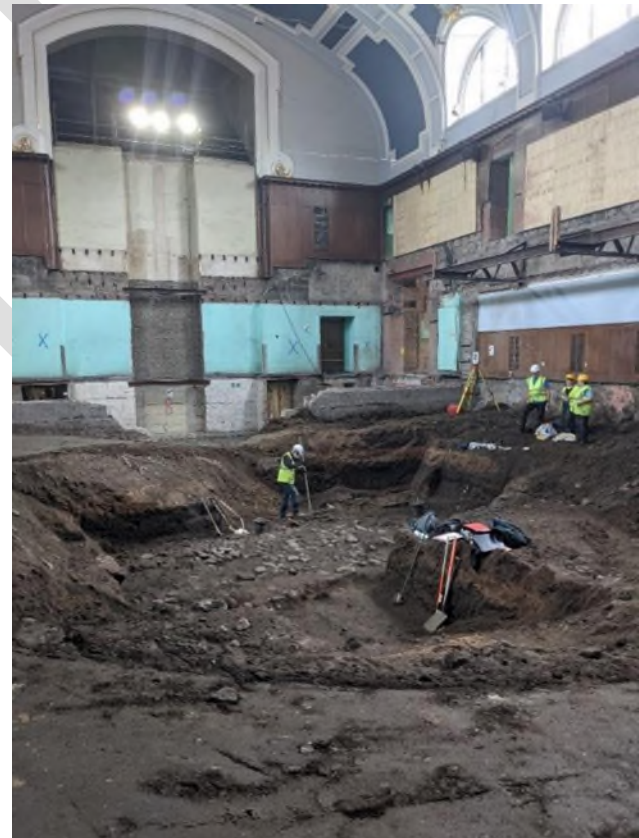


Figure 8 – Archaeological excavation prior to redevelopment of the Perth City Hall, now Perth Museum (2021)

### 3. SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT

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3.1 Considerable evidence survives to illustrate the importance of Perth in the medieval period, not least St John’s Parish Kirk. The Kirk is on a roughly central raised point from which the settlement has radiated out. There were further religious foundations, including chapels and hospitals, but these did not survive the 16th century Reformation, after which the overall appearance of the city would have changed considerably.

3.2 As one of the most powerful Royal Burghs in Scotland at the time, Perth was pivotal in the Scottish Reformation. The Burgh’s early adoption of Protestantism, and the role of John Knox in the widespread riots of 1559, weakened the Catholic Church and directly challenged the Queen Regent, Mary of Guise.

Figure 9 – Artist’s impression of Perth on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1559 (the day John Knox preached in St John’s Kirk).  
Source: [Medieval Trail Perth](#)



Figure 10 – Excerpt of Lower Angus and Perthshire east of the Tay map by Timothy Pont, 1583-1589.  
Source: © 2026 [National Library of Scotland](#)

- 3.3 The King James VI Hospital of 1748- 1752 stands on the original site of Scotland's Carthusian Friary in Hospital Street. It was built for a church foundation to care for the sick and destitute, set up after receiving the revenues of the friaries and chapels abolished after the reformation. The site of the Franciscan friary of Greyfriars has been used as the city's cemetery since 1580.



Figure 11 – Roy Military Survey of Scotland, 1747-1755  
Source: © 2026 [National Library of Scotland](#)

- 3.4 The first building in Perth mentioned in early charters is the Dominican Friary in the North Port area, near the present site of Carpenter Court. This was where the 1266 Treaty of Perth was signed between kings Alexander III of Scotland and Magnus IV of Norway. James I, underlining

Perth's favoured Royal position, held a General Council in 1427 here, and a Parliament in 1429. Perth was the site of one of the first conventions of Royal Burghs in 1555, and in 1563, 1597 and 1618 General Assemblies were convened in Perth by the church of the reformed religion.

Figure 12 – Artist's impression of Perth Citadel. Built by Oliver Cromwell 1651  
Source: © [Simon Edwards](#)

- 3.5 Perth was active on the Presbyterian side in the Civil Wars of the 1640s. The victory of Montrose at the battle of Tibbermore (1644) occasioned a period of Royalist occupation until the town was captured by Cromwell's army, who constructed a citadel in the north-east corner of the South Inch in 1652. Several of the city's buildings were demolished to provide stone for the citadel, and even grave slabs from Greyfriars were used. The citadel was given to the city after Cromwell's death, and the process of dismantling it began soon after. It is now no longer visible above ground, and a car park is now located over part of it. The

site has been excavated, and is designated as a scheduled monument. After the restoration of Charles II, Perth supported the Jacobite uprising and was strengthened and re-fortified by Jacobite supporters in 1715 and 1745.

3.6 The harbour is a significant contributing factor in the development of Perth, and known sites include the earliest at the end of the High Street shown on Horneck's 1715 town plan (Figure 6). Also on Horneck's plan is the later site at the end of what is now Canal Street, which at the time was the town lade. In the 19th century the harbour moved approximately one mile out of town to its present site at Friarton to accommodate larger vessels in deeper water. The harbour remains open to commercial shipping, although its future is currently uncertain, with recent consultations undertaken on its closure.

3.7 A fundamental aspect of settlement development in the city is the bridge, or bridges. The first record of a bridge is from 1207, when it is reported to have been destroyed by flooding. It was replaced and thereafter recorded as having been repaired on several occasions. A new bridge was built in 1617 but destroyed by flooding in 1621. It was not replaced until Smeaton's Bridge was completed to the north of the original in 1771. This increased the importance of the hamlet of Bridgend, and allowed the city to expand outside the medieval defences to the north and south in two new grid-plan developments. These were based on Marshall Place in the south (completed 1801), and Charlotte Street in the north (completed 1783). The medieval plan was rationalised to allow these new developments to be accessed easily, with the addition of George Street and St John Street. Smeaton's Bridge survives and remains in use. An additional crossing was built in 1900, and replaced by the Queen's Bridge in 1960.

3.8 Rutherford's 1774 map of Perth is the first accurately surveyed plan of the city. It demonstrates that at this stage Perth was still largely contained within the medieval city walls, although there was an increase in building cover and the impact of Smeaton's bridge was beginning to be evident. Around this time, the population of Perth expanded significantly. St Paul's church, the first post-reformation church in Perth, was built in 1806-1807 in order to cope with the overflow of worshippers at St John's, and also to be an "architectural ornament to encourage further development" (Gifford 2007). It worked as a new landmark, paving the way for further expansion to the west of the city.



Figure 13 – St John's Kirk

it had fallen to eighth place. The mainstays of the economy remained, however, and during the 19th century, both industry and agricultural trade were strengthened, with notable manufacturing areas including glass, brick, textiles, printing, ship-building and whisky. The railway arrived in 1848, further enabling trade and expansion. The existing railway bridge was built in 1863. In the 1870s, the Tay Street embankment was added, giving a new frontage to the city. This was further landscaped in the late 1990s with the addition of the new flood prevention system.



Figure 15 – Coming South: Perth Station. 1895 George Earl  
Source: [Board of Trustees of the Science Museum / Science & Society Picture Library](#)

Figure 14 – Perth, by A. Rutherford 1774.  
Source: © 2026 [National Library of Scotland](#)

3.9 In the 14th century, Perth was one of the most important economies in Scotland, along with Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee. By the 17th century, due to limitations of the harbour and problems with flooding,

- 3.10 Perth's importance as a retail centre for the surrounding area has suffered in recent years with the impact of online retail and the Covid pandemic, although it retains a range of specialist and independent retailers, as well as branches of larger chains. Recent investments, particularly the new Perth Museum in the converted former City Hall, have encouraged footfall in the city centre.
- 3.11 Residential properties are concentrated in the suburbs surrounding the inner core, although many city centre Georgian and Victorian tenements, terraces and villas have been retained and remain in residential use. Although there have been some losses in terms of historic buildings, the townscape remains varied and unique. In more recent years notable new additions include Perth Concert Hall, which opened in 2005.



*Figure 16 – Perth Concert Hall*

## 4. MOVEMENT & STREET PATTERN

- 4.1 Perth has two parallel main streets; High Street and South Street. The High Street, pedestrianised in 1989, forms the centre of the main shopping area. The majority of the shops in St John Street, High Street and the St John's Centre are national chains, with independent retailers situated elsewhere, most notably George Street, Old High Street and Princes Street.



Figure 17 – First edition six-inch edition OS map 1866  
Source: © 2026 [National Library of Scotland](#)

- 4.2 Due to pedestrianisation of the High Street and the area around St John's Parish Kirk, traffic in the city centre is limited but can be very busy along South Street, the main east-west traffic route through the city centre. Traffic is busiest on the inner ring road, with high concentrations at the junctions of Atholl Street/ Barrack Street/ Caledonian Road; York Place/Caledonian Road, and at the two bridges. This has had an impact on localised air quality, the improvement of which is a long-term aim for city centre enhancement and traffic management schemes.
- 4.3 Perth's recreational facilities include the new Perth Museum, Perth Art Gallery, Perth Theatre and Concert Hall, the Art Deco Playhouse cinema, the AK Bell Library, and sports and leisure activities available nearby at the North and South Inch, Perth Leisure Pool and Dewar's Centre.



Figure 18 – Playhouse Cinema, Perth (artists impression)  
 Source: [Trove -Historic Environment Scotland](#)

Street and Canal Street, and on the east the river provided a natural defence. Later additions to the city centre such as Rose Terrace and Marshall Place are linked by George Street, St John’s Street, and Princes Street, a north-south route through the city. The city centre is now largely contained in the area originally within the walls along with the Georgian additions by an outer traffic route (not a complete ring road due to the presence of the station in the south-east corner). The juxtaposition of small vennels and wider, more regularly placed shopping streets gives an indication of the varied nature of the street pattern within this contained area.

- 4.4 The number of bars and restaurants in the city centre, and the active live music scene, means that it can also be busy during evenings and weekends. There is some seasonal variation in activity due to Perth being a popular tourist base, and also the festival calendar, most notably Perth Festival of the Arts.
- 4.5 As previously discussed, Perth retains a semblance of its incarnation as a walled medieval Burgh, in terms of the relatively compact city centre and the herringbone street pattern of vennels leading off and linking the two parallel east-west main streets. The original city walls would have been situated at approximately the present lines of Mill Street, South Methven



Figure 19 – Water Vennell with views to the Tay off Watergate

- 4.6 The main contributing factor to the city's topography is the River Tay on the east side of the city. The settlement's low-lying, relatively flat topography means that there are only subtle variations in height, occasionally due to artificial reclamation, and largely concealed by the built-up nature of the city. The ground level rises away from the river outside the city centre, giving unrivalled views of the city from the surrounding hills.

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# 5. CHARACTER AREAS

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5.1 Six character areas can be identified within the Perth Conservation Area:

1. **City Centre:** The medieval core of the city which contains part of the historic high street running east west. This area also contains a high concentration of listed buildings, including the 15<sup>th</sup> century St John's Kirk and the recently converted former City Hall, now Perth Museum
2. **City Mills:** This character area incorporates the Town Lade and historic mill buildings, and generally preserves the larger scale plots developed for industrial and ancillary uses, outside the historic medieval city defences and downwind of the city centre.
3. **George St / Rose Terrace:** This area represents the Thomas Hay Marshall late 18th century additions to the north of the city centre and is notable for its Georgian terraces and views across the Tay.
4. **Tay Street & Greyfriars:** This area contains Watergate, one of the oldest areas of settlement in Perth where buildings on the east would have had rear plots leading to the river, and Greyfriars Burial Ground which contains one of the finest collections of 17th, 18th and 19th century headstones and grave-slabs in Scotland (HES listing description).
5. **Marshall Place:** This area is primarily residential, including the 1801 Marshall Place development by Robert Reid, with the landmark St Leonards in the Field church at the southern end of the area, facing towards the South Inch.
6. **Railway Station & AK Bell Library:** This character area has the lowest concentration of listed buildings in the conservation area, but contains several landmark historic buildings, including the Perth Railway Station, A. K. Bell Library and the former King James VI Hospital. The area is mixed-use with areas of industrial and service activity and some residential buildings.

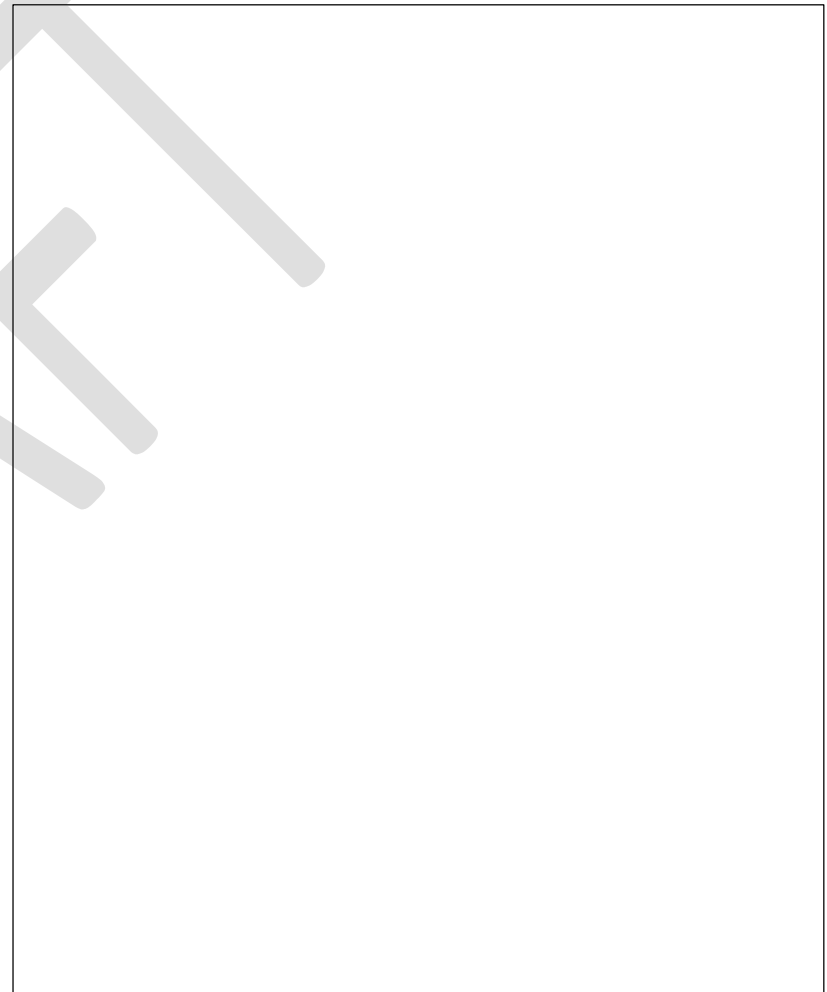


Figure 20 – Perth Conservation Area character areas (not to scale)

## CHARACTER AREA 1: City Centre

### Listed Buildings

- 5.2 Perth City Centre contains a high concentration of Category A, B and C listed buildings. All buildings on either side of St John Street are listed. These largely 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings are generally of three storeys, with some surviving historic shopfronts at ground level and residential above.



*Figure 22 – Perth Museum with St John's Kirk  
Source: © Greg Holmes*

- 5.3 There is a cluster of listed buildings around the junction of Kinnoull Street and Mill Street, including the prominent Scots Gothic Congregational Church, the Romanesque North Church and the distinctive former Sandeman Library with its corner clock tower.

*Figure 21 – Character Area 1 Bridgend Townscape Analysis*



Figure 23 – The former Sandeman Library



Figure 24 - Historic shopfront on the corner of South Street and Speygate

- 5.4 St John's Kirk - a townscape landmark and arguably the most important building in the city - and Perth Museum dominate the central shared area and are surrounded by cafes and restaurants. The view south from the pedestrianised St John's Street is terminated by views of the monumental Venetian window of the Category B listed Salutation Hotel on South Street. One of the most important historic shopfront survivors in Scotland is located on the corner of South Street and Speygate, a tenement with an 18th century bow-fronted 30-pane window.

### Unlisted Buildings of Merit

- 5.5 Unlisted buildings in conservation areas are protected against inappropriate alterations or demolition, as set out in the Management Plan.
- 5.6 Due to the long history of development within this area, there are numerous historic buildings, which although they are not listed, make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Many of these buildings have suffered from inappropriate alterations to materials and shopfronts. In spite of this,

important architectural characteristics remain, such as regular fenestration patterns, uniform scale and massing and materials. Good examples of such buildings can be found along Scott Street between High Street and South Street. A number of the unlisted buildings identified along South Methven Street have important surviving historic shopfronts including entrance mosaics and tiling.



Figure 25 - Unlisted historic shop front in South Methven Street

5.7 Of particular merit within the character area is the gothic inspired King Edward VII memorial erected in 1913 opposite Perth Museum.



Figure 26 – The King Edward VII Memorial with Perth Museum behind

## Gateways & Views

5.8 Important views throughout this character area are mostly towards the St John's Kirk or St Paul's Church. Other views encompass the former King James VI Hospital, the former St Leonards Parish Church (Lindsay Burns Auctioneers) and feature corner elements on prominent buildings such as the Sandeman clock tower.

## Tress and Open Space

5.10 There is very little public amenity space in this part of the conservation area, although there are pockets of open space along Mill Street and around St John's Kirk and Perth Museum. These areas nonetheless remain largely dominated by vehicles, associated signage and hard surfaces.

5.11 Trees are largely limited to small street trees on the High Street, and there are no specific Tree Preservation Orders.

## Public Realm

5.12 Public realm improvements have been undertaken along Mill Street and around St John's Kirk and the Perth Museum with new paving and shared pedestrian and vehicle spaces being created.

*Figure 27- View along Kirkgate to St John's Kirk spire*

5.9 The city centre character area retains lanes or vennels leading north and south from and between South Street and High Street, some of which have names hinting at their role in the medieval burgh's trade, such as Cutlog Vennel and Flesher's Vennel.



*Figure 28 Figure 29 – Public realm improvements around Perth Museum  
Source: © Greg Holmes*

5.13 Shared space on St John Street is enhanced with granite slab paving, bespoke lighting with decorative copper features, bench seating and cast-iron directional signage for pedestrians. Public art on the High Street includes two bronze sculptures; one depicting the Fair Maid of Perth, and a second with two figures inside a horizontal steel ring, inspired by a William Soutar poem.



Figure 30 – The Fair Maid of Perth

Figure 31 – William Soutar inspired sculpture

## Opportunities for Improvement

5.14 Areas of shared space and pedestrianisation such as Mill Street and around the new Museum provide opportunities to reduce car dominance and provide additional soft landscaping and seating. The recent public realm improvements on Mill Street have enhanced the appearance of this key pedestrian route, but further work could be done to the southern edge and the rears of buildings to provide additional soft landscaping and reduce the dominance of vehicles.

5.15 Scott Street car park is well-used and largely hidden from the surrounding main streets. However, it is accessed by multiple narrow vennels, and is used by pedestrians as a shortcut, particularly between South Street and the High Street. Measures could be taken to improve these walking routes, including landscaping and bin storage, and addressing the poor-quality commercial signage on the rear of buildings.



Figure 32 – Scott Street car park

5.16 The former Debenhams and McEwans department stores occupy large sites in the city centre which have been vacant for several years. These buildings, along with several other empty shopfronts, detract from the historic character of the conservation area and their regeneration would be welcomed.



*Figure 33 -Former McEwans Department Store*

## CHARACTER AREA 2: City Mills



Figure 35 – Lower City Mills

Figure 34 – Character Area 2 City Mills Townscape Analysis

### Listed Buildings

5.17 The category A listed City Mills were served by the lade bringing water from the River Almond, north-west of the city. Lower City Mill, completed by 1805, was used for barley and oatmeal. It was restored in the 1980s with working machinery, and has subsequently been in use as offices, although currently vacant. The 1792 Upper City Mills, consisting of two wheat mills linked by a granary, became a hotel in 1971.

5.18 St Paul's Church of 1807 initiated further development to the west of the city, and its spire is a major focal point of this area at the junction of Old High Street and North Methven Street. Having fallen out of use in 1988, the building became derelict until the council took ownership in 2017, converting it to a mixed-use public space for exhibitions and events. While this regrettably meant the loss of the octagonal roof, the spire remains a city landmark. Opposite is the category B listed late-18th century former Glasite Meeting House – now a dance studio – with its striking first floor Venetian windows.

*Figure 36 – Former Glasite Meeting House*

- 5.19 On the north side of Murray Street is the category B listed 1897 Congregational Church, and the Art Deco Playhouse Cinema of 1933, an important survivor of this era with its distinctive metal-framed windows, continual horizontal lines and central tower.
- 5.20 Further along Mill Street is Pullar House, which once housed Perth's largest industry, employing 2600 people as Pullar's North British Dye Works in 1900. It was converted to office use in 2000.



*Figure 37 – Pullar House*

## Unlisted Buildings of Merit

- 5.21 The 2005 Concert Hall, a large, oval building with a curved copper roof, is a landmark building at the east end of Mill Street. Between the Concert Hall and Pullar House, an unlisted part of the former dye works was converted to a hotel in 2014, retaining the uniformity and streetscape character of the Mill Street elevation.
- 5.22 This area contains multiple examples of plain but good quality unlisted tenement buildings, particularly around Thimble Row and the Old High Street. In Mill Wynd, the medieval route from the High Street to the City Mills, Hal o' the Wynd House (late 18th century) is the building on which Sir Walter Scott based the home of Catherine's suitor in his novel *The Fair Maid of Perth* (1828).

*Figure 38 – Hal o' the Wynd House*

## Gateways & Views

- 5.23 Key views in this area include those towards the spire of St Paul's, and of the City Mills from North Methven St. The cathedral of St Ninian's, although outwith this character area, is a key focal point at the entrance from the west, and from North Methven Street.

*Figure 39 – St Paul's spire in views from the north along North Methven Street*

- 5.24 The high crowstepped gable of Pullar House, above the entrance to the multi-storey carpark, is a focal point on Kinnoull Street looking south.

## Trees & Open Space

- 5.25 This character area contains established tree groups at Black Watch Gardens, southeast of the Police Station and around Thimblerow. Elsewhere the area is densely developed with little public or private open space.

*Figure 40 – Established tree groups around Thimblerow.*

- 5.26 A secluded courtyard accessed through a vennel from the Old High Street contains a Korean War Memorial and garden.

## Public Realm and Art

- 5.27 Mill Street has been a focus for public art in the city centre in recent years, including light installations and the colourful mural on a gable end at Bridge Lane.

*Figure 41 - Bridge Lane mural*

- 5.28 The town lade provides a pleasant pedestrian route into the city centre from the northwest. Although the lade is largely bordered here by new development, including the Police Station and flats at Vasart Court, there are some visible remnants of the former Black Watch barracks and parade ground on the north-east side before it meets Caledonian Road.
- 5.29 Cobbled street surfaces remain around St Paul's Square and the City Mills, which enhances the historic character of these building groups. A recently restored mosaic referencing the lade is set into the ground on West Mill Street.

## Opportunities for enhancement

5.30 This part of the conservation area is blighted in places by poorly maintained buildings, heavy traffic, vacant commercial units and signage clutter. Murray Street contains some notable historic buildings, but these are visually overwhelmed by the bus and taxi stances. Additional soft landscaping and improved seating would enhance this area and soften the adverse visual impact of multiple bus shelters and associated signage.

5.32 Recent work to clean the lade and improve water quality has enhanced the amenity of this key pedestrian route into the city centre, but it is still frequently subject to littering and accumulations of debris in the water. Further enhancement could be carried out to improve the public experience of this walking and cycling route.

5.33 Proposals are currently being developed for a new swimming pool and sports centre on the site of the Thimble Row Car Park, which would create an activity hub in a currently under-used city centre location. Future development should ensure that the historic environment is preserved and enhanced, with particular reference to the category A listed City Mills.

5.34 The ongoing vacancy of Lower City Mills raises concerns. Consent was recently granted for a programme of repairs and reuse as a visitor centre, café and offices. Realisation of this project would greatly enhance this part of the conservation area and ensure the future maintenance and active use of a landmark historic building.

*Figure 42 – Murray Street*

5.31 The area around the north end of Caledonian Road is dominated by traffic, particularly at the junction with Atholl Street and Barrack Street. Existing interpretation relating to the lade and the site of the Black Watch barracks could be further developed.

*Figure 43 – The vacant Lower City Mills building*

## CHARACTER AREA 3: George Street / Rose Terrace



Figure 45 – St Ninian's Cathedral 1978  
Source: [Trove -Historic Environment Scotland](#)

Figure 44 – Character Area 3 George Street / Rose Terrace Townscape Analysis

### Listed Buildings

5.35 There is a high concentration of listed buildings in this character area, the most prominent being the William Butterfield designed Category A listed St Ninian's Cathedral of 1849, which was the first cathedral commenced in Britain following the Reformation.

5.36 The Georgian developments to the north of the character area include those in Charlotte Street and the converted Category A listed former Old Academy building on Rose Terrace. The Georgian architectural set-pieces of Atholl Crescent and Atholl Place front the North Inch along Charlotte Street. Rose Terrace, built around 1800, with the Old Academy as a central point, acts as an edge to the Georgian development with an open aspect looking on to the North Inch.

*Figure 46 – Rose Terrace and the Old Academy buildings facing the North Inch*

- 5.37 Barossa Place forms the northern boundary of the conservation area with a row of mid-19th century villas of broadly uniform character including fenestration pattern, roof pitches, scale, massing and materials.
- 5.38 A key townscape feature at the eastern edge of the conservation area is Smeaton's Bridge, connecting Perth and Kinnoull. The category A listed bridge, opened in 1771, forms a major landmark within both Perth and Kinnoull.

*Figure 47 – Smeaton's Bridge*

- 5.39 In North Port is the Fair Maid's House, used by Sir Walter Scott as the model for the home of Catherine Glover in *The Fair Maid of Perth* (1828). It is a late medieval building, bought by the Glover incorporation in 1693 and used as a meeting house, but was largely reconstructed in 1893.

*Figure 48 – The Fair Maid’s House*

5.40 As with St John Street, all buildings on both sides of George Street are listed, making this an area of high architectural value, with late 18th and early 19th century tenements of three and four storeys and ground floor commercial units. The portico and dome of the category B listed Perth Art Gallery terminates the view north.

### Unlisted Buildings of Merit

- 5.41 Unlisted buildings in conservation areas are protected against inappropriate alterations or demolition, as set out in the Management Plan.
- 5.42 Due to the high concentration of listed buildings within the character area, there are few unlisted buildings of merit. There are two unlisted war memorials at the southern end of the North Inch which make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area.

*Figure 49 – War memorial on the North Inch*

5.43 The red brick Creative Exchange located on Stormont Street is a successful adaptive reuse of a former school. The regeneration of this building and creation of associated public open space enhances the character of the area.

## Boundary Treatments

5.44 Front gardens with stone boundary walls, some with cast iron and metal railings are retained along Barossa Place and Melville Street. Unfortunately, some front gardens and boundary walls have been lost to facilitate off-street parking to the detriment to the conservation area.

## Gateways & Views

5.45 St Ninian's sits at the gateway to the conservation area when approached from the north along Dunkeld Road. Views of the Cathedral can be seen from various vantage points within and outwith the conservation area.

5.46 Key views within the character area are:

- North along George Street and west along Bridge Lane towards the Art Gallery
- North-west along North port and Blackfriars towards the North Inch
- West along George Inn Lane towards the Tay
- From the banks of the Tay in the North Inch towards Smeaton's Bridge
- East from Barossa Place to the North Inch
- From Atholl Street to the North Inch
- Towards the Cathedral from North Methven Street, Melville Street and Atholl Street.

*Figure 50 – Front gardens of Barossa Place*

*Figure 51 – St Ninian’s Cathedral from the Dunkeld Road, Atholl Road and Caledonian Road junction*

*Figure 52 – Sweet chestnut with a Tree Protection Order on Atholl Place*

## Trees & Open Space

- 5.47 The southern area of the North Inch forms the boundary of the conservation area, creating a soft edge to the north of the city, and providing ample public green space and riverside walks. There is one Tree Preservation Order within the character area, pertaining to a sweet chestnut and a cherry tree within a parking area to the rear of Atholl Place.
- 5.48 The Georgian villas of Barossa Place have generous and consistent private front gardens. The set-pieces of Atholl Crescent and Atholl Place also have open space to the north, unfortunately lost to car parking at Atholl Crescent.

## Public Realm including Public Art

- 5.49 The category B listed Prince Albert Monument, unveiled by Queen Victoria in 1846, stands at the southern entrance to the North Inch in an area incorporating formal planting, bench seating and public art, linking to the footpath around the Inch.

*Figure 53 – The listed Prince Albert Monument*

- 5.50 The North Port adjacent to the Fair Maid's House is one of the few city centre areas retaining a historic cobbled road surface.
- 5.51 The eastern end of Mill Street and Bridge Lane near the Concert Hall formed part of the Mill Street regeneration scheme, focusing largely on upgrades to street surfacing, with the later addition of movable small planters and bench seating. The forecourt to the Concert Hall is utilised

as a temporary outdoor function space and pop-up events such as the pop-up mobility hub.

*Figure 54 – Pop up mobility hub*

- 5.52 The pedestrian footway on the east side of Tay Street was landscaped in the 1990's as part of the flood protection scheme, incorporating tree planting, seating, high-quality Caithness slab paving and an attractive variety of public art which add character to the conservation area.

## Opportunities for enhancement

- 5.53 The Concert Hall forecourt could be further enhanced with permanent seating and soft landscaping

*Figure 55 – Concert Hall forecourt*

- 5.54 The car park and adjacent buildings on the west side of Barossa Street appear rundown, and detract from an area which has been a focus for regeneration in recent years with the opening of the Creative Exchange to the north.

*Figure 56 – West side of Barossa Street in poor condition*

- 5.55 Key buildings in prominent locations in this character area are suffering from disuse and lack of maintenance, most notably Robertson's Buildings on the corner of Barrack Street and Low Street, at the north-west entrance to the conservation area, the category B Classical style tenement of Stormont House on Atholl Street, and the category B listed building overlooking the North Inch at the east end of Charlotte Street.
- 5.56 The site of the former White Horse Inn on the corner of North William Street and Union Lane has been vacant for a number of years, and its redevelopment would be welcomed, particularly in the context of the successful regeneration scheme at the Y Centre opposite and on Atholl Street.

*Figure 57 – Stormont House with the former White Horse Inn site behind*

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## CHARACTER AREA 4: Tay Street & Greyfriars

### Listed Buildings

- 5.57 At the southern end of Tay Street, the Category A listed Neo-classical former Perth Water Works with its domed rotunda is one of Scotland's most significant industrial buildings, and the earliest example of a large-scale cast-iron building.

*Figure 59 – Former Perth Water Works*

- 5.58 Tay Street's west side is characterised by its large-scale public buildings, including the Category B listed St Matthew's Church, Category B listed Andrew Heiton designed Victoria Buildings, and the Category B listed Council Chamber on the corner with High Street, built in 1899 as the headquarters of General Accident Fire and Life Assurance Corporation.

*Figure 58 – Character Area 4 Tay Street & Greyfriars Townscape Analysis*

- 5.59 Greyfriars Burial Ground, accessed from both Canal Street and Tay Street, is category A listed and contains one of Scotland's best collections of 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century grave memorials. Next to Greyfriars is the Category B listed St John the Baptist Episcopal Church of 1851.

*Figure 60 – Greyfriars Burial Ground*

- 5.60 As well as the monumental Greek revival style Category A listed Perth Court which has continued its purpose-built use since construction in 1819. Unfortunately, the jail to rear was demolished in the 1960s with only part of the exercise yard wall remaining.

### Scheduled Monument

- 5.61 To the south of the conservation area, within the South Inch, is the scheduled monument of Cromwell's Citadel. The monument is of national importance for its potential to provide important information about the construction and use of Cromwellian artillery fortifications and barrack accommodation ([HES listing statement of national importance](#)).

### Unlisted Buildings of Merit

- 5.62 The north end of Watergate has a number of unlisted buildings of merit that make a positive contribution to one of the earliest streets in Perth. Late Victorian buildings such as the former Night Shelter for Females (1891) make up the western side, whilst more utilitarian buildings make up the eastern side of the narrow street.

*Figure 61 – Former Night Shelter for Females on Watergate*

- 5.63 The southern end of Princes Street contains an 1898 four-storey tenement with historic shop fronts, and an adjacent two-storey late Victorian building with classical detailing, which make a positive streetscape contribution to this part of the conservation area.

*Figure 62 – Two unlisted building of merit to the right and the listed former photographic studio to the left*

- 5.64 The brick and stone viaduct carrying the railway line at high level through town between the station and the bridge over the Tay is visible from Tay and Princes Streets. Unlike the other raised sections of railway through the conservation area, this arched section is open to the north within a garage forecourt and parking area, creating a distinctive streetscape feature.

*Figure 63 – Railway viaduct visible from Tay Street*

### Gateways & Views

- 5.65 The former Perth Water Works provides a strong southern gateway into the conservation area along Tay Street. It is visible in distant views due to the high chimney, and has a prominent corner site at one of the main entry points to the city, separated from the rest of Tay Street by the railway viaduct.
- 5.66 Other key views in this character area are:
- The courthouse from Queen's Bridge
  - The Tay from Water Vennel
  - The three bridges and open views across to Kinnoull Hill from Tay Street.
  - St Matthew's Church spire from Watergate.

- Direct views to St John’s Kirk spire and the spire of St John’s Episcopal Church from Princes Street.
- Tay Street from the railway bridge.

### Trees & Open Space

5.67 Planned in 1806, the Tay Street embankment was completed in the 1880s with buildings on the west side open to the river, and gave a new presence to the city as viewed from the east. The embankment was replaced in the late 1990’s with a new flood prevention scheme including landscaping and public art.

- 5.68 Greyfriars Burial Ground serves as both an important historic site and a peaceful green space in the city centre. It is maintained as a nature conservation site, with mature trees and some grass given over to meadow to encourage wild flora and fauna.
- 5.69 Mature trees at the South Inch car park form the southern edge of this character area.

### Public Realm including Public Art

- 5.70 Two cast iron lamp posts survive outside the current Perth & Kinross Council main office at 2 High Street, but very little other historic street furniture survives within the character area. The Pillory marker stone on the High Street near the Tay Street junction marks the location of the historic pillory for securing prisoners, which had reportedly fallen out of use by 1786.
- 5.71 Bespoke iron gates have been installed to the Tay Street entrance to Greyfriars Burial Ground.

*Figure 64 – Tay Street embankment with Greyfriars Burial Ground to the rear*

## Opportunities for enhancement

- 5.73 Speygate car park behind the Court is busy and difficult to navigate. This area could be improved with landscaping and interpretation of the court and former prison yard.

*Figure 65 – Cast iron lam post on High Street*

- 5.72 The pedestrian footway to the southern part of Tay Street contains high quality landscaping, public art and interpretation, again as part of the flood protection scheme. The area in front of the former Perth Water Works has been laid with decorative setts around a bronze sculpture by JD Fergusson.

*Figure 66 – Speygate car park behind the Court*

- 5.74 A number of buildings fronting St John Street have rears to Watergate which are poorly maintained. There is also a lack of bin storage along Watergate which detracts from this historically important street.

*Figure 67 – Poor maintenance and lack of bin storage on Watergate*

- 5.75 Several properties on Princes Street detract from the impressive gateway into the city due to a lack of maintenance and poor signage.
- 5.76 The category A listed former Water Works has most recently been in use as a gallery dedicated to the work of JD Fergusson, but is now vacant and showing evidence of a lack of maintenance. A new active use for this building should be a priority, given its historic and architectural significance.

## CHARACTER AREA 5: Marshall Place

pavilions. The third terrace of King's Place, also category B listed, was begun in the 1820s but eventually shortened to accommodate St Leonard's in the Fields in 1885. The intended uniformity of the terrace has been affected by more recent external treatments of the original polished ashlar, including masonry paint and cement render, and changes to windows and doors.

*Figure 68 – Character Area 5 Marshall Place Townscape Analysis*

### Listed Buildings

5.77 All buildings on the north side of Marshall Place are listed, with Georgian terraced villas forming a row facing towards the South Inch, punctuated by the category A listed Scots Gothic Revival St Leonard's in the Fields Church, with its distinctive crown steeple. The category B listed Marshall Place development was planned by architect Robert Reid in the early 19th century, with two long, uniform terraces created. These exemplify typical aspects of Georgian architecture, including classical detailing, flyover stairs and pyramidal roofs to the end

*Figure 69 – St Leonard's in the Field and Marshall Place terraces*

5.78 The Category B listed Neo-Tudor Loves Auction Rooms provides architectural interest within an otherwise functional streetscape further north on Canal Street, with views to the west here terminated by the category B listed neo-classical façade of the former St Leonard's Parish Church, now an Auction House.

- 5.81 Spey Court on Canal Street is an attractive 1920s Arts and Crafts development which has largely retained the uniformity of its detailing, although its domestic scale is somewhat overshadowed by the adjacent multi-storey car park.

*Figure 70 – Former Love Auction Rooms*

- 5.79 St Leonard's Bank is a series of category B and C listed east-facing villas in large grounds, looking across the South Inch and backing on to the street. The plots for these were laid out in 1828, and the villas largely date from the first half of the 19th century.

*Figure 71 – Spey Court on Canal Street*

- 5.82 King Street was laid out to provide villa sites from approximately 1830. A number of the later villas are not listed, but follow the established pattern of development set back from the street with large front gardens. Unlisted villas on King's Place also contribute to the architectural interest and variety, with two substantial villas at the western end constructed in brick, an unusual material for the area.

### Unlisted Buildings of Merit

- 5.80 This character area is more residential in character than the city centre, and contains a mix of historic domestic buildings, including tenements, villas and cottages. Many are not listed but contribute to the streetscape quality and character, and the area's architectural diversity away from the Georgian terraces of Marshall Place.

## Boundary Treatments

5.83 There is a strong boundary line to the front of properties along Marshall Place, with rubble garden walls and cast-iron gates. These walls would originally have been topped with cast iron railings, but only a few examples of original railings and gates remain. Some properties on King Street and the west end of King's Place have had front boundaries removed to create private parking, which has an adverse visual impact due to the loss of soft landscaping and the stone boundary walls

*Figure 72 – Consistent front boundary treatment along Marshall Place*

5.84 St Leonard's Bank is characterised by high stone boundary walls with solid timber gates, and the deep retaining walls around the junction of King's Place and St Leonard's Bank combined with the red-painted rail bridge above create a highly distinctive streetscape character.

## Gateways & Views

5.85 The Georgian terraces of Marshall Place and landmark spire of St Leonard's in the Fields create an attractive approach to the conservation area from the south. Key views in this character area include:

- Towards the South Inch from St Leonard's Bridge, Marshall Place and adjacent streets from the north
- Towards the Walter Scott statue from King Street
- Towards the St Leonard's in the Fields spire from neighbouring streets and the South Inch
- East from Marshall Place towards Kinnoull Hill
- West on Canal Street to the former St Leonard's Parish Church
- North on Princes Street towards the spire of St Johns Kirk

*Figure 73 – Glimpse views of the St Leonards in the Fields spire*

## Trees & Open Space

- 5.86 The South Inch forms the southern edge to the city centre, with views out towards its mature trees and open parkland. The railings along this edge of the park are no longer in place, but the gateposts of the main entrance remain on either side of the category B listed Walter Scott statue of 1845, moved here from the High Street in 1877.

## Public Realm including Public Art

- 5.88 This character area contains key pedestrian routes into the city centre from the South Inch and St Leonard's Bridge, and is a good pedestrian environment with wide pavements and clear sightlines. Street surfacing is generally standard tarmac with white kerbs, although there is an area of traditional setts around the Walter Scott statue.

*Figure 74 – Mature trees of Marshall Place and the South Inch.*

- 5.87 There is a transition in this character area between the more densely developed city centre to larger and more secluded private gardens before the contrasting open setting of the South Inch. Front gardens to King Street, King's Place, Marshall Place and the east side of James Street provide streetscape colour and interest.

*Figure 75 – Walter Scott statue*

- 5.89 The railway line is on an elevated viaduct to the rear of Marshall Place, creating a prominent and unusual streetscape feature.

## Opportunities for enhancement

5.90 Many of the tenement properties in this part of the conservation area suffer from a lack of maintenance and inappropriate alterations, including multiple satellite dishes across front elevations.

*Figure 76 – Upvc windows and satellite dishes detract from the character of this building*

5.91 The large retail unit and car park at Matalan disrupt the historic street pattern and architectural character of this part of the conservation area and create a visually bland, vehicle-dominated space.

*Figure 77 – Matalan on Victoria Street*

5.92 Love's Auction Rooms is a key listed building, providing architectural interest in the context of large-scale modern development on Canal Street. The building is in extremely poor condition and timber decorative features on the front elevation are at risk of being lost.

## CHARACTER AREA 6: A.K Bell Library & Railway Station

### Listed Buildings

- 5.93 This area has a lesser concentration of listed buildings than others in the conservation area, but contains areas of high-quality streetscape and a number of landmark listed buildings.
- 5.94 The Station Hotel of 1888 and Caledonian Road Primary School of 1890, both by Andrew Heiton Jr., are key architectural highlights. The hotel is recorded as having been visited on several occasions by Queen Victoria on her way to Balmoral. Other prominent hotels in the vicinity mark this area as both the historic and current transport hub.



Figure 79 – The Station Hotel 1891  
Source: [Trove -Historic Environment Scotland](#)

Figure 78 – Character Area 6 AK Bell Library & Railway Station Townscape Analysis

5.95 The 1849 station building with its Tudor Gothic octagonal tower was designed by William Tite. Multiple phases of extensions, particularly the new awnings and platforms of 1884-86 and the booking hall, have largely obscured the original building.

*Figure 80 – Perth Station with the octagonal tower largely obscured by later additions.*

5.96 The category A listed AK Bell library has been significantly altered by its 1990s side extensions, but retains a strong civic presence with landscaped grounds to York Place.

*Figure 81 – AK Bell Library*

5.97 The former King James VI Hospital of 1750, also category A listed and now in residential use, creates a focal point at the north end of King Street with its timber and lead cupola and courtyard to Hospital Street.

*Figure 82 – The former King James VI Hospital*

5.98 The corner of Hospital Street and County Place is notable for the B-listed end tenement block of the early 19th century, with a bowed corner bay, mirroring a similar block diagonally opposite on the corner of King Street and Canal Crescent.

### Unlisted Buildings of Merit

5.99 Residential property is largely contained in new blocks around the bus station, including two large-scale modernist blocks; a slab and tower backing on to the bus station. Retail is on ground floors on York Place, County Place, Hospital Street and Leonard Street. There are areas of light industrial use, particularly at Earl's Dykes.

*Figure 83 – Historic shopfronts along Hospital Street*

5.100 Architectural quality throughout this character area is mixed, but the principal route into the conservation area along York Place is characterised by substantial two-storey villas, many of which are now in commercial or office use.

5.101 Tenement buildings also make a strong contribution to the streetscape, including the red sandstone building at the corner of New Row and County Place the corner of Market and Milne Street, albeit subject to some inappropriate uPVC windows.

5.102 There are some unusual individual buildings such as the single-storey residential development at 15-21 Alexandra Street, which is somewhat hidden due to its recessed nature. It is also constructed in red sandstone, with a rare Edward VIII 1936 insignia.

*Figure 84 – Single-storey development on Alexandra Street.*

## Boundary Treatments

- 5.103 Streets in this area vary widely in character, with buildings including tenements and industrial buildings frequently built directly on to the street.
- 5.104 What has in the past been a strong boundary line on York Place with front gardens to villas has now been eroded, with many boundary walls removed, and gardens replaced with hardstanding for parking.

*Figure 85 – Eroded front boundaries along York Place*

## Gateways & Views

- 5.105 York Place forms the key route into the centre of Perth from the west, with views through the city centre and out to Kinnoull Hill beyond.

Other key views in this area include:

- South from South Street Port towards St. Magdalene's Hill and Friarton Quarry
- East from the station carpark along King's Place, punctuated by the railway bridge.
- North along St. Leonard's Street towards the York Corner cupola.
- Towards York Corner and the red sandstone building opposite looking north on New Row

- East and west from Hospital Street
- North from St. Leonard's Bridge towards the original station trainshed and tower and east towards Leonard's Bank, South Inch and Kinnoull Hill
- East to Kinnoull Hill across the South Inch from Leonard's Bridge
- From South Methven Street towards the King James VI Hospital

### Trees & Open Space

5.106 This part of the conservation area has limited public open space or tree cover other than within the grounds of the AK Bell library and King James VI Hospital, although the area around St Leonard's Bridge benefits from views out to the South Inch parklands.

5.107 Additional trees contributing to streetscape character include those in the rear grounds of the Station Hotel and Royal British House.

### Public Realm including Public Art

5.108 The area provides few areas of public amenity space. Most road and footpath surfaces are standard tarmac with whin kerbs, with some feature stone paving and boundary walling around the station.

5.109 Leonard Street between the train station and towards Hospital Street is a key pedestrian route for visitors and commuters, but there is poor legibility in terms of crossing points, and the route is dominated by cars and buses with no cycle lane.

### Opportunities for enhancement

5.110 This area, particularly as it may be the first impression of Perth for visitors arriving, is a focus for improvement. The area suffers from the dominance of cars and buses, with key traffic routes at Leonard Street, County/York Place, and Caledonian Road. Car-centric design juxtaposed onto a pre-car street layout detracts from the value of the conservation area both visually, in terms of large areas dedicated to car parking and unclear boundary definition, and in terms of the pedestrian experience, with lack of crossing points and large vehicles using narrow streets. A key opportunity for enhancement would be the pedestrianisation of Hospital Street to improve this key walking route and the setting of the former King James VI Hospital. In addition:

- Many properties in this part of the conservation area suffer from a lack of maintenance and inappropriate alterations.
- There are multiple examples of poor-quality shopfronts and commercial signage, particularly on York Place.
- The abandoned former car showroom on St Leonard's Bridge is a blight on a key pedestrian route to the train station and into the city centre
- There is a high level of vacancy of commercial buildings, including prominent larger buildings such as the New County Hotel

# 6. TRADITIONAL BUILDING MATERIALS

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## TRADITIONAL SCOTTISH SLATE

**DESCRIPTION & APPLICATION:** Scottish slate is often blue-grey in colour with an irregular finish. It is normally laid in diminishing courses, with smaller slates at the ridge increasing in size towards the eaves. Scottish slate is a finite resource which hasn't been quarried since the 1950s, although it has recently been announced that a quarry will be reopening on the west coast of Scotland in 2027, and will produce slate for historic building projects.

**MAINTENANCE & REPLACEMENT:** When re-roofing or replacing Scottish slates, it should be ensured that existing slate is reused wherever possible, and any new slate is selected and installed to closely match the existing roof. While many types of commonly available slate (e.g. Spanish) are thinner and more uniform in appearance, some are of higher quality and a better visual match, as well as being more hardwearing for the Scottish climate.

**COMMON ISSUES:** Slipped slates, nail sickness

**MORE INFORMATION:** [Inform Guide: Repairing Scottish Slate Roofs | Hist Env Scotland](#)

## BRICK & CLAY

**DESCRIPTION & APPLICATION:** Brick is a less common masonry type in Scotland, but is often used for chimneys due to its better heat resistance. Chimney stacks and traditional clay chimney cans are an important streetscape feature.

**MAINTENANCE & REPLACEMENT:** Chimneys are exposed to weather and vulnerable points such as flashings are prone to failure as a result. Regular maintenance is vital to avoid water ingress.

**COMMON ISSUES:** Water ingress, plant growth, lack of access for maintenance.

**MORE INFORMATION:** [Inform Guide: Domestic Chimneys and Flues | An Seada Einnsein](#)

## LIME MORTAR & RENDER

**DESCRIPTION AND APPLICATION:** Building lime was traditionally used for pointing, bedding and harling or painting masonry until cement became more widely used in the 20th century. Cement has since been found to be incompatible with most natural stone types, and cause damage to sandstone masonry over time.

**MAINTENANCE & REPLACEMENT:** Lime should always be used for pointing and rendering buildings of traditional construction to ensure breathability and prevent masonry decay.

**COMMON ISSUES:** Cement renders can trap moisture within a building and cause a build-up of condensation and damp.

**MORE INFORMATION:** [Inform Guide: Lime and Cement in Traditional Mortars | The Engine Shed](#)

## CAST IRON

## STONE

**DESCRIPTION AND APPLICATION:** Cast and wrought iron were widely used in the 18th and 19th centuries for elements of construction and decorative features. Perth has numerous examples of decorative cast iron features including finials, rainwater hoppers, gates and railings, and the former Perth Water Works is the earliest identified example of a large-scale cast iron building in the world.

**MAINTENANCE & REPLACEMENT:** Where cast iron features remain, these should be retained and repaired wherever possible. Replacement of cast iron rainwater goods with less durable uPVC harms the character of historic buildings and should be avoided. Regular maintenance and painting are vital to avoid exposure to oxygen and water, causing corrosion.

**COMMON ISSUES:** Rust/ corrosion of cast iron rainwater goods can affect their ability to keep water away from the building, resulting in stone decay and damp

**MORE INFORMATION:**

[Inform Guide: The Maintenance of Cast Iron Rainwater Goods](#)

[Inform Guide: The Maintenance of Iron Gates and Railings | Engine Shed](#)

**DESCRIPTION AND APPLICATION:** Sandstone is the main type of building stone used in Scotland.

**MAINTENANCE & REPLACEMENT:** Cement mortars and renders should be avoided. Where stone needs to be replaced it should be ensured that new stone is an appropriate match in terms of both appearance and petrographic characteristics

**COMMON ISSUES:** Mechanical or pressure cleaning of porous sandstone can cause significant damage. Stone cleaning should only be undertaken by hand

**MORE INFORMATION:**

[Inform Guide: Cleaning Sandstone - Risks and Consequences](#)

[Inform Guide: Indent Repairs To Sandstone Ashlar Masonry | Engine Shed](#)

## TIMBER

**DESCRIPTION AND APPLICATION:** Timber features such as windows, doors and historic shopfronts make an important contribution to the historic character of Perth. Timber is a versatile and sustainable building material with a long history of use in construction.

**MAINTENANCE & REPLACEMENT:** Historic timber is often higher quality and more durable than modern soft or hardwoods. Timber elements such as windows, doors and fascias should be repaired and maintained rather than replaced with less durable or sustainable modern equivalents such as uPVC

**COMMON ISSUES:** Regular maintenance and painting of timber is vital to avoid damage or decay by wet/ dry rot or woodworm.

**MORE INFORMATION:** [Inform Guide: Maintaining Sash and Case Windows | The Engine Shed](#)

# 7. THREATS TO THE CONSERVATION AREA

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7.1 Covering a large area and with a wide range of uses, the Perth Central Conservation Area has a diverse architectural character. In common with many town and city centres, the area suffers from vacancy of commercial units and examples of poor quality or badly designed alterations and additions. However, the architectural and streetscape quality of the city centre is its key asset, and should be protected to ensure that Perth can thrive and remain attractive to residents and visitors. Threats to the architectural and townscape character are presented by:

- Lack of maintenance
- Loss of architectural features such as chimneys, timber doors or windows and cast-iron rainwater goods
- Poorly designed or sited new development
- Masonry repairs using cement rather than lime-based mortars or renders
- Accumulations of visually prominent modern additions such as flues, pipework, cabling, solar panels, EV chargers, tv aerials and satellite dishes
- Loss of trees, soft landscaping and open green space
- Poorly designed alterations to shopfronts
- Vacant commercial units
- Streetscape clutter including excessive signage, bins, disused phone boxes, free-standing ATM kiosks
- Visual dominance of parking and traffic

# 8. MANAGEMENT PLAN

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8.1 The appraisal and management plan provides a framework for ongoing management of the conservation area. The key objectives are:

- To ensure the integrity of the conservation area is maintained.
- To prevent small changes damaging the character of the area over time.
- To enable future evolution and change which will enhance the area's character and appearance.

8.2 Meeting these key objectives is contingent on the following requirements:

- Development must be in accordance with current local and national planning policy and supplementary guidance in relation to historic environment assets.
- Design, materials and detailing of works affecting the conservation area must be carefully considered in relation to the existing streetscape character and material palette.
- Development proposals should demonstrate a sustainable approach in relation to both use and materials.
- Adaptive reuse of buildings will be given positive consideration to address physical, visual and economic decline.

8.3 A combination of guidance, information and planning tools will be utilised to ensure positive management of the conservation area:

- Development proposals will be subject to consideration by the council's conservation officers at the pre-application and application stage, and advice provided as appropriate.
- The planning authority will signpost sources of additional specialist advice or grant funding where available.
- Article 4 Directions will be updated to bring certain classes of permitted development under planning control.
- The planning authority will seek to work with owners to assist in positive outcomes for buildings which are long-term vacant or in disrepair.
- The planning authority will work in partnership with bodies such as Historic Environment Scotland and Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust to facilitate conservation training for local contractors and property owners.

8.4 The planning authority will work with property owners to address planning breaches and unauthorised works to buildings in the conservation area. Where possible the council's planning enforcement team will seek to resolve these without taking formal action, but it is recognised that this may be necessary in some cases. Any enforcement action will be taken in line with the adopted enforcement charter:

[Planning enforcement - Perth & Kinross Council](#)

## Repair and Maintenance

- 8.5 Routine maintenance and care are the best means of preserving the character and appearance of buildings within a conservation area.
- 8.6 Failure to carry out regular maintenance can place a building at considerable risk and place a financial burden upon property owners if unattended problems lead to damage to the internal fabric such as wet or dry rot. Owners should carry out an annual survey of their property and undertake maintenance and repairs as necessary including gutter clearing, replacing broken or slipped slates, repointing and painting external timber and metal.
- 8.7 Repairs should be “like for like” using traditional materials such as lime mortar rather than cement. Roof repairs should be undertaken using lead and natural slate sourced to match the existing as closely as possible.
- 8.8 Traditional buildings were designed using vapour-permeable materials including stone, timber and lime. It is important to maintain ventilation and breathability to help preserve the existing fabric and internal air quality, preventing condensation and damp. Non-vapour permeable materials such as modern paints, cement mortar/ render and PIR insulation should be avoided.
- 8.9 Where there is evidence of damp, the source should be identified and addressed without the use of waterproof coatings or chemical damp proofing, which can cause more damage over time.

## New Development and Alterations to Existing Buildings

- 8.10 Advice on design is set out in the [Perth & Kinross Council Placemaking Guide](#) with guidance on specific issues contained within the HES “[Managing Change](#)” and “[Inform](#)” guidance.
- 8.11 Issues of particular importance to Perth:
- Maintenance of tenement and other buildings in the city centre is a key concern. The Perth City Heritage Fund currently operates in the Perth Central and Kinnoull Conservation Areas to grant-assist owners of historic buildings with the costs of high-quality repairs using traditional materials and best conservation practice: [Perth City Heritage Fund - Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust](#)
  - Vacant historic buildings should be a focus for reuse to avoid long-term dereliction in the city centre.
  - Opportunities should be taken to increase the streetscape presence of key buildings and move away from the dominance of car traffic and parking.
  - Commercial signage, lighting and alterations to shopfronts and other businesses should be appropriately designed to enhance the historic environment.

## Street Furniture

8.12 The Perth Central Conservation Area contains multiple examples of high-quality, bespoke street furniture and public art, particularly on Tay Street as part of the flood protection measures. There are other examples where street furniture is of lesser quality or has been damaged or removed. The Local Authority should ensure that any new or replacement street furniture is of an appropriate standard of design and quality to preserve or enhance the appearance of the conservation area, and that existing features are maintained as necessary.

## Trees

8.13 Under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 the local planning authority must be given six weeks' notice of the intention to uproot, fell, lop or top trees. The planning authority will endeavour to discuss suitable management of the trees with the owner, and consider serving a Tree Preservation Order where appropriate. Failure to give notice of works to trees will render owners liable to a fine not exceeding £20,000 per tree.

8.14 More information is available on the PKC website here: [Trees and Tree Preservation Orders - Perth & Kinross Council](#)

## Climate Change and the Historic Environment

8.15 “Our Past Our Future” is Scotland’s national strategy for the historic environment 2023-2028. Priority 1 is the transition to net zero, and the role of the historic environment in achieving this.

8.16 The historic environment is a precious resource not just in terms of its cultural value, but also its embodied carbon and the potential to reuse and adapt buildings. Repairing existing buildings is a form of carbon capture and storage. Small-scale measures such as retaining and repairing existing doors and windows rather than replacing them with unsustainable new materials is the most environmentally conscious approach, contributing towards the transition to net zero.

8.17 In terms of adapting individual buildings to reduce heat loss and energy bills, some commonly used methods of improving energy efficiency are designed for buildings of modern construction and are not compatible with traditional (pre-1919) buildings. The use of non-vapour-permeable materials for insulation, for example, can result in a build-up of damp and condensation which can affect the building fabric and internal air quality. Maintenance is the best means to ensure a historic building is as energy efficient as possible. Only once the building fabric is in good repair and basic measures have been undertaken such as improved internal insulation, draught proofing and energy reduction, should additional more expensive and intrusive energy efficiency measures such as solar panels or external insulation be considered.

8.18 Most external changes to a property in a conservation area will require planning permission. To meet the legal requirement to preserve the character and appearance of the area, applications will be assessed on

the basis of their visual impact. Accordingly, as well as the cost and efficiency benefits of renewable energy measures, careful consideration should also be given to the potential impact on the historic interest of the building and area.

8.19 The policy outcomes of NPF4 Policy 7 in relation to the historic environment are as follows:

- The historic environment is valued, protected and enhanced, supporting the transition to net zero and ensuring assets are resilient to current and future impacts of climate change.
- Redundant or neglected historic buildings are brought back into sustainable and productive uses.
- Recognise the social, environmental and economic value of the historic environment, to our economy and cultural identity.

8.20 Advice on energy efficiency and traditional buildings is available on the PKC climate strategy website: [Traditional Buildings and Climate Adaptation and Mitigation](#) and from Historic Environment Scotland: [Guide to Energy Retrofit of Traditional Buildings | Hist Env Scotland](#)

## Article 4 Direction

8.21 Under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order, the local planning authority can seek the approval of Scottish Ministers for Directions that restrict certain permitted development rights. Development is not precluded, but such alterations will require planning permission, and special attention will be paid to potential adverse effects on the conservation area. An Article 4 Direction is not needed for most householder development, but it can be beneficial to provide an additional level of control, for

example over development by statutory undertakers. The current Article 4 Direction for Perth is outdated and it is considered that a revised Direction should be drafted for the approval of Scottish Ministers in order to support the conservation area designation. The draft Article 4 Direction is contained in Appendix 1.

## Advertisements

8.22 There are certain types of advertisements which do not require advertisement consent under the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (Scotland) Regulations 1984. It is possible for a local planning authority to propose additional advertisement controls through Regulation 11 of the 1984 Regulations and seek the approval of the Scottish Ministers. A Regulation 11 order controls normally permitted forms of 'minor' advertisement which can have an impact in areas of environmental quality. Certain types of advertisements, such as shop or business signage, can have a significant impact on historic building frontages and on the overall quality of the character of the conservation area. Usually, Regulation 11 advert controls are only approved in conservation areas.

8.23 There are existing examples of poorly designed signage which have an adverse visual impact on the wider conservation area. The Perth Central Conservation Area currently has a Regulation 11 advert control which is up to date and attached in Appendix 2. Further advice can be found in the PKC [Advertisement Guidelines](#).

## Monitoring and Review

- 8.24 As part of the current review a photographic record of the conservation area has been undertaken.
- 8.25 The conservation area will be monitored through regular visits by council officers in the course of the development management process, and liaison with amenity groups, interested parties and residents as necessary.

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# 9. APPENDICES

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APPENDIX 1 – DRAFT ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION

APPENDIX 2 – REGULATION 11 ORDER

APPENDIX 3 – USEFUL INFORMATION

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# 10. APPENDIX 1 – DRAFT ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION

## Draft Article 4 Direction – Perth

**Perth & Kinross Council in terms of article 4(1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 (SI 1992/223) being satisfied that it is expedient that all or any development comprising:-**

**Class 3A** - The provision within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse of a building for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of that dwellinghouse, or the alteration, maintenance or improvement of such a building;

**Class 7** - The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure;

**Class 7A** – Any alteration or replacement of an existing window;

**Class 9E** – The installation, alteration or replacement within [a qualifying parking area], of an electrical outlet mounted on a wall for recharging electric vehicles

**Class 9F** – The installation, alteration or replacement, within a qualifying parking area of –

(a) An upstand with an electrical outlet mounted on it for recharging vehicles

(b) Equipment (including equipment housing) necessary for the operation of such an upstand.

**Class 16** - The use of land, other than a building, as a caravan site;

**Class 27** - The carrying out on land within the boundaries of a private road or private way of works required for the maintenance or improvement of the road or way;

**Class 30** - The erection or construction and the maintenance, improvement or other alteration by a local authority;

**Class 33** – The carrying out of development, within their own district by a local authority;

**Class 38** - Water undertakings;

**Class 39** - Public gas transporters;

**Class 40** - Electricity undertakings;

**Class 43** - Universal service providers; and,

**Class 43A** - Sewerage undertakings.

**should not be carried out within the Conservation Area of Perth (area of land hatched in red on the map) unless permission is granted on an application in that behalf, hereby directs that the permission granted by article 3 in respect of:-**

Classes **3A, 7, 7A, 9E, 9F, 16, 27, 30, 33, 38, 39, 40, 43 and 43A**, as described above, shall not apply.

This direction may be cited as the Perth & Kinross Council (Restriction of Permitted Development) (Perth) Direction 2026.

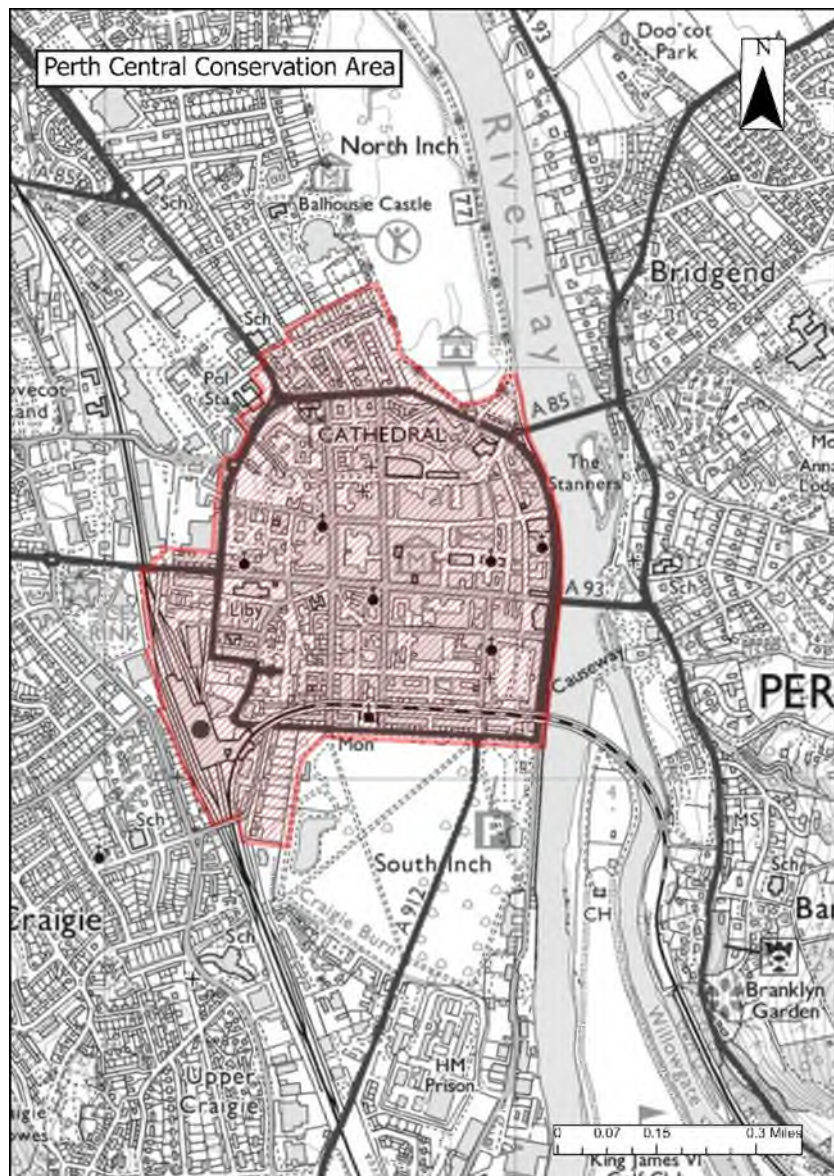


Figure 86 - Red hatch indicates area to be covered by the proposed Article 4 Direction

# 11. APPENDIX 2 - REGULATION 11 ORDER 2010

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Classes of advertisement controlled under Regulation 11 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) (Scotland) Regulations 1984  
The following classes of advertisement as shown in the tables (which normally have 'deemed consent') are under planning control and require advertisement consent:-

## Description of Advertisement

Class II (3): Advertisements relating to any institution of a religious, educational, cultural, recreational or medical or similar character to any hotel, inn or public house or hostel, situated on the land on which any such advertisement is displayed.

Class III (3): Advertisements relating to the carrying out of building or similar work on the land on which they are displayed, not being land which is normally used, whether at regular intervals or otherwise for the purpose of carrying out such work.

Class IV (1) Advertisements displayed on business premises wholly with reference to all of the following matters; the business or other activity carried on, the goods sold or services provided, and the name and qualification of the person carrying on such business or activity or manufacturing or supplying such goods or services on those premises.

Class IV (2) Advertisement displayed on any forecourt of business premises wholly with reference to all or any of the matters specified in Class IV (1).

# 12. APPENDIX 3 – USEFUL INFORMATION

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## Legislation and policy:

- [Planning \(Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas\) \(Scotland\) Act 1997 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [National Planning Framework | Transforming Planning](#)
- [Historic Environment Policy for Scotland | Historic Environment Scotland](#)
- [Development plan - Perth & Kinross Council \(pkc.gov.uk\)](#)

## Sources of advice:

- [Advice and Support | Historic Environment Scotland | History](#)
- [Making a planning application - Perth & Kinross Council \(pkc.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Heritage conservation - Perth & Kinross Council \(pkc.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Local Development Plan - Supplementary Guidance - Perth & Kinross Council \(pkc.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Traditional Buildings and Climate Adaptation and Mitigation \(pkclimateaction.co.uk\)](#)

## CONTACT

For general conservation advice:

Perth & Kinross Council

2 High Street PH1 5PH

**email:** [tconservationteamaccount@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:tconservationteamaccount@pkc.gov.uk)