Planning Committee

10am, Thursday 7 August 2014

Queensferry Conservation Area – Review of Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Item number 9.3

Report number

Executive/routine Executive Wards Almond

Executive summary

This report seeks approval of the revised Queensferry Conservation Area Character Appraisal in draft for consultation. The content has been updated to reflect changing issues in the area, the community's views and concerns, and to produce a more user-friendly format.

Links

Coalition pledges P40

Council outcomes CO19, CO23

Single Outcome Agreement SO4



Report

Queensferry Conservation Area – Review of Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
 - approves the attached revised Queensferry Conservation Area Character Appraisal in draft for consultation; and
 - 2) agrees to consult at the same time on the potential to extend the conservation area to include the Forth Terrace area.

Background

- 2.1 On 3 October 2013, the Planning Committee approved a programme of review of Edinburgh's conservation areas. Queensferry was assessed as one of the initial six priority areas and is the second to be reviewed, following the Grange.
- 2.2 Lessons learned from the Grange review process and consultation have informed the process for Queensferry. Elements such as the survey of recent design in the area have been adapted to reflect local interests and areas of concern, on the advice of local community groups.

Main report

- 3.1 The revised Queensferry Conservation Area Character Appraisal is intended to reflect changes that have occurred in Queensferry since the previous appraisal was published in 2001, to be more tightly focused on the analysis of character and townscape, and targeted at guiding decisions more clearly. Research has focused on community concerns regarding infrastructure, the potential opportunities and impacts of the Forth Bridge World Heritage nomination and areas of information which have been omitted or require updating.
- 3.2 Early engagement with the community and others to inform the draft appraisal has consisted of:
 - discussions with Queensferry and District Community Council, Queensferry Ambition, Queensferry History Group and the emerging Queensferry Trust;
 - an on-line survey;
 - drop-in information session at Queensferry Library;
 - sharing information with the Queensferry West End Design Study; and

- discussions with officers and the Almond Neighbourhood Partnership.
- 3.3 These activities produced invaluable information on the community's priorities and current concerns regarding the nature of change and pressures on the area. The on-line survey was designed in collaboration with the group of community organisations mentioned above. 29 responses to the survey were received, including 11 in person from visitors who attended the library information session. A summary of the results of the community survey is attached at Appendix 1. The most common areas of comment or concern were on traffic management, surface repair in the High Street, proposed parking within the historic core, the protection of riggs/gardens, paving and iron railings in the High Street terraces.
- 3.4 The draft Queensferry Conservation Area Character Appraisal attached at Appendix 2 reflects the feedback received during this initial engagement process. For example, greater emphasis has been given to the important streetscape features of the area, the character of open spaces and the need for management recommendations to address key pressures.
- 3.5 To reflect better the active role of the appraisal in guiding decisions, a Management section has been introduced which summarises the controls and policies which apply in the area and identifies a series of pressures and sensitivities, with recommendations made to address each type. Opportunities for development or enhancement are identified.

Potential boundary changes

- 3.6 A number of suggestions were received for boundary changes, both to include wider areas (such as Port Edgar, the wider suburbs of the town or the historic Bridge construction yard and workers cottages at Forth Terrace) and to reduce its size (for example by removing modern development along Station Road).
- 3.7 Most of the suggested changes are not considered appropriate. Reductions in extent would erode the protection of the key historic elements of the town and the setting of the Bridges. Most areas suggested for extension do not meet the criteria of being of special architectural or historic merit.
- 3.8 Port Edgar is considered to be of interest in its own right, and may potentially meet the criteria for designation or extension of a conservation area set out at Appendix 3. Its national significance as a naval base, and the evidence for that history remaining in situ in the form of historic buildings, spaces, street layout, piers etc, potentially meet the criteria for selection and would merit further research.
- 3.9 However, its character contrasts with that of the main town of Queensferry and for that reason it is not considered appropriate as an extension of Queensferry Conservation Area. The majority of its significant structures are already protected by listing and the planning brief produced in 2008 sets out the key considerations for its potential future development. The merits of designating

- this area as a separate conservation area will be considered further as plans for its development evolve.
- 3.10 The area of the historic Forth Bridge construction yard and workers' cottages at Forth Terrace and Rosshill Terrace, east of Dalmeny station, is also considered to potentially meet the criteria for designation listed at Appendix 3. The area in question is illustrated at Appendix 4. The three terraces of cottages to the south of Station Road and the area including Forthview West and East to the north are surviving evidence of the construction and development of the Forth Bridge and its impact on the development of the town. They form an interesting grouping of buildings and gardens, related to the existing railway line, the station and the disused line to the west, now used as a footpath and cycleway. They are not protected by listing and may be at risk from uncontrolled demolition or erosion of character. However some degree of unsympathetic alteration and infill development has already occurred.
- 3.11 It is recommended this element forms a specific question within the consultation on the draft appraisal to assess the merits of an extension in the Forth Terrace area.

Next steps

- 3.12 Once approved, the draft conservation area character appraisal will be presented in the interactive format developed for the Grange appraisal. Public consultation will then be carried out during autumn 2014. The consultation will consist of information presented on-line with a feedback form, an exhibition, and information events in Queensferry, with officers on hand to discuss and explain the appraisal.
- 3.13 The consultation information and related events will be promoted by posters and press in the local area, on social media and the Council website. Local and city wide amenity groups, and local Councillors, will also be notified. Further promotion will be carried out by local community groups through their websites and email networks. Residents and landowners directly affected by the potential boundary change will be consulted individually.

Measures of success

- 4.1 Completion of a programme of public consultation on the draft appraisal.
- 4.2 Incorporation of public feedback and production of the finalised Queensferry Conservation Area Character Appraisal.
- 4.3 Positive lessons learned for the ongoing review of appraisals.

Financial impact

- 5.1 The work will be undertaken within existing staff resources. There are no immediate financial implications for the Council arising from this report. There may be financial implications arising from recommendations for specific projects such as enhancement schemes, however these will require further approval from the relevant Committee as projects are developed.
- 5.2 If carried out, the potential boundary extension would generate some additional development management caseload. However the approximately 40 properties within this area would not create a significant additional burden and could be absorbed within existing capacity.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 There are no significant risks associated with approval of the document as recommended. Completion of the review of the appraisal ensures the Council's compliance with its statutory duty to review its conservation areas contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997.
- 6.2 Review of the appraisal also helps to achieve a number of the aims of the Management Plan for the Forth Bridge. This will help to demonstrate the Council's commitment to protection of the site and its setting during its consideration for World Heritage status by UNESCO.
- 6.3 If not approved, there are implications for the loss of momentum of the appraisal review process and the consequent impact on the quality of decision making in the area. There may be a negative impact on the Council's relationship with community groups owing to delay or the failure to complete the review process. Failure to progress the review would also introduce a risk factor into the evaluation of the World Heritage nomination.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 The aim of conservation area status is to enhance the quality of the area. This has the potential to improve quality of life and supports sustainable communities.
- 7.2 No infringements of rights have been identified. No negative impacts on equality have been identified.

Sustainability impact

8.1 The impacts of this report in relation to the three elements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties have been considered, and

the outcomes are summarised below. Relevant Council sustainable development policies have been taken into account.

- Conservation of the built environment has the potential to minimise the use of natural resources and reduce carbon emissions.
- The need to build resilience to climate change impacts is not relevant to the proposals in this report because the proposals are neither positively nor negatively affected by climate change.
- The proposals in this report will help achieve a sustainable Edinburgh because the conservation and management of the historic environment contributes directly to sustainability in a number of ways. These include the energy and materials invested in a building, the scope for adaptation and reuse, and the unique quality of historic environments which provide a sense of identity and continuity.

Consultation and engagement

9.1 Early public engagement has been carried out in Queensferry to inform the content and emphasis of the draft appraisal. Queensferry and District Community Council, Queensferry Ambition and Queensferry History Group have provided invaluable support and feedback to this process. Once approved for public consultation, the draft appraisal will be taken to a broader audience for detailed comment.

Background reading/external references

Report to Planning Committee of 3 October 2013, Review of Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

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Links

Coalition pledges P40 Work with Edinburgh World Heritage Trust and other

stakeholders to conserve the city's built heritage.

Council outcomes CO19 Attractive Places and Well Maintained - Edinburgh remains an attractive city through the development of high quality buildings and places and the delivery of high standards and maintenance of infrastructure and public realm. CO23 Well engaged and well informed - Communities and individuals are empowered and supported to improve local outcomes and foster a sense of community. **Single Outcome** SO4 Edinburgh's communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric. Agreement **Appendices** 1. Analysis of community survey results 2. Draft Queensferry Conservation Area Character Appraisal 3. Criteria for the designation or extension of a conservation area 4. Potential boundary extension at Forth and Rosshill Terraces

APPENDIX 1

Queensferry Conservation Area Character Appraisal Community Survey Analysis of results

An on-line SurveyMonkey questionnaire was set up to capture views about the character and appearance of the area and the current local issues of importance. The survey questions were designed by a working group consisting of representatives from the City of Edinburgh Council, Queensferry and District Community Council, Queensferry Ambition and Queensferry History Group. The survey ran between 13 February and 14 April 2014 and generated 29 responses.

Special characteristics

In the first section, respondents were asked whether they agreed with a series of statements about the special character of the area, taken from the existing character appraisal. The majority of respondents broadly or strongly agreed with all of the statements (96-100% of responses completely agreed with 10 of the 12 statements). The only statements on which respondents registered moderate disagreement, or a neutral response, were, "Later villa area with large villas in spacious grounds surrounding the village core to the south" and "Traditional gabled frontages to the harbourside" although responses to these were still predominantly positive.

When asked if there were any additional special characteristics or features that had been missed, the following areas were noted (in order of most frequent response):

Cobbled streets

Priory Church and surroundings

Harbour and Craigs

Council Chambers and Museum

Varied architecture

Back Braes

Steeply-rising wooded landscape

Port Edgar

Binks picnic area

Boundary

When asked about the conservation area boundary, 63% of respondents agreed with its current extent, while 22% disagreed. 15% did not know where the existing boundary lies (a boundary plan was included in the survey but perhaps was not clear enough. This can be addressed next time). Suggestions for alterations to the boundary were to include outlying estates such as Echline and Port Edgar, the Forth Bridge construction yard and cottages at Forth Terrace, and to exclude development along the southern boundary. A few suggestions were also made for areas which are already within the boundary, such as Back Braes, Ferry Glen and Dalmeny Station.

Recent development

63% of respondents felt that development in the last 10 years reflected the character of the conservation area fairly or very well. The remainder held no opinion or felt it reflected the character fairly badly. Explanatory comments in this question focused on the low levels of recent development in the historic core; the relatively poor design quality of larger developments compared with individual sites of high quality; concerns re. development of open rigg and garden sites; concerns re. the impact of heavy traffic and

standards of maintenance of the High Street surface. One response noted that the cobbled surface of the High Street is not a historic feature.

Managing change

Respondents were asked how important they consider various types of change in safeguarding the special qualities of Queensferry Conservation Area. A series of eight issues were listed relating to common themes or concerns within the community regarding their local environment. The themes which raised the strongest levels of agreement were "Improving facilities for and management of visitors", "Improving the setting of valuable historic structures including the Bridges" and "Improving public green spaces" each considered very or fairly important by 93% of respondents. There was slightly more variation in neutral/disagree responses to the remaining themes. However, no themes raised a significant level of overall disagreement.

When asked about any other observations or concerns about Queensferry Conservation Area, responses reflected the Special Characteristics section, and focused on the following areas. Traffic management generated significantly more comments than any other single issue.

Traffic management

Surface repair in the High Street

Concerns re. proposed parking within historic area

Protection of riggs/gardens

Paving and iron railings in Terraces

Parking for High Street residents

Protection/upgrade of vennels/closes

Empty shops

Importance of good design

Protection of views from sea and escarpment

Appendix 2 QUEENSFERRY CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

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1. Summary information

Location and boundaries

Queensferry lies on the south shore of the Firth of Forth, around 13km west of the centre of Edinburgh. The nucleus of the conservation area is formed by the historic old town, and also includes Ravel Bank, the heavily wooded area of the Hawes, and an area of land east of the rail bridge known as Gallondean which all contribute to the landscape setting of the town.

The conservation area is bounded on the north by the City of Edinburgh Council boundary at the mean low water spring; on the west by the Forth Road Bridge; along the south by the southern line of the disused Railway, Hopetoun Road and Station Road (excluding 19-33 Station Road and St. Margaret's Primary School). The boundary then includes Dalmeny Station before turning north and eastwards to a point on the shore known as Long Rib east of the rail bridge.

The area falls within Almond ward and is covered by the Queensferry and District Community Council. The population of Queensferry Conservation Area in 2011 was 937.

Dates of designation/amendments

The original South Queensferry Conservation Area was designated on 13 October 1977. A conservation area character appraisal was completed in 2001. The boundary was amended in 2003 to include the villa area at Station Road.

Statement of significance

The architectural form and character of Queensferry is rich and varied with many fine historic buildings dating from its origins as a medieval burgh and following through several periods including Georgian and Victorian, to the present day. The materials are traditional: stone and harl, slate and pantiles, timber windows and doors. The roofscape is important with its variations in form and features, such as crow-step gables, a variety of dormer styles and chimneys with cans. The shoreline setting embraces the waterfront buildings and the historic settlement is framed within the Victorian rail bridge and the 1960s road bridge.

Acknowledgements

This document has been produced with the assistance of Queensferry and District Community Council; Queensferry Ambition; Queensferry History Group and Queensferry Trust.

2. Conservation Area Character Appraisals

Purpose of character appraisals - why do we need them?

Conservation area character appraisals are intended to help manage change. They provide an agreed basis of understanding of what makes an area special. This understanding informs and provides the context in which decisions can be made on proposals which may affect that character. An enhanced level of understanding, combined with appropriate management tools, ensures that change and development sustains and respects the qualities and special characteristics of the area.

"When effectively managed, conservation areas can anchor thriving communities, sustain cultural heritage, generate wealth and prosperity and add to quality of life. To realise this potential many of them need to continue to adapt and develop in response to the modern-day needs and aspirations of living and working communities. This means accommodating physical, social and economic change for the better.

Physical change in conservation areas does not necessarily need to replicate its surroundings. The challenge is to ensure that all new development respects, enhances and has a positive impact on the area. Physical and land use change in conservation areas should always be founded on a detailed understanding of the historic and urban design context." From PAN 71, Conservation Area Management.

How to use this document

The analysis of Queensferry's character and appearance focuses on the features which make the area special and distinctive. This is divided into two sections: **4.1 Structure**, which describes and draws conclusions regarding the overall organisation and macro-scale features of the area; and **4.2 Key elements**, which examines the smaller-scale features and details which fit within the structure.

This document is not intended to give prescriptive instructions on what designs or styles will be acceptable in the area. Instead, it can be used to ensure that the design of an alteration or addition is based on an informed interpretation of context. This context should be considered in conjunction with the relevant Local Development Plan policies and planning guidance. Section **5 Management** outlines the policy and legislation relevant to decision-making in the area. Issues specific to Queensferry are discussed in more detail and recommendations or opportunities identified.

3. Historical origins and development

A review of the historical development of Queensferry is important in order to understand how the area has evolved in its present form and adopted its essential character.

Origins

The settlement of Queensferry probably has prehistoric origins and owes its name and existence to the ferry passage across the Forth. Its Gaelic name, cas chilis or cas chaolas means a fast-running strait. The linear rock formations of the foreshore created natural landing points and were later enhanced with piers and harbours. Queen Margaret, wife of Malcolm III (Canmore), King of Scotland 1057-1093, endowed the ferry crossing with boats, hostels and a right of free passage for pilgrims travelling to St Andrews and Dunfermline Abbey. As a result the crossing became associated with her royal title. This association was strengthened by her own canonisation in 1250 and interment in Dunfermline.

A Carmelite Friary was established close to the ferry landing, possibly as early as 1330, and a church and monastery were built c.1450. At the Reformation the Carmelite church building became the parish church. This was abandoned when worship moved to the Vennel in 1635, and was then restored in 1889 to form the current Episcopal Church, known as the Priory Church. It is the only medieval Carmelite church still in use in the British Isles.

Growth and trade

By the early 14th century, Queensferry had emerged as one of four Burghs owing allegiance to Dunfermline Abbey and in 1576-7 was made into a 'Burgh of Regality', with certain privileges of trading and customs. By the 1630s, Queensferry had become a flourishing seafaring town and in 1636 it became a Royal Burgh. Its leading burgesses were captains and shipmasters whose vessels were chartered, often by Edinburgh merchants, to carry cargoes such as timber, salt, fish and wine to and from other parts of Britain, Europe and Scandinavia. Their prosperity is reflected in the number of 17th century buildings in the town and tombstones surviving in the Vennel kirkyard marked with ships, anchors and navigational instruments.

In the late 17th and 18th centuries the merchant fleet dwindled and the Burgh's revenues fell. Fishing and herring salting brought intermittent prosperity. 18th century turnpike roads and fast stagecoach services from 1765 brought more trade to the ferries and this resulted in demands for greater efficiency and better landings. During the latter half of the 18th century, innovations in agricultural methods began to change the face of the rural landscape. The former open field system gave away to an enclosed field system and many woodlands, tree belts and estate landscapes around the area such as the Dalmeny and Dundas Estates date from this period.

The hamlet of New Halls to the east of the original settlement developed a pier and inns catering for the crossing traffic. Its name evolved into Hawes and it was

eventually amalgamated into the Royal Burgh. It later became the base for construction yards and workers' accommodation for the Forth Bridge.

Crossing the Forth

An Act of Parliament in 1810 introduced a Board of Trustees to take control of the ferry service. The Trustees were empowered to build new piers, buy new boats and generally to improve the quality of service. It is recorded that during the year 1810-11, four large sailing boats and four smaller yawls carried 1,515 carriages, 4252 carts, 18,057 cattle and 25,151 sheep, plus an average of 228 passengers per day. Sailing ships were gradually replaced with steam vessels, however, rail ferry links via Granton and Leith had captured much of Queensferry's passenger trade by the mid 19th century. From 1878, a rail steamer service linked Edinburgh and Dunfermline via the Trustees pier at Port Edgar. This seems to have been used by local traffic and in 1890 the opening of the Forth Rail Bridge made it redundant.

Bridges

Another brief but significant boom came in the 1880s and 90s, with the construction of the Forth Rail Bridge. The workforce of 4,600 men and tourists who came to see the work in progress brought trade and prosperity. A report on possible routes for a road bridge was commissioned in 1929, but plans were not approved until 1947, with the bridge opening in 1964. The arrival of the Road Bridge brought an end to the car ferry passage at Queensferry. In 2011 construction began on a third bridge, to the west of the Road Bridge and intended to relieve pressure on it, to be named the Queensferry Crossing.

Twentieth and twenty-first centuries

The naval base at Port Edgar, commissioned in 1917, a distillery and the shale oil works at Dalmeny benefited the town during the 20th century. Beyond the Burgh boundaries, the surrounding landed estates provided a steady source of trade and employment. The 1975 Local Government (Scotland) Act reorganised local authority boundaries and Queensferry's status as a Royal Burgh was removed. Electronics, tourism and the Hound Point tank farm and oil-loading facility have been more recent sources of employment for the area.

Summary

The medieval core of the Queensferry Conservation Area, with its rigg development pattern, remains fairly intact. Alternating periods of modest prosperity and gentle decay have left a richly varied townscape spanning five centuries. As a result, significant evidence of each phase of the town's history can still be read in the street pattern and buildings surviving today.

4. Special Characteristics

4.1 Structure

- Natural crossing point of the Forth, sheltered by the bay and steep escarpment.
- Unique setting framed by the Forth, steep rising landscape, the Forth Bridge and Forth Road Bridge.
- Woodland and open space surround the core of the town to south and
- Historic designed landscapes form the wider setting.
- Spectacular views out to the firth and bridges.
- Open views down from the bridges onto the picturesque roofscape.
- Dense medieval core in a linear pattern with riggs running north and south.
- Sculptural, multi-level townscape form.
- Bridges form gateways at east and west ends of town.
- Later villa areas have a separate and contrasting character from the historic core.
- Vertical, pedestrian circulation a unique feature.
- Wooded landscape and private amenity spaces predominate; public open space is less common.

Topography

Queensferry is located at one of the narrowest points of the Forth estuary before it broadens out eastwards to the sea, explaining its long history as the preferred crossing point. The early part of the town is located on the shoreline, at the foot of a steeply sloping bank and within a bay formed by two promontories, the Binks to the west and the Craigs to the east. The historic core is therefore set back from the Forth within a natural harbour and shelter. From Victorian times the town expanded at the top of the slope, first along the main access roads and more recently along the north bank in a semicircle around the old town.

Setting

The historic core of Queensferry is bounded by areas of woodland extending from the Gallondean/Hawes Brae in the east, through Jock's Hole and Back Braes to the former railway lands between Hopetoun Road and Shore Road. These areas have a high amenity and biodiversity value to the town and are included within the conservation area boundary.

The conservation area as a whole is bounded by twentieth century residential areas to the south and west and by the Forth Road Bridge and Port Edgar to the west. To the east and in its wider setting the protected gardens and designed landscapes of the Dalmeny, Dundas and Hopetoun estates add to the area's historic character. The

historic estate village of Dalmeny to the south-east is designated as a separate conservation area. To the north, most of the coastline and islands of the Forth are protected by national and international designations covering important habitats, species and geology.

Views

Views of the Firth of Forth and Forth Bridge originating in Edinburgh city centre are defined by the Council's Skyline Study. Prominent development within and around Queensferry would potentially impact in the fore- and middle ground of several key views. A similar system of viewpoints and associated policies may be developed to support the protection of the setting of the Forth Bridge.

In more local views, the sheltering topography of Queensferry means that its historic core is only visible in longer views from its piers and on the water. Views down from the rail and road bridges and from pathways at the upper levels of Back Braes and Ravel Bank provide panoramas of the town's picturesque roofscape against the backdrop of the Firth.

Within the conservation area, mid- and short-range views are important along the gently curving High Street and out towards the Forth, the Fife coast and the bridges through gaps in the northern building line and from the Hawes Promenade. Glimpse views along pends and narrow lanes, of the harbours and Forth to the north and gardens to the south, add to the picturesque qualities of the townscape.

Development pattern

Topography dictated the earliest development of the town within a restricted strip between the harbour and the southern escarpment. Development along the High Street follows a linear pattern and reflects the curve of the bay. The gentle curve in the street is emphasised especially on its south side by raised pavements. The building line forms an unbroken terrace wall, but widens and narrows in places such as the Black Castle. To the south, the narrow rigg ownership pattern radiates back from the High Street up the banks towards the former railway line.

On the north or seaward side, development largely fronts the High Street, turning its back to the harbour. There are a few survivals of L-shaped buildings with gables facing the coastline, typical of Scottish fishing villages. The building line is interrupted by wider breaks giving an awareness of the lower plane of the beach. These different levels following the coastline give the High Street a strong sculptural character. This multi-layered effect is continued with the spectacular separation in height between the rail or road deck levels of the bridges and the streets below. This gives a sense of calm isolation to the town, protected from the high-speed traffic flying past above.

The three road approaches on the landward side of the conservation area follow the historic routes connecting the town with Linlithgow, Kirkliston and Edinburgh. The road bridge at the west and the rail bridge in the east act as gateways and provide a sense of arrival. Seals Craig creates a kink in the line of the road and forms an inner

gateway and shelter to the High Street. The parish church and manse, and St. Margaret's Church on either side of the top of the Loan (Kirkliston Road) also function as a gateway.

The Hawes and the area of Victorian villa development at the west end of Station Road are notable for their physical separation and contrasting character from the High Street. Victorian expansion created a generous layout with wide streets and large plots. Their separation from the historic core allows the woodland to almost reach the water's edge, provides amenity and acts as a visual break between these areas of different character.

Grain and density

Density of development within the historic core is high, consistent with its constricted site and the relatively crowded character of medieval urban development. The solid building line conceals the open spaces of rear plots from the High Street except in glimpse views. Some of these riggs are divided into small garden courts, while others still retain early development, creating intimate groupings of small-scale spaces, buildings and narrow access ways. This is particularly evident on those plots that back on to Hawthornbank.

The Hawes is of a much lower density, with large Edwardian villas facing the spectacular view. Many of these have been converted to hotels, cafés and gift shops catering for visitors. Kirkliston Road, Station Road and Stewart Terrace have a strongly coherent pattern of well-spaced, detached villas set in generous, rectangular plots. These villa plots stand out from both the narrower but often longer plots of the historic core and from the smaller and denser pattern of later 20th century suburban development.

Streets

The sinuous curve of the High Street is reflected by its street surfacing and the alignment of pavements, terraces, railings and building frontages. Vertical circulation, formed by steps, closes and wynds, connects the various levels of beach, High Street, terraces, gardens and upper brae beyond. The Back Braes and Hawes Inn walkways connect the later Victorian development and Dalmeny Station right into the historic core.

20th century traffic engineering altered the townscape at the west end of the High Street, isolating Hopetoun Road from the main town centre and creating an artificial gateway at the Bell Stane.

Spaces

Queensferry has an abundance of open space with a variety of roles and characteristics. Private open space of gardens and courtyards play a significant role, softening the density and hard frontages of the historic core and providing visual relief and glimpse views.

Urban, public open space is less prominent but there are examples of small squares and formal gardens such as the garden around the Provost's drinking fountain next to Rosebery Hall, and the square opening onto the beach access steps between Mid and West Terrace. The Hawes esplanade is the most significant example of this type of space. Its value as amenity space is eroded by the visual dominance of parking alongside it. A small public park and bowling green are also located within the conservation area, just off Station Road. The beaches, harbours and piers provide distinctive spaces within the town and spectacular, panoramic viewpoints.

Woodland and landscape amenity space are critical to the character of Queensferry, enclosing the historic core and providing visual breaks between contrasting areas.



4.2 Key elements

- Buildings dating from 17th to mid-20th century reflecting gradual evolution.
- Overall unity created by regular scale and proportions.
- Villa areas have detached buildings in generous plots with strong, formal compositions.
- The bridges are the dominant landmarks in long range views; local landmarks are more evident from within the High Street.
- Restricted palette of materials given variety through differing treatments and architectural styles.
- Gardens preserve historic rigg features.
- Ferry Glen and Back Braes are the key public green spaces.
- Distinctive raised terraces over projecting shops with historic ironwork
- Good quality historic and more recent streetscape and boundary features.

Scale

Buildings are mainly 2 to 3½ storeys in height. Narrow frontages set up a rhythm along the street, and vertical planes are emphasised by the subtle variation of heights which expose parts of gables. The continuity of frontages and narrow proportions of the street create a strong sense of enclosure. The buildings are also relatively shallow in depth. This results in regular contrasts of enclosure to openness, revealed in views down narrow wynds and low close entrances.

Building types and styles

The earliest surviving buildings are the merchants' houses of the 17th century, such as Plewlands House and the Black Castle. These are characterised by an L-plan form of main range and projecting jamb, steeply-pitched roofs with straight or crowstepped skews, small windows and, occasionally, surviving forestairs. Elements of buildings of this period are likely to survive elsewhere, disguised by later alterations and additions.

Georgian and early Victorian buildings predominate within the historic core and provide its underlying coherence through the largely continuous building line, the uniformity of building type, similar heights, narrow frontages, solid to void relationships and window sizes. It is difficult to distinguish which buildings are flatted, except possibly over shops, and those which are town houses.

Later insertions into the High Street largely conform to the earlier pattern of scale, building line and materials but add variety of style and decoration. These include the Baronial Clydesdale Bank at 35 High Street, and the Rosebery Memorial Hall built in the Scots Renaissance style in 1894. The Council offices and museum at 53 High

Street form an eye-catching, white-harled block with some Arts and Crafts features. The municipal housing at Hill Court, built in 1964, forms an L-plan at the corner of the High Street and The Loan. This is an interesting example of architecture of its date, and relates to the contemporary regeneration of historic fishing communities in Fife such as Dysart and Burntisland. However its siting and mass disrupt the strong historic pattern around it.

The Hawes and Station Road villa areas share some characteristics, being large dwellings set back from the road frontage in generous grounds. Apart from the Hawes Inn these buildings date from the Victorian and Edwardian expansions of the town. Station Road villas are relatively uniform in layout, scale and character, generally having formal, symmetrical front elevations, piended roofs, large plateglass sash and case windows and tall stacks. Tudor-inspired multi-gable forms also feature. The Hawes villas are more varied with no predominant style, although all have been heavily altered and extended reflecting their change from original domestic use to hotels, public houses and restaurants.

Landmarks

The Forth Rail and Road Bridges are the outstanding landmarks, dominating the town and the wider area with their sheer scale and presence. However, the bridges are often hidden from view within the enclosure of the High Street, allowing local landmarks to become more evident. These include the Tolbooth steeple, the Seals Craig Hotel and the spire of the parish church, viewed on the skyline from the north.

Materials and details

A significant level of uniformity is achieved from the use of local building materials, despite the considerable range of building styles. The predominant materials form a restricted palette of rubble and dressed sandstone, render and slate roofing. The variety of treatment provides interest with decorative tooling and carved stonework, often reflecting maritime connections, pediments, doorframes and marriage lintels, dressed or rendered margin bands, chamfered corners, gable windows and crowsteps, cast iron signs and railings.

The later villas are built in a more sombre and formal dressed stone and with more intricate and decorative detailing of entrances, bay windows, dormers and front gablets projecting out on exposed decorative trusses. There are also examples in the Arts and Crafts style with white render, painted timberwork and complex roof forms.

Trees and gardens

Gardens and landscapes are a dominant feature of the conservation area, both private gardens and publicly-accessible green spaces. The garden ground relating to the High Street preserves the historic rigg pattern of the medieval burgh. The managed, domestic scale and character of these spaces, along with the profusion of ornamental species, provide a rich green environment.

The large plots of the villa areas have a more open character with formal garden landscaping with prominent individual mature trees and hedges. The former gardens

of large houses in Station Road, such as Rosshill and Ashburnham House, have been developed for housing but preserve some of their trees and boundary features. The conservation area contains only one tree preservation order, off Station Road between Ashburnham Gardens and St Mary's RC Primary School.

These areas contrast with the informal, semi-wild planting and sinuous pathways of the Ferry Glen and Back Braes. The profusion of trees at various stages of maturity, along with the rich biodiversity they support, are important for their extent and cumulative effect rather than any single specimen or specific area.

Streetscape

The raised terraces of the High Street, providing pedestrian access across the roofs of ground-floor shops to terraced entrances above, are one of the outstanding streetscape features of Queensferry. Natural stone treads, paving, setts and cast iron railings survive along their length, although in poor condition in places. Examples of modern ironwork along the High Street have also added to the quality of detail in this area.

The majority of the traditional, natural stone finishes of the High Street are the result of streetscape enhancement works of the 1990s. However, the general design and material palette reflect the historic character of the street and respond to its distinctive features. Footway and carriageway surfaces elsewhere are generally in modern finishes.

In the Hawes and villa areas, property boundaries are generally formed by rubble walls – dwarf walls with hedges and gate piers in the villa area, and more substantial, high walls at the Hawes and Edinburgh Road. Stubs of traditional railings removed for the war effort occasionally remain. The Hawes waterfront is bounded by 1930s esplanade railings, adding to its distinctive, seaside air.

Activity

Queensferry is the largest settlement in rural west Edinburgh with four primary schools, a high school, library, churches, community centres, a leisure centre, museum, police station, health and welfare services. The High Street retains a variety of shops, bars and restaurants although most residents' convenience shopping is done in the larger supermarkets outwith the historic core of the town.

This sense of activity along the High Street contrasts with the peace and quiet of the villa area on the ridge above. The high ground behind the High Street to the south is used for informal recreation such as dog walking, walking and running. The Gallondean to the west has a coastal path linking with Cramond.

Visitors are a major factor in the town's activity, drawn by views of the bridges and access to the water. The Hawes Pier is used by boat trippers to the islands in the Forth and the harbour is used for private boat moorings. The Forth itself is a busy shipping channel, and provides a range of watersport activities. Cruise liners berth in

the Firth and visitors are ferried to Hawes Pier. Dalmeny Tank Farm is situated in the Forth and linked by pipeline to the tanker terminal at Hound Point.



5. Management

5.1 Legislation, policies and guidance

Conservation areas

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states that conservation areas "are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". Local authorities have a statutory duty to identify and designate such areas.

Special attention must be paid to the character and appearance of the conservation area when planning controls are being exercised. Conservation area status brings a number of special controls:

- The demolition of unlisted buildings requires conservation area consent.
- Permitted development rights, which allow improvements or alterations to the external appearance of dwellinghouses and flatted dwellings, are removed.
- Works to trees are controlled (see Trees for more detail).

The demolition of unlisted buildings considered to make a positive contribution to the area is only permitted in exceptional circumstances, and where the proposals meet certain criteria relating to condition, conservation deficit, adequacy of efforts to retain the building and the relative public benefit of replacement proposals. Conservation area character appraisals are a material consideration when considering applications for development within conservation areas.

Listed buildings

A significant proportion of buildings within Queensferry are listed for their special architectural or historic interest and are protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. Listed building consent is required for the demolition of a listed building, or its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its special character.

National policy

The Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) is the strategic statement of national policy relating to the historic environment.

The development plan

The Rural West Edinburgh Local Plan (RWELP) sets out policies and proposals for the development and use of land in and around Queensferry. The policies in the Plan are used to determine applications for development. In broad summary, the key policy areas affecting Queensferry Conservation Area are:

• The Coastline E12, E13

- Designed Landscapes E14
- Trees and Woodland E15, E16
- Nature conservation and biodiversity E17-E22
- Archaeology E29-E31
- Historic buildings E32-E34
- Conservation areas E35-E40
- Design of new development E41-E44
- Open space E51-E52
- Economic development and tourism ED2, ED11
- Transport TRA5-TRA7
- Retailing R1-R3, R5

The proposed City of Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LDP) contains broadly similar policies and is a material consideration in current planning decisions.

Planning guidance

More detailed, subject-specific guidance is set out in Planning Guidance documents. Those particularly relevant to Queensferry Conservation Area are:

- Guidance for Householders
- Guidance for Businesses
- Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas
- Developer contributions and affordable housing
- Edinburgh Design guidance
- Communications Infrastructure
- Street Design Guidance in draft, published May 2014

In addition, a number of statutory tools are available to assist development management within the conservation area:

GPDO and Article 4 Directions

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992, amended 2012, (abbreviated to GPDO), restricts the types of development which can be carried out in a conservation area without the need for planning permission. These include most alterations to the external appearance of dwellinghouses and flats. Development is not precluded, but such alterations will require planning permission and special attention will be paid to the potential effect of proposals.

Under Article 4 of the GPDO the planning authority can seek the approval of the Scottish Ministers for Directions that restrict development rights further. The Directions effectively control the proliferation of relatively minor developments in conservation areas which can cumulatively lead to the erosion of character and appearance. Queensferry Conservation Area has Article 4 Directions covering the following classes of development:

- 7 The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure
- The carrying out on agricultural land in an agricultural unit of works for the erection, extension or alteration of a building; the formation, alteration or maintenance of private ways; or any excavation or engineering operations, for the purposes of agriculture.
- 38 Development by statutory undertakers for the purpose of water undertakings
- 39 Development by a public gas supplier
- 40 Development by an electricity statutory undertaker

Trees

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

TPOs are used to secure the preservation of trees which are of significant stature, in sound condition, and prominently located to be of public amenity value. When assessing contribution to amenity, the importance of trees as wildlife habitats will be taken into consideration. There is a strong presumption against any form of development or change of use of land which is likely to damage or prejudice the future long term existence of trees covered by a TPO. The removal of trees for arboricultural reasons will not imply that the space created by their removal can be used for development.

Landscape and Biodiversity

The Council has an obligation to take account of the impact of development on species protected by legislation and international commitments. The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 places a duty on all public bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity as far as is consistent with their functions. The rich garden landscapes and open spaces of the conservation area give it a high amenity and biodiversity value. The conservation area boundary overlaps with the local biodiversity sites of Hopetoun Road, Dalmeny Estate and the Newbridge to South Queensferry Walkway. The Gallondean forms part of the Leuchold Wood ancient woodland.

The Firth of Forth is protected by a range of local, national and international landscape and environmental designations including the Firth of Forth Ramsar site, Special Protection Area and site of special scientific interest (SSSI).

Three historic landscapes included in the national Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes surround Queensferry Conservation Area: Dalmeny, Dundas Castle and Hopetoun House.

Archaeology

Queensferry has been continuously inhabited for in excess of 1000 years. Its current townscape contains surviving elements from at least 700 years and there may be evidence of earlier occupation surviving below existing structures or landscapes. Canmore notes various discoveries of bones, funeral urns, etc in Queensferry and its immediate neighbourhood. Several cists, with skeletons and other remains of interment were reported found during railway construction from the 1850s and onwards.

The area may contain the remains of a wide range of historic sites and uses including the Carmelite friary complex, medieval (and later) ferry landings and facilities for pilgrims and travellers, maritime industries, activities associated with the rigg system, post-medieval land-based industries such as brewing and distilling, shale oil extraction, quarry sites, railway infrastructure and sites associated with the construction of the Rail and Road Bridges. Marine archaeology is also present along the foreshore.

Remains of these structures may survive below existing development, although the extent of their survival is currently unknown due to the lack of modern archaeological investigations in the area. Depending on the scale and impact of any development proposal, the City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service (CECAS) may recommend a pre-determination evaluation in order to assess the presence and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits and to determine the scope of any required mitigation including preservation. Similarly for works affecting standing structures of historic significance, a programme of archaeological building assessment and recording may be recommended.

There are no scheduled monuments located within Queensferry Conservation Area.

5.2 Pressures and sensitivities

In contrast with many conservation areas, the main pressures in Queensferry Conservation Area are not principally a result of private development but relate to infrastructure and the public realm. Their central role in the character and appearance of the conservation area makes all of the following issues key opportunities for enhancement.

Many of these issues are longstanding in origin, and solutions must involve community engagement and creative collaboration between multiple agencies. Community-led efforts to resolve some of these are already underway. The recommendations made below assume the historic environment is used as the starting point for creative decisions.

Historic streetscapes

Queensferry has a rich legacy of historic ironwork, complemented by high quality modern examples. The raised terraces unique to Queensferry are deteriorating in places, risking the loss of quality and special character of the High Street. The vennels leading north and south from the High Street are also at risk from privatisation of access, blocking of glimpse views and pedestrian routes, and erosion of traditional surfacing materials.

Recommendation: Historic surfacing materials, ironwork and detailing should always be retained and repaired where they survive. Lost features should be reinstated where there is evidence. Training and education in specification and maintenance of appropriate materials would assist in protecting these features in the longer term.

Development of riggs and gardens

The secluded green spaces of the historic riggs are a key amenity for the conservation area. Development of gardens and backland spaces has the potential to impact significantly on the area's special character, landscape quality and biodiversity. Archaeological remains may also be impacted by development.

Recommendation: The character, density and pattern of the context must be respected in any development proposal. Standing remains should be recorded and understood before proposals are developed. Where development is acceptable in principle it should be deferential in scale, appropriate in its use and enhance the distinctive character of the space.

Pedestrian connectivity

As a result of topography, maintenance and some 20th century traffic management decisions, disparate areas of the town centre have become isolated from each other. Access difficulties particularly affect vulnerable age groups, those with mobility problems, and visitors with no prior knowledge and in need of orientation. This reduces the attractiveness, vibrancy and active economic use of the historic town centre, which in the long term threatens its economic health and the protection of its character.

Recommendation: Historic routes and connections should provide the basis for enhancements to connectivity. Historic features can help to re-join fractured areas of the town and provide an appropriate context for new development. Sensitive traffic engineering and wayfinding should redress the balance between vehicular and pedestrian users, in conjunction with other infrastructure improvements such as parking.

Traffic management and parking

Existing pressures from visitors, residents and workers, along with projected increases in visitors as a result of enhanced interest in the Bridges, create serious pressures on existing traffic routes and parking areas.

Recommendation: The historic character of the town is a key amenity for all users of the town. Potential solutions for parking must therefore respect the character of the conservation area. A variety of solutions are likely to be necessary, including investigating new, peripheral parking areas, incorporating environmental enhancements into new or redesigned central parking areas and removing pressure from vehicular traffic by investigating alternative, sustainable transport methods where possible.

Shoreline, piers and harbours

The approach to Queensferry from the Forth was historically of central importance but this aspect of its character has been diminished since the loss of the ferries and fishing trade. Greater appreciation of the town from the water, piers and shoreline could create additional viewpoints as draws for visitors and generate interest in fuller, more productive, income-generating use of these facilities. The treatment of waterfront facades is also of key importance in protecting the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Recommendation: Proposals to develop and regenerate waterfront features should protect and repair historic fabric, and reinstate lost features where there is evidence for them. The historic character of these areas should be emphasised in proposals for change of use or development. The outstanding landscape and natural environment significance of these spaces will also be a critical consideration.

5.3 Opportunities for development

Small-scale development opportunities for infill or replacement may arise within the historic core, and will be considered under the policies and guidance listed at 5.1.

Development on a significant scale is unlikely to take place within the conservation area although a number of sites on its peripheries may be affected, such as Port Edgar, the Corus site adjacent to the Forth Bridges Contact and Information Centre and at the wider edges of the settlement, particularly when the Queensferry Crossing comes into use. In most instances development is unlikely to have a significant visual impact on the setting of the conservation area or the Bridges owing

to the topography, domestic scale and intervening development. However, proposals will be monitored to ensure the sensitivities of these features are taken into account. View protection (discussed below) also has a role to play in this issue.

A development brief has been produced for Port Edgar.

5.4 Opportunities for planning action

The Forth Bridge as a potential World Heritage Site

World Heritage Sites are places of outstanding universal value for their cultural, natural or combined qualities inscribed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) under the World Heritage Convention. There are currently 981 sites globally, with 28 in the UK and dependent territories, and 5 of these located in Scotland.

The UK Tentative List of potential world heritage sites was reviewed in 2010/11. The Forth Bridge was included in the shortlist of eleven candidate sites, and was subsequently chosen as the first site from that list to be submitted to UNESCO for consideration. An intensive period of research and consultation resulted in a nomination dossier being submitted in January 2014.

The nomination document makes the justification for the site's inscription, based on the criteria set out by UNESCO, includes a description of the site, details on the existing protection and management of the site, its state of conservation, and information on known threats and potential opportunities. This will undergo a demanding 18-month process of scrutiny and evaluation by UNESCO and its advisory body ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites). The final decision will be made at the meeting of the UNESCO Committee in summer 2015.

Statutory designations surrounding the bridge, particularly those covering the bridgehead communities of North and South Queensferry, will be the principal means of protecting the outstanding universal value of the Bridge and its setting.

This document aims to demonstrate the safeguards given by the planning authority to the setting of the bridge. It also offers a means for communicating local community support and interest in its historic environment.

Conservation area boundaries

The boundaries have been re-examined through the appraisal process. Suggestions were considered for various changes, both to include wider areas (such as Port Edgar, the wider suburbs of the town or the historic Bridge construction yard and workers cottages at Forth Terrace) and to reduce its size (for example by removing modern development along Station Road).

The current extent of the boundary, adopted in 2003, was carefully considered in order to encompass the most distinctive architectural and historic features of the settlement, and to include a suitable belt of the wooded landscape surrounding the

core of the town. This is considered to provide a zone of suitable breadth and quality to protect both the historic town core and the immediate setting of the Bridges. Reductions in its extent are not considered appropriate.

Most of the suggested areas of expansion are not considered to meet the criteria of being of special architectural or historic merit. Port Edgar however is considered to be of interest in its own right. Its national significance as a naval base, and the evidence for that history remaining in situ in the form of historic buildings, spaces, street layout, piers etc. potentially meet the criteria for selection and would merit further research.

However, its character contrasts with that of the main town of Queensferry and it is not considered appropriate as an extension of Queensferry Conservation Area. The majority of its significant structures are already protected by listing and the planning brief above sets out the key considerations for its potential future development. The merits of designating this area as a separate conservation area will be considered further as plans for its development evolve.

The area of the historic Forth Bridge construction yard and workers' cottages at Forth Terrace and Rosshill Terrace, east of Dalmeny station, is also considered to potentially meet the criteria for designation. The three terraces of cottages to the south of Station Road and the area including Forthview West and East to the north are surviving evidence of the construction and development of the Forth Bridge and its impact on the development of the town. They form an interesting grouping of buildings and gardens, related to the existing railway line, the station and the disused line to the west now used as a footpath and cycleway. They are not protected by listing and may be at risk from uncontrolled demolition or erosion of character. However some degree of unsympathetic alteration and infill development has already occurred.

It is recommended that the merits of expanding the boundary to include the Forth Terrace area are investigated further, including consultation with owners, the wider community and other interested groups.

View protection framework

Historic Scotland has carried out a study of key viewpoints and viewsheds around the Forth Bridge. This helps to understand its role and impact in views around the area and to inform its nomination as a World Heritage Site. The key viewpoints identified in the nomination document are a material planning consideration. If the nomination is successful, the merits of adopting a formal view protection system, complementing that already in place for the neighbouring Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site, will be considered.

5.5 Opportunities for enhancement

The pressures and sensitivities listed at 5.2 are considered the key opportunities for enhancement of the conservation area. Solutions, or improvements, to these issues would make a significant difference to the quality and vitality of the historic environment in the town. Quality of life would be enhanced for residents and other users, and the visitor experience would be improved.



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PAN 71, Conservation Area Management

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Queensferry History Group: www.queensferryhistorygroup.org.uk

APPENDIX 3

Criteria for designation or extension of a conservation area

The statutory definition of a conservation area is 'an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. The Scottish Historic Environment Policy specifies that it is the character or historic interest of an area created by individual buildings and open spaces and their relationship, one with the other, which the legislation covering conservation areas seeks to preserve.

The principles of selection for designation as a conservation area are broadly as follows:

- areas of significant architectural or historic interest in terms of specific listed buildings and/or ancient monuments;
- areas of significant architectural or historic interest in terms of building groupings, which may or may not include listed buildings and/or ancient monuments, and open spaces which they abut;
- areas with features of architectural or historic interest such as street pattern, planned towns and villages and historic gardens and designed landscapes; and
- other areas of distinctive architectural or historic character.

In designating a conservation area, consideration also has to be given to the reasons why it is felt that it should be protected. These may include:

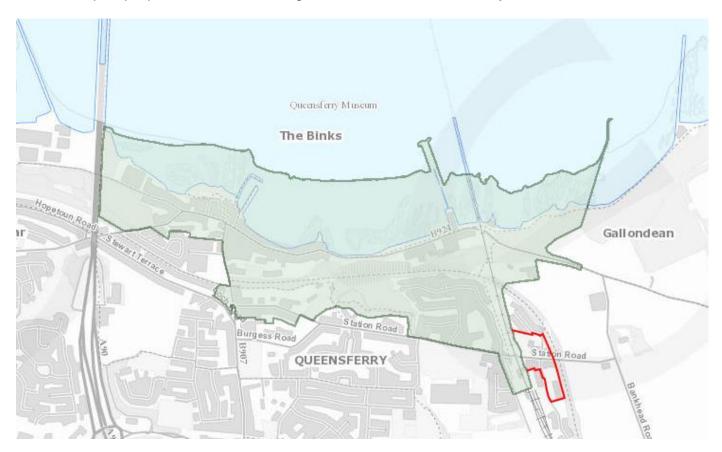
- its special architectural and historic importance;
- its distinct character;
- its value as a good example of local or regional style;
- its value within the wider context of the village or town; and
- its present condition and the scope for significant improvement and enhancement.

The designation of a conservation area must, therefore, be based on the historic and architectural interest of an area. Conservation area status is not intended to act solely as a means of controlling development.

APPENDIX 4
Queensferry Conservation Area
Potential boundary extension, Forth Terrace/Rosshill Terrace



Relationship of proposed area to existing conservation area boundary



Rosshill Terrace/Forth Terrace images

