

PLANNING ADVICE: 8/2012

ABERDEENSHIRE SETTLEMENT CHARACTERISATION REPORTS

WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISATION REPORTS?

As part of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2012 “characterisation reports” were prepared to help present the sense of place and local character associated with major settlements across Aberdeenshire.

These reports are presented here to assist the development industry in making sure that new development is designed to complement and respect existing townscape features. It presents a consensus view, tested at the MIR stage of plan preparation, of what the main design elements within towns and villages may be, considering issues of urban layout, massing, built form and materials.

These reports are dynamic in nature and the planning policy team will happily consider any reasonable suggestion for their amendment, or disaggregation to consider smaller areas. Such suggestions will be subjected to a peer review process and the views of the local community council sought, before being incorporated into the advice.

Suggested additions should be sent to:

The Planning Policy Team

Planning and Building Standards

Infrastructure Service

Aberdeenshire Council

Woodhill House

Westburn Road

Aberdeen AB16 5GB

Or e-mailed to spgconsultation@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Reference should also be made to other design planning advice prepared by Aberdeenshire Council, including “Implementation of Policy SG LSD2 Layout, siting and design of new development” and, where appropriate, Conservation Area Appraisals.

BANFF AND BUCHAN

Aberchirder

Aberchirder is a planned village, originally developed in 1764. It remains a good example of a planned village built in the era of Scotland's agricultural improvement. The original village consisted of a main street with a central square; houses were located along the main street with feus running north and south. Only one original building of the planned village remains, the rest were improved in the C19. This has led to a fairly uniform main street with 1 ½ storey bay windowed dwellings and more squat buildings on the parallel and cross streets. Most dwellings in the central area are either terraced or closely spaced. Granite, light brown in colour with rough ashlar finishing, is the dominant building material whilst roofs are made of slate. The C18 planned spine of the village is a designated conservation area.

The village developed in the 1920's and 1930's with municipal housing to the north east and along the southern boundary South Street (A97). Further municipal housing in the 1950's and 1960's spread the village further to the north and is built to a fairly high density with rigid layouts. Since the 1970's private housing development has taken place to the west and in the centre, through the subdivision of the town's original feus. The C20 architecture is very standard in terms of semi detached municipal and late C20 private housing designs. This C20 development has increased the footprint of Aberchirder but the planned C18 core remains and still defines the village. Development opportunities exist to the west and north of the village, where the topography is more favourable.

Banff

Banff's history as an important C 18 and C19 trading and fishing port, and its role as the county town of Banffshire are reflected in its architectural wealth. The town initially developed around Banff Bay at the mouth of the river Deveron and has since grown up towards the steep sloping land which surrounds it. The lower town contains the landmark Duff House, and the Harbour with its C17 and 18C buildings, as well as a large amount of open space. The upper town houses most of Banff's famous Georgian architecture strung along the High Street thoroughfare. This offers good views towards Banff Bay and connects, via steep winding lanes, to the lower town and the beach and links. Most of the upper and lower town is covered by a Conservation Area. Further uphill Banff developed throughout the C19 with terraced cottages and in the early C20 with municipal estates of detached and semi detached housing. The town then spread further uphill spread out with a large amount of mid C20 municipal housing which is very standard in design but provided with good sea views. The town developed further towards the south west with some substantially sized private dwellings in the late C20/C21. The old area of Banff still defines the settlement as the C20 is less visible and quite standard, however the old and new coexist quite well overall. There are further opportunities for westward expansion, the westward edge is at present quite undefined, development of a high standard could add to Banff's already considerable form and character.

Inverallochy/ Cairnbulg

Inverallochy and Cairnbulg are two separate villages but, physically at least, forms the same settlement. They date from the early C14 when informal fishing villages grew up along the

coast. In the C19 growth, spurred by a boom in the herring industry, led to the reconstruction of the settlements as planned villages. The planned village (a more or less merged Inveralochy and Cairbulg) is laid out along the seafront and is now a conservation area. The setting is an attractive links landscape which is very flat and exposed to the sea. The cottages are detached but are densely spaced. Unusually for a planned village, they have their gable ends facing the sea with very narrow terraces separating the neighbouring houses. This forms a distinctive settlement which combines the best of the planned village model with tried and tested traditional fishing village characteristics. Houses in this area are squat and predominately 1 1/2 storey in height with distinctive skew tabled, tile clad roofs. The overall colour is grey, with light browns and reddish/pinks. There is no boundary treatment as such, as the walls of homes adjoin the street frontages. To the landward side of the planned village there is a later extension of larger detached late C19 homes and some recreational space. Inverallochy Church is the only large landmark building and, along with the school and some small shops, forms the hinge of the settlement connecting the village with newer development to the west.

The C20 western extension to Inverallochy/ Cairnbulg abuts the village and could be seen as a separate village in itself. The flat open landscape and individuality of the planned village makes it difficult to blend new and old, and the development of the newer area could simply be described as very standard mid C20 built up municipal housing, combined with low density, late C20 bungalow development. The late C20 development now acts as the gateway to the village but is fairly ubiquitous in style and, as is usually the case with modern development, lacks the character of the old village. There is definite scope for extension of the settlement but new development could attempt to mix some of the ideals and characteristics of the old village with modern techniques, this would reaffirm the settlement's unique built fabric and setting.

Fordyce

Fordyce is a small ancient village which is found nestled into a small valley at the foot of Durn Hill, where the Fordyce Burn runs to the nearby Moray Firth. Its origin can be traced all the way back to the foundation of a church in the C5 and the remains of the C13 Old Fordyce Church are found on the same site in the centre of the village, adjacent to the baronial C15 Fordyce Castle. Having hardly grown over the course of its long history, the village now stands as rare example of an ancient, well preserved, organically evolved, North East Scottish village.

The town is located at the crossroads of four minor and ancient roads, very small terraced cottages and detached houses are either strung along these or connected via narrow alleys. Some old fashioned building techniques are used with rough ashlar and heavy mortaring common, using the local grey, light pink and brown granites. Most cottages only reach 1 or 1 1/2 storeys but there are some attractive larger residences. On the edge of the village there are some early C20 agricultural workers cottages and some fairly sympathetic new builds.

Views are pleasant from most angles, with quite expansive views of the surrounding rolling farmland and planted forestry to the south and west. Boundary edges are formed by dry stone dykes and are emphasised with trees and vegetation, whilst private gardens are quirky and well kept; combined, these elements make Fordyce unusually 'green' for a Banff and Buchan village. The village's conservation status lies with its historic ruined church, castle and unique fabric. However this is aided by other elements: The small open park, buildings with distinctive architecture styles including bright wet-harled walls and small deep-set openings, street furniture and signage which remain old fashioned; all these contribute to Fordyce's distinctiveness. Any development in Fordyce would have to maintain the considerably high standard of architecture and rural charm which have made the entire village a conservation area. It is likely that this would have to be small in scale so as not to damage the village's current form and character.

Fraserburgh

Fraserburgh is one of the largest towns in Aberdeenshire; it is located at Kinnaird Head, where the North Sea meets the Moray Firth. It has become one of Europe's most important fishing harbours and its physical growth has been tied to the fortunes of the industry ever since its beginnings as a fishing village in the C15.

There are remnants of Old Fraserburgh at Broadsea, this Conservation Area is typical of the Aberdeenshire fishing villages, but Fraserburgh grew rapidly in the C19 as a fishing port and the built fabric of the town reflects this. The town centre is C19 and is fairly compact, rising up from the harbour and reaching heights of up to 4 storeys with some distinctive commercial buildings and churches. The architectural style is generally quite functional and understated; whilst the colourscape is distinctly grey, with predominant use of granite. The harbour area is home to a variety of forms; the lighthouse stands out, as does the scale of warehousing and the enormous boats are landmarks in themselves. It is this area which gives Fraserburgh its distinctive character. The C19 warehousing and tightly packed tenements eventually give way to leafy C19 streets to the south west and expansive recreational areas along the links and to the south.

Fraserburgh is home to a large amount of 1920's and 1930's municipal housing which spread out to the north and west and now forms the geographical centre of the town. This is well formed and a good example of early C20 municipal architecture and planning. The 1960's and 1970's seem to have seen a further spurt of growth in the town with some fairly high density, and often flatted, municipal building. These developments are fairly typical of the national municipal architecture of the time, but quite large in scale for the relatively small size of the town. Since then, Fraserburgh has spread out to the western and southern directions with expansive estates of private detached dwellings, some of considerable size, forming the new boundaries of the town.

Fraserburgh is a fishing town and the scale of some of the fish processing sites in Fraserburgh's employment areas relative to the size of the town indicate their importance. There have been attempts to add gateway branding as well as hard and soft landscaping in the centre which has achieved mixed results. The north end of the town is undergoing extensive regeneration; the southern and western boundaries remain areas for potential growth, but this should hopefully avoid cul-de-sac sprawl.

Macduff

Macduff is located on the opposite side of Banff Bay and has developed as the fishing harbour for Banff Bay since the early C19. Its physical landscape is similar to neighbouring Banff but the built environment reflects its fishing and shipbuilding past and present - it is still a working harbour. There are a number of vantage points in the town; two of these are dominated by the Doune Parish Church as well as the town's war memorial. The harbour is fronted by related commercial buildings on Shore Street and, off this, the town's shopping street, Duff Street. The harbour is home to a number of fishing and shipbuilding fabrication sheds and these dominate the area. Residential streets which are built according to the very steep landscape are dominated by C19 workers housing which are mostly built fronting straight onto the streets at low heights of up to 2 storeys using the local dark grey and brown granite. A large proportion of the building stock is made up of C20 municipal housing. Overall the majority of the town is modestly built, but well kept and enjoys some dramatic sea views. There has been a spread to the south and west in recent years through C20 bungalow private development and there is a growing employment area to the south east where units have been successfully taken up. There are opportunities for the further expansion of Macduff to the south and south-east; these might take advantage of the dramatic but exposed locations the town offers.

New Aberdour

New Aberdour is a small C18 planned village located 7 miles west of Fraserburgh just inland from the Moray Firth. It is an L shaped planned C18 village. At the junction there is an open village green where the church and village hall are located. A limited amount of new build has taken place in the village, but the current form of the village has changed very little since the C19.

Most buildings are small and fairly squat, terraced, 1 ½ storeys, and many have splayed bay windows. The local red, brown and grey granite is used, and gives the village its colour. Use of grey and brown/red wet harl is also quite common and some buildings have a painted finish. The overall style of architecture is quite understated and the landmark building, the church is very functional and sombre in style.

Undulating farmland surrounds New Aberdour, but it is located very close to the coast. This is not immediately apparent, as the village lies over the lip of a hill which slopes down to nearby the New Aberdour beach. There is room for expansion, especially to the east where the surrounding topography is flatter. Some new development has taken place in the village and on its edges which has fitted in well within the overall character. A larger development on the north east edge would be possible due to the fairly flat topography. Such a development would have a noticeable impact as New Aberdour does not seem to have changed substantially since the C19, however this would be very difficult to avoid if growth is required.

Portsoy

Portsoy is one of the oldest fishing towns in the North East and has grown up around its C16 century and later C19 harbours. It is characterised by its densely built old town which clings to the hilly topography before giving way to a more planned hilltop C19 town centre and incremental C20 extensions. The Soy Burn runs through the town and down towards the harbour. Much of the town is covered by a Conservation Area.

The old town is situated at the foot of a steep slope, sandwiched between two hills on the east and west and is Portsoy's most characterful area. Houses front directly onto the winding streets which are packed tightly and connected by vennels and alleys. Heights of the housing and warehousing reach up to 3 1/2 storeys, with steep roof pitches and small openings. The houses are painted brightly and the granite stone colour is a mix of brown and very dark granite. The C19 town is located uphill on flatter land, it is well ordered in comparison to the older harbour area. The main street Seafield Street (A98) is home to local landmarks of Fordyce Church and The Church Hall as well as a fairly uniform 2 ½ storey with bay window streetscape. The A98 dissects Portsoy and can become quite busy. There are some modest terraced streets branching off Seafield Street as well.

The C20 has seen expansion throughout the town in locations where the undulating topography and Soy Burn gully has allowed. This varies from municipal expansion to the west, to private bungalow development to the south. This southern area looks over farmland and towards the Hill of Durn, whereas the majority of the town faces the sea. There is scope for development to the south and west, this would hopefully be in keeping with the character of what is an interesting town.

Sandend

Sandend is one of the smallest fishing villages on the Moray Firth. It is located near Portsoy at the point where the Fordyce Burn flows into the firth at Sandend Bay.

The old village is made up squat cottages built with gable ends facing the sea and has been given Conservation Area status. Either terraced or detached and densely spaced, they are

mostly built up to 1 ½ storey, using granite which is a light grey/brown. Heavy use of mortaring gives a rough ashlar look. Wet harling is used on some cottages as well as an unusual black painted mortaring with white grouting on some of the cottages. Openings are very short and fairly narrow and there is consistent use of rybats and deep inset windows. The character of the old village comes not just from the buildings themselves but also from the way they are laid out. It has a very informal network of lanes, alleys, and gardens connecting it. On the harbour front there is a small public green area with drying lines, park benches and berthed boats.

The village has developed along the narrow Seaview Road to the south and gradually gets younger as it moves towards the A98. There is a row of houses in a variety of styles and forms; most of which either enjoy direct views onto Sandend Bay or have Sandend Caravan Park and playing fields in the foreground. At the southern tip of the village is The Bents, a development of mid C20 detached and semi detached municipal properties, and a village hall. These are designed to the standard of their time and their positioning leaves them looking quite bleak and exposed, especially in comparison to the old village. Residential development in the southern area of Sandend could be an opportunity to add more coherence and shape to a village which, whilst having an abundance of charm and an enviable setting, is currently quite disjointed.

Sandhaven and Pittulie

The coastal villages of Sandhaven and Pittulie have effectively become a single settlement; the two former fishing villages are located along the Moray Firth on an area of rocky shoreline, surrounded by coastal links landscape and flat arable farmland.

Pitullie bears the hallmarks of a typical Moray Firth fishing village; it is made up of squat, 1 storey cottages, which are laid out with gable ends facing the sea, separated by narrow terraces. The village is very small, essentially a strip along the coast and the road which links it to Sandhaven. The older area of Sandhaven is similar to Pitullie in many respects but contains later C19 cottages. These are around 1 ½ storey in height, with splayed dormer windows. In both Sandhaven and Pittulie coarse/rough ashlar is used in light brown and grey. Pinnings are used fairly extensively throughout, which is a signature material finish in this area of Aberdeenshire. Sandhaven follows the coast and the Fraserburgh road, and it is along here that the village's limited services are located. These along with the old harbour and old mill, indicate the role the village once played. There is still some employment land located around the harbour but it is of a low quality, as is the harbour in general as many of the village's functions have been superseded by neighbouring Fraserburgh. Sandhaven grew southwards across the surrounding flat arable land during the mid to late C20 with a mix of semi detached one and two storey municipal homes, these common building types now make up the majority of the building stock. The flat landscape means that any new building is very obvious and is difficult to blend in. Some recent private development has added to the C20 municipal area of the village. Interestingly the building heights and roofs seem to have been kept low and this helps the development fit in with the older part of the village. The area surrounding the village, to the south-east, south and west could be suitable for further expansion.

Whitehills

Whitehills is a small fishing village located just west of Banff surrounding a rocky bay to the west of Knock Head. It has grown as a fishing village since the C16 and developed especially in the C19. It is characterised by its C18/19 old village which stretches along the shore towards the harbour. This has developed like other Moray Firth fishing villages, with small houses clustered around each other with gable ends facing the sea. The exteriors are painted a variety of colours; gable ends face the sea and there is extensive use of rybats and edge detailing as well as

distinctive white grouting between granite blocks. Most houses front directly onto the street with small informal spaces between them. The village spread inland in the C19 through the development of terraced 1 ½ storey and detached villa housing. The shore, links and extensive views from throughout the village add a sense of openness. The landmark buildings in Whitehills are the Parish Church and the Downie's Fish Processing Plant as well as the marina.

During the C20 the town has developed to the east and also along the southerly edges. Around half the building stock is low density, private new build; these are built in a style which is typical of most modern development. The 20/21C extension to the village has little in common with old town character or its street pattern and its recent spread means that the village can clearly be seen from Banff. The village's exposed location, sea views and unique character, mean that new development is unavoidably obvious. Further expansion to the south west is likely to most favoured by developers, but this should maintain principles of good layout and sympathetic siting in order to avoid the sprawl of the village.

BUCHAN

Auchnagatt

Auchnagatt is a small settlement, located on the A948 to New Deer. The name Auchnagatt means Field of Withies, withies being the old name for sallow or willow trees which grow along the banks of the Ebrie burn. The settlement is built on the southern slope of a Backhill of Annochie and along Ebrie Burn. It is surrounded by undulating fields with Ebrie Burn flowing through the settlement to the west and another watercourse to the east and meet just south of the settlement.

Auchnagatt grew when the railway line was built in the 1860's, but little growth has happened since the line was dismantled in the early 1980s. It is predominantly ribbon development and quite open due to the limited development that has taken place over the last 100 years. Development in Auchnagatt is predominantly 1½ storey in height and the original development is a traditional grey/brown granite cottage. The majority of 20th century development has been on the secondary road (B9030). Developments in the 20th century are generally coloured cream or brown/grey. Later developments have largely been bungalows finished in grey fyffe stone and pale grey dry-dash pale grey. Dwellings in Auchnagatt either detached (19th century and bungalows) or semi-detached (20th century developments). The key features in Auchnagatt are the hotel, hall and the school.

There are opportunities in Auchnagatt to provide land for future development that takes advantages of the good road network, school and small retail outlet and its close proximity to Ellon. However, there is no public drainage (WWTW) in the settlement.

Boddam

Boddam is a small settlement with minimal traffic. It has grown significantly in the last 60 years westwards as a result of RAF Buchan, which closed in 2006. It is bordered by the A90(T) on the west side, along with Stirling Village and Stirling Hill to the south west. The remains of Boddam Castle is located on a peninsula to the south of the settlement. Flat agricultural land/rough pasture border the settlement to the north and south.

Development in the historic core of Boddam is generally 1 to 1½ storeys in height and the original development is a traditional pink granite cottage. Boddam only grew significantly when RAF Buchan was located on the terminal of the former Boddam railway line in the 1950s. Large areas of local authority housing were built along with the RAF base, which closed in 2006. Modern developments are now more common and are generally 2 storeys high. Later developments have largely been bungalows. Developments in the 20th century are generally finished in dry-dash pale grey or red/dark brown. Dwellings built in the 21st century are pale grey fyffe stone and dry harling. Dwellings in Boddam are largely terraced or closely spaced with little open space, except to the southwest where modern bungalows have been built. The key features in Boddam are the lighthouse, the former RAF base, Peterhead Power Station the fish processing plant.

There are limited opportunities for future development on the Boddam-side of the A90(T) as it is enclosed by the sea to the east, Stirling Hill to the south west, narrow peninsulas to the south and Peterhead Power Station to the north. Redevelopment of the RAF base will provide some opportunities for development, but it may be necessary in the long term to breach the A90(T) and develop Stirling Village.

Cruden Bay

Cruden Bay is located just south of Slains Castle (begun in 1597) and is accessed from the A90(T) (over a mile away) from three roads two of which are minor roads. Traditionally, the name was derived from the Gaelic Croch Dain (Slaughter of Danes), as Cruden Bay was the site of a battle between Danes and Scots in 1012. Cruden Bay dates back to the 16th century and encompasses several earlier fishing communities; Ward, an abandoned hamlet of fisher cottages and Port Erroll, which was established by William Hay, 19th Earl of Erroll in the 1840s and 1850s. A functional harbour at the mouth of the Water of Cruden was added in the 1870s.

The historic core of Cruden Bay (Port Erroll) lies within a dip in the landscape, which is now a Conversation Area. Large sand dunes stretch along the settlement to the harbour, screening part of it. The arrival of the oil and gas sector to the north east has increased the population and it has now become a small scale tourist and commuter settlement.

Development in the historic core of Cruden Bay is generally 1½ storeys with pink granite terraced cottages. Only a handful of single storey cottages remain. Many have later been wet dashed and painted either white or a pastel colour. Modern developments are a mix of bungalows, 1.5 (most common) and 2 storeys high. They are generally finished in dry harling or in the later 20th and 21st Century in pale grey fyffe stone and off-white dry harling. A large area of open space, which is protected in the local plan separates Cruden Bay in two, with all the most recent developments on the west side. The local hotels, links golf course and the dwellings along Harbour Street are key features in Cruden Bay.

Development opportunities are limited to the west of Cruden Bay due to the up landscape and unnamed water course and valley to the east.

Hatton

Hatton is located on the A90(T), but the settlement itself receives little through traffic. The majority of the settlement lies to the north of the Water of Cruden valley. Hatton is surrounded by undulating/rolling agricultural land.

Development in the historic core of Hatton is generally 1 to 1½ storeys in height and the original development is a traditional pink granite cottage. Modern developments are a mix of bungalows (most common), 1.5 and 2 storeys high. They are generally finished in wood or dry harling or in the later 20th Century in pale grey fyffe stone or dry harling. Modern dwellings are typically pale brown/beige dry dash and fyffe stone. Dwellings in Hatton are closely spaced with little open space, except to the east at the Water of Cruden valley, which is protected in the local plan, and that surrounding the settlement. The pub, formerly a corn mill, the bakery and the station Hotel are key features in Hatton.

There are opportunities in Hatton to provide land for future development that takes advantage of the A90(T) and its central proximity to Ellon, Peterhead and Aberdeen.

Mintlaw

Meaning the smooth flat place, Mintlaw was founded as a crossroads point by James Ferguson of Pitlour who planned three other settlements during the late 18th and early 19th centuries (Longside, Stuartfield and New Deer). Developed on the site of a turnpike (road toll) it has four roads radiating outwards from a central Square (or village Green), now a roundabout, which lead to Fraserburgh, Ellon, Peterhead, and New Pitsligo. Mintlaw expanded westwards when the railway station was built in the 1860s. However, significant growth did not occur until the 1950/60s to house construction workers of the St Fergus Gas Terminal and the Peterhead Power station in the 1970s. In the 1980s, private homes were built in the east. The latest developments are to the west side of the settlement. Mintlaw boasts a range of housing types.

Each housing estate is unique, characterised by the popular materials and designs of the period.

The surrounding land is low undulating agricultural land interspersed with very small pockets of trees to the east and larger areas of woodland to the west, including Aden Country Park.

There are opportunities in Mintlaw for future development given the generally flat nature of the land, the number of local amenities existing and the close proximity it is to Peterhead. However, given the designed landscaped nature of the west side of Mintlaw, as it was part of Aden and Pitfour estates, development should be respectful of these estates. The estates are important archaeologically, and are listed in the Sites and Monuments Record.

New Deer

New Deer is one of four planned villages (Longside, Mintlaw and Stuartfield) that were founded by James Ferguson of Pitlour during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. However, unlike other planned settlements it does not have a central Square or Village Green, as it was an extension of an existing settlement known as Auchreddie (which translates as "field of the bog myrtle" (a plant)). Auchreddie was originally founded after monks from Deer Abbey, Old Deer built a chapel to the south of the settlement in the 13th century. The settlement is set on the south side of a hill and is surrounded by undulating agricultural broken up by small pockets of woodland.

After the initial extension of New Deer to the north in 1805 there has been little new development. New Deer is characterised by ribbon development except in the local authority housing estate to the east of the settlement. Development in the historic part of New Deer is generally cottages with dormer extensions with some 2 storey buildings, built in grey granite, with some finished in wet dash and painted cream. Local authority housing is general 2 storeys and constructed in pink granite or finished in dry dash. Recent dwellings are either bungalows or 1.5 storeys and are generally finished in cream dry dash or pale grey fyffe stone.

There are opportunities in New Deer for future development given the high number of amenities and local businesses within the settlement and the location of the Keenan Recycling composting facility located just of the B9170 west of New Deer.

Peterhead

Founded by the Earl Marischal Keith in 1587 Peterhead was developed as a planned settlement. Its first harbour was built in 1593 and Peterhead soon became an established base for trade, most notably for fish. Peterhead grew and in the 1800s it became popular as a spa town. Three areas of the town are designated as conservation areas (Buchanhaven, Roanheads and between Bath street and Broad Street).

The town did not grow significantly until the 1970s when it became a major oil industry service centre, and when the nearby St Fergus gas terminal was completed. It grew later in the 20th Century when Peterhead Power Station was built and when RAF Buchan was stationed in Boddam.

The latest developments are to the northwest and west side of the settlement. Peterhead boasts a range of housing types. Each housing estate is unique, characterised by the popular materials and designs of the period.

The surrounding land is low undulating agricultural land interspersed with small pockets of trees to the northwest. The land rises to the north at the mouth of the River Ugie and to the south (Meethill). Sandy beaches break up the rocky coastline along Peterhead Bay and Sandford Bay.

There are opportunities in Peterhead for future development given the generally flat nature of the land, the number of local amenities existing, the harbour, and the location the A90(T) on the periphery of the settlement. New development would be welcomed where gap sites have occurred in the historic core of the settlement. However, such developments should be carefully considered in terms of scale, in respect for the urban grain of the area and in relation to its neighbours.

St Combs

St Combs is an organically planned fishing town and was 'created' in the 1780's as a way to promote improvements within estate. It is a quiet coastal village set in a depression in the landscape and is surrounded by undulating agricultural land. Although a former fishing village, it has no harbour. Fishing was sustained by the St Combs Light Railway line to Fraserburgh, which opened in 1903. A shellfish industry also developed as a result of the railway line. The railway line closed in 1965 and fishing declined in the settlement as a result.

St Combs grew significantly in its early years and is characterised by rows of dwellings (ribbon development style). There are no large planned estates within the settlement. Development in the historic core of St Combs is generally 1 to 1½ storeys in height and the original development is a traditional brown/grey granite cottage. Modern developments are largely bungalows or single storey terraces with only a few 1.5 storey dwellings and are generally finished in pale grey or beige dry harling. Pale grey or pink fyffe stone is used on the corners of 21st century dwellings. Dwellings are closely spaced and there little open space within the settlement. However, the coastal and southern boundary is designated as a Protected Area in the Aberdeenshire Local Plan (ALP).

Due to its isolated location away from the main road network, and the lack of employment within the settlement, there has been a very slow uptake of the housing allocated sites in ALP. As a result there are opportunities in St Combs for future development. However, as St Combs is a dormant settlement a clear purpose for these allocations will need to be identified, if they are expected to be developed.

Strichen

Founded by Alexander Fraser, 7th Lord Strichen in 1764, Strichen was developed as a planned settlement, and is largely covered by a conservation area designation. Known as Mormond until the 1850's, Strichen was built to house workers for the growing textile industry. Strichen grew further when the Strichen railway station opened in 1865 on the Maud to Fraserburgh, line. Growth in the 20th Century has not been as strong as in the 19th century given its peripheral location and decline in the textile industry. New development is largely concentrated along the northern periphery of the settlement.

Strichen lies within the foothills of Mormond Hill to the north. Strichen sits within a valley formed by the North Ugie Water and four small hills. The surrounding land is undulating agricultural land with large areas of woodland to the south across the North Ugie Water.

Due to the setting of Strichen within a river valley, there are limited opportunities for future development. Developing west/south of North Ugie Water could only be considered if there would be good pedestrian linkages to Strichen.

Stuartfield

Formerly known as Crichtie, Stuartfield was founded by John Burnett in 1772, the laird at the time. John Burnett was a relative of James Ferguson of Pitlour who planned three other

settlements (Longside, Mintlaw and New Deer) during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Named after John Burnett's grandfather Captain John Stuart, Stuartfield lies within a valley formed by four small hills with several small water courses running through it. The surrounding land is flat agricultural land interspersed with trees before it rises upwards on all sides with large areas of woodland to the north (Aden Country Park), west and south (landscaped grounds of Crichton House).

Stuartfield was built with four wide streets radiating outwards from a central Square (or village Green) to the north, south, east and west. Developed to house estate workers in the lint and wool industries, many of the original buildings still stand. The dwellings were originally built to a design known as a "house and a half", the half length extension being a workroom to house the loom (the start of the 'cottage industry'). Further planned extensions of the settlement did not occur until the 1970s when new homes were built. There has been a steady increase of planned small-scale extensions since then. Development in the historic part of Stuartfield is generally cottages, built in grey or brown granite. Some have been altered with higher walls, a second storey and/or dormer windows. Local authority housing is generally 2 storeys and constructed in pink granite or finished in dry dash. Recent dwellings are predominantly bungalows and finished in cream or light brown dry dash with pale grey or beige fyffe stone on the corners.

There are opportunities in Stuartfield for future development given the generally flat nature of the land, the number of local amenities existing and the close proximity it is to Mintlaw. However, given the planned layout of Stuartfield, development opportunities should be well linked to the settlement by respecting its traditional layout and enhancing existing services through linkages and proposed uses (i.e. space for small businesses).

FORMARTINE

Blackdog

Blackdog consists of two separate entities, an industrial estate and a residential housing development. The housing estate consists of a mix of 1 and 2 story dwellings, detached and semi-detached. They are very similar in style, brown harling and simple monopoly style design.

Blackdog has a feel of a commuter settlement, this is characterised by the lack of community facilities and the lack of a focal point/centre to the settlement.

The current settlement is surrounded by green belt and has pleasant views to the south and east with nothing of particular noteworthiness.

Fyvie

The settlement sits in the valley of surrounding hills and has views out to rolling agricultural land and forestry plantations. Within Fyvie there is an abundance of open space with informal recreational opportunities and playing fields. The settlement of Fyvie is bisected by the Oldmeldrum Turriff road with the majority of it on the north side of this road. The Gateway to the town includes the large Vale Hotel, a small park and the crossing over the river Ythan, a most pleasant entrance to the settlement. Fyvie castle, although not visible from the settlement, has an influencing effect on the settlement. The key landmarks in the settlement are the gateway to the town and two war memorials.

The original settlement contained 1½ story Victorian cottages, decorated with bay windows and sitting on individual plots. There are a number of larger Victorian villas interspersed throughout the settlement with similar characteristics to the cottages from the Victorian era. Associated decorative features add character to the settlement, with wrought iron fencing and hedging detail. The roofs are of traditional pitches with flush dormers and squat chimneys. Grey granite buildings with dark grey natural slate on the roof.

Newer dwellings have complemented the traditional style, even though different in appearance, are designed as individual houses, 1½ story within individual plots. There is good permeability throughout the settlement with little or no cul-de-sac development. The primary school, shops and health centre illustrate its role as a service centre for a rural hinterland.

Garmond

A linear settlement consisting of a collection of older Aberdeenshire style cottages interspersed with modern bungalow development. The distinction between the two styles lies in the materials and the layout of the two types of dwellings; the older style abuts the main street whereas the newer dwellings are set back with gardens at the front.

The majority of houses are of 1½ stories with set back dormers and traditional 45° roof pitches. The ridge tiles are of a plain appearance and chimneys, found mainly on the older style dwellings, are of a squat nature. There is little 'craft' or detail in the design of the houses and there is a functional agricultural aesthetic, obviously in relation to their traditional uses. The traditional dwellings are constructed of dark grey granite while the newer dwellings are harled in

a camel brown finish. The layout and design of the buildings are all different and therefore add a unique style to the settlement.

There is a very rural feel to this settlement where it sits in a landscape of rolling hills surrounded by farmland and shelterbelt forestry. There is much open space between many of the buildings and this is partially used as small scale farming space.

A small community hall to the north of the settlement suggests that this is a centre point for a wide rural hinterland.

Potterton

Potterton is dominated by two large housing estates, one comprising wooden chalet type bungalows, and the other simple mid 20th century bungalows. A small amount of traditional granite style cottages are located along the main street along with a Church and associated manse house.

All housing is 1-1½ story with little decorative features and mainly of muted beige/brown colours. There is a lack of flow and permeability through this settlement.

Potterton has a feel of a commuter settlement and this is represented by the main road that bisects the settlement, with few key buildings and a lack of focal point/centre,

The current settlement is surrounded by green belt, and a large protected area, including playing fields, is located within the settlement.

St Katherines

St. Katherines is a small rural hamlet located on the main Oldmeldrum to Turriff road (A947). At the start of the C20 the settlement consisted of a few houses and a school to provide a service to the wider hinterland, this role has now changed and the settlement takes on the role of a dormitory settlement, serving Aberdeen. The surrounding countryside is of rolling hills consisting of agricultural land and small areas of forestry. The main road is a dominant feature and presents a high level of vehicle movements.

There are no geographical or cultural ties and it would seem probable that the settlement has developed organically with small developments of individual dwellings or small clusters over the years.

Many of the newer residential dwellings are 'modern' and non description in appearance and have little aesthetic relevance to the original settlement or the traditions of rural Aberdeenshire as a whole. The dominate form is of dwellings comprise 1½ story bungalow style houses, finished with light brown harling, dark grey roof tiles and functional finishings. They are simple in design and have no decorative craft features.

Tarves

Tarves is located in rolling countryside, surrounded by agricultural land, which gives the settlement a distinct rural feel. The square is the main focal point of the village, together with the church and war memorial lying to the east of the square. It is a conservation area and presents a strong character to Tarves. The primary school, open space and bowling green all provide a function to the settlement and it is well served by informal recreational facilities. There is traffic flow throughout the village rather than through.

There is a clear time line of development within the settlement ranging from the original settlement, newer development and very recently new modern housing estates.

Approaching the settlement from the east the gateway features to the village are the cemetery and large villas, including the manse house. The original village was planned, based around the square, with prominence given to the church to the east of the square. Since then much of the settlement has developed on a planned approach, with the bulk of housing incorporated within residential estates. The western approach is dominated by large executive detached family dwellings not in keeping with the original core of the settlement.

Many of the original dwellings, located around the square, are typical Aberdeenshire cottages, terraced in nature, 1½ story with simple architecture. The main road leading west from the square is lined with individual villas of Victorian stature facing onto the road. Roofs are of a traditional pitch with some fine detail and occasional ridge ornamentation. The windows are of a traditional size and main doors are short and broad. Projections are very limited apart from on larger villas. Signage is in keeping with the conservation status of the area. Traditional buildings are of mellow granite with hues of red/pink.

Udny Green

Udny Green is centred on the green and is dominated by the Church to the north side of this green. Many of these buildings are granite cottages found extensively in Aberdeenshire. This settlement takes on a planned form, primarily being based around the green, then further later extension through the development of residential estates.

Arriving from the southern approach large villas are dominant before arriving at the south east end of the green. The west road from Pitmedden is flanked by Udny castle estate which has an entrance on to the north east side of the green. This castle, even though not seen from the settlement, has an imposing effect on the area.

Many of the original cottages are similar in style, 1½ story granite stone with set back dormer windows and short, broad doorways. The colourings are 'sharp' grey with white finishing's. Some of the cottages contain small, traditional skylights and are generally plain with little ornamentation or craft.

The dominance of the church and the central location of the green 'ties' the settlement together and provides a focus for the settlement, the primary school is also located next to the green. These prominent features of the settlement reinforce the role it plays and the strong character of the settlement. The prominence of mature trees adds to the character of the settlement.

The settlement is enhanced by the use of additional elements of landscaping, including stone walls, traditional lampposts, authentic signage etc.

Udny Station

Udny Station is located within close proximity to Ellon and Aberdeen amid rolling hills with a predominance of agriculture and small pockets of woodland surrounding.

Three different areas can be identified within the settlement, the original settlement buildings, council housing stock and newer housing developments; these are roughly divided into three equal parts. There is a certain amount of dereliction to older style buildings located on the main street, which would have been the original makeup of Udny Station, they may have possibly been used as some sort of agricultural use.

The style of houses include typical north east cottages, prevalent throughout Aberdeenshire and are constructed from grey granite and slate roofs. The council house style buildings are of unusual design and are quite different from the typical Aberdeenshire cottages within the settlement. There is little distinct style in this settlement due to the variety of styles on show. The lack of key buildings would indicate that this is a dormitory settlement serving Aberdeen.

The traditional role of this settlement would have been built up around the railway station now the Formartine and Buchan way One main thoroughfare runs through the settlement although this is not a main transport route and therefore there is relatively little traffic.

GARIOCH

Blackburn

Blackburn is a commuter town with a large industrial estate. The location and demand for housing in Aberdeen has driven development in this settlement. The historic core lies on flat land, but the majority of the modern development is on hilly land in a river valley. Blackburn is surrounded by rolling agricultural land, but the town does not gain much benefit from areas of public open space within the town.

There is a wide range of types of housing and tenures ranging from 1 ½ storeys to 3 storeys in height. The key characteristic of housing developments in Blackburn is the use of west dash harling. Development in Blackburn is relatively dense in comparison with other settlements in Aberdeenshire.

Chapel of Garioch

Chapel of Garioch is a small settlement set in the foothills of Bennachie and is surrounded by rolling agricultural land. The settlement as defined is in two separate sections the school church being focal point for the southern area and the school being the focus for the northern area.

The historic core of Chapel of Garioch has a large number of rough granite buildings, but buildings rendered in brown/grey are most common. The dwellings in Chapel of Garioch are mainly 1 ½ storeys and these are a mix of cottages and bungalows. A key feature in Chapel of Garioch is the spaces between buildings and mature trees that contribute to the setting and provide a sense of place.

There are opportunities in Chapel of Garioch to continue the pattern of development with open areas and mature trees, but also to provide areas of formal open space. Views from Chapel of Garioch to Bennachie should be protected. Any new development requires to be highly sensitive to the character of the settlement and should follow the high standard set by recent infill sites in terms of design and materials.

Clovenstone

Clovenstone is not classed as a settlement in the Aberdeenshire Local Plan and there is very little to characterise. Buildings are a mix of bungalows and disused farm buildings. The housing in Clovenstone is sparse and there are views to the surrounding countryside.

There is currently very poor access to Clovenstone and development, if any, should be restricted to small scale development.

Echt

Echt is an estate village and is centred on the junction of the B977 Dunecht to Banchory road and the B9119 Kingsford Ordie road. The majority of buildings in Echt are 1 ½ storeys and there are some larger buildings at the crossroads the church and cowdry arms being a focal point of the village. Echt benefits from a large area of formal open space and there are nice views from Echt to the surrounding countryside and the Hill of Fare to the south.

Within the designated conservation area in Echt there is some use of finials and porches. Residential buildings on the main road are set back with large gardens, which give a sense of place to the settlement.

There are opportunities in Echt to accommodate small scale development that enhances the features within the designated conservation area.

Insch

Insch can refer to a meadow or low-lying pasture which closely corresponds to the siting of the town of Insch which lies in a bowl surrounded by hills to the south and west and the land rises to the north east. The views from insch to surrounding hills including Dunnydeer are important and should be retained. Insch is screened when entering from the south east by mature trees and ancient woodland. Insch is well hidden and it is not until you arrive that you are really aware of the size of Insch. Insch has grown organically around the market and railway. The railway, associated buildings and railway museum are a defining feature of the area. The town is highly permeable with good pedestrian links to areas of open space generally located on the edges of the settlement.

The traditional development in Insch is generally 1&1/2 stories and is often simple in form based on the “cottage”. The key characteristic of the houses in Insch are the use of reddish grey rough granite, grey slate roofs, rybats used on corners, windows and doors of buildings and use of stone window/door lintol. The buildings are often closely spaced.

Opportunities exist for development in this area to reinforce the diversity of house types and build on the traditional design seen in the area. There are also opportunities for development to enhance links to areas of open space and areas of woodland.

Inverurie

Inverurie sits in the Don Valley and straddles both the river Don and Ury. The town centre is not located in the centre of the town, but provides a focal point for the town. The town centre is dominated by the grand Town Hall and the informal open area in front. Inverurie is a thriving market town with; a monthly farmers market, many small shops, an increasing number of larger national and international chain shops, businesses and services. Inverurie and Port Elphinstone are classed as a single settlement, but the bridge across the Don between the two is a key gateway feature with the flood plain providing an open space buffer between Inverurie and Port Elphinstone. There are views from the settlement to the surrounding landscape including views of Bennachie. Inverurie benefits from public art and sinage within the town centre that both provide the settlement with character.

Given the size of Inverurie and the role that it plays in the Garioch Area there is a wide range of house types, sizes and tenures. There are a large number of rough granite buildings in the older part of the town and this is mixed with a large amount of roughcast rendered buildings. There is no characteristic design for the town given the amount of growth that has occurred in Inverurie, but the central areas are built in the form of traditional Aberdeenshire buildings. This includes Skewputs and skewtabling on the gables, dormer windows (a mix of flush and set back) and built with rough granite.

There is significant traffic congestion in Inverurie and there are opportunities to reduce this and make the central areas more pedestrian friendly. In Inverurie there is opportunity to build on the shops and services provided and maintain Inverurie’s position in the retail hierarchy of the region. Within Inverurie there is opportunity to reflect traditional Aberdeenshire built features, but also to embrace innovative design.

Kemnay

The name Kemnay is believed to originate from the Celtic words that mean bend and river due to the location on the bend of the River Don. Kemnay is set in the valley of the Don and the settlement rises from the river, to the west of Kemnay, to higher ground on the east. Kemnay has an employment area to the north of the town which includes the famous Kemnay Quarry. From the Quarry the whole settlement and surrounding hills can be viewed. The town centre and Academy highlight Kemnay's role in the rural community. Kemnay benefits from large areas of open space in the town and good access to a paths network in the Fetternear Estate. A key feature of Kemnay is the high street with a large number of shops.

The buildings in Kemnay range in height from 1 ½ up to 2 storeys and are mainly simple in form. Common features in Kemnay include pitched roofs, skew putts and bay dormer windows. There are a number of different colours and finishes in Kemnay from the traditional granite buildings to the dark brown and red brown wood finished buildings.

There are opportunities to develop and enhance links to the paths network on the edge of Kemnay. Design and materials used in Kemnay is of a very high quality in the historic Victorian houses and also the newer wooden houses, although not the prettiest, work well and could provide a base for which timber can be used in the settlement.

Kintore

Kintore has grown rapidly since the 1980's primarily due to its close proximity to Aberdeen. Kintore is a key area for archaeology and there are a large number of scheduled monuments in and around the town. Within the historic core the buildings which include the town house, Kintore Parish Church and Kintore Arms Inn have character and contribute to a sense of place, whereas the modern developments lack coherence.

The majority of development in Kintore is modern detached dwelling houses. The key characteristic of housing developments in Kintore is the use of rough cast render. Tuach hill and the open area around provide Kintore with attractive walks and is well used by residents.

There are opportunities to maintain links to Tuach hill for informal recreation, but also to provide more areas of formal open space. There is potential for employment development in Kintore due to its location close to Aberdeen and access to the trunk road network.

Newmachar

Newmachar lies on relatively flat land within close proximity to Aberdeen City and Dyce. The town has grown organically around the church and post office, originally known as 'Summerhill'. The town serves as a commuter town to Aberdeen and there is little employment sites within the town itself. Newmachar lacks both formal open space and informal spaces and mainly comprises of modern residential developments.

In Newmachar the use of rough cast render and Fyffe stone are common finishing materials. The majority of the buildings in the town are modern residential and do not contribute much in the way of design character to Newmachar.

There are opportunities in Newmachar for innovative design and opportunities to create public spaces and places within the town. Newmachar is a commuter village and there is a real need to provide more employment opportunities in Newmachar in order to provide a more sustainable community.

Old Rayne

Old Rayne is located in the valley of the river Urie and is surrounded by rolling agricultural land. A key feature of Old Rayne is the 17th-century mercat cross (or market cross). This highlights the role that Old Rayne once had as a market town and provides a cultural tie for the village today. Old Rayne has grown organically from the medieval core, which is the area around the market cross. Old rayne has good pedestrian links and there is easy access to areas of informal and formal recreational ground.

The buildings in Old Rayne are generally 1 and ½ storeys, with some 2 storey modern developments. There are no key colours or characteristics on the buildings in Old Rayne, but in the medieval core the buildings are mainly based on the 'cottage' and make use of light brown/grey granite.

Opportunities exist for development in this area with good use of strategic planting to mitigate the impact on the surrounding landscape.

Westhill

Westhill was originally planned as a new " on the south facing slope of a ridge. The defining features in Westhill are the town centre and the large industrial estate to the south of the town. Westhill benefits from a wide range of facilities. Due to the planned growth of Westhill there are a number of open areas within the town and there is a good network of open spaces, these include Arnhall Moss and Carnie Woods, which are both important features in Westhill.

The settlement has grown significantly since 1968 and the developments that have taken place are modern in form and materials used. The style of residential development is consistent: small curvilinear developments made up of cul-de-sacs and crescents. The majority of buildings are 1 to 1 ½ storey bungalows with some 2 storey semi-detached and detached housing.

In Westhill there is a large amount of traffic due to its size and proximity to Aberdeen. There is potential to improve the traffic problems and also to protect the open space network in Westhill. Development in Westhill that leads to coalescence with Kirkton of Skene should be avoided as this will have a detrimental impact on the heritage and setting of Kirkton of Skene. There are opportunities to build on the employment developments to the South of Westhill.

Whiteford

Whiteford is a quiet village with minimal traffic. It is set on flat land in the valley of the river Urie. Whiteford is surrounded by rolling agricultural land and has clear views to Bennachie.

Whiteford is an estate village with informal development with no street pattern. Development is generally 1 to 1½ storeys in height and the original development is a traditional granite cottage. Modern developments are more common and are finished in wood or dry dash harling. Dwellings in Whiteford are closely spaced with little open space, except the open areas surrounding the settlement. Durno Primary school and the wall that surrounds the remains of the designed landscape are key features in Whiteford.

There are opportunities in whiteford to provide land for future development that respects the views to the surrounding agricultural land and views to Bennachie.

KINGARDINE & MEARNNS

Auchenblae

Auchenblae is village which historically grew up around the textile industry. It is in an upland area on the ridge of a hill, which slopes to the South, and flattens. When entering from the SE a recently completed development is highly visible, but the main settlement is quite well screened by the landscape. The traditional settlement takes a linear form following the main road, and is fairly elongated. Recent phases of development and council housing have developed the settlement horizontally to the East.

The main street has terraced cottages and townhouses varying in height, but up to 2 stories. There are a number of villas and larger detached properties to the South, and also in the modern developments to the east. There is a high occurrence of sandstone properties with rybats, but wet dash finish is prominent. The modern developments are not visible from the main street as they are set behind. The main street is enclosed, with terraced properties fronting onto the road. The use of dormers is a characteristic.

There are a lot of services and facilities in the village, so these may require development in order to be sustained. Future development could respect the terraced street form rather than cul-de-sacs with large individual houses.

Downies

Downies is an historical fishing village located about a mile from Portlethen. It is perched on a hillside above the cliffs of Cammachmore Bay, and is surrounded by open farmland. The newer part of the village is visible in advance from the road, although the historical core would not have been visible as it is screened by the hillside. The settlement has expanded from the vernacular cottages at the lower point above the cliffs, up the hillside with individual houses being built over time. The settlement has built up around the narrow single track road, which ends in the village.

The traditional white dash, one story cottages make up the lower part of the village. Modern houses vary in colour from red to grey and are in general bigger than the traditional cottages, commonly being 1 ½ stories. The houses are reasonably well spaced, with all being set back from the road.

Future developments would have to adhere to the small scale, no taller than 1 ½ stories. There are infill opportunities in the village, although these may be best utilised as formal open space, or saved for services.

Drumlithie

Drumlithie can be translated to 'Drum' meaning the ridge of a hill and 'lithie' meaning grey place. The settlement is set into a col between Orchard Hill to the South West and Kinmonth to the North. Being set between two hills rather screens the settlement on entry, but from further afield there are glimpses of the settlement through the hills. The settlement historically formed around the weaving industry and the landmark Steeple on High Street represents the villages past as it was used to inform the working day. The village has a good network of roads, albeit some are narrow and meander amongst the houses.

The traditional development consists largely of 1 ½ story cottages, simple in style. Characteristically cottages are of white wet dash finish or red/brown/grey sandstone. The development is quite dense with buildings close together or semi-detached. In the traditional part of the village, houses front onto the road. The hotel is a key landmark as at 3 stories it rises above the remaining cottages and is in a central position. Modern developments are largely to the South, in cul-de-sacs and consist of bungalows or 2 story detached and semi-detached houses.

The village could benefit from some retail outlet to service the community.

Drumoak

Drumoak when translated from gaelic means The Hill of St Moloch, but the settlement was previously known as 'Dalmaik' meaning the Valley of the St Moloch. The village is located in the Deeside Valley near to Drum Castle built around 13C and also Park House. It is set on the sloping agricultural land on the North side of the Dee, to the North of Keith's Muir ancient woodland. The settlement has grown organically to the North, South and West, and spread over both sides of the A93 trunk road. The village is fairly well serviced with a post office, primary school, church, inn and a bowling club.

The traditional development ranges from 2 story granite villas, single story gate lodge, and 1 ½ story granite cottages. Modern developments make up the majority of the village and are generally pale grey or sand brown in colour, with Fyffe stone fairly well utilised as a detail. Single story and 1 ½ stories are the most common elevations. Modern houses are simple in style and vary from detached 'box' like bungalows, semi-detached council houses, to tall houses with a sharp roof pitch. Dormers are used fairly consistently within the settlement.

There is opportunity to create more of a village focal point, with increased services, and perhaps relocation of the primary school to a more central and accessible location. The most recent developments have seen a return to more traditional Scottish cottage style and this would be encouraged, although not required to the variation of house types which exist.

Edzell Woods

Edzell Woods was a new settlement built to service the Edzell Airbase, which ceased operation in 1996. It is located on flat agricultural land with the Grampian mountains to the North. The settlement is not obvious as it is screened by airbase buildings and also trees.

The development consist of 1 ½ story semi-detached modern monopoly style houses, set in suburban style. They are white/cream in colour and set back from the road, with ample green space areas between buildings. Some facilities have been closed and are falling into dilapidation.

The settlement requires reinstatement of services, and development of the airbase would be highly beneficial as it currently overshadows the village.

Fettercairn

Fettercairn is set within undulating farmland at the foot of Cairn 'O Mount on the edge of the Grampian hills in the Howe of The Mearns. The settlement enjoys views to the North of the Grampian Mountains, and to the South of flat agricultural land. Five roads intersect in the village, and probably due to these good links the village historically developed as a market town.

It is a village with conservation area status meaning it has great architectural and historic interest and a character worthy of preservation.

The heart of the village is the Main Street leading onto Market Square, where the Meercat Cross Stands, albeit obscured by surrounding cars as the square provides car parking. The 2 story terraced Scottish Houses, and 1 ½ story vernacular cottages front directly onto the main street. Along Burnside Road are a number of large 3 story villas, well spaced out with surrounding garden land. Modern ribbon development has expanded the village along the B974 Deeside Road and the Distillery Road. This is in the form of individual properties, or council houses which are generally 1 ½ stories.

There is little by way of green or open space within the village, but there is a large recreational park along Burnside Road, and the settlement is surrounded by open space. There are a number of landmark buildings which stand out; the church set on a mound has a notable spire which can be seen from all over the village, the Public Hall in the centre has a neo-baronial Scottish tower and outside sits an elaborate, but small fountain. Further, the arch is an elaborate structure built in the 19C, and opposite it is the large white hotel.

Findon

Findon, also known as 'Finnan' is a historical fishing village, although it is set in a position elevated from the coast. It is located in a slight indent on sloping farmland adjacent to Findon Moor. When entering the village from the Portlethen side it is well screened, however when viewed from further south the village sits on the skyline. The village which traditionally would have been compact, has been elongated by recent developments. The setting is dominated by panoramic sea views, with all properties situated to make the most of this view.

The historic core of the village is around the very narrow Earnsheugh Terrace where small scale but relatively high density single story or 1 ½ story fishing cottages are located. Many of these buildings have slightly lost their historical character through modern extensions. These are either white wet dash finish or brown/grey granite with slate roofs of black/grey colour. There are a row of terraced 2 story Georgian type houses on Findon Road which stand out, they have flush dormers. New developments have taken the form of more orderly street pattern, unlike the traditional ad hoc location of cottages, and are much larger, with bigger garden areas.

There are opportunities to provide planned open space, and a centre 'key' building to the village. New housing could be developed to provide the village with key services, maintaining the high density, low scale housing, and traditional white or brown building materials.

Fordoun

Fordoun translates into the 'The Lower Place', and this is probably as it sits on flat agricultural land in the Howe of the Mearns. To the East are views of Hill of Gyralesmyre and Dodds Knap, with partial forest cover. The settlement is quite well screened by trees and an embankment from the A90 but on arrival from the Auchenblae direction, a large industrial shed and a new housing development are very visible. The village has grown up around the railway, and there was a station there until 1956. Part of the village has been segregated by the A90.

The characteristic development varies from large 3 story houses to single story cottages, but the most common form is 1 ½ story cottages or terraced housing. Traditionally developments were of brown/orange sandstone but modern developments consist largely of pale grey monopoly council houses. There is some detail on traditional properties in the form of cantilevered porches and dormers but modern developments are in the main simple. Developments vary between those set back from the road, and those which front directly onto the road.

In order to overcome the constraints of the A90 and the railway, future development may be best suited to the North and East of the settlement. The school is currently segregated from the main settlement over the A90.

Gourdon

The settlement is located on the steep Eastern side of Gourdon Hill, nestled in on flat land adjacent to the coast, although modern developments have expanded the settlement to the North above steep slopes. It is set below the A92 and although traditional development was well screened, modern expansion is visible from this road. Gourdon is a village with its harbour very much at its heart. It remains a working fishing village, and the core of the settlement is the harbour with industrial sandstone sheds, as well as a bar and restaurant. The settlement contains a Primary School, local shop, a good provision of recreational space and a Business Park to the North which is under utilised.

There are a number of landmarks: the granite war memorial opposite the playing fields a white beacon set above the traditional developments on Brae Road, and at the harbour there is a monument and also the lifeboat museum which is in a small 'shed' in the middle of William Street. The traditional development is set alongside the coast and around the harbour where properties front directly onto the road. The largest traditional sandstone industrial sheds have been replaced by sympathetic sandstone housing. Development is relatively organic with occasional terraces, detached and semi-detached housing varying from 1 ½ story cottages to 2-3 story Scottish Houses and with a small amount of modern infill. Materials vary between red sandstone, wet dash and pebble dash, but colours in the main are dirty red/brown or cream. Dormers are a characteristic, some box with flat roof, others set back and some flush, there are also some outbuildings visible mainly from Queen Street.

There are off white / light grey semi detached council type houses to the North, surrounded by recent housing developments of detached brown houses (in the traditional cottage style). These are in cul-de-sac layout and are quite separate from the traditional village as they are above the steep cliff face to the rear of Queen Street.

Inverbervie

Inverbervie is a town set on sloping agricultural land on the Hillside of Dendoldrum above the North East Coast. The River Bervie flows down a valley to the North East of the settlement, hence the name meaning 'Mouth of the River Bervie'. It is located around Bervie Bay, a pebble beach but despite this, the sea is not a focal point of the settlement and there is recreational open space adjacent to the beach. Also, unlike almost all other settlements along the coast fishing has not been its main industry. The settlement was home to Scotland's first flax spinning mill in 1787 so weaving industry was predominant. The settlement was served by a railway running from Inverbervie to Montrose until around the 1960's and a path remains on this route in front of Hallgreen Road along the seafront. The main transport route is now the A92, a trunk road running from Stonehaven to Arbroath which forms the busy main street through the settlement.

The original settlement is of a fairly organic arrangement, there is no clear grid iron pattern, but curving streets. The market square would have been the clear centre with the meercat cross a landmark there, although it is now used as a car park it is still a focal point. Further landmarks are the Bervie Parish Church Tower on King Street which stands tall above other buildings, and on entry from the North the Jubilee Road Bridge which replaced the old Bervie Bridge is an impressive 7 arched viaduct.

Traditional developments along King Street are of sandstone and white wet dash terraced 1 ½ to 3 story cottages and houses fronting directly onto the street, the larger buildings are to the

North of King Street. There are some variations with the fire station and the co-op supermarket modern rectangular pebble dash buildings set back from the street. Along Castle Terrace and Farquhar Street are terraced 2 story sandstone houses set back from the street with small front gardens. To the North East is sandstone 2 story semi-detached council housing. To the South of the settlement modern housing developments occur incrementally, and have substantially increased the size of the settlement. These are detached pebble-dash plain bungalows and houses of light grey and brown.

Johnshaven

Johnshaven is a quaint fishing village set along a stretch of rocky North East coast on the steep side of Cloch Hill. The settlement is accessed by a link road off the A92, but is fairly well screened from it. There is a war memorial opposite the Post Office and shop, just up from the village square (a small square lined by terraced 2 story sandstone houses), but the harbour is probably the main focal point, where boats are strewn about the street. The settlement stretches out along the coast, either side of the harbour and streets are terraced to the NW, into the steep hillside. There is limited modern development (last 10-20 years), to the North, North East and also as infill.

Development is fairly organic, there are rows of houses but also houses set at differing orientations and between streets. Properties are commonly vernacular single story or 1 ½ story Scottish fishing cottages, but there are also 2 story houses. White or cream wet dash is a common finish, and dormers are common on cottages. There are some industrial fishing sheds which remain, and also a mill on Herd Road / New Road. Within the settlement streets are very narrow, steep, and enclosed as they are usually lined by either houses or tall stone walls.

There is a large area of open space, facilities and a caravan park to the NE of the settlement at Wairds Park, but outwith this area there is very limited open space. The settlement is served by a Primary School and a Post Office/shop.

Kinneff

Kinneff is a village set at the foot of St Johns Hill, facing West towards the sea in the distance. It is on the East side of the A92, and a number of local roads meet in the settlement. On entering from the North woodland screens the majority of the village, and from the South you emerge over a rise and first notice the Parish Church. The village hall is also quite a noticeable building with a reddish brown corrugated roof. The settlement is elongated, so probably looks larger than it is.

The row of houses along the A92 are predominantly traditional, they vary from single story to 1 ½ story cottages and are slightly set back from the road with boundary walls. There is a mix of red sandstone and white wet dash with black/dark grey slate roofs. To the rear of this row of houses, further up the hill, more phases of development have occurred. There is a development of semi-detached council houses with some single story set beside 1½ story houses. The most recent development is of large light brown/sand colour villas with large open gardens. In general there is a simple design style with few architectural features.

There is opportunity to develop further up the hill where the views could be utilised. The school is currently about half a mile from the village so there may be opportunity to move this into the heart of the village.

Laurencekirk

Laurencekirk is set on sloping land at the base of the Hill of Garvock, and with the Cairn O Mount and the Grampian Mountains in the distance across the valley. The settlement is located between the A90 and the railway line. The village was formerly known as Conveth, and it was developed into a planned settlement by Lord Gardenstoun in the 1770's, when weaving and craft industry was introduced. The settlement has a number of landmarks; the hall (church) about half way up the High Street has a prominent spire and clock tower, there is a war memorial at top of Garvock Street playing fields but this is not obvious. Kinnear park is tree lined and has a fairly eye-catching pavilion, to the South West of the settlement. The settlement is well served by services; it contains a primary and secondary school, community centre, health practice, hotels, many retail outlets and a business / industry park.

The settlement originated around the linear High Street and Johnston Street. Red sandstone properties are predominant within the historic part of the settlement, with some pebbledash finish. 1 ½ cottages fronting directly onto the street with set back dormers are common, and to the North are larger 3 story hotels and banks with some greater architectural detail. There are also detached red sandstone town houses with bay windows and splay dormers to the South East, with front gardens enclosed by stone walls. Dormers are a characteristic, they are commonly set back but flush and oriel make an appearance, and chimneys are also common. There have also been some instances of modern infill.

The settlement has expanded to either side of the High Street with a number of modern housing developments in cul-de-sacs or curving roads, and the as a result the settlement has a relatively unplanned and ad hoc layout. Modern houses are simple in style and vary from semi-detached monopoly style council housing, detached bungalows and 2 story houses, or 1 ½ story cottages which are dark digestive brown or dark grey in colour.

Luthermuir

Luthermuir is built on an open flat area of land, in an area of prime agricultural land to the South of Aberdeen-shire. The surrounding countryside consists of flat agricultural land, with some forestry, but with views to mountains in the distance. In 19C the village would have relied upon agricultural and weaving industries. The original L-shaped settlement has expanded organically to the East towards the school and also some infill to the North, to create an elongated Z-shaped settlement.

The settlement originally consisted of white/grey single story and 1 ½ story vernacular cottages. These are terraced developments which front directly onto the road and are of a relatively high density. Modern developments bare little similarity to traditional developments, they are set back from the road, spaced out and much larger than traditional properties and are generally of sandy brown shades.

The properties are all of simple appearance, with little architectural detail. The settlement has a school, village hall, church and pub, but lacks any retail. Infill within the settlement could be encouraged preventing any further elongation.

Marykirk

Marykirk is set to the East of the River North Esk, on the lower slopes of Kirkton Hill in a landscape of undulating farmland. It is a sloping site, with views predominantly to the West to the impressive railway viaduct and the Grampian mountains beyond. The settlement is set along the A937 main road and is quite heavily wooded, particularly to the South. The settlement is well served by open space with playing fields surrounding the hall and school. The settlement has a shop, but it lacks a lot of services which it previously contained.

There is no clear characteristic type of development, as it appears to have evolved organically over the years. In general the main street comprises 2 – 3 story terraced cottages and houses constructed of either red sandstone or cream wet dash. The hotel is a detached, larger property in an L-shape which stands out, and also has within its grounds the obscured Meercat Cross. Further to the South on the main road are the sandstone gate lodges to Kirktonhill Mansion, now ruinous, and past that the church sits on a mound albeit surrounded by woodland. To the west of the road is a Wester Balmanno Farm Steading which is prominent in the settlement, and on the A937 in front is a monument.

There is a development of council housing around the school on Kirktonhill Road, monopoly shaped housing of dark deep grey wet dash construction. There have been modern housing developments to the North, in a cul-de-sac of the main A937, and on Kirktonhill Road to the NE. These developments are simply styled detached bungalows and 2 story houses set in their own space, of pale grey and digestive brown pebble-dash finishes.

Marywell

Marywell is a settlement located on the sloping embankment to the East of the A90, and to the west of the local road (Stonehaven Road). To the east of Stonehaven Road is a large area of flat land, with the sea in the distance. The settlement is well screened by the undulating landscape and by trees. There is no obvious cultural tie, and the village has grown up as a residential area due to its close proximity with Aberdeen and transport links through the A90.

The majority of development takes the form of small pre-fabricated units or mobile homes. These are predominantly cream or white in colour, but there are a variety of finishes, with wood cladding also appearing. The buildings are simple with little projection or detail. The original development was a traditional granite cottage and steading. The settlement pattern is quite suburban in form, with a loop road round the boundary of the settlement, connecting roads and cul-de-sacs. The development is dense, with little open space, except that surrounding the settlement.

At the centre, adjacent to the road is a storage yard, currently with recycling facilities which could be utilised as community space, giving the village a focal point.

Muchalls

Muchalls is set above the dramatic cliffs of the North Sea, just North of Doonie Point on sloping agricultural land. The settlement was in the past known as Stranathro, and it has merged with Muchalls to the South. It was historically a fishing village, but has also as a farming community. It is situated off the A90, on a loop road serving the settlement.

There is a traditional core to the settlement based around white terraced vernacular fishing cottages, facing the seafront. There are granite villas located down Marine Terrace, set within large garden grounds and screened by walls or trees which characterise the settlement. The settlement has evolved to the North West and South West with two phases of modern development. There is a wide range of buildings ranging from terraced cottages, terraced houses, semi detached modern cottages and villas and with this the density also varies. Chimneys and dormers are characteristics of the properties.

As a village centre there is a post box and telephone box, and the settlement would benefit by having a focal point. There are no obvious landmark features in the village.

Newtonhill

Newtonhill lies adjacent to the A90, between Portlethen and Stonehaven, about ten miles South of Aberdeen. It is located on agricultural land sloping from the peak of Newtonhill in the West, east down towards the cliffs of Whiteland Head. The surrounding countryside consists of undulating farmland with the Sea to the East. Within the settlement, views to the surrounding landscape are limited due to the scale of development, and the view to the North is screened by the embankment of the A90. The sea view is the most dominant.

In 19C the settlement was a small fishing village containing a handful of vernacular fishing cottages and was known as Skateraw. The original village has expanded beyond all recognition, effectively creating a new town of modern suburban style development, and a commuter town serving Aberdeen. The settlement is relatively well served by community facilities, it has a primary school, a small retail outlet along with two public houses.

The settlement mainly comprises 1 ½ story semi-detached and detached houses, although there is an historic core with vernacular properties. The characteristic shape is that of a 'monopoly house', and colours vary. The settlement has a relatively high density of houses which are situated in close proximity to one another. There are no characteristic colours or features.

Portlethen

Portlethen is located on gently sloping farmland between Cairnwell Hill and Hillhead, about seven miles south of Aberdeen. The settlement is set within the boundaries of the A90 and the Aberdeen railway line, with the exception of the Badentoy Industrial Park to the West of the A90. Land east of the railway line is covered by the 'designated coast: undeveloped' policy limiting development in this area.

In the 1970's, the oil and gas boom created a demand for more housing in Aberdeen, and Portlethen was a new town developed to meet this requirement. There has been a railway station at Portlethen since 19C, and located nearby were a church and school. The town is partly built on an area of Portlethen Moss, a wetland habitat.

The characteristic style is of a modern 'monopoly house' of simple style, with a relatively high density. There is a mix of semi-detached, detached, single story and 1 ½ story houses. The layout is suburban, with meandering roads and cul-de-sacs and houses set back from the road, but sited close together. There are no characteristic colours or features.

Portlethen has good provision of services, albeit they are scattered throughout the settlement with three different retail centres. The settlement is effectively a suburban development and it requires a centre and focal point to be established. It has been the victim of disjointed instrumentalism, whereby phases of development continue to be stuck onto the edge of the settlement.

Portlethen Village

Portlethen Village, or 'Old Portlethen' as it was known, is historically a fishing village perched above a steep cove. It is a fairly steep site, surrounded by rolling farmland and the majority of the village is well screened by the hillside on entry. The village has grown from the fishing cottages at the coast, up the hill along two main streets. There is a range of traditional terraces, detached, and semi-detached houses, but they are generally moderately sized and packed in with small gardens. The streets are quite enclosed by houses, screening the surrounding open space. Harley Terrace is a narrow road, with doorways fronting on to it, and is only open to pedestrians.

Properties are in almost all instances 1 ½ stories, based on the traditional 'cottage'. White and brown/grey are characteristic colours, with dark grey roofs. Extensions are very common particularly on traditional properties, creating diverse range of shapes.

Overall there is quite a variation of styles in the village, but the commonalities are high densities and simple shapes. Modern houses are both detached and semi-detached.

The settlement contains a public house and a small recreational area.

St Cyrus

St Cyrus is an 18C village, formerly known as Eggesgrieg, meaning the Church of Grig. It is set on undulating agricultural land with Woodstone Hill to the North and Hill of Morphie to the West, sloping down the dunes and St Cyrus Sands. This coastal area to the South West is a National Nature Reserve. Historic influences on the town are farming, mining, salmon fishing and weaving.

The A92 road forms the main street through the settlement, and it would also have had a railway line and station until the 1960's. There are 2 churches in the village, the Parish Church on Beach Road is a focal point, with a tall spire highly visible, and a war memorial to the front.

The traditional development incorporates red sandstone vernacular single and 1 ½ story cottages along the main street, with a number of larger 2 ½ story villas around the Burnside / Eggesgrieg Road area. These properties are set back from the road with small front gardens, generally enclosed by a stone wall. Around the Burnside area, there is some woodland and hedging is common. There are modern council estates with semi-detached monopoly style simple houses, pebble dash in grey and brown. Other modern housing developments include larger detached bungalows and 1 ½ story houses, largely beige or digestive brown in colour. Dormers are a characteristic on vernacular cottages, and have been incorporated into some modern housing developments.

The settlement has a village shop, cafeteria, petrol station/garage and a hotel so is relatively well served by amenities. There is a large recreational area with all weather sports pitch and pavilion to the North West.

Stonehaven

Stonehaven, or Steenhive as it is also known is a large settlement set within the crescent of Stonehaven Bay, between the rocky outcrops of Downie Point and Garron Point. To the South are steep cliffs, to the North and West is undulating agricultural land. The settlement is located on a hill sloping East down to the sea, with the Carron Water and the Cowie Water flowing through the settlement. The settlement would have originated around Stonehaven Harbour dating from 16C, and has developed into a resort town. Other industry formerly found in the town was the distillery at Glen of Ury and Woollen Mill at Cowie.

The Town House is a landmark at the harbour, with a spire and a meercat cross at the base. There is also the historic tollbooth at the end of the pier. There is a prominent spire on the market buildings on Allardice Street which can be seen from some distance away. Clashfarquhar House is a building located on Robert St which stands out due to its size at 5 stories, and also it is set on the hillside enhancing its prominence. To the North of the settlement, Mackie Academy built in the 1960's stands out due to its size and its location within an area of open space, at the top of the slope. To the South on Black Hill is a prominent war memorial of Grecian style in the form of a temple.

The traditional building material is old red sandstone, in the historic areas this is a dark stone, but further west becomes lighter(Ashlar), wet dash finish is also fairly common.

Traditional developments at the centre (adjacent to the coast) of the settlement are in grid iron form, they are generally terraced and front directly onto the street. There is a range of 1 ½ story to 4 story houses, and cottages. Further up the hill to the west, properties start to become semi-detached and detached sandstone town houses and villas set back from the road, and the form becomes less rigid with more curvaceous roads. Bay windows and dormers with finials are a characteristic. There is development around the harbour of large 3-4 story detached vernacular Scottish houses, with some irregular 1 ½ squat vernacular cottages.

The settlement has expanded with modern developments to the North West and South West, connected to the main roads through off the A90. Development is quite segregated by the railway, of which there are two underpasses for. These houses are generally of simple monopoly shapes and vary between 1 and 2 stories. Development is denser and gardens are smaller than traditional developments but there is more provision of open space within developments.

MARR

Aboyne

Aboyne is an attractive heavily wooded settlement set in afforested hillcountry. During the C19 the village fanned out to all points north, east and west from the semicircular slope down to the haugh where the railway station was constructed. Aboyne Castle policies inhibited development to the northwest, and the thrust has been consistently westwards along the main North Deeside (A93) Road, with a second axis of development striking roughly southwest to link up with the bridge across the Dee and then continuing until the north/south reach of the river is reached.

The form was originally organic, and there has been an ongoing tendency to seek an organic solution, with houses sited irregularly on individual plots, orthodox as the layouts themselves may be. Notwithstanding the Council housing around Bonty Court, Station Square retains its traditional feel. This carries over into the commercial property fronting the North Deeside Road and Charlestown Green. Noteworthy buildings are the Huntly Arms Hotel, the old Free Church and the Aboyne & Dinnit Parish Church, the War Memorial Building, the former school on Huntly Road, now a business centre, and St Thomas's Episcopal Church.

The village as a whole is characterised by the spacious C19 villas lining Ballater Road, with the greater part contained within the angle formed by the A93 and the River Dee west of Charlestown Green. There is continuity in the Aboyne Castle style of architecture which has "leaked" into the village. Chimneys tend to be chunky, splayed dormers are popular, and detailing can tend to be whimsical. One is continuously aware of semi-mature/mature garden ground and wooded areas about Aboyne, and it is particularly important that the ambience thus created is maintained.

Alford

Alford occupies a position southwest of centre of the Don's floodplain at the Howe of Alford. It is completely surrounded by hills on which the transition from grazing to heather/afforested areas occurs at various levels. Views range from the pleasing to the scenic in every direction, and future development should exploit the considerable assets these provide.

C19 and Early C20 development spread out along the A944 Donside Road. It also formed a spur on the Montgarrie Road leading north to the ford across the Dorn. The village has grown dramatically over the last half century, with Council development in the angle between Donside Road and Montgarrie Road. Both Council and market housing exhibit disjointed incrementalism. Prior to this the village was linear/tridentine configuration, but this is not a form to perpetuate. Given the sustainable principles inhering in a grid-iron or disrupted chequerboard layout, and the rural classicism of which this peaks, developers should adopt this style.

Haughton Country Park which abutts the settlement to the north, and the Museum of Transport and the Heritage Centre. Components in the settlement scene worthy of note are the sculpture of the Black Aberdeen Angus bull at the eastern access to the village, Holy Trinity Parish Church, Haughton Arms Hotel, the Episcopal Church, the Museum of Transport's cast Iron arch, the Heritage Centre with its mill wheel, and Haughton House and Country Park. These features should be conserved.

Banchory

Banchory is located on the north bank of the River Dee, and enjoys a superb setting as it is surrounded on all sides by afforested hills. Its form is somewhat anomalous in that a shelf of land between the river and the steep rise to the ridge, which extends from Crowsnest Moss to Ley Wood, is for the most part given over to a public park and golf course. This means that the remaining older built fabric is crowded between the line of the old railway and the slope of the ridge, although post war development has extended over it to the north, and along the flatland to the east and west.

The area between the High Street and the former railway line has been largely redeveloped around Scott Skinner Square, with the block's perimeter a mixture of old and new. Both sides of the High Street frontage are typified by 2½ -storey terraced commercial property. Older residential development strings out along the North Deeside Road, with significantly more large villas west of the High Street.

Prominent buildings obtain in the High Street Churches, the town hall and Council offices, Burnett Arms Hotel, Bellfield oldfolks home, and the recreational facilities in the park. The C19 detailing is strong and simple. What indigenous urban form there is to be found in the single street-to-street plots where Ramsay Road, Watson Street, and Arbeadie Terrace contour along the slope beyond High Street. This pattern of development was a response to the steep gradient, but its revival (albeit on a gentler slope, or a completely flat site) or adaptation to incorporate C21 principles of sustainability could provide continuity. Regard should always be had of the need to utilise and/or preserve views.

Huntly

Huntly lies in a relatively flat depression at the confluence of the Deveron and Bogie Rivers and is surrounded by afforested hills, which embrace the place in a swathe of green. The town grew out of the cross roads where the routes to and from crossing-points on the two rivers met, as may be seen from the N/S spine of Gordon Street giving access to the village from the south, with the "transom" of Duke Street which led down to the Bogie.

Today the main route north from the settlement is provided by the A97 (Banff) and B9022 (Portsoy) Roads, but Gordon Street still constitutes the main access, and Duke Street's significance has been enhanced, first with the coming of the railway, and secondly with Tesco's location at the western periphery of the town. The C18 plan must have blotted out much of the earlier form, by imposing a rectangular grid-iron layout in which the northeast quadrant nonetheless remains largely organic and defines the Old Town.

C20 Council housing and volume building have retained the Old Town buildings' orientation although the grid-iron layout has been superseded by a disrupted chequerboard. Developers should give thought to how the two approaches may be reconciled. As a magnet Asda matches Tesco, and this should be recognised. New development should not detract from Huntly's traditional character, and every opportunity should be taken to exploit views of the surrounding terrain.

Lumsden

Lumsden lies on the floor of the pass between the Ladder and Correen Hills, with The Buck very much the dominant feature. The valley floor is mainly grazing but this gives way to heather as the gradient steepens, which it does so, sharply, and the overall effect is of a heather covered massif.

The form of the village has remained remarkably unchanged over the last 150 years, although there has been some consolidation with private and Council housing utilising larger garden/backyard ground. Traditional houses do not differ significantly from like development elsewhere in Upper Deeside/Donside. Buildings are predominantly 1&1½ storey, with the Lumsden Arms Hotel standing out on account of its 2½ storeys and semi-classic embellishments. Other buildings of note are Auchindor Church, the Old Police Station, the War Memorial, the new Community Hall, and the Hanover Court Housing Project. The last named provides useful pointers as to the form new residential development should take.

The main public open space, or focal point for the village is the square, or Market Stance, which is grassed and bounded by trees on the sides away from the A97, on which it is located. The other public open space is the grassed strip of woodland abutting the A97 which has been fashioned into a sculpture garden, and provides a pedestrian route from the primary school to the village. Great care should be taken to safeguard the village's rural upland ambience and views of the surrounding mountain landscape when new development is proposed.

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Rhynie

Rhynie is located in the pass between the ladder and Correen Hills. Tap o' Noth's heathery slopes dominate the area in general and the village in particular, and the character is one of mountainous terrain. The village grew up around the junction between the Cromar/Huntly (A97) Road and the road that leads off from it to Dufftown (A941). These two roads form the main axes of development, the right angle they comprise filling up so that Rhynie's current form is that of a square with a spur leading off south from one corner along the Cromar Road.

Rhynie's remoteness means that it has not been subjected to speculative housing development, and what private housing there is has taken place on an individual one-off basis, conforming to the pattern set down in the C19 rather than disjointed incrementalism. The village's main feature (and a significant asset) is the tree-lined stretch of green public open space that abuts the Dufftown Road to the south and is separated into two components by the Parish Church. Buildings of note are the Church and the War Memorial.

Special care should be taken to safeguard the village's rural upland ambience, and the views of the surrounding hills from within the settlement where new development is concerned.

Torphins

Torphins lies approximately two thirds of the way along the 8 mile swale that runs from Banchory to Lumphanan, and the prevailing impression outwith the village is of arable merging into rough grazing land interspersed with afforested areas as the eye lifts to the hills.

The settlement grew out of the mid-C19 hamlet where the railway line coincided with the Banchory-Alford /Kincardine O'Neil/Echt crossroads, with development spreading along the arms of the star thus formed. Today it displays the disjointed incrementalism which is a national feature of settlement extension over the last 30/40 years, with the ribbon development on the A980 and Craigmyle Roads that extends the village's reach along the floor of the swale by over 1 kilometre emphasising this. It is essential that east/west attenuation is halted and that new development counterweighs the village out to the north or south.

The architecture is typical of the North East, with grey granite, Aberdeen Bond, and skew-tabling. Porches are something of a local feature in traditional buildings. Buildings of note are the Learney Arms Hotel and Hall, the Primary School, Mother Hubbard's pub (formerly a church) the War Memorial Hospital, the fountain commemorating 60 years of Queen Victoria's reign, and the Parish Church. These buildings should be safeguarded, as should views of the surrounding countryside.