RATHO CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL
THE RATHO CONSERVATION AREA
CHARACTER APPRAISAL WAS APPROVED BY THE
PLANNING COMMITTEE
ON 21 NOVEMBER 2000

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**INTRODUCTION**

**Conservation Areas**

Section 61 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997, describes conservation areas as “...areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. The Act makes provision for the designation of conservation areas as distinct from individual buildings, and planning authorities are required to determine which parts of their areas merit conservation area status.

There are currently 38 conservation areas in Edinburgh, including city centre areas, Victorian suburbs and former villages. Each conservation area has its own unique character and appearance.

**Character Appraisals**

The protection of an area does not end with conservation area designation; rather designation demonstrates a commitment to positive action for the safeguarding and enhancement of character and appearance. The planning authority and the Scottish Executive are obliged to protect conservation areas from development that would adversely affect their special character. It is, therefore, important that both the authorities and other groups who have an interest in conservation areas and residents are aware of those elements that must be preserved or enhanced.

A Character Appraisal is seen as the best method of defining the key elements that contribute to the special historic and architectural character of an area. It is intended that Character Appraisals will guide the local planning authority in making planning decisions and, where opportunities arise, preparing enhancement proposals. The Character Appraisal will be a material consideration when considering applications for development within the conservation area and applications for significant new developments should be accompanied by a contextual analysis that demonstrates how the proposals take account of the essential character of the area as identified in this document.

NPPG 18: Planning and the Historic Environment states that Conservation Area Character Appraisals should be prepared when reconsidering existing conservation area designations, promoting further designations or formulating enhancement schemes. The NPPG also specifies that Article 4 Direction Orders will not be confirmed unless a Character Appraisal is in place.
Ratho Conservation Area

Midlothian County Council originally designated the Ratho Conservation Area on 13th July 1971. After local government reorganisation, in May 1975, Ratho was included within the boundary of Edinburgh District Council. The Conservation Area boundary was revised on 29th May 1987 to delete an area of land to the south-west of the canal, which includes new housing, the new primary school and the community centre. The Conservation Area is classified as ‘Outstanding’ for grant purposes by Historic Scotland. The 1991 Census indicates that Ratho has a population of 2,157.

The Conservation Area is approximately 9 miles west of Edinburgh city centre, located between the M8 motorway and A71, with the Pentland Hills lying directly to the south. It is surrounded by undulating agricultural land, much of which to the south and east forms part of Edinburgh’s Green Belt. The former Ratho and Craigpark Quarries abut the settlement to the west.

The Conservation Area straddles the Union Canal, taking in two east-west running ridges occupied by Ratho Hall and St Mary’s Church in the north and the historic village core to the south of the canal. The boundary to the north follows the rear of the cottages on Freelands Road and the northern and western boundaries of Ratho Hall grounds, then turns east along the southern bank of the Union Canal. It proceeds south-west until it intersects with Main Street, continuing west along the south side of the street, then turning south and east along the rear of the Main Street properties until it reaches Dalmahoy Road. The boundary continues in an easterly direction along the southern boundary of the village to join Ratho Park Road, turns north along the eastern boundary of the playing fields and then across the Union Canal to Freelands Road.
BOUNDARY OF RATHO CONSERVATION AREA
HISTORICAL ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

Origins

There have been settlements in the vicinity of Ratho since pre-historic times. Recent excavations have discovered Neolithic and Bronze Age artefacts in the area. The earliest historical reference to Ratho dates from the late 12th century and relates to the Barony of Ratho and Bathgate, which was centred on the area now know as Ratho Park Golf Club. Approximately 100 years later, Alexander III repurchased the Barony lands. Later the Barony featured in the dowries of Margaret, the daughter of Alexander III and of Marjorie Bruce. With the ascension of Robert II to the throne, the lands along with other estates, became the property of the heir to the throne. In 1404, these estates became a principality with regal jurisdiction. Ratho remained in royal possession until 1660 when Charles II sold the estate to Alexander Foulis of Colinton.

The parish church is the oldest building in the Conservation Area. It is probable that worship took place on the site of Ratho parish church in the days of the Celtic Church long before the Norman period, and in 1243 a church was dedicated to St Mary.

Ratho was largely an agricultural settlement, with distilling and corn grinding being the main activities, until the arrival of the Union Canal, which was constructed between 1818 and 1822. Designed by the engineer Hugh Baird, the canal was an important part of the infrastructure of Central Scotland until the opening of the Edinburgh-Glasgow railway line in 1842. The canal was inspired by the completion of the Forth and Clyde Canal and was seen as an appropriate way of transporting heavy goods between Glasgow and Edinburgh, while opening up the coal districts to the west of Edinburgh. The canal had a direct influence on the prosperity of Ratho by opening a means of transport for quarrying. Ratho and Craigpark Quarries expanded at this time.

The canal soon provided a passenger service as well as goods transportation. During the 1820s and 30s Scotland’s roads were poor quality and the journey between Glasgow and Edinburgh by coach was an unpleasant experience. The Bridge Inn at Ratho provided sustenance to canal travellers while horses were changed at the ‘change house’ on the opposite side of the bridge. The passenger service began to decline when the first railway service opened between Glasgow and Edinburgh in the 1840s.
In the 20th century, the canal gradually lost its goods traffic due to the ever-increasing use of road transport. Baird Road, which runs north-south through the village, was formerly known as “Ludgate” (or road to the church) being the road that connected the village to the church.

**Development of the Village**

In the 19th century, Ratho developed in a linear form along the main through routes. The traditional building form at that time was terraced, single storey, whinstone cottages with long, narrow rear plots and minimal garden area to the front. The former Smithy was situated to the north of the primary school and the Bridge Inn, dating from the early 19th century, completed the western side of Baird Road. Ludgate House, Lodge and grounds were located immediately south of Baird Road on Main Street. The settlement spread westwards along Main Street with the majority of buildings comprising one or two storey terraced dwellings.

All original buildings on the west side of Baird Road were demolished in the mid-20th century, with the exception of the Bridge Inn. The dwellings on the east side remain virtually intact. The majority of the original buildings on Main Street up to Dalmahoy Road have been preserved, and sections of the western end of Main Street were redeveloped for housing in the early 20th century.

The location of Ratho village in relation to Edinburgh city centre and service sector centres in West Lothian has attracted significant private housing development for commuters. The area between Ratho Park Road and the Union Canal to the east of the village core was developed for private housing in the 1970s and 80s. At the opposite end of Ratho there is an extensive area of former local authority development along North Street, erected post-war until the 1970s. Earlier 20th century public sector housing is interspersed with surviving mid to late 19th century dwellings on the north side of Main Street. The outer west area is occupied by private cul-de-sac housing developments contemporary with the modern housing estate at the east end. The new primary school and community centre are located to the north of the modern housing at the west end and are surrounded by an extensive area of green open space.
RATHO CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

ANALYSIS AND ESSENTIAL CHARACTER

Overview

The village as a whole fits neatly into its countryside setting. Its layout responds to the topography which consists of two ridges and a valley, along which runs the canal.

The Conservation Area has two distinct settlement patterns: one running along an east to west axis on top of the southern ridge. It is compact, linear and ‘L’ shaped comprising the historic core. The other, to the north, lies on a south-facing slope. It is organic and semi-rural where rich landscape and well-separated substantial buildings interplay with each other.

Spatial Structure
The main structure of the Conservation Area comprises the following elements:

The Union Canal, two intersecting spine streets with contrasting layout and the organic and informal settlement pattern fitting into the strong landscape background.

The Union Canal, which lies at the valley bottom physically bisects the historic area but also helps to connect visually the two contrasting built environments located to each of its sides. It provides a strong focus to the village both visually and functionally.

To the south the historic linear core evolved into a ‘L’ shaped street (when intercepted by Baird Road) which terminates at the ‘Bridge Inn’ where the space opens up into a car park facing new redevelopment. The stone bridge marks the end of this section of the Conservation Area. The compact and human scaled spatial pattern provides a low rise intimate street environment along most of its length.

To the north the village presents a contrasting organic pattern with well separated individual buildings, or groups, placed at different levels on the south-facing slope. They are well integrated into the landscape setting and enclosed by the woodland area at the top of the ridge.
Approaches

There are three main entrances to the Conservation Area, from the south, north and west. Each approach indicates in different visual ways that a special area is about to be entered.

From the south, and in the distance, the image of a clear linear edge between town and country is perceived. The road crosses the Green Belt, and encounters a handful of mixed buildings, some pleasing vernacular ones to both sides of the street and set at different angles to it.

The road ends in a ‘T’ junction. Here a traditional building (the former Masonic Lodge) provides a strong stop end to the street view.

From the west, the approach is through some modern housing development, but, well before the road encounters the Conservation Area, St Mary’s RC Church signals, highlights and helps to frame the streetscape of the historic row of cottages on the south side of the street beyond.

From the north, the road slopes up gently to a crest marked by a sharp turn in the road. Here it encounters a group of buildings including the Manse and the St Mary’s Parish Church complex beyond, which form an unusual and attractive ‘gateway’ to this part of the Conservation Area. Further south the stone bridge provides glimpses of the canal, to the west, and, with the “Inn”, establish a transitional pointer between the two contrasting environments of the historic village.
Streetscape

The western part of Main Street up to the ‘T’ junction is characterised by mainly one storey vernacular cottages which step up and down following the levels of the ground and the undulation of the road. Facing them there is post-war local authority housing of a variety of types and ages. Although not great in architectural design much of its scale, mass, height, and materials fit comfortably with the historic group of buildings opposite. Together they provide enclosure and help retain the close knit intimacy in the street.

To the east of Main Street, beyond the ‘T’ junction, the streetscape differs. Most of the buildings to the north side have wider frontages, are two storeys high and some sit at the heel of a fairly wide pavement, while others have small front gardens bounded by low stone walls. A high stone wall largely dominates the south side of the street with strong vegetation behind defining the boundary to Ludgate House, and bringing the landscape into the eastern core of the Conservation Area. The far end of the street is marked by the historic former schoolhouse, which provides a strong visual stop as the road turns sharply to the north.

In general, the built up area of Main Street still reflects the original settlement pattern with its narrow footprints, deep plots of different widths and shapes, although predominantly rectangular. Some small gaps and lanes in between buildings provide access and glimpses to the rear gardens, buildings behind or the countryside beyond. A degree of permeability is captured through these.

The mixture of heights, varied silhouette and offset rhythm of the buildings enhance the general townscape. The boundary treatment also adds variety having small walled front gardens in some places while in others buildings abut directly onto the pavement.
Small details such as low boundary walls, some with railings above, trees, shrubs, and hedges add softening touches to the streetscene.

The amenity green strip and central footpath in front of the council housing contributes to the individuality of the western part of the street.

Baird Road is different. It does not have the compactness of Main Street except on one side of the southern end where the line of historic cottages sits.

The recent redevelopment of the frontage on the west side, and the part facing the ‘Bridge Inn’ car park, do not reflect the historic layout and introduce a more open feel to this part of the street. It lacks enclosure and a sense of place, which most other parts of the Conservation Area have.

Looking westwards from the ‘Inn” and car park the school bulk intrudes into the landscape setting. The rear of the council housing along the ridge does not add to the quality of the environment. The landscaping on the southern land in the foreground has not reached maturity, in contrast looking north the views towards the countryside are very pleasing. There may be opportunities here for development and environmental improvements to add definition, enclosure and fit into the wider context of the area.

The listed ‘Bridge Inn’ and the stone bridge mark the change between the linear settlement and the loose knit, dispersed semi-rural environment. Beyond them to the north sits the ‘A’ listed Church complex. The car park opposite also fails to produce a sense of enclosure. It detracts from the otherwise fine environment surrounding the historic complex. This area needs some attention for future environmental improvements.
There are many attractive views along Baird Street and across the canal. To the north, views of the historic buildings set within the landscape and framed by the woodland behind are impressive. To the east, views over the bridge along the canal reach out beyond the immediate countryside towards the centre of Edinburgh. In the far distance the Castle and Arthur’s seat are noticeable.

Both ends of Baird Road play important roles visually. At the south, Ludgate Lodge ends the vista and at the north the curve, rise, and bend of the road visually unify the Manse and adjacent buildings with the church complex as an attractive end to the village.

Finally other distinct character elements include the hard and crisply defined edges of the village. Some well-established tree lines and clusters at the north and south mark these.

To the east the playing fields help to separate the historic core from the modern suburban housing.
Essential Character

• The Conservation Area fits well into its landscape setting.

• The built form still reflects the essence of the original settlement pattern.

• Its core is predominantly a linear form.

• The scale of the Conservation Area is essentially domestic and intimate.

• The historic buildings form strong visual stops, landmarks, focal points and gateways.

• There are powerful and clear divisions between town and country at the built-up edges.

• The Union Canal provides both a definitional and unifying role.
Architectural Character

The character of Ratho Conservation Area has been shaped by the development of the village from a small agricultural parish, to a village on a major industrial corridor, to its present form as a historic village, with the Union Canal as a visitor attraction and modern commuter housing on the periphery.

The historic core of Ratho lies to the south of the Union Canal and is based around an “L” shaped layout. Its character is derived from the organic street pattern and the vernacular style and near-continuous rhythm of one and two storey cottages which follow the natural topography of the land. Pedestrian lanes to rear plots and a mature tree belt on the south side of Main Street form breaks within this street pattern.

The predominant building form in the village core is small-scale, vernacular style, picturesque, mainly 3-bay, semi-detached and terraced cottages, dating from the early to mid 19th century. Simple pitched roof forms with ashlar skews are punctuated with apex and centre ridge chimney stacks, and are uncluttered by dormer extensions. There is a general homogeneity of building materials due to the use of distinctive locally quarried squared and coursed whinstone with sandstone margins and quoins, rubble sandstone gables with buff sandstone margins and grey Scots slate roofs.

The buildings typically include vertically proportioned, timber sash and case windows with a variety of traditional glazing patterns, and comparatively higher ratio of solid to void. Front doors are generally boarded timber with narrow letterbox fanlights. Architectural elements which contribute to the vernacular and picturesque character, include triangular pediments above doors, pilastered doorpieces, and half-piended side additions.

Minimal front gardens are enclosed by dwarf stone walls with raised gatepiers, creating a formal division between public and private space. Long, narrow rear plots surrounded by high, rubble stone boundary walls are typical of the village core. The streetscape is generally uncluttered due to a lack of street furniture and simple pavement and road surfaces that do not detract from the historic and vernacular character.
Baird Road and Main Street include buildings of distinctive forms and architectural styles. Baird Road contains mainly single storey, semi-detached cottages with grey slate roofs. The buildings on Main Street are a mixture of one and two storey, several with red clay pantiled roofs, and unusual semi-circular coped, front dwarf walls which sweep upwards at the edges.

Prominent buildings of individual historic and architectural merit on corner sites and road junctions provide village landmarks and variety to the homogeneous streetscape. These include:

- 58-60 Main Street, a category B listed two storey, symmetrical house, unusual in its construction detailing of squared Aberdeen Bond whinstone and distinctive central three doors with a corbelled, advanced centrepiece above;

- the B listed former Masonic Lodge at 62-64 Main Street, which is the earliest surviving building in the village core and forms a prominent feature, emphasised by the display of the Lauderdale Coat of Arms and its white-painted harled walls, at the junction of Dalmahoy Road;

- the Tudor style, C(S) listed buildings which form a gateway to Baird Road from the south, comprising the distinctive former Schoolhouse at No. 2 with a tripartite window in its tall gabled bay, and the former Lodge of Ludgate House by William Burn, dating from circa 1840; and

- the group of single storey, ‘B’ listed cottages at 4-14 Baird Road, which were the result of improvements in the early 19th century.
The section of the Conservation Area north of the Union Canal remains essentially rural in character. The character of this area is greatly influenced by a small number of key buildings of historic and architectural significance. These include:

- the category A listed, Romanesque St Mary’s Parish Church which has a particularly dominant presence and is of importance as the first documented building in Ratho. It occupies a significant location forming a gateway to the historic village;

- Kirkton Farm which is significant as the former malting house. It maintains its appearance as a farmstead, despite the past industrial use and recent conversion to residential;

- the category B listed, former Manse, dating from 1803, occupying a prominent site which is clearly visible from the Union Canal; and

- Ratho Hall, a category A listed, early 19th century, rectangular-plan, classical style villa, which is an unusually complete and well-finished house for this age and stands, along with its stables and doocot, within its formal landscape setting;

The distinctive building materials in this northern section of the Conservation Area are black whin and buff sandstone. The predominant roofing material is grey Scots slate.

The Union Canal demarcates the line between the predominantly rural northern section of Ratho and the main built up area to the south. The canal is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and forms a distinctive and architecturally important grouping with the statutorily listed (Category ‘B’) bridge and Bridge Inn. This grouping constitutes the main focal point of the Conservation Area.
Essential Character

• Strong representation of vernacular development within the village core reflecting Ratho’s history as a rural settlement.

• Predominant building form of small-scale vernacular cottages with simple pitched roofs providing a unified character in the village core.

• Consistency in the use of traditional building materials (stone, harl, and Scots slates) which contribute to the unified architectural character of the village core.

• Vernacular and picturesque architectural elements.

• Minimal front gardens and stone boundary walls in the core.

• An uncluttered streetscape.

• A number of prominent buildings which provide village landmarks.

• The limited number of key historic buildings which provide a focus in the area north of the Union Canal.

• The importance of the architectural grouping at the Bridge Inn.
Activities and Uses

Ratho is a predominantly residential area, including a considerable amount of former local authority housing at the western end of the village. The majority of dwellings are family units and owner-occupied. The Castle Rock Housing Association has developed the site of the former primary school on Baird Road for sheltered housing, incorporating a doctor’s surgery.

Several shops and two public houses serve the local community, although there is an increasing attraction to Edinburgh city centre and the western suburbs for shopping and leisure facilities. The village also has two churches, a new primary school, community hall and library, and a creche. A pre-cast concrete works is located north of the village off Baird Road. However, the majority of residents commute to work in Edinburgh and major commercial centres in West Lothian. The adjoining Green Belt land is predominantly productive farmland.

The Union Canal is an important amenity facility and focus for recreational activities. Leisure trips on the canal have maintained the waterway in use and the Bridge Inn continues to serve canal users. The canal provides facilities for rowing, canoeing, cruising, walking, cycling and fishing. A reception centre and dry dock have been developed by the Seagull Trust, which provides barge trips and holidays for disabled people.

Ratho is well located adjacent to the Union Canal to contribute to, and benefit from, the Millennium Link Project which proposes reinstating the link between the Union Canal and the Forth and Clyde Canal and is likely to significantly increase activity on the Canal.

Essential Character

- **Prevalence of residential use.**
- **The importance of the Union Canal as an amenity facility.**
Natural Heritage

Ratho Conservation Area is bounded largely by agricultural fields which are an important element of its landscape setting and this containment within a rural setting provides a strong sense of place. The Union Canal is central to the Conservation Area and is a key landscape element and important amenity space that reinforces the rural character of the area.

The mature tree belts between the Lodge and No. 45 Main Street and around the development at Ludgate Lodge contribute to the rural setting and continues the line of street enclosure. The playing fields on Ratho Park Road, have been the centre for many village activities and makes an important contribution to open space provision in this part of the Conservation Area.

The wooded area to the north of the canal around Ratho Hall, the former Ratho Quarry and Kirkton Farm is an area of outstanding landscape quality and is protected by a Tree Preservation Order. The views from the village to the northern bank which comprise open ground surrounding Ratho Hall, Kirkton Farm and St Mary’s Church provides an open rural backdrop to the village. Of equal importance are the views to the village on the southern bank of the canal, highlighting the village’s setting on the ridge and the long southern views to the Pentland Hills from the north side of Main Street along Dalmahoy Road.

Essential Character

- The strong sense of place and general tranquillity derived from the containment within a rural setting.
- The key landscape feature of the Union Canal.
- The far-reaching and prominent views.
- The importance of the existing wooded areas and playing fields to the landscape setting of the Conservation Area.
OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT

The following pressures are associated with development proposals which conservation area designation, together with the statutory and non-statutory policies of the Council, are designed to manage:

• new development which affects the setting of buildings, garden spaces and boundary walls;

• development and alterations which affect the traditional architectural character and are out of scale with the rural setting of the Conservation Area; and

• loss of mature trees and planting of trees which fail to provide the appropriate scale, shelter and natural.

New development will require to be of appropriate architectural quality and relate in mass, scale, outline and character to the existing village fabric. The construction materials should be stone for walls and chimneys and either Scotch slate or clay pantiles for the roof.

The timber fencing to the car parking is particularly out of character where stone boundary walls are the norm within the Conservation Area. An environmental improvement scheme using more appropriate materials would enhance the setting of Church, War Memorial and car park.

The Bridge Inn car park is an unenclosed area effectively presenting a gap in Baird Road. An environmental improvement scheme to soften and enclose the car parking would close off and reduce the impact of the car park.

The school and housing development on the south side of the canal and just outside the Conservation Area boundary occupy a prominent position in terms of views. The south banks would be considerably enhanced by planting a tree belt to screen out the school and adjacent housing.
Boundaries

Amendments to the present Conservation Area boundary are proposed in the Rural West Edinburgh Local Plan. The proposed eastern boundary would follow the line of the rear of Baird Road cottages, omitting the playing fields, then cross the Union Canal, taking a northerly line to incorporate the burial ground to the north of Freelands Road. The area around the former Ludgate Lodge is proposed for deletion, as the house and grounds have recently been developed for housing, which has affected the setting of the house. The proposed removal of the playing fields from the Conservation Area was criticised during the public consultation, and the boundary of the Conservation Area will be the subject of further consideration.

Role of the Public

It is essential that property owners accept their maintenance responsibilities. The emphasis should be on the repair rather than replacement of original features, as these contribute to the Conservation Area’s character as a whole. Alterations or additions should be sympathetic to the original style and of an appropriate scale.
General Information

Statutory Policies

The Ratho, Newbridge & Kirkliston Local Plan (1985) identifies Ratho Village as a Conservation Area and seeks to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the historic townscape, and its buildings of architectural quality and historic interest.

More recent guidance in the Finalised Rural West Local Plan aims to reinforce Ratho’s historic character, identity, and visual interest. It recognises the erosion of character and loss of features that has gradually occurred as a result of unsympathetic development, and seeks to reverse this trend.

The local plan defines the boundary of the Conservation Area, and also identifies Green Belt land, areas of open space and nature conservation, as well as land covered by Tree Preservation Orders.

It also contains policy advice on:

- The retention of original features such as walls and railings, trees and gardens, and even the pattern of Ratho’s streets and open spaces.
- The need for high quality design and use of traditional building materials in new developments, and in alterations and extensions.
- The redevelopment of existing buildings considered by their appearance to be detrimental to the Conservation Area.
- Development that would normally be permitted, but in the Conservation Area requires Planning Permission.
- The location of Guest Houses.
Supplementary Guidelines

The Council also produces supplementary planning guidance on a range of development control issues. These are contained within the Development Quality Handbook.
Implications of Conservation Area Status

Designation as a conservation area has the following implications:

* Permitted development rights under the General Development Order are restricted. Planning permission is, therefore, required for stonecleaning, external painting, roof alterations and the formation of hard surfaces. The area of extensions to dwelling houses which may be erected without consent is also restricted to 16m² and there are additional controls over satellite dishes.

* Under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992, the planning authority can seek approval of the Scottish Executive for Directions that restrict permitted development rights. The Directions effectively control the proliferation of relatively minor alterations to buildings in conservation areas that can cumulatively lead to erosion of character and appearance. Development is not precluded, but such alterations will require planning permission and special attention will be paid to the potential effect of proposals. The Ratho Conservation Area is covered by Article 4 directions covering the following classes of development:

  1. enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwelling house;
  3. provision or alteration of buildings or enclosures within the curtilage of a dwelling house;
  6. installation, alteration or replacement of satellite antennae;
  7. construction or alteration of gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure.

The Rural West Edinburgh Local Plan proposes the introduction of Article 4 directions covering the following additional classes of development:

  18. agricultural;
  30 + 33. local authority development;
  38, 39, + 40. water, gas, and electricity;
  67. telecommunications.
Special attention must be paid to the character and appearance of the conservation area when planning controls are being exercised. Most applications for planning permission for alterations will, therefore, be advertised for public comment and any views expressed must be taken into account when making a decision on the application.

Buildings that are not statutorily listed can normally be demolished without approval under the Planning Regulations. Within conservation areas the demolition of unlisted buildings requires conservation area consent.

Alterations to windows are controlled in terms of the Council’s policy.

Trees within conservation areas are covered by the Town and Country (Scotland) Act 1972, as amended by the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. The Act applies to the uprooting, felling or lopping of a tree having a diameter exceeding 75mm at a point 1.5m above ground level, and concerns the lopping of trees as much as removal. The planning authority must be given six weeks notice of the intention to uproot, fell or lop trees. Failure to give notice render the person liable to the same penalties as for contravention of a TPO.

Grants may be available towards the repair or restoration of historic building. The Council runs a conservation grant scheme. Such grants are normally dependent on comprehensive repair and restoration of original features and priority is given to tenemental housing and prominent buildings.
This document is available on request in Braille, tape, large print various computer formats and community languages. Please contact ITS on 0131 242 8181 and quote ref. 02246/1. For additional English copies please contact Marilyn Robertson on 0131 529 3900.

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