

AIRDRIE: VICTORIA & TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA

Supplementary Planning Guidance Note Ref: SPG.30 - NLLP Policy NBE.1 and NBE.2

Copies available from Planning & Development, Fleming House, Cumbernauld G67 1JW or from www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/spg

APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

INTRODUCTION

1. What is a Conservation Area?

A Conservation Area is: 'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.' The buildings and spaces within a town and their associations and history form the historic environment which creates a sense of place. Victoria and Town Centre Conservation Area was designated in 1975, and the boundary was reviewed in October 2011. The area is covered by an Article 4 Direction which controls development and alteration work however Permitted Development regulations changed in February 2012 and most householder development within a Conservation Area now requires planning permission (see back page). Information on conservation areas can be found at www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/conservation-areas

2. Purpose of this Guidance

This Guidance was subject to public consultation in 2012. Comments made have been considered, with guidance revised and agreed at Committee on 20 February 2014. It now has material weight in considering planning applications affecting the Conservation Area. It aims to:

- provide a detailed appraisal of those buildings, features and spaces which characterise Victoria and Town Centre Conservation Area.
- set out a Conservation Management Plan for its preservation and enhancement.
- provide guidance for development proposals.



Public art enhances historic Stirling Street shopping area

SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

1. The Historic Layout

Recent streetscape works have reinforced the positive qualities of the medieval street layout at Buchanan Street and Stirling Street. The layout of the historic core of the town remains largely intact with expansion of the commercial area to the west and residential development to the south.

2. Historic Buildings and Materials

During the 19th century, many handsome civic buildings were built in the town centre which reflected the wealth and status of the burgh. Many of these original buildings still survive and most are in an adequate condition. Landmark buildings which contribute to the unique character of the area include: Wellwynd Church, New Wellwynd Parish Church, Airdrie Savings Bank, Airdrie Library and Sir John Wilson Town Hall. Although there is a wide variety of building styles within the conservation

area, buildings are characterised by use of sandstone, scottish slate roofs and traditional timber sash and case painted windows.

3. Open Space and Water Features

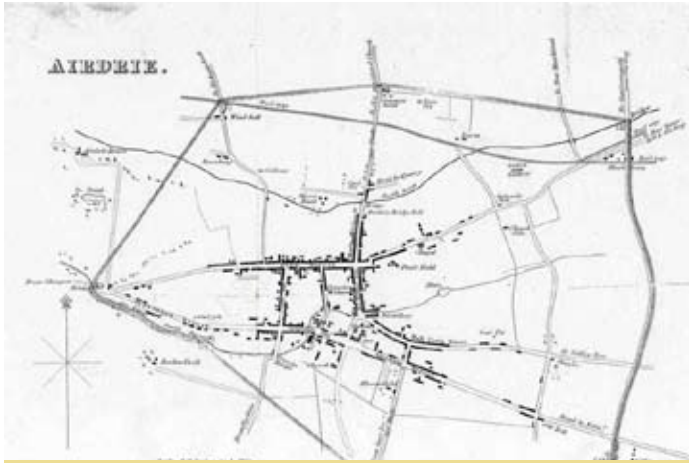
There is a significant amount of well managed public space in West End Park around the war memorial and, proposed for inclusion in the new boundary, Centenary Park. The south burn, north of the railway line, is culverted under West End Park and re-opens to flow through Centenary Park.

4. Public Realm Features

Stirling Street pedestrian area includes seating with views along the key vista, looking westwards which maximises the unusually varied topography of the town centre.

The Council will seek to ensure these principles are achieved through the development management process

A. HISTORY OF VICTORIA AND AIRDRIE TOWN CENTRE



Plan of Airdrie showing the burgh boundary 1832



Ordnance Survey Map 1864 shows how the town developed

Airdrie was established as a market town in 1695, and expanded as a result of the successful hand loom weaving industry, as in many parts of Scotland at this time. By the 1830's the Monkland Canal facilitated transportation of the coal being mined locally and iron and steel production grew. In the inter war years, house building in Airdrie increased with over 3000 local authority houses being built. New electronics industries came to the town in the 1950's however industries have largely ceased and Airdrie faces economic challenges with many residents commuting to Glasgow and Cumbernauld. West End Park was laid out between 1909 and 1913. The public library on Wellwynd was the first lending library in Scotland after Airdrie adopted the public libraries act in 1853 and also housed an observatory.



West End Park and Glasgow / Airdrie Railway circa 1935

B. CHARACTER APPRAISAL

1. Western Zone: Parks and Residential Area

1. This area is predominantly residential with some hotel / guest house use. The inclusion of **Centenary Park** now encompasses the impressive rail bridge viaduct, newly constructed sensory garden and sentinel sculptures, mature trees along the southern boundary of the park and the well used and well equipped children's play area. The war memorial at the busy junction of Alexander Street and Deedes Street forms the gateway to Monklands Hospital and provides a green gateway to this western approach.

2. **West End Park**, south of the A80 (Alexander St) is a more formally managed park. It provides a green space separating the residential area to the south from the more intensively developed town centre, with attractive mature trees on the boundary with the railway. A row of traditional cottages and a red sandstone building on the south of Alexander Street with some commercial use face the large villas set back from the road in gardens with mature trees, giving the area an open aspect

3. The housing is a mix of 19th and 20th century villa development, now with many of the buildings subdivided for flats. Many of these buildings are Italianate inspired Edwardian and early 20th century villas with some more modern brick constructions close to the busy junction at the war memorial. Ebenezer Evangelical church echoes the red brick sandstone terraced buildings on Ralston street. George Street has a variety of styles of housing with stone walls on the southern boundary. Queen Victoria St has larger detached villas. Victoria Primary School at the top of Aitchison Street is a typical stone building with attractive views across the town to the east.



Sensory Garden and Sentinals Sculpture in Centenary Park

B. CHARACTER APPRAISAL (Cont)

2. Southern Zone: Residential South of Railway

This area is dominated by late 19th, early 20th century residential villas, separated from the historic town centre by the railway. Kennedy Drive has housing on the south side of the street, facing the railway line, which is below the level of the street with trees on the boundary. Victoria Place is characterised by large villas in mature tree lined gardens and along with Arthur Avenue exploit their elevated position.

This area has a positive impact due to its position on the key vista from Broomknoll Street and the railway station bridge and surprisingly uniform architecture.



Victoria Place circa 1902

3. Commercial Area

Most public buildings are in the eastern part of the commercial area, retaining the 19th century street plan, including town halls, library, churches and swimming pool. The post medieval street layout also largely remains around High Street / South Bridge Street / North Bridge Street and Wellwynd, however the area is largely filled with housing, industrial and commercial buildings. Public realm works have made improvements however, at Graham street, Bank Street and South Bridge Street.

Original buildings in this area include the mid 19th century bank building, now Royal Bank of Scotland and the Tuscan inspired corner building at 2-10 Graham Street, constructed in 1878. Airdrie library is sandstone, built around 1926, with a twin Doric column entrance. There are various styles of two storey commercial buildings along Stirling Street with some unsympathetic infill development.



Crowds in Stirling Street during the celebrations for the Coronation of King George V and Queen Mary on 23 June 1911



Broomknoll Street 1930's largely unchanged



Airdrie Savings Bank and original design drawing from 1925



Airdrie Savings Bank, 1925 has imposing grey granite columns and is the only independent bank in Britain which commissioned bespoke buildings.

The B listed Bank of Scotland building (1846) has a plain but symmetrical facade in polished ashlar and fine Doric columned entrance. Although there is no uniformity to the design of shopfronts in the main shopping area of South Bridge Street and the key building, Orrs, on South Bridge Street is now closed, the overall character is attractive due to the topography and the remaining original buildings.



South Bridge Street

Original and restored weavers cottages are still in existence on Wellwynd and adjacent modern building, 1 Wellwynd, provides contrast. Broomknoll Street is largely unchanged with some modern infill and provides a viewpoint to New Cross and the Town Hall.

C. APPRAISAL/PROPOSALS MAP

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LEGEND



Listed Buildings



Conservation Area Boundary

Whinb



Poorly designed vacant units - an opportunity for enhancement?



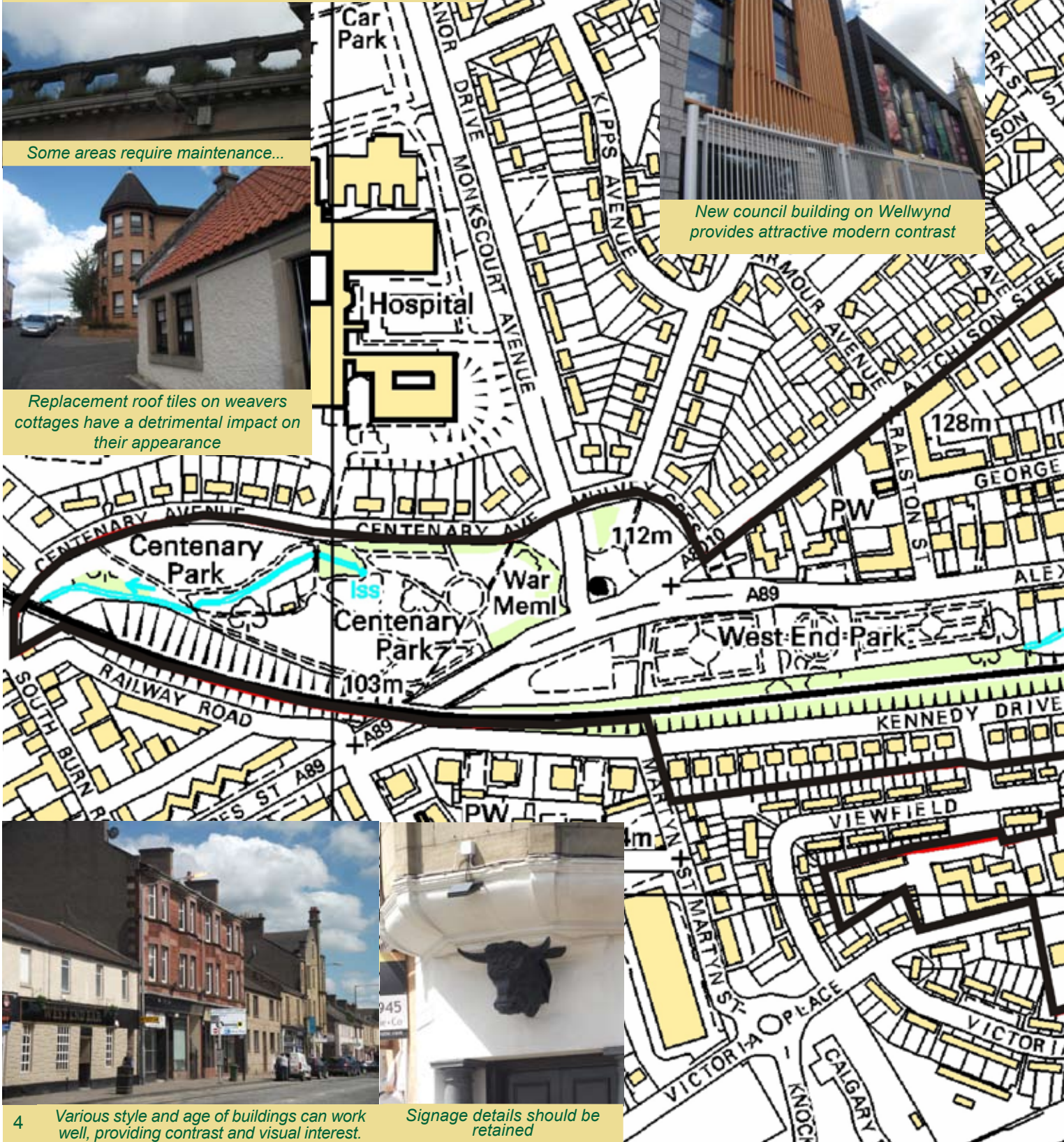
Some areas require maintenance...



Replacement roof tiles on weavers cottages have a detrimental impact on their appearance



New council building on Wellwynd provides attractive modern contrast



4 Various style and age of buildings can work well, providing contrast and visual interest.



Signage details should be retained



Vacant buildings on North Bridge Street affect the approach and perception of the town centre



Produced by North Lanarkshire Council
Environmental Services

D. CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Following on from the Character Appraisal, this leaflete now sets out specific Enhancement Proposals and Management Policies, which together form a strategy for the preservation and enhancement of Airdrie, Victoria and Town Centre Conservation Area in line with para 117 of Scottish Planning Policy 2010. The Council will seek to achieve this enhancement through the Development Management process. Four underlying threats to the historic fabric are: 1. general lack of good quality annual maintenance checks and repairs over an extended period. 2. inappropriate modern repairs and alterations, 3. building fabric which is approaching the end of its life and 4. underused or derelict buildings.

1. Enhancement Strategy

In order to preserve and enhance the historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area and its historic buildings, features and setting the Council will seek to apply Local Plan Policy DSP 4 and NBE1 and NBE2 by:-

a. Preserving and reinforcing the historic character

Seeking to ensure that repairs are carried out sensitively and that works to both listed and unlisted buildings, features and surroundings are considered in relation to the historic context and use appropriate materials, scale and detailing.

b. Minimising the impact of modern development

Any new development will need to start with a local Character Appraisal (as set out at the back of Planning Advice Note 71 - Conservation Area Management)- which protects important views, reinforces a sharp edge to the Conservation Area, and uses sympathetic scale, materials and details - so as to minimise any harmful impact.

c. Ensuring that any new development (or alteration) respects the historic context and character

New development needs to be designed to be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. High quality modern design can in skilled hands be better than traditional pastiche. It is important that it does not harm the setting of the existing historical features or harm the underground archaeological resource.

d. Encouraging a high quality shopping environment

In seeking to promote the viability and vitality of the town centre the Council will also seek to encourage high quality traditional shop fronts and security measures which respect and enhance the local character. The Council will seek to achieve these objectives through the adjoining enhancement proposals and management policies.

North Lanarkshire Local Plan

Policy NBE 1 Protecting the Natural & Built Environment (extract)

(B) Built Environment - Development should avoid causing harm to the character or setting of the sites listed below. Planning permission will only be granted for such sites where the character and appearance of the site and its setting is preserved and enhanced – including any special interest or features of architectural or historic interest. Additional assessment criteria specific to those sites are listed below.

3(a) Conservation Areas

- applications in principle will not normally be considered appropriate
- development shall be consistent with any relevant Conservation Area appraisal or management plan (such as this document)
- designs, materials, scale & siting of any development shall be appropriate to the character of the CA & its setting
- trees which ... contribute to the character & appearance shall be preserved (or replaced if health reasons justify)
- where an existing building contributes positively... presumption against demolition shall apply

Policy NBE 2 Promoting the Natural and Built Environment (extract)

(B) Built Environment - The Council will promote the following built environment improvement initiatives by requiring proposals affecting those sites or their settings to contribute to their enhancement.

(2) Conservation Areas

- Design Statements should include a character appraisal as part of any development or design brief
- Development shall be consistent with any relevant CA appraisal or management strategy

Refer to related Supplementary Guidance for advice on: 15: Design Tools and 02 Trees and Development. See also Local Plan Policy DSP4 - Design Quality



Unsympathetic infill development ...



Improved Shopfront design ...



The design of new infill development ...



Key views ...



... needs to be avoided



...is needed - East High Street



needs to complement existing buildings



... need to be protected

2. Enhancement Proposals

- AVE1** Support the protection and enhancement of the quality and character of the Conservation Area by continuing to develop and maintain high quality public realm improvements.
- AVE2** Seek further opportunities for appropriate high quality surfacing and landscape enhancements.
- AVE3** Seek to reduce harm to the character of the Conservation Area caused by street furniture or sign clutter, poor quality surface reinstatement work, or wirescape clutter through guidance, education and promotion of good practice, health check audits, good stewardship and vigilance.
- AVE4** Seek to restore and enhance the features of West End Park and Centenary Park - and promote positive community use.
- AVE5** Enhance the Conservation Area by feature lighting of historic or landmark structures e.g. Airdrie Savings Bank, Town Hall etc in line with NLC Lighting Strategy.
- AVE6** Encourage good building maintenance and early (preventative) repair by owners, through the dissemination of advice, promotion of publications and use of legislation where necessary to halt deterioration.
- AVE7** Seek to reduce harm to the character and amenity of the Conservation Area caused by high volumes of traffic along Stirling Street and South Bridge Street through tree planting/mitigation and appropriate traffic management measures with full public consultation.
- AVE8** Seek to promote more appropriate signage on existing commercial premises.

3. Management Policies

- AVM1** There is a presumption in favour of preserving all buildings which contribute positively to the character of the Conservation Area (see centre page map).
- AVM2** Any building extension, alteration or new development within or adjoining the Conservation Area should preserve and respect the design, scale, proportions, materials and detailing of the host and adjoining properties, where these contribute positively to the character of the Conservation Area.
- AVM3** The Council will encourage and support development which preserves and enhances the character of the area. Alongside this it recognises the need to promote and enforce control over potentially harmful changes to buildings, such as to roofs and windows, where the cumulative impact is likely to detract from or harm the character of the area. See back page for more information.
- AVM4** Key views and vistas will be protected.
- AVM5** Applicants for new or re-development on sites within or adjacent to the Conservation Area will be required to submit a Design Statement with their proposal which takes account of this Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.
- AVM6** Development should comply with good practice guidance on Conservation Areas, including signage and surfacing materials, on the need for high quality new development, and in restrictions such as tree pruning and removal. Generic Guidance on Conservation Areas has been produced (see SPG.31). Regard should also be had to preserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- AVM7** Development will be expected to comply with Local Plan Policy DSP.4, "Designing North Lanarkshire" (2007), SPG.15 and other relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance. This provides a design framework to promote good design, manage change in the built environment and enhance identity and sense of place in line with the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) Guidance.
- AVM8** Relevant Local Plan policies should also be applied - particularly North Lanarkshire Local Plan Policy NBE.1 & 2, which set out the requirement that all new development must preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and preserve its setting (see p.6).



The local character is derived from a variety of types of building (suburban, civic and commercial) and small details should be preserved.

E. PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT

Development has always been more rigorously controlled within Conservation Areas. Following a Scottish Government review, new legislation affecting Permitted Development Rights came into force in February 2012. In addition to other changes, most works within Conservation Areas will now require planning permission, including:

- house extensions, improvement or other alterations (including window, door or roof replacement);
- works within the curtilage of a dwelling house;
- hard surfacing within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse;
- Changes to any part of a boundary wall railings or enclosure
- Signage

This is in addition to the normal controls over demolition and works to trees. See the Scottish Government Guidance on householder development for more information.



Airdrie: Town Hall

The boundary of the Conservation Area was reviewed in 2010 and amended in October 2011. This SPG was consulted on in 2012 and approved on 20 February 2014.

F. Checklist

The Council will expect most applications for schemes within a Conservation Area to include a Conservation Statement (as part of the Design Statement) which provides the following information:-

does your application for development include...

- ☐ a Character Appraisal - as per the checklist at the back of Planning Advice Note 71 on Conservation Area Management - identifying the design rationale by which any new development will reflect the area's special architectural or visual qualities and "fit in".
- ☐ how the scheme secures the repair and retention of features of interest
- ☐ how the scheme furthers the Management Plan objectives in Section. D (p.6 & 7)
- ☐ an assessment of alternative design approaches to ensure that the development minimises any harm to the character or appearance of the area - in line with Local Plan Policies NBE1, NBE2 and DSP4 and SPG.15.
- ☐ identifies how the development preserves or enhances the existing character through appropriate design, materials, scale and siting
- ☐ how the scheme minimises any harmful demolition works or mitigates any loss of mature trees - whilst enhancing and addressing areas of poor character

The latest Supplementary Planning Guidance and index can be found online at:- www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/spg

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North Lanarkshire Council Building Standards

Municipal Buildings
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Coatbridge ML5 3LN
01236 812440

Scottish Government

www.scotland.gov.uk/topics/planning

Contains general information on planning and building standards. Scottish Planning Policy and Planning Advice Notes, including **PAN71** Conservation Area Management, and **PAN52** Planning & Small Towns

Historic Scotland Conservation Bureau

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hs.conservation.bureau@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

For assistance, and publications on various technical matters

This is one of a series of Supplementary Planning Guidance Leaflets aimed at encouraging good practice in the design and layout of new development. The advice supplements the policies in the North Lanarkshire Local Plan. The Council will have regard to this Guidance when assessing the merits of planning applications. This leaflet was, following public consultation and consideration of all comments made, formally approved as Supplementary Planning Guidance by P&T Committee on 20 Feb 2014. It is available on-line and can be translated or provided in other languages or formats on request

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