

# Aberfeldy Conservation Area Appraisal



November 2008



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## **INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE AND JUSTIFICATION**

### **Conservation Areas**

1.1 Conservation areas are crucial to the conservation of our built environment. There are over 600 conservation areas in Scotland. They contain groups of buildings extending over areas of a village or town and can also include public parks, woods and historic land. To safeguard them for the enjoyment and benefit of future generations any new development should preserve or enhance their varied character. The local planning authority is required to determine which parts of its area are of special architectural and/or historic interest. It may propose and designate these as conservation areas. The public will be consulted on any proposal to designate conservation areas or change their boundaries.

1.2 Conservation areas must be safeguarded and enhanced. This is defined through:

- Defining the character that merits protection, including the space between buildings;
- Use of appropriate controls over development, demolition and advertising;
- Financial assistance, where appropriate, for works of repair and restoration;
- Protection of trees;
- Interpretation schemes, through leaflets or exhibitions;
- The implementation of enhancement schemes based upon a conservation area appraisal.

1.3 Designation as a conservation area does not place a ban upon all new development within its boundaries. However new development will normally only be granted planning permission if it can be demonstrated that it will not harm the character or visual quality of the area. New development should also positively enhance the area through good design rather than just create a neutral effect.

### **Reason for Conservation Area designation**

2.1 The centre of Aberfeldy retains a strong architectural and historic character which demonstrates its evolution and creates a unique, high quality environment. This character is important for the quality of life and economic health of the town, in the present and the future.

2.2 The principle of a conservation area designation has already been established through the Local Plan consultation process. The Highland Area Local Plan indicates that the Council will designate a conservation area in Aberfeldy. The Council will also investigate and progress, where appropriate, enhancement schemes for the area.

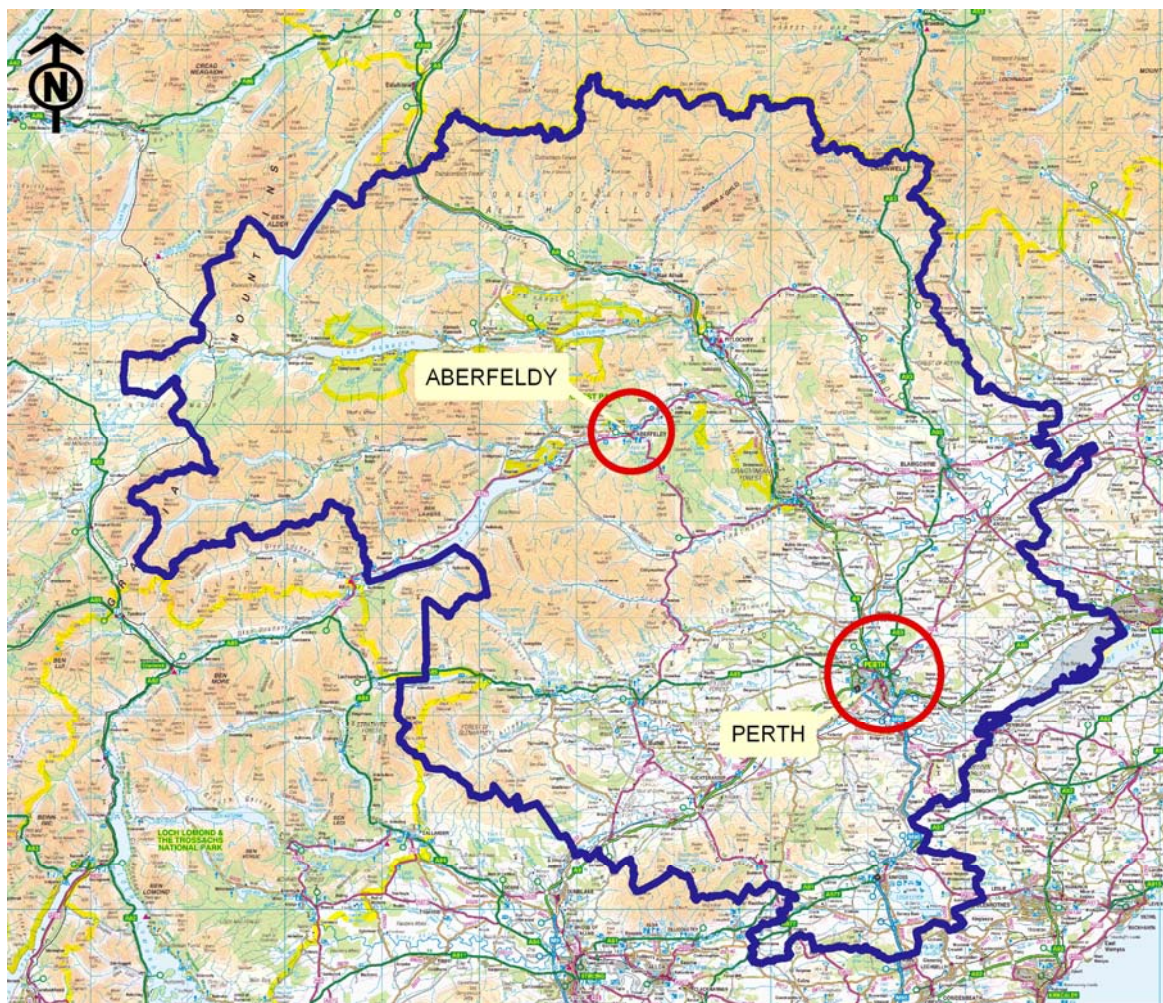
2.3 Local Plan policy indicates that, within the conservation area, new development will only be acceptable when it is compatible with the character and density of the surrounding area and it does not result in the loss of any significant trees.

### **Purpose of the Conservation Area Appraisal**

2.4 A Conservation Area Appraisal is a management tool which helps to identify the special interest and changing needs of an area. It serves as supplementary planning guidance to the Local Plan. The appraisal provides the basis for the development of a programme of action that is compatible with the sensitivities of the historic area and can enable the local authority to fulfil its statutory duties to protect and enhance that particular area.

2.5 Appraisals also assist development control and management. They provide the opportunity to inform residents about the special needs and characteristics of the area and help developers identify and formulate development proposals. If a conservation area's special interest has been clearly defined and published in an appraisal then this definition will help those thinking to invest in the area and can be used to guide the form and content of new development.

**Map1: Location of Aberfeldy within Perth & Kinross Council boundary**



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## **CONTEXT AND SURVEY**

### **Location, History and Development**

3.1 Located in highland Perthshire, Aberfeldy lies on the south side of the River Tay 13 miles south-west of Pitlochry. It stands astride the Moness Burn a mile to the north of the Falls Of Moness which are said to have inspired Robert Burns to write 'The Birks of Aberfeldy'. Aberfeldy takes its name from the alternative name of the Moness, or Paldie burn, Aberfeldy meaning 'mouth of the Paldie', where it meets the Tay. The Tay is crossed at Aberfeldy by a magnificent five-arched bridge built in 1733 by the military road builder General Wade to a design by the architect William Adam.

3.2 When General Wade built his famous bridge there was no village or settlement by the name of Aberfeldy. Early maps indicate a number of farms (or 'fermtouns') scattered on the low ground on both sides of the Moness Burn. There was a network of farm tracks or drove roads in the wider area. Following 1715 military roads were created by General Wade, often based on the older drove roads. One of the most important of these was the road from Crieff through Aberfeldy, Weem, Keltneyburn, Tummel Bridge and Trinafour to Dalnacardoch. The route required frequent bridges resulting in many surviving architectural and engineering landmarks.



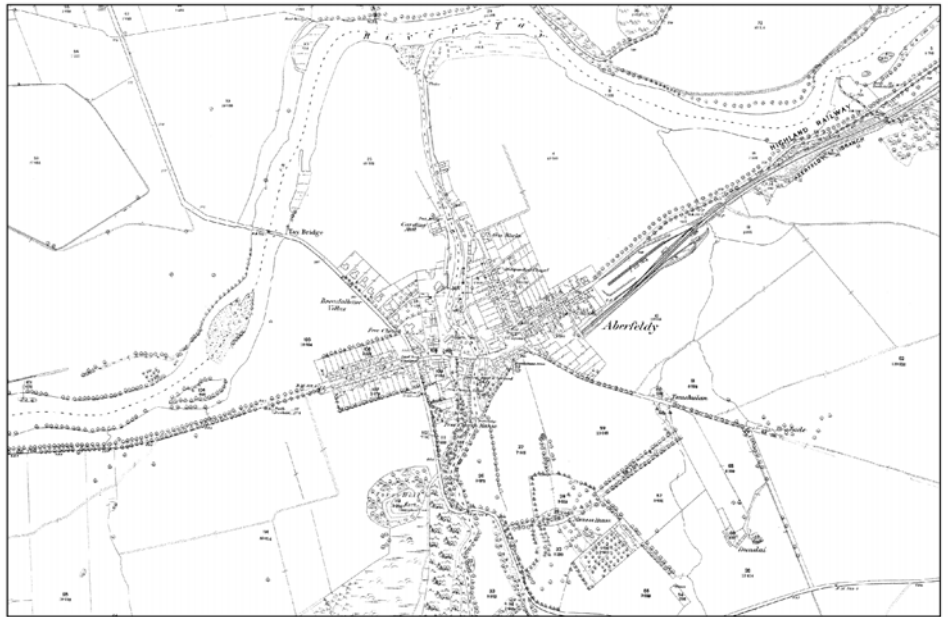
**General Wade's Bridge over River Tay**

3.3 The land to the west of the Moness Burn was owned by the Menzies of Weem, while that to the east was the property of the Stuarts of Grandtully and the Flemyngs who owned Moness House. The Flemyngs were reputed to have introduced lace makers from Flanders and built a factory. During the late 1700's the Stuarts sold their holdings to the Menzies who in turn sold to the 3rd Earl of Breadalbane. The Flemyng male line died out and the Moness estate was acquired by the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Breadalbane. In 1795 the Moness Manufacturing Company leased Moness House, land and water rights from the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl to build a cotton mill.

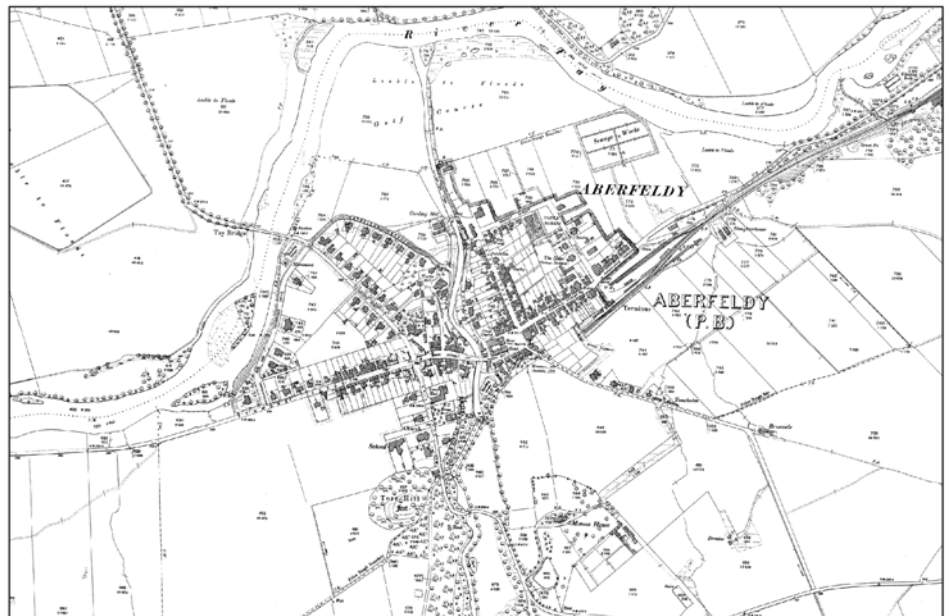
3.4 By now the population of the settlement by the water had increased. At the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the site of Kenmore Street was occupied by 'one long row of miserable thatched cottages', according to Mackay. The Breadalbane factor designed a plan for the development of a town to the east of Moness Burn (The Square and Dunkeld Street). No copies of the plan exist but references are made to it in building leases granted in 1796. The cotton mill apparently went out of business in 1810. Development of the town continued with the construction a grain mill in 1825 and textile mills on both sides of the burn. In 1836 a plan was produced by the Breadalbane factor for the further extension of Aberfeldy to the west (Kenmore Street). A gasworks was built in 1856 at the corner of Chapel Street and Market Street and the Highland Railway reached Aberfeldy in 1865. The railway station was sited where the Moness Terrace public car park is now. Until its demise under the effects of the Beeching Plan in the 1960s, the railway was of considerable economic and social importance to Aberfeldy and the whole Breadalbane area. The railway linked with steamers on Loch Tay allowing onward travel between Kenmore and Killin.

3.5 In 1887 a group of town residents petitioned that Aberfeldy should become a Police Burgh with the power to elect its own Police Commissioners. Commissioners were elected later that same year and were responsible for 'lighting, cleansing, paving, draining, supplying water and promoting public health.' The Commissioners became 'Councillors' under the Town Councils Act of 1900. The Town Council was thus formed and lasted until local government re-organisation in 1975.

## Settlement development



Map 2: c. 1886



Map 3: c. 1900



Map 4: c. 1977



## TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS

### CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

#### Setting and topography

4.1 Aberfeldy is concentrated in the fairly flat valley floor within a bend of the river Tay framed by the wooded hills of Weem, Cluny, Grandtully and Bolfracks. Its nearest neighbouring settlement, Kenmore to the west, lies at the point where the river Tay leaves Loch Tay. Around 27,000-14,000 years ago ice advancing eastward from Rannoch Moor formed the basins of Lochs Rannoch, Tay, Earn and Tummel and the characteristic valley section in which Aberfeldy sits. Fertile agricultural land is found at the lower elevations, rising to moorland. Modern forestry now forms a significant element of the character of the upland areas. Isolated glacial outcrops form local landmarks and recreational areas such as the wooded 'Duns' including Duiness, Duntuim and Duntaylor.

Map 5: Setting



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#### Activity and Movement

4.2 The Perthshire Tourist Route passes through Aberfeldy en route between Crieff and the A9 at Ballinluig. The main Edinburgh-Inverness rail line branched at Ballinluig with a terminus at Aberfeldy, although this was closed in the 1960s. Historically a centre for textiles manufacture owing to its water sources, Aberfeldy is now principally a local service and tourist centre although local manufacturing industry remains active at the Aberfeldy Distillery and Glenlyon Tweed Mill. In the surrounding area agriculture, forestry and hydro-electric generation are significant land uses. Aberfeldy has developed a range of good independent shopping and food and drink outlets and markets itself as 'Scotland's First Fairtrade Town' after being granted this status in 2002.

#### Street Pattern and Topography

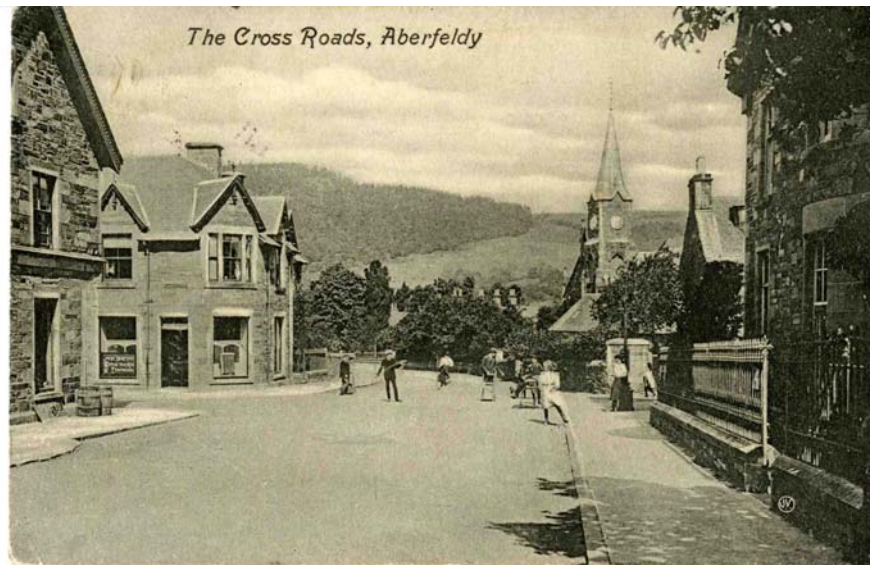
4.3 The centre of Aberfeldy is generally formed around the structure of the Moness Burn and the military road (Crieff Road and Taybridge Road), with additional main routes east-west along Kenmore Street and Dunkeld Street. The civic and architectural core of Aberfeldy is located at the Square. Building plots and some surviving built form along the burn preserve the sense and scale of early industrial uses. Tenements and retail uses line the main routes with smaller-scale residential plots with long rig gardens running back from and behind these areas. Higher-status villas in extensive grounds spread to fill the space between the core of the town and the Tay to the west of the burn. 20<sup>th</sup> century housing including council tenements/terraces and later private detached, semidetached and bungalow types has generally spread eastwards from the centre.

## Old Photographic Record

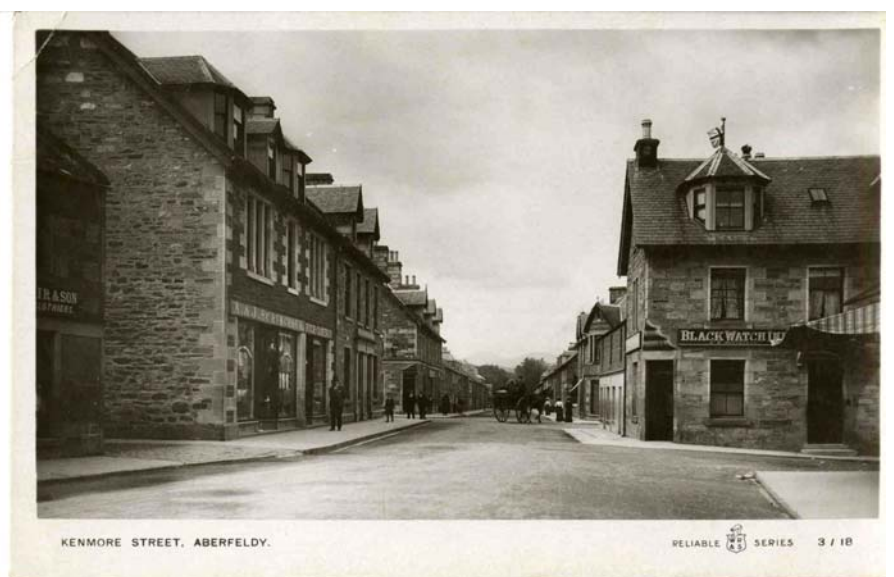
The Square  
(S-E corner)  
early 20th century



The cross roads  
at Crieff Road,  
early 20th century



Looking West along  
Kenmore Street,  
early 20th century



Photographs courtesy of A.K. Bell  
Local Studies, A.K. Bell Library, Perth

## Buildings and Townscape

4.4 The skyline of Aberfeldy is relatively uniform, with few obvious landmarks visible over long distances. However key focus points are formed by a number of churches, public buildings and commercial premises. St Andrew's Church, the Town Hall, Aberfeldy Library (former Union Bank) and St Andrew's Church Hall (former Free Church) along Crieff Road and Taybridge Road form a particularly distinguished grouping of civic and religious buildings along the natural slope of the former military road. The Town Hall (1899) is designed in an Arts and Crafts style with an impressive arched loggia on the street elevation.



**Library (former Union Bank), Bank Street**



**Town Hall, Crieff Road**

4.5 Revivalist styles expressing the confidence and aspirations of the 19<sup>th</sup> century businesses and community are particularly notable around The Square, Bridgend, Bank Street and the western part of Dunkeld Street. Scots Baronial and Flemish Renaissance types are evident in premises such as Haggart's tweed merchants in Dunkeld Street, McKerchar & McNaughton's Emporium in Bank Street. On a prominent corner site at the east end of Dunkeld Street is the Palace Hotel, built at the turn of the last century with red sandstone dressings and an impressive corner tower with pyramid roof. The use of local chlorite schist, red sandstone detail and unusually prominent or decorative façade rainwater goods are particularly unique to Aberfeldy.

4.6 The Square was planned and laid out as a public space in 1806. It became the focus for commercial and public buildings and is characterised by the varied architecture of its banks and hotels. The former Temperance Hotel, now the Co-op, retains its 1898 cast-iron shopfronts. The former Birks Cinema introduces an unusual Art Deco element to the space.

4.7 The steep hump-backed bridge built by General Wade across the Moness Burn became an obstacle to modern traffic and the level of the street was raised to ease the approach. As a result the original ground floor of the Breadalbane Hotel became a semi-basement.

4.8 The area north of The Square and immediately around the Burn was the historic focus for industrial activities. Chapel Street was originally known as Factory Street, named after the 1795 cotton mill located here and re-named after the building of the Independent or Congregational Chapel in 1820. Vestiges of industrial buildings and the town's gas works remain in Chapel Street/Market Street including an unusual castellated chimney.



**Castellated chimney,  
corner of Chapel Street and Market Street**



**Water Mill, Mill Street**

4.9 The Water Mill behind Bank Street in Mill Street dates from 1825 and was built in the Breadalbane estate gothic style. The mill is driven through an eight-spoke overshot wood and iron wheel. The mill was restored in the 1980's by a miller from Cupar in Fife and is now a visitor centre and art gallery. A former sawmill remains just to the north of the Water Mill. The tweed mill, formerly a carding mill, also survives along the burn on Taybridge Terrace and is still in active use.

4.10 The east end of Kenmore Street starts as an impressive regimented layout of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, two storey houses, built on the site of former flax spinners' cottages. The building materials used were the local chlorite slate and rubble. Up to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century many of these houses had byres and the cows were turned out in the town's four cow parks.



**Terraces in Kenmore Street**



**West Toll House (The Armoury), Kenmore St**

4.11 The 'West Toll House' or 'Armoury' dates from around 1840 and is a typical example of the Breadalbane estate cottage style with bow window, decorative barge-boarding and diagonal shafted chimneys. This house originally served to collect tolls from road users to Kenmore, but it later became the headquarters of the Aberfeldy 'A' Company of the 5<sup>th</sup> Volunteer Battalion Royal Highlanders or 'The Black Watch'.

4.12 To the west and north-west of the town centre lies a group of late-Victorian villas, many with barge-boarding in a variety of decorative styles. The spread of these types of large-scale Victorian villas along Kenmore Road, Taybridge Road, Taybridge Drive and Taybridge Terrace indicates Aberfeldy's increased prosperity during the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



**St. Helen's, Taybridge Drive**



**Auchrannie, Taybridge Road**

### **Spaces**

4.13 All spaces, regardless of ownership and accessibility (ie. public and private spaces) contribute to the amenity and character of an area, as indicated in Planning Advice Note 65, 'Planning and Open Space'. The term 'open space' covers green space consisting of any vegetated land or geological feature in a village and civic space including squares, market places and other paved or hard landscaped areas.

4.14 The main civic open space in the town centre is The Square, which is square in plan and laid out in a semi-formal manner. The Square is the visual focus of the commercial centre of the town and links with four main streets, namely Dunkeld Street, Chapel Street, Bridgend/Bank Street and Crieff Road. The main feature in the square is the Fountain, which was presented to the town in 1885 by the Marquis of Breadalbane.



**The Square and Fountain**



**Putting green**

4.15 Formal green spaces are located to the north of the town where there is a putting green at the corner of Taybridge Road and Taybridge Drive and extensive parklands and golf course between Taybridge Terrace and the Tay in Victoria Park. Some of this parkland around the Mill House is included in the conservation area. More informal spaces in woodland areas exist at various points along the Moness Burn, such as around The Watermill and to the south of Bridgend. The Aberfeldy War Memorial forms a gateway into the Den of Moness, with its waterside paths and spaces, from the built-up core of the town at Bridgend.

4.16 Outwith the denser core of the town centre there are several mature and attractive gardens of Victorian villas which are of high amenity value and enrich the townscape setting.

4.17 Key buildings and spaces within the village are indicated on map 6.



## Trees and Landscaping

4.18 Aberfeldy is located within 'big tree country' with various woodland trails in the surrounding area, including The Birks. Within and around the edges of the conservation area there are substantial tree groups and tree belts which add a distinctive dimension to the townscape experience. The tree lined banks of the Tay to the north and the Moness Burn which flows through the centre of town and links the woodland of The Birks to the south are of high amenity value and are important wildlife corridors. Significant tree species are silver birch, ash, rowan, alder, wych elm, sessile oak, hawthorn, elder, cherry, whitebeam, beech, maple and lime.



**Tree belts, Moness Burn**



**Trees and boundary hedges in mature gardens**



**Looking West from Kenmore Street**

4.19 There are also individual trees or tree groups in several gardens of Victorian villas and within the grounds of more recent buildings. Tree types are a variety of native and some exotic species.

4.20 Boundary treatments including walls, railings and hedges are an important element of the townscape. Much original, decorative ironwork in boundary railings survives. Where there are remnants or evidence of original railings it would be desirable to restore these decorative features wherever possible. The areas of villa development to the north and west of the town centre are characterised by mature gardens with stone walls, iron railings, hedges and trees.

4.21 Any proposals to fell, top or lop trees within the conservation area will be subject to certain planning controls under the Town & Country Planning Act.

4.22 Trees and woodland areas within the town are indicated on map 7.





## Character Areas

4.23 The conservation area divides broadly into two areas of distinct character, namely the central commercial area of the town running east-west to either side of the Moness Burn and later Victorian and Edwardian villa development to the north-west. There are no distinct boundary divisions between these character areas and they generally overlap and merge.

## Negative Factors

5.1 There are a number of negative buildings, façades or ill-defined spaces which detract from the quality of the townscape. These areas of poor visual quality have been identified in the townscape survey and there may be potential to enhance or improve these areas.

5.2 Home Street: the parking and servicing area to the rear of the Palace Hotel.

5.3 Dunkeld Street: the filling station building and associated area at the corner with Moness Terrace and the south and west elevations of the garage building adjacent to the Moness Terrace public car park; no.12 Dunkeld Street; the public space in front of the Birks Cinema and the elevation of this building facing Chapel Street.



**Left and clockwise: Forecourt at the filling station; Approach to the filling station; The Birks (former cinema).**



5.4 Chapel Street: the west elevation of the former gasworks building and the un-used area in front at the corner of Chapel Street and Market Street; the industrial yards, fences and buildings behind the gasworks building near Churchill Court; the façade of no.30 Chapel Street (blocked-in doorway).

5.5 Burnside and Burnside Lane: the street elevation of the garage at the corner with Burnside Lane; the rear parking area of the Breadalbane Hotel.

5.6 Mill Street: the frontage and servicing/parking area of the garage at the corner with Taybridge Terrace.



**Garage, corner of Mill Street / Taybridge Terrace**

**Parking area and building, former filling station, Kenmore Street**

5.7 Bank Street: the vehicular access area between the public house and no.20 Bank Street; the façade of the public house at the corner with Taybridge Road.

5.8 Kenmore Street: the extension to no.2 Kenmore Street; the parking area in front of no.11 and the building façade (former filling station); the parking area in front of the police station between no.25 and no.37.

## **Building by Building Analysis**

### **Buildings at Risk Survey**

6.1 There are no buildings in Aberfeldy currently listed in the Scottish Civic Trust's Buildings at Risk Register but the situation will be monitored at regular intervals.

### **Public Realm Audit**

7.1 Street furniture in Aberfeldy is generally of standard 'off-the-shelf' design, such as lamp standards, litter bins and benches. The Square has been hard landscaped in recent times with defined parking and pedestrian spaces using concrete setts and paviers. The main feature of The Square is The Fountain. Street furniture here includes specially designed assemblies for hanging flower baskets; curved benches; pedestrian finger posts; cast iron bollards and standardised litter bins. There are also two transplant trees planted recently.



**Curved benches and finger posting, The Square**

**Litter bins and hanging basket trees, The Square**

7.2 There are several examples of traditional Victorian shopfronts in the town centre with elegantly designed fascias, pilasters and stallrisers. There are however some shopfronts which have been significantly altered in recent times which have rather obtrusive or standardised signage. Unsympathetic signage can have an adverse visual effect on neighbouring, traditional shopfronts and on the quality of the streetscape as a whole. There is also a degree of visual clutter in the main shopping streets (Dunkeld Street in particular) comprising standard projecting shop signage, large fascia or window signs and road signage.



**Poor shopfront with signage clutter**



**Traditional shopfronts**

(Further measures to manage standards of advertising and road signage are suggested and discussed in the Opportunities for Planning Action section at paragraphs 14.5).

7.3 Some of the road directional signage has been rationalised recently. This has been done through the placing of two, sometimes three chevron signs on one sign-plate. Attempts have also been made to include all tourist attractions on one brown and white sign-plate at or near the key junctions.

### **Surveys of Specific Issues**

8.1 All conservation areas contain streetscapes, building types, architectural details, materials or other features which are unique to that area and a result of their historical development. These features contribute to an area's local distinctiveness, the characteristics that lend it a unique sense of place. Some of these characteristics are general or intangible, but others can be quite closely defined.

8.2 The following is not an exhaustive list and will be augmented in the future. It identifies the most important types of features and elements of the townscape which help to shape its identity, but which may be most at risk of incremental erosion. A full survey of each category will be undertaken as part of the building analysis survey. This will provide example images which may be referred to when new development, alterations and extensions are proposed in the area.

Surveys of Specific Issues:  
Roofscapes



# Windows & Doors



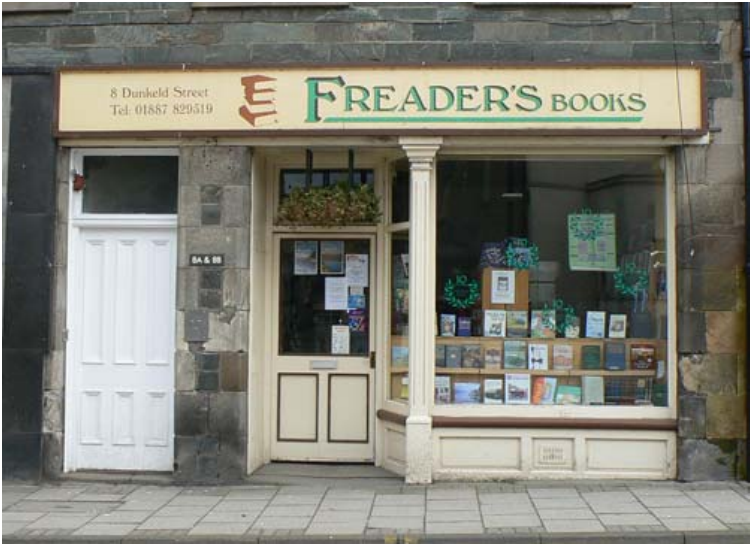
**Materials, decoration and detail**



**Boundary treatments**



Shopfronts and signs



## Sensitivity Analysis

### Setting of the conservation area

9.1 The edges of the conservation area can be sensitive to potential development. It is important to preserve and enhance the setting of the conservation area and the design, scale and landscaping of any development must not adversely affect this setting. Also, existing tree belts should not be adversely affected.



**View West over River Tay**



**View South down Moness Burn**

### Archaeology

9.2 There are no scheduled monuments within the conservation area. General Wade's Bridge over the Tay is within the setting of the conservation area and this is a scheduled monument as well as a grade A listed building.

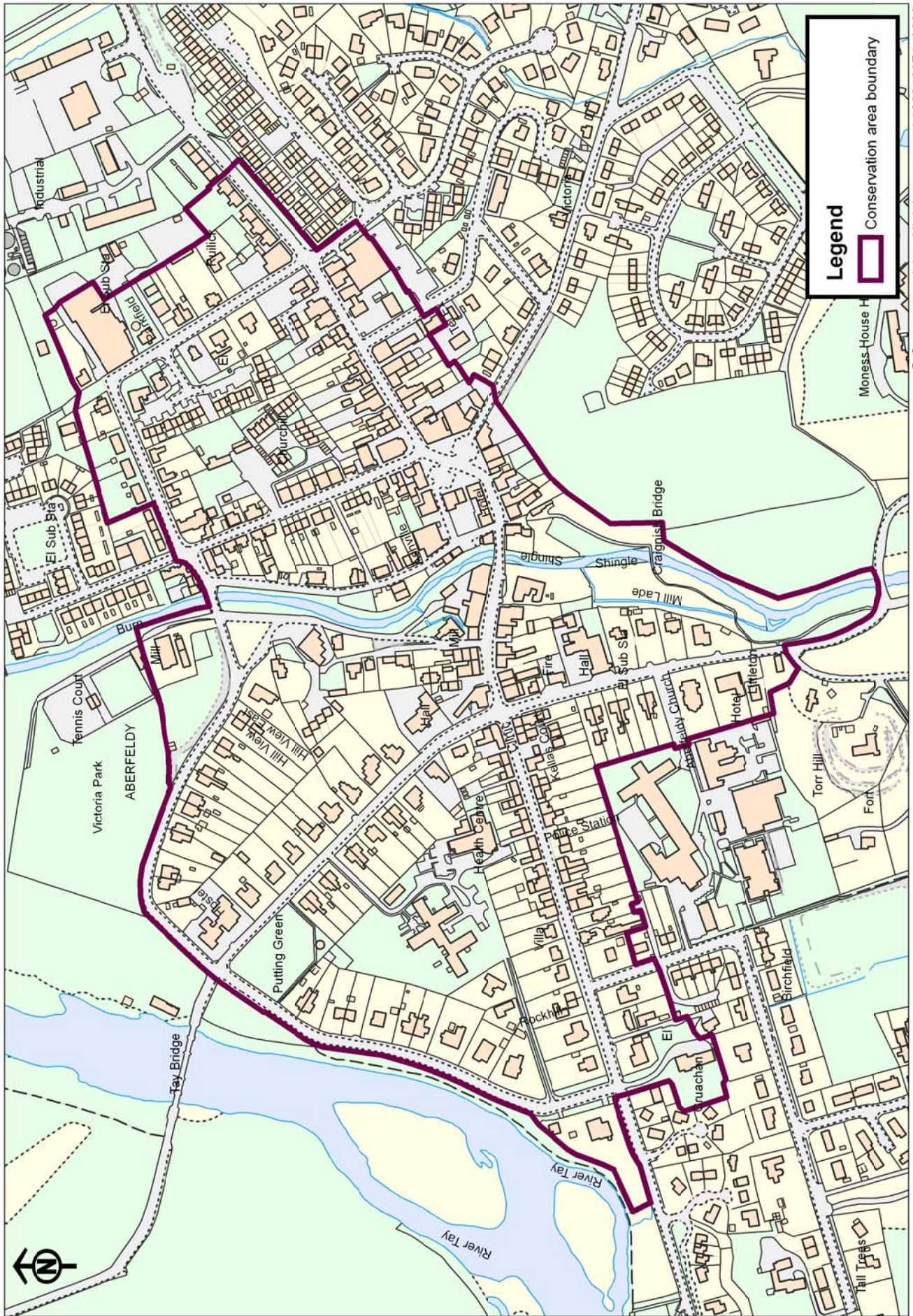
9.3 Further non-designated monuments are indicated in the Perth & Kinross Historic Environment Record (HER), searchable at <http://www.pkht.org.uk/HERSearchRecord.asp>

## Assessment of Significance

10.1 The townscape of Aberfeldy has evolved from early hamlets around the Moness Burn, triggered by the construction of the military road and later developing into a local manufacturing centre with its associated housing and service functions. Important architectural survivals from each of these phases are preserved, creating a richly varied yet harmonious character and appearance to the townscape. Decorative Victorian building styles are particularly prevalent. The Moness Burn framed with mature tree groups or small woodlands, the south bank of the River Tay and surrounding hills enrich the townscape and its setting.



Map 8: Conservation area boundary



## CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Using the Conservation Area Appraisal

11.1 The Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) provides a sound basis for development management and for initiatives to promote environmental and economic improvements. Key issues and features that contribute to the character of Aberfeldy are addressed and proposals will be put forward for enhancing the character of the area. This will be done through local consultation with amenity groups, businesses and other community organisations. Public meetings and exhibitions will also be arranged.

11.2 The CAA provides a framework for on-going management of the conservation area in the medium term as well as the near future. The key objectives are:

- To ensure maintenance of the integrity of the conservation area;
- To prevent erosion of character through small-scale change;
- To enable future evolution and change as long as it is appropriately controlled.

11.3 Implementing these objectives will depend on a number of factors:

- Development proposals must be in accordance with current development plan policies relating to conservation area status and special character of the historic buildings, open spaces and tree groups. Design, materials and detailing will require to be in accordance with design guidelines prepared by the local planning authority;
- Development proposals should demonstrate a sustainable approach, including use of materials and sustainability of use;
- Adaptive re-use of buildings and mixed use projects to ensure a reverse in physical, visual or economic decline will be positively considered subject to compatibility with neighbouring property and uses;
- The potential for economic regeneration will be considered as a positive factor, subject to compatibility with neighbours.

11.4 Whilst current planning policies provide a framework for protection of the conservation area, it is important to ensure implementation and enforcement where necessary. A combination of guidance, information and planning tools will be used in this management role, as indicated below:

- Conservation area guidance: design advice covering conservation areas in general will be provided for owners and occupiers of residential and commercial property with regard to building alterations and improvements, and there will also be advice for any new build site infill in conservation areas;
- Grant aid: the local planning authority will provide information regarding what grant schemes may be available from partnership agencies and other organisations for certain types of repair or enhancement works;
- Enforcement action: the planning authority will produce an enforcement charter which will identify any unauthorised works within and adjacent to conservation areas as priorities for action;

- Article 4 Directions: the planning authority is committed to establishing this additional planning tool within the conservation area in order to bring certain classes of permitted development under planning control (as described in paras 14.2, 14.3 & 14.4).
- Repairs Notices: the planning authority will seek to work with owners of listed buildings but will take action in terms of undertaking urgent works or requiring repairs where owners allow buildings to fall into disrepair;
- Compulsory Purchase orders: the planning authority will exercise its rights to acquire buildings in disrepair to assist their repair and conversion in partnership with other agencies;
- Education and training: the planning authority is in the process of establishing links with Historic Scotland and Scottish Enterprise to facilitate conservation training programmes for building contractors and other interested parties or private individuals. PKHT has recently secured resources from the Heritage Lottery fund to develop an interpretive and outreach education programme in conjunction with other agencies to promote understanding and enjoyment of conservation areas.

11.5 There is a firm commitment from the planning authority to ensure the protection and enhancement of Aberfeldy Conservation Area and to use statutory planning powers when these are required. The importance of public consultation with local civic amenity and community groups and local businesses is fully understood and this will continue after the conservation area has been designated and established.

## **Monitoring and Review**

The Conservation Area will be monitored through:-

12.1 Photographic surveys: a detailed survey of all buildings and open spaces within the conservation area has been undertaken as part of the appraisal and will form a basis for monitoring further change;

12.2 Observation: officers from the planning authority will visit the conservation area at regular intervals and check on the progress of any restoration and enhancement schemes and also observe any other works occurring which may be unauthorised;

12.3 Liaison: officers will liaise with local amenity groups, the public and other interested parties as necessary;

12.4 Review: the Conservation Area Appraisal will be monitored and reviewed from time to time depending upon budget constraints and other priorities.

## PROPOSALS

### Opportunities for Development

13.1 The Highland Area Local Plan identified various sites for new housing within or near the conservation area, all of which have now been developed. Other housing sites outwith the conservation area may be zoned in future development plans. It is important to preserve and enhance the setting of the conservation area and the design, scale and landscaping of any development must not adversely affect this setting.

13.2 A combined education and leisure campus, including an extension of Aberfeldy Recreation Centre, is planned for the Breadalbane Academy site. The conservation area borders the north and east boundaries of this site.

13.3 The Highland Area Local Plan indicates major areas of public and private space and recreation which are to be retained. Any development proposals which erode these areas will be resisted. Key green spaces identified are the parklands north of Taybridge Terrace, the wooded banks of the Tay along Taybridge Drive and the woodlands south of Bank Street on either side of the Moness Burn which are a pedestrian link to the Birks and part of a wildlife corridor.



**Path to The Birks**



**Parklands North of Taybridge Terrace**

13.4 The management of the conservation area provides an opportunity for the development and enhancement of path networks passing through and around the area. The local plan indicates that the Council will investigate methods of improving pedestrian and cycle facilities to the town centre. The local plan also states that the Council in association with others will investigate the potential for the design and implementation of environmental improvement, facelift and signing schemes to improve car parking and visitor facilities in the town centre and approaches. This conservation area appraisal recognises The Square as a key public space and focus of the town centre and this space should be considered for a scheme of façade, signage and hard landscaping enhancement.

### Opportunities for Planning Action

#### Conservation area boundary refinement

14.1 A draft boundary was identified in the Highland Area Local Plan 2000. The boundary has been refined and extended to the north as part of the appraisal process. The area of late 19<sup>th</sup> Century Victorian villas, Taybridge Terrace and Taybridge Drive, has been included as this is an important element of the town's development history and is an area of high townscape quality.

## Effects of permitted development

14.2 There are examples in the town of development which would not have required planning permission (under the General Permitted Development Order 1992), called 'permitted development', but which in some cases, are not appropriate to the traditional character of the townscape. Alterations to listed buildings are covered by listed building legislation and the need to obtain listed building consent, but unlisted buildings, of which there are several in Aberfeldy, are not covered by this legislation. Small scale developments or alterations to unlisted buildings or open spaces may not be significant individually but cumulatively can erode the visual fabric of the townscape and there is the potential, without development management, for more of such developments to appear.

14.3 Classes of development which are usually 'permitted' include alteration or removal of stone walls or railings; small extensions or some types of alterations to the exterior of houses, including replacement windows; small buildings or alterations within the curtilage of houses; some satellite dishes; repairs to private streets; caravan sites; some forms of telecommunications development; some types of development by statutory undertakers (water, gas, electricity, road transport, post office and sewerage) and, certain types of development by local authorities, including lamp standards and street furniture. In Aberfeldy the townscape is particularly vulnerable to some if not all of these classes of permitted development. For example, window and door replacements; developments within the curtilage of gardens and possible loss of trees; the alteration of stone boundary walls or decorative iron railings ; visual clutter of telecommunications and electricity apparatus on or near buildings, and alterations to roads or parking areas.



**Oversized satellite dish on main façade**



**Poor door replacement**



**Poor window replacement**

14.4 Under Article 4 of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992, the local planning authority can seek the approval of the Scottish Ministers for Directions that restrict permitted development rights. Development is not precluded, but such alterations will require planning permission and special attention will be paid to the potential effect of proposals. In order to maximise the benefit of a conservation area designation it is considered that an 'Article 4 Direction' should be drafted for Scottish Ministers approval (Draft Article 4 Direction shown in Appendix 1).

## Advertisements

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



**Co-op signage**



**'Premier' Breadalbane Stores**

14.6 The problems of visual clutter in Aberfeldy's town centre are highlighted in the public realm audit section of this Appraisal. The competition for business signs is unlikely to diminish and may increase in the short to medium term. Additional advertisement controls would be a useful development management tool and should therefore be drafted for consultation and Scottish Ministers approval. (Classes of permitted advertisement proposed for removal under Regulation 11 of the Control of Advertisements Regulations 1984 are shown at Appendix 2).

### Trees

14.7 There is a case for Tree Preservation Orders to be formulated within the setting of Aberfeldy if there are trees which are important to the setting of the conservation area. The Council will consider serving TPO's if any important tree belts in these areas are under apparent or potential risk.

14.8 Any proposals to fell, top or lop trees within the Conservation Area will be subject to certain planning controls under the Town & Country Planning Act. Under this Act the local planning authority must be given six weeks notice of the intention to uproot, fell or lop trees. The planning authority then has the opportunity to discuss suitable management of the tree(s) with the owners, such as thinning rather than lopping. The planning authority would also have the option to propose protection by Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Failure to give notice will render the person liable to the same penalties as for contravention of a TPO, which could involve a fine not exceeding £20,000 per tree.

### Opportunities for Enhancement

15.1 The Highland Local Plan includes the commitment to identify environmental improvement, facelift and signing schemes, particularly to improve car parking and visitor facilities in the town centre and approaches. Car parking and river access improvements at Dunolly, Kenmore Road, are identified as a specific project.

15.2 Other opportunities for enhancement identified through the conservation area appraisal process include:

15.3 The Square, including the Birks Cinema environs. This unusual art-deco style cinema is now disused and this lack of activity and maintenance adversely affects the north-east corner of The Square. Schemes to bring the building into active and beneficial use, combined with façade and environs improvements, will be encouraged.



**Side of The Birks, former cinema**



**Garage building behind filling station**

15.4 The filling station site in Dunkeld Street and garage buildings behind, facing the public car park, would benefit from hard and soft landscaping treatments to soften the impact of the hard forecourt and canopy. Other commercial buildings in Dunkeld Street, opposite or near to the filling station, which require a degree of facelift could also be included in this scheme.

15.5 The rear of the Palace Hotel would benefit from improved design and sympathetic use of this outdoor amenity space.

15.6 The former Gas Works site has interesting surviving architectural features such as the castellated chimney, which are swamped by surrounding yards and associated visual clutter. The area would benefit from rationalisation to improve its visual amenity and the setting and use of the former industrial structures.

15.7 The garage building and service yard in Mill St has a derelict appearance visually. The building frontage needs repair and enhancement. Any abandoned vehicles should be removed. The site boundaries would benefit from a soft landscaping scheme.

15.8 Parking and access spaces in Bank St and Kenmore St are poorly defined, leading to parking problems detracting from the enjoyment of the surrounding townscape. Rationalisation and improved management of these areas will be encouraged.

15.9 A façade improvement scheme for severely altered building facades and shopfronts in Dunkeld Street and Kenmore Street will be promoted. A partnership scheme with tourist operators and local businesses will also be considered with the purpose of rationalising, enhancement and possible sharing of signboards.



**Parking area, Kenmore Street**



**Building in Dunkeld Street**

15.10 Possible areas for enhancement are indicated on map 9.





## APPENDICES

### 1) Article 4 Direction

**Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997**  
**Form of Direction by Planning Authority under Article 4(8)**  
**Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)**  
**(Scotland) Order 1992**

### **Aberfeldy Conservation Area**

**The Perth & Kinross Council (Restriction of Permitted Development)**  
**(Aberfeldy) Direction 2008**

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

- Class 1 - the enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse;
- Class 3 - the provision within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse of any building or enclosure, swimming or other pool required for a purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse, or the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of such a building or enclosure;
- Class 6 - the installation, alteration or replacement of a microwave antenna on a dwellinghouse or within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse;
- Class 7 - the erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure;
- Class 16 - the use of land, other than a building, as a caravan site;
- Class 27 - the carrying out on land within the boundaries of a private road or private way of works required for the maintenance or improvement of the road or way;
- Class 30 - the erection or construction and the maintenance, improvement or other alteration by a local authority;
- Class 38 - water undertakings;
- Class 39 - public gas transporters;
- Class 40 - electricity undertakings;
  
- Class 43 - universal service providers; and,
- Class 43A - sewerage undertakings;

should not be carried out within the Conservation Area of Aberfeldy (area of land as described in the Schedule hereto) unless permission is granted on an application in that behalf, hereby directs that the permission granted by article 3 in respect of:-

Classes 1, 3, 6, 7, 16, 27, 30, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43 and 43A, as described above, shall not apply.

This direction may be cited as the Perth & Kinross Council (Restriction of Permitted Development) (Aberfeldy) Direction 2008.

2) Classes of advertisements proposed for advertisement control under Regulation 11

<b>Description of Advertisement</b>
<b>Class II (3):</b> Advertisements relating to any institution of a religious, educational, cultural, recreational or medical or similar character to any hotel, inn or public house or hostel, situated on the land on which any such advertisement is displayed.
<b>Class III (3):</b> Advertisements relating to the carrying out of building or similar work on the land on which they are displayed, not being land which is normally used, whether at regular intervals or otherwise for the purpose of carrying out such work.
<b>Class IV (1)</b> Advertisements displayed on business premises wholly with reference to all of the following matters; the business or other activity carried on, the goods sold or services provided, and the name and qualification of the person carrying on such business or activity or manufacturing or supplying such goods or services on those premises.
<b>Class IV (2)</b> Advertisement displayed on any forecourt of business premises wholly with reference to all or any of the matters specified in <b>Class IV (1)</b> .

## Sources

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Mackay, N.D., *Aberfeldy Past and Present*, Town Council of Aberfeldy 1954

Wheater, Hilary, *Aberfeldy to Glenlyon*, Appin Publications, Aberfeldy 1981