

Dumfries and Galloway Council

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2

Newton Stewart Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

Supplementary Guidance - Adopted 25th November 2022

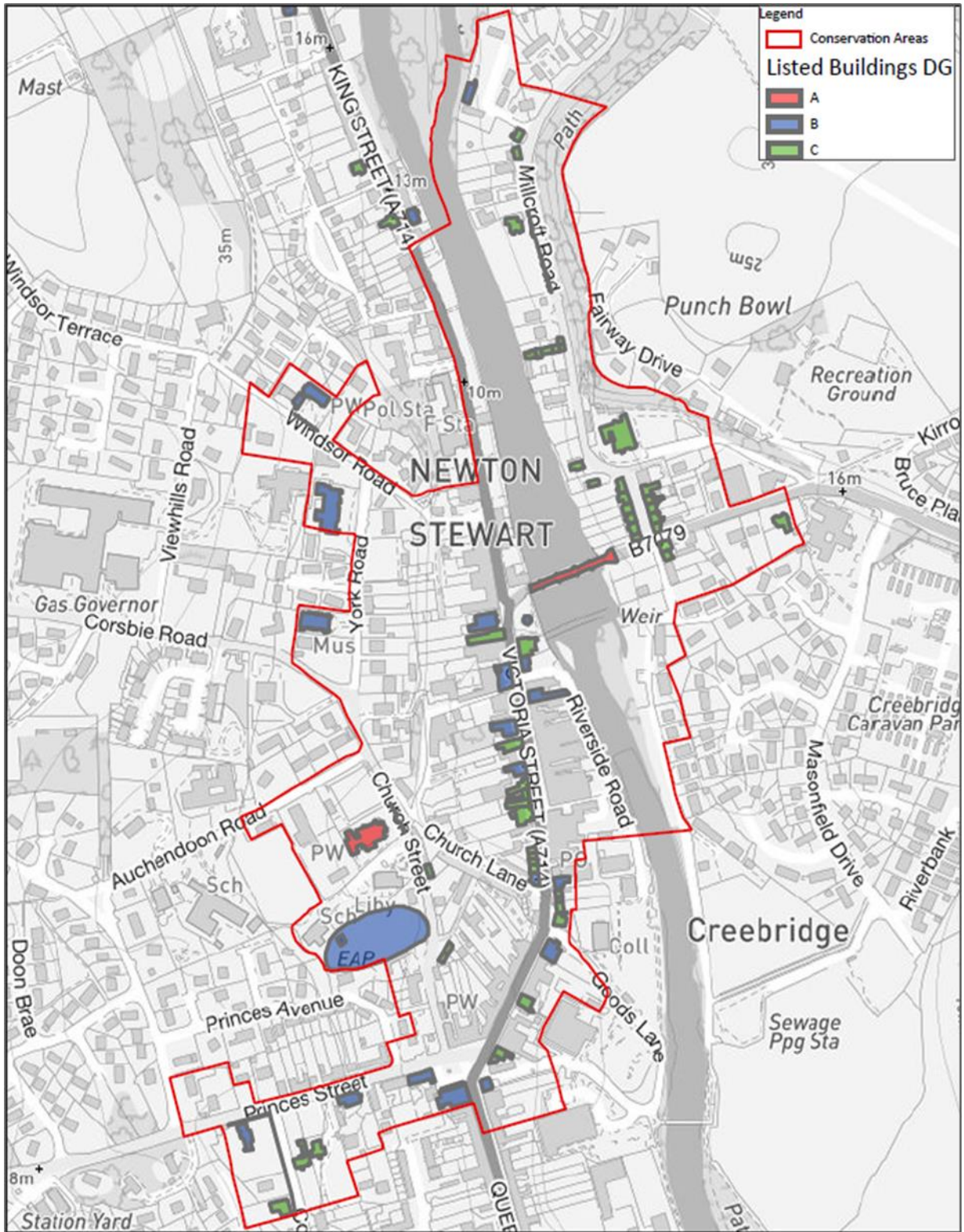


Newton Stewart Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

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Before 1950, this is how the area that includes much of Newton Stewart Conservation Area appeared, from the air.





Introduction

This is a combined document which sets out, summarises and appraises the character of Newton Stewart Conservation Area and how to positively manage that character. It identifies common themes and many important features but not every detail of built structures or spaces. The management plan suggests how significant themes, features and details which contribute positively to character might be preserved or enhanced. The combined character appraisal and management plan will be a helpful document when putting together proposals within Newton Stewart Conservation Area so that any proposed changes will be

designed to have a positive effect on historic and architectural character. The guidance will be used to assess and refine proposals which affect Newton Stewart Conservation Area such as new development, alterations, enhancement, upgrades or demolition. It will encourage regular maintenance.

What is a conservation area?

Conservation Areas were first introduced in the UK in 1967 and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 provides the current legislative framework for their designation. S61 of the 1997 Act defines a conservation area as “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance...” Local planning authorities are required to identify areas which merit this status and to review them.

In a conservation area it is both the buildings and the spaces between them that are of interest. Planning control is therefore directed at maintaining the integrity of the entire conservation area and enhancing its special character.

Conservation area status does not mean that new development is unacceptable, but care must be taken to ensure the development will not harm, but will preserve or enhance, historic and architectural character and appearance. This means that designs for new development must refer carefully to character and context to demonstrate how they will achieve this.

Planning controls in a conservation area:

Current legislation requires that permission is sought for the following works within a conservation area:

Demolition of all or most of a building requires Conservation Area Consent. Where a building makes a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area there is a presumption against demolition. The decision to allow demolition also depends on the intended use of the land afterwards and may require that a design has been prepared for any new buildings or other structures proposed on the site and an approved new development and demolition are part of the same contract. Conservation area consent applications are made online. <https://www.eplanning.scot/ePlanningClient/default.aspx>

Alterations or additions to the exterior of buildings in a conservation area require Planning Permission e.g.: small house extensions; roof alterations including dormers or rooflights; chimney alterations; stone cleaning; elevation painting; rendering or any cladding; changing windows or doors; and creation of hard surfaces outside buildings. Development management decisions will consider how proposals impact on the appearance of the property; on its neighbours; and the character of any part of Newton Stewart Conservation Area. Sometimes officers will request alternative designs which will remove, or significantly reduce, detrimental impact on character but will achieve an equivalent outcome. <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15329/Apply-for-planning-permission>

New buildings proposed within a conservation will need planning permission.

Trees in conservations have special protection. Proposals to remove branches, fell a tree or carry out work affecting its roots must be notified to the Council six weeks in advance which will allow sufficient time for the impact of the proposed works to be considered. The Council may decide that a Tree Preservation Order should be placed on the tree or group of trees if it/they make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area. In those circumstances, the extent of the proposed works to the trees may be refused or require amendment. <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15334/Protected-trees>

Attachments such as satellite dishes and other equipment have more restrictive controls in conservation areas where they have the potential to impact negatively on character. In most cases Planning Permission will be needed. It is usually possible to find discrete locations or alternative solutions. <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15329/Apply-for-planning-permission> New buildings proposed within a conservation area will need Planning Permission. The design and choice of material should take account of the site and the character and design of the surrounding buildings and spaces. Pre-application advice may be sought in advance of finalising or submitting any proposals and the links to the guidance and forms are found on the Council's web page. <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15327/Planning-advice-and-enquiries>

Planning Policy

Scottish National Policy

2014 National Planning Framework 3 [NPF3] and Scottish Planning Policy [SPP] Both NPF3, SPP and the draft version of NPF4 that will replace them, recognise that cultural heritage contributes to the economy, cultural identity and quality of life in Scotland.

By preserving character, encouraging maintenance and promoting enhancement of historic places, the planning system can be part of making Scotland a successful and sustainable country and meet the goals of national policy including 'Valuing the Historic Environment'.

"The historic environment is a key cultural and economic asset and a source of inspiration that should be seen as integral to creating successful places. Culture-led regeneration can have a profound impact on the well-being of a community in terms of the physical look and feel of a place and can also attract visitors, which in turn can bolster the local economy and sense of pride or ownership." (SPP 2014, paragraph 136) "When effectively managed, conservation areas can anchor thriving communities, sustain cultural heritage, generate wealth and prosperity and add to quality of life." (Scottish Government's Planning Advice Note PAN 71: Conservation Area Management, December 2004.)

Where development will impact on a conservation area, Scottish Planning Polices expects it to preserve or enhance the character and setting. There is a strong presumption to keep and adapt buildings where they are part of a group contributing to the either the general historic and architectural character or as individual buildings making a unique positive contribution to that character. Materials and labour techniques, used to create the existing structures, embody energy that should not be disregarded or discarded. Demolition is therefore

considered to be a last resort in a conservation area from the points of view of the character, finding low carbon solutions and reducing the creation of waste.

There is an expectation in national policy that conservation area appraisals and management plans should inform development management decisions. (SPP, 2014 paragraphs 143 & 144 and carried through in Policy 28 of draft NPF4).

The legislation and advice for conservation areas does not set out to prevent development or change but aims to secure local and community identity, the unique sense of place, reduce impacts on climate change and maximise the economic benefits which historic character supports in most areas. It seeks to secure the best care of the historic environment through appropriate protection, adaptation and enhancement for the benefit of current and future generations of people.

Historic Environment Scotland has publications and guidance that set out and amplify national policy and good practice.

Local Policy

Dumfries and Galloway Council is committed to the stewardship of its historic areas. Preparation of this document is part of that commitment and should inform development and management of Newton Stewart Conservation Area.

Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2), formally adopted October 2019, includes a section on the Historic Environment with policies and accompanying text which apply to managing historic assets.

Policy HE2: 'Conservation Areas' promotes a sensitive and informed approach to development within conservation areas and refers to explanatory supplementary guidance (SG). Those are the Historic Built Environment SG and adopted conservation area appraisals and management plans specific to places, including this document.

Planning Guidance (PG) adopted by the Council in January 2020 sets out the approach to upgrading and changing windows and doors in conservation areas Windows and doors in Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas PG.

Newton Stewart Conservation Area

Newton Stewart is a small market town built along the River Cree, a little inland from Wigtown Bay. Newton Stewart Conservation Area was designated on 6th September 1977 and lies either side of the river taking in part of the original settlement of Minnigaff and an area known as Creebridge and parts of Newton Stewart. As well as the streets that run parallel to the River Cree, the westernmost part of the conservation area is up the valley sides.

The larger part of the conservation area is on the west of the River Cree within the town of Newton Stewart with a smaller part on the east side of the river which includes parts of the earlier settlement of Minnigaff. The River Cree curves very gently through the conservation area but meanders in its lower stretches south of Newton Stewart slightly east through Creetown and into Wigtown Bay. The appraisal considers two character areas on the east and west of the river as the

river is a clear, largely linear feature between the two parts. The two sides are connected by the early 19th century A-Listed John Rennie designed road bridge (approximately 70m wide).

Building stone

The table below summarises the use of the building stones.

STONE	Description	Use
Granite (silver-grey granite quarried at Glebe and Kirkmabreck quarries near Creetown)	Hard, metamorphic, speckled grey stone quarried nearby	Often hewn roughly or cut for lintels, sills and other dressings; squared for main elevations; and used for monuments.
Sandstone (red, pale red and honey or cream coloured from deposits across the region)	Sedimentary rock ranging from strong red to honey colour	Usually cut into blocks; often polished ashlar in main elevations; but used in rubble walls too.
Greywacke (also known as whinstone)	Partly metamorphosed Moderately hard, sandstone found in shades of dark grey	Used as rubble stone and sometimes squared rubble in elevations and garden walls

Local and regional geology provides the commonly used stones in the conservation area. There is a great range of stone which is used in distinctive ways, key to the area's character. Red and pale red sandstones are used in the elevations of some notable buildings as are much paler honey cream coloured sandstones. Sandstone is also used for architectural dressings, carvings, sculptures and gravestones. Whinstone (a darkish grey, greywacke) is present throughout, some is roughly square cut and can be coursed or uncoursed, some with 'mouse ladder' snecking stones to make up course heights or fill spaces between the main stones. Granite also features prominently in many buildings in the conservation area.



Left: Examples of the different uses of ashlar stone in Victoria Street illustrating the variety.

Although there are now a number of painted stone or rendered buildings through the conservation area there was a clear predominance of unpainted stone buildings in the early part of the 20th century. The exception to this is the Creebridge and Minnigaff area where painted rubble stone is used in many of the cottages. However, in Creebridge, the grander traditional dwellings such as Creebridge House Hotel and Flowerbank have remained unpainted.



Left: Red ashlar with pale ashlar dressings.

Below: Early 20th century Victoria Street, showing the predominance of unpainted and unrendered building facades.

Bottom: Pale red ashlar sandstone of 19th century McMillan Hall on Dashwood Square.



A range of examples of stone elevations and building materials found in the conservation area



Granite blocks in distinctive coursing with mouse ladder snecking stones in vertical spaces between blocks



Rubble stone mix of whinstone and other red tone sandstone



Grey tone whinstone rubble stone with granite boulder corners



Unpainted coursed rubble whinstone with granite window margins and sills



Painted rubble stone with formed window margins

Purpose of Newton Stewart Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

Change is inevitable within a conservation area. Buildings and spaces must adapt to accommodate new uses, challenges and to support social need.

In order to manage change the character of the conservation area and what elements contribute to it should be understood. Newton Stewart CACAMP highlights the contribution and significance of:

- the early origins of the town and surroundings up to the modern period;
- the broad and detailed historic themes and features;
- the streets, spaces and buildings of different designs and age;
- the use of traditional and other materials; and
- the changing role of the historic settlement.

The underlying principle is that Newton Stewart Conservation Area should evolve sensitively to keep up with modern needs, climate change adaptations and to help the economy of the town. Property owners, occupiers, businesses, the Council and other organisations should look after the buildings and spaces within the conservation area so that the special historic character will be improved or maintained. Funding bodies seek long lasting impacts when they provide investment therefore the guidance also promotes proper care and maintenance of buildings into the future. Appropriate guidance should be followed when anyone seeks to make physical changes within Newton Stewart Conservation Area.

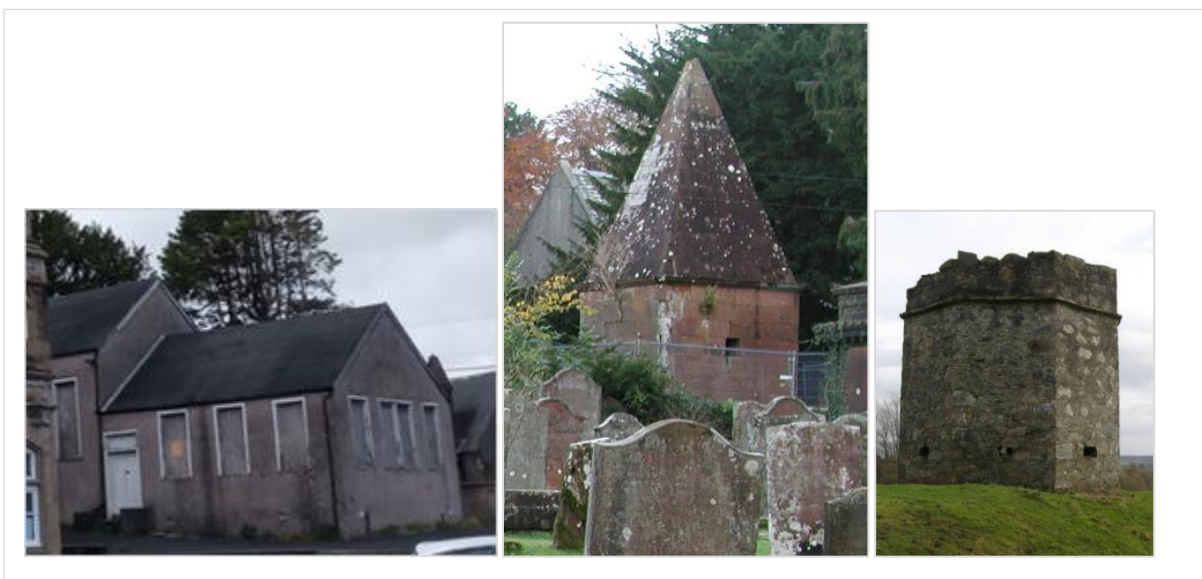
Below: Sandstone gravestones within Penninghame Churchyard.



Proposed change should:

- **Keep historic references** which influenced layout and appearance and the character of the conservation area.
- **Achieve good design** for the adaptation of buildings, re-use of spaces and new development.
- **Respect the landscape setting and topography** of the conservation area.
- **Catalyse the generation of well-considered enhancement proposals.**
- **Support regeneration** applications and bids for grants which restore, repair and repurpose buildings and spaces.
- **Address Buildings at Risk.** Historic Environment Scotland holds records of deteriorating, unoccupied historic buildings with potential for restoration. The Buildings at Risk Register includes a small number in Newton Stewart.

Buildings at Risk	
former School Annexe, corner of York Road and Windsor Road	unlisted late 19 th /early 20 th century building formerly part of the school
Mausoleum within Penninghame Burial Ground, off Church Street	B Listed, late 18 th century ashlar mausoleum erected by Samuel Douglas, dangerous condition in 2014
Kirroughtree Dooocot on golf course, Minnigaff	Built 1719, stable but roofless in 2014 needing consolidation of wallheads [outside the conservation area but close to it]



Above: Former school annexe corner Windsor Road; mausoleum located in Penninghame Churchyard on Church Street and Kirroughtree doocot to the east of the conservation area in the Kirroughtree Non-Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape.

Aims of the Newton Stewart Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan are to:

- identify and describe the elements and themes that contribute to the area’s special architectural and historic character and interest;
- describe how character and quality of the historic built environment should be protected and enhanced, by retaining buildings and finding uses to prevent their loss;
- identify where small-scale inappropriate changes to buildings, streets and open areas have the potential to erode the character;
- note the effects of existing development within the conservation area boundary and the general physical condition of buildings, structures and spaces;
- protect against the demolition of unlisted buildings which make a positive contribution to the general character of the conservation area;
- enable and support carefully managed change and evolution of the conservation area by endorsing development that makes a positive contribution to character; and
- identify wider opportunities for enhancement.

The guidance is divided into two parts:

Part One: History, Development and General Character of Newton Stewart Conservation Area – the historical development of Newton Stewart and overview of significant themes and elements conferring specific character.

Part Two: Managing the Character Areas - management of Newton Stewart Conservation Area requires preserving the pattern of development which has influenced the character of each part; retaining uniformity, repeated architectural details and building materials; and keeping individual features, which together create its unique character. It will support initiatives and actions, both individual and collective, which will preserve or enhance character of buildings and spaces.



Looking north, down the slope from Albert Street towards the old Town Hall with varied building heights and roof forms along Victoria Street.



Looking south, up the slope of Albert Street, towards McMillan Hall. The bank on the left has an ornate door piece and the terraced buildings have different, simple styles on the opposite side of the street.

PART ONE: HISTORY, DEVELOPMENT AND GENERAL CHARACTER OF NEWTON STEWART CONSERVATION AREA

National and Regional Context

Newton Stewart and Minnigaff sit in the southern part of the Galloway Hills Regional Scenic Area and within the Galloway and South Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere. The town is close to the A75 trunk road which by-passes the town to its south on the route to the Cairnryan ferry ports. The combined population is a little over 4000 and Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) identifies this as a larger town and district centre in the Mid Galloway Housing Market Area. The settlement has a wide catchment providing a range of retail, professional services, education, leisure and entertainment which support the resident population of smaller towns, villages and rural population in the eastern and southern part of Wigtownshire as well as parts of Galloway to the north and those visiting the area.

The surrounding area is agricultural where there is a strong focus on sheep, cattle and dairy farming, so a further important function of Newton Stewart is the regular livestock auction market where cattle and sheep are bought and sold from the local farms.

There are compact areas where there is established business, industry and retail on the edge of the town centre, with potential to expand. Much of the industrial units are linked with building services which supply the materials for smaller businesses in the local area.

Some of the objectives for Newton Stewart in regional planning policy are:

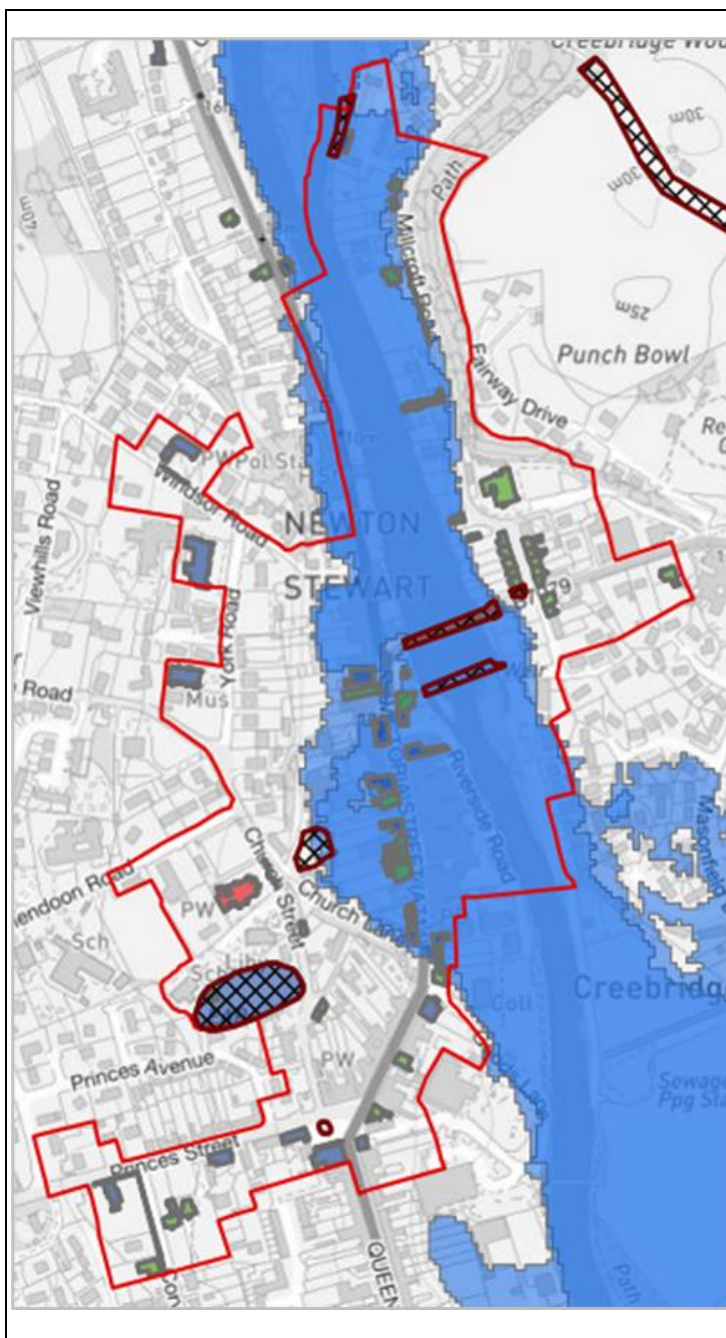
- to consolidate it as a district centre;
- reinforce its role as the gateway to the Galloway Hills;
- improve the town centre, which is largely within the conservation area;

- recognise the strengths of its historic character and landscape setting; and,
- strengthen and develop its potential to consolidate, support and attract tourism economy.

LDP2 includes a number of development sites for housing and business and industry. LDP2 also recognises the importance of the secondary school, the cottage hospital and health care provision; sports grounds; existing traditional and modern housing; the well established town centre retail and service offer; and, the formal and informal recreational spaces.

Flooding

The Cree River presents a significant flooding risk. In 1806 the first Cree Bridge between Minnigaff and Newton Stewart was swept away and replaced in 1813 with the current bridge. The river has flooded the town centre and parts of Minnigaff and Creebridge a number of times in recent years with the loss of a footbridge during the worst event. A comprehensive study has been undertaken with options for flood mitigation measures being considered.



Flood map overlaid on the conservation area and photos of flooding in the conservation area: Croft Road, Minnigaff above and Victoria Street, Newton Stewart below.



The flood events have a serious detrimental impact on the conservation area over short periods but with longer term concern for the effects that extreme wetting can have on the built fabric. It is possible that some physical works may be required within the conservation area boundary but sensitivity to character and historic buildings will be required.

The following map shows the extent of flood risk in blue, in relation to the boundary of the conservation area which is marked in red. A combination of embankments, storage areas, glass walls is being considered. The final designs will be required to take the character of the conservation area into account.

Archaeological Interest

There are a range of human placed stones and cairns in the local area, some close to the River Cree along its last sections to Wigtown Bay. The oldest known site is a Neolithic long cairn from before 2200BC at Boreland, east and north of Minnigaff. At Creebridge there is a Bronze Age (pre-700BC) cairn, partly cut through by the road. In the Kirroughtree afforested area are probable remains of a small Iron Age Hillfort. Nationally designated Scheduled Monuments are: Skaith Mote (motte) west of the Newton Stewart at Challoch; Minigaff Motte and Monigaff (Minnigaff) Old Church north and east of the conservation area boundary. There are also remnants of early settlement enclosures and a probable observation post near Doon Hill.

The Council's Historic Environment Record shows sites in the surrounding area as seen in the extract below.

Penninghame, a clachan north of Newton Stewart, predates Newton Stewart. Penningham(e) appears on mid-17th century maps by Robert and James Gordon. In 1677 a barony charter was granted on the west side of the Cree River to William Stewart, 3rd son of the 2nd Earl of Galloway, living at Castle Stewart, who owned the land. At the time the charter was granted a small number of dwellings had already been built close to a few cottages. At this time the dwellings were mostly single storey and probably with thatched rooves. However a short time later two storey houses had replaced many of the earlier dwellings and the small town was emerging. It is alleged that some of the proceeds from smuggling allowed peasants to live in the new properties.

Minnigaff existed in the 12th century with a mill at a ford; the Gaelic for which 'muillin an ath' is probably the origin of the name. The ford was one of a small number of crossing points over the River Cree. In 1698 a barony charter was granted to Andrew Heron in the established settlement. There was by that time, a small collection of buildings.

There are also more recent records of archaeology associated with milling, mining and military roads from the 18th century and later industries, improved road routes and rail routes on the Carlisle to Portpatrick corridor from the late 18th and the 19th century.



Above left: Remains of Garlies Castle; Above right: Minnigaff old Church, C13th but most of the remains are from C17th
 Below: Extract from Joan Blaeu Atlas Maior, 1662 where some of the place names are earlier versions of the modern name. —————> N



Development of Newton Stewart and Minnigaff: Roman to Modern

It is not thought that the Romans settled the land in this area in any significant way as they were prevented from doing so by local tribes. However, there are accounts of a tomb with a tall human skeleton being uncovered under a mound on Kirroughtree Estate in the 18th century which contained artefacts that may have dated from Roman times.

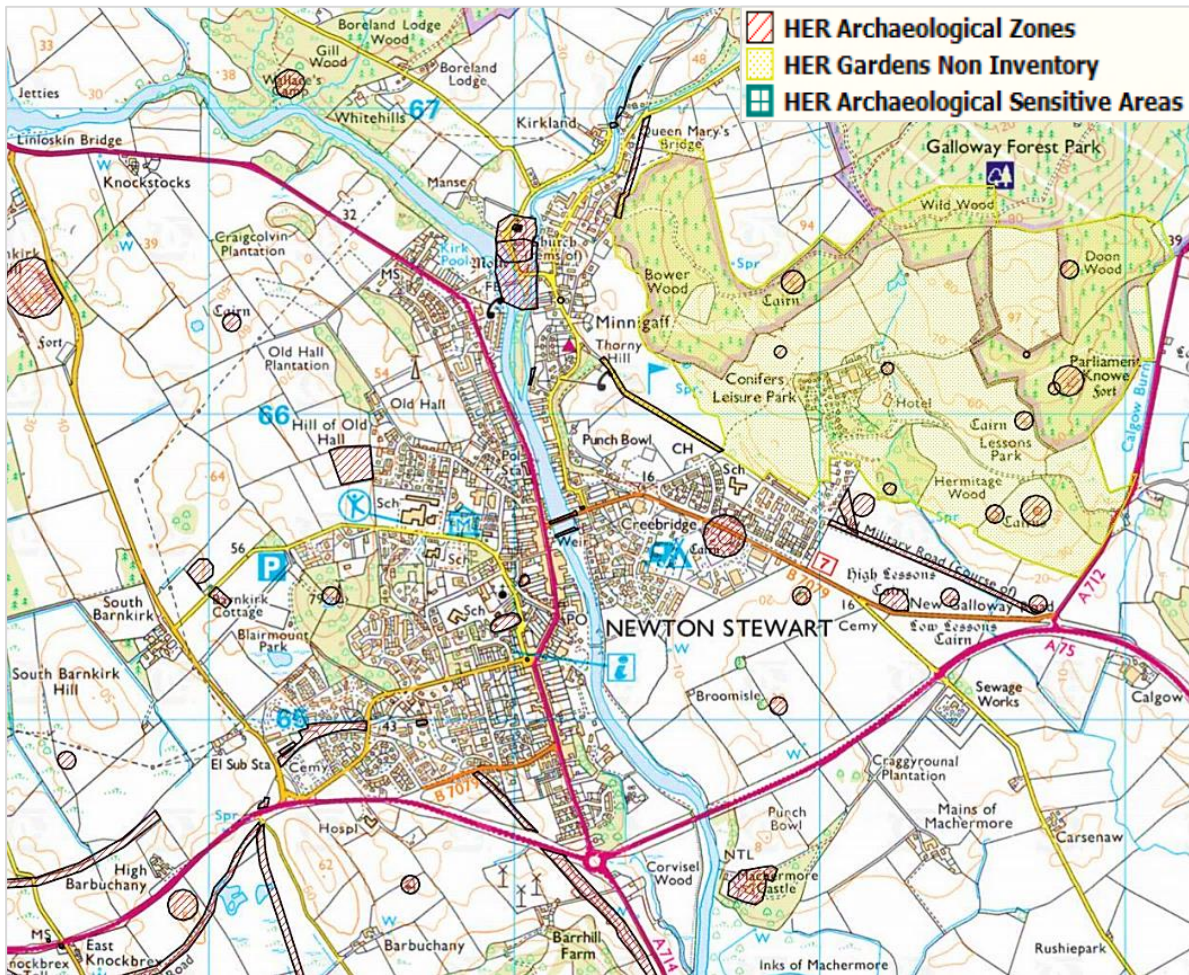
In Mediaeval times, certainly by about 1200, there was a mill, a church and a hospital located in the Minnigaff area. Just over a mile to the north was the original home of the Earls of Galloway – Garlies Castle. A little of it remains.

The seat moved to Creebridge House in the early 1600s where the current building replaced the earlier building in the 18th century.

Minnigaff church has some connections with Premonstratensian monks

In the late Middle Ages there was a battle close to Kirroughtree where Edward, the younger brother of Robert the Bruce, fought off a larger English force who then fled.

Following this, much of the land in the area came to be owned by the Heron family. The current house dates from the early 18th century with some elements of the original house thought to have survived in parts of the cellar.



The Heron family were non-conformist Covenanters during the 17th century but their loyalties to those in power at the right time enabled them to keep their estates. Andrew Heron's son Patrick exported cattle to England that he reared in Wigtownshire, becoming very wealthy.



Above: Patrick Heron's Kirroughtree House with its origins in 1719

When Patrick inherited from his father, in the early 1700s, he enclosed the lands around Minnigaff with dykes to contain his farm animals and he planted many

trees. Local people lost their rights to good quality crop growing and common grazing land which became a focus for the early 18th century Levellers movement.

Patrick Heron built the current house at Kirroughtree and as land owner was permitted to have a doocot, which has survived since 1719. He was responsible for changes to much of the landscape which is recognised through a local landscape designation. His son, also Patrick, was linked with Boswell through marriage, and socially with Robert Burns. The estate passed through marriage to Heron-Maxwell and the house, separated from the land, went to Major Arthur Armitage.

The house falls outside the conservation area boundary separated by the golf course.

The area known as Machermore, south of Newton Stewart, was held by the MacDowalls but taken and awarded to the McClurgs sometime after the 17th century. The 16th century MacDowall building is incorporated into the McClurg family building and it now has a 19th century Scottish Baronial style exterior appearance with subsequent extensions.

Castle Stewart is a 16th century tower house pre-dating Newton Stewart found 2 miles north on the west side of the river. It was a fortified home known as Calcruchie and a seat of the Stewart family and then of William Douglas. In the 19th century it was bought by Colonel William Stewart. Newton Stewart was renamed Newton Douglas for a brief period from 1799 the town (reverting to Newton Stewart by 1813).



Machermore Castle – originating in the 16th century but much remodelled by Richard Park, a prominent architect and mason in 19th century

John M'Millan was born at a hill farm close to Minnigaff in 1669. He was one of the Cameronian (Covenantor) preachers and minister, involved in promoting the Reformed Presbyterian Church. This area is associated with the Covenantors which is reflected in some of the monuments in the graveyard within the conservation area.

In the 1760s, lead ore was discovered in Minnigaff during construction of the military road. William Carruthers and George Clerk, as Craigtown Mining Company, took up mining lead in the area on land owned by Patrick Heron. There were 25 miners and 7 smelters in 1780. Silver Rig and Coldstream Burn were two named lead mines. Intensive mining of lead ore (galena) continued until 1790 and again in the mid-19th century with some zinc ore (sphalerite). Records also reference a shot mill in 1783.

In the 1790s William Douglas established cotton carding and spinning mills. It must be acknowledged that raw cotton was cheap only because it was grown using enslaved people on overseas plantations. When slavery was finally abolished, there was a very significant decline in the economic viability of working with cotton, underlining that profits were only possible at the expensive of the cruelly treated, unpaid labourers. Following the cessation of cotton milling activities, in 1826 Lord Garlies bought the mill to use the stone for dwellings and steadings.

Douglas also set up a tannery close to the junction of Victoria Lane and Church Lane and a coarse carpet factory was begun under his patronage by Tannahill.

Archibald Richardson established a brewing industry in 1799.

Weaving took place in the town some of it using from yarn that had been spun outside the town. The weaving also declined shortly after the carpet looms ceased and the cotton spinning ended. By 1840, the only part of the industrial textile industry that continued, was leather production. Wool continued to be gathered in the town for bulk for export to Lancashire.

Below: Extract from 'A map of the County of Wigtown', John Ainslie, printed 1782 on left and on the right from Taylor & Skinner Survey of Roads in Scotland, published 1776 - The Road from Port Patrick to Dumfries showing the 18th century road layout.



Description of Newton Stewart Conservation Area

Setting

Topography, Landscape, Location and Viewpoints

Newton Stewart and Creebridge in Minigaff sit in the lower stretches of the valley of the River Cree before its last meanders on the way to meet Wigtown Bay at Creetown. The wider landscape is hilly and much of it is afforested but it is also grazing and recreational land.



Newton Stewart and Minigaff looking north along the River Cree.

To the west the land rises up towards Doon Hill and Hill of Old Hall. The town has been developed in a series of phases on the west side with individual 19th century villas and late 20th century dwellings at different stages on the slopes.

Victoria Street is mostly level including the building extensions and outbuildings to the rear. However, Victoria Lane which runs to the back of these properties marks the beginning of rising land. Victoria Lane rises gently upwards to meet Church Lane but Church Lane then rises steeply from Albert Street towards the

north-west. Both lanes are met and crossed by the steeply stepped pedestrian lanes, Ivy Place and Church Road, leading to Church Street.

Windsor Road also climbs and winds west, starting at right angles to Arthur Street with a dry stone dyke enclosing a semi-naturalised private garden on its southern side. It meets York Road and continues on uphill to Viewhills Road.

Below: The top and bottom of Victoria Lane steps leading up to and down from Church Street.



Although significantly higher up than Victoria Street, the York Road, Church Street, Jubilee Road route ending at Dashwood Square is almost level. Dashwood Square was previously called 'The Angle'. Although there are some views to the south they close down at the elegant elevation of the McMillan building and the war memorial on Dashwood Square. On the west side of York Road is a good view of an elevated villa named Oakbank which faces east as does the ornate elevation of the Ewart Institute, which was built as a school on part of Corsbie Farm. There is also a vacant community centre on part of the former farm, lying just outside the conservation area boundary behind the Ewart building, on a partially terraced site, which is likely to be developed.

Corsbie House has been renamed Rowallan House and lies just outside the conservation area but the mature trees of its garden are an important backdrop to Auchendoon Road, the bowling green and the Penninghame Centre within the boundary.

By the end of the 19th century, there were several sites where civic and church buildings had been built. A-Listed 19th century Penninghame Church replaced an earlier 18th century building. The uses of some of the 19th century buildings have changed including the United Reformed Church which is now Newton Stewart Museum.

There are two graveyards, one from the 18th century and a smaller one from the 19th century behind the Catholic church. There are two manses, the Ewart Institute and areas of recreation ground including a bowling green and tennis courts. The larger footprint buildings are interesting focal points. There are terraces and small groups of 19th century stone dwellings and occasional larger

dwelling which channel views along these roads. One of the terraces is now a small church too.



Above: The entrance to Penninghame Churchyard off Church Street close to Jubilee Road.

Along York Road and Church Street there are glimpse views into or down narrow lanes towards the east. Windsor Road [formerly Salt Box Brae], Ivy Place leading to pedestrian steps, Church Lane leading to Victoria Place and Albert Street and the northern part of Church Road leading to the public gardens rising up from Albert Street.

Each of the roads, streets and lanes have unique views, some over parts of the town and others as narrow, framed views along road edges defined by walls, trees or shrubs.

On the west side of Church Street, the grounds of the Council's customer service building provides access to and views towards St. Ninian's Primary School and Auchendoon Road runs along the side of the bowling green past the former Penninghame School, Gothick style whinstone with sandstone dressings begun in 1876 to a design by Richard Park and extended twice in the later 19th century. It

has been in use as a social work centre. There is also an 1894 Episcopal church by a little known architect James Caird MacFarlane originally from Angus.



Above: Former Penninghame School started to a design by Richard Park in 1846
Below: Newton Stewart bowling green in front of the former Penninghame school.



Below: Former Episcopal church dated 1894 by J C MacFarlane



Below: The little meeting area with shelter at Jubilee Road beside Dashwood Square.



Towards the south, Albert Street rises over a short distance to join Queen Street and Dashwood Square. The road is tightly developed to the edge of town except at Dashwood Square, or The Angle, where some of the dwellings have very good views towards the east.



Above: Approach towards the conservation area from the east along New Galloway Road.

The approach to Minnigaff and Creebridge from the east along New Galloway Road is scenic with fields leading to hills and forestry. There are tree covered hills above open pasture to the north. The road is straight but slopes downwards to meet Cree Bridge over the river. Trees line much of both sides of the road, formally planted along the housing development on the north side and naturalised on the south side beside the industrial and retail area of Holmpark and Creebridge

caravan park. Low stone walls are also a feature. The housing development and caravan park are substantially concealed among the trees below the road.

The trees in the forward view are mainly in the grounds of Creebridge House Hotel and the golf course.

Below: the north side of New Galloway Road; the fields to the north are pasture, lying below the designed landscape of 18th century Kirroughtree House.



The road dog-legs as it reaches Creebridge and this part of the road is tightly developed with the view closed down by the terraces which are in two storey or single storey groups although continuous up to the toll house.



The former toll house at the junction of Creebridge, New Galloway Road and Millcroft Road <https://canmore.org.uk/collection/446286>

New Galloway Road becomes part of the conservation area at Masonfield House. The northern part of Millcroft Road and Creebridge run parallel with the river. There are a few buildings on the east side over a short stretch and many on the west side with a significant proportion of these being statutorily listed.

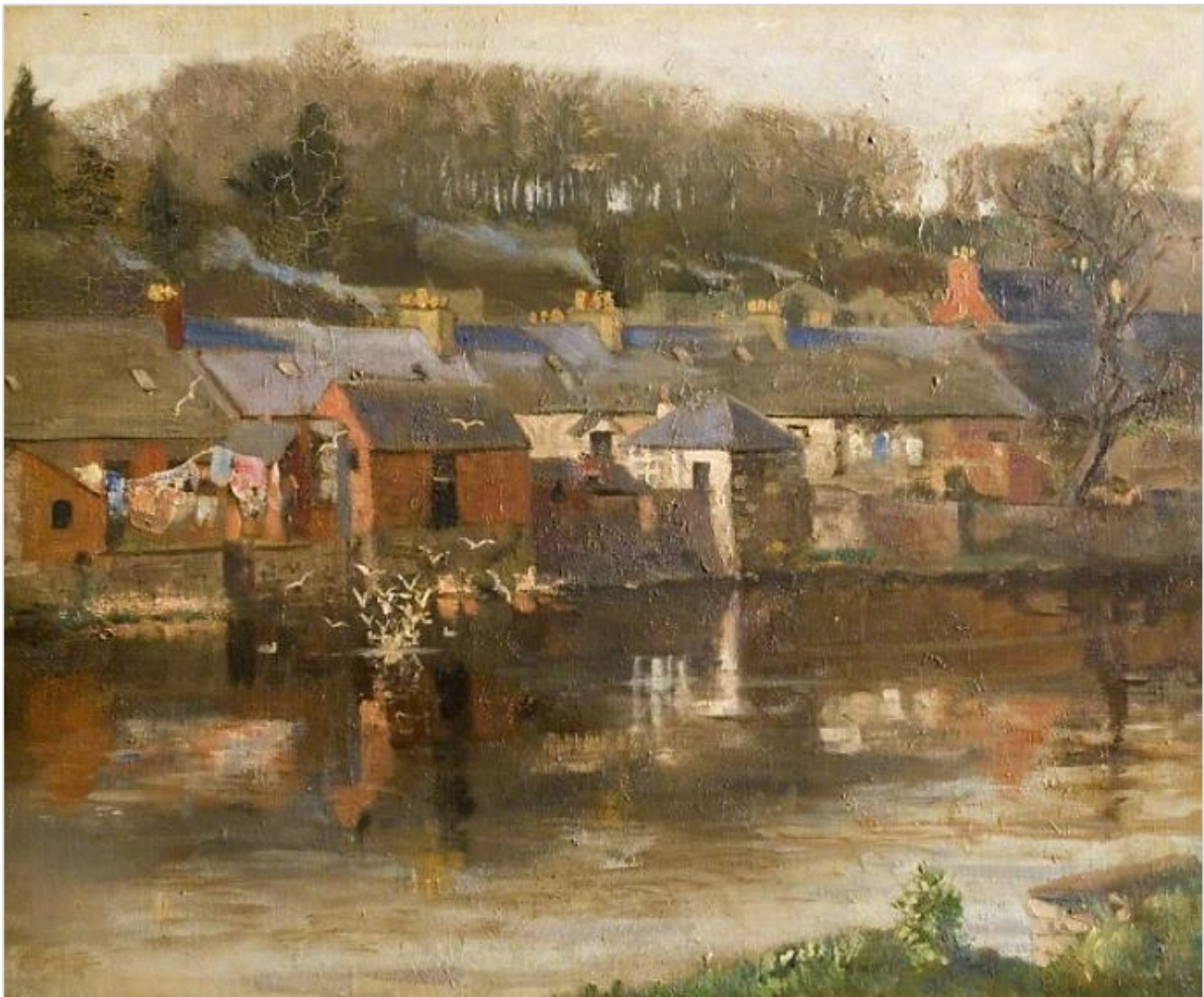
On the west side of Millcroft Road the groups and spacing allow significant views to the river and to the rear of the buildings on Arthur Street.



Above: View south from rear of properties on riverside in Minnegaff along Millcroft Road.

Below: Extract of a painting by William Leadbetter Calderwood: 'The Gorbals from Creebridge' with thanks to The Museum, Newton Stewart, where the original painting is exhibited.

Although parts of the view have changed the general appearance is very similar.



The gardens include mature trees and planting and, along with the deciduous trees on the wooded embankment on the east side of the road, the character is quite rural, reinforced by a concealed path along the boundary of the golf course and the whinstone walls which line much of this part of Millcroft Road. For the most part the rural character has been preserved when new development has taken place within the conservation area boundary.

Below: Top row - the B-Listed, 1823 Minnigaff Mill formerly used for corn, carpet making and storage over parts of its history. Second and third rows – a selection of the vernacular dwellings on Millcroft Road including individual single storey cottages; and parts of C-Listed, late 18th/early 19th century Reid Terrace.



Part of the southern part of Creebridge is also within the conservation area. It contrasts with the northern section as the dwellings are mostly on the east side of

the lane, facing the river, with detached private front gardens between the waterside and the lane and the character is more urban than the northern side.

Street Pattern and Form

The layout of Newton Stewart Conservation Area is strongly influenced by the River Cree and the sloping river valley on the west and rising land on the east. The original settlements of Newton Stewart, Minnigaff and Creebridge followed the line of the river. It was not a planned town but shaped by the topography and natural features and to some degree the whim of the builders. A regular street frontage has emerged, which has maximised the plot size or kept buildings away from the edge of the river. The building frontages are not universally back of pavement but the majority are. There are buildings which are set back from the general building line but most often with boundary features or steps up from the pavement which continue the general building line.



Above: Extract from 1894 OS stitched from two plans which demonstrates the strong, north-south linear street layout and its relationship to the River Cree.

Victoria Street [formerly High Street] is the main commercial street and is roughly parallel to the river. Beginning at its north end, it is perpendicular to the Cree Bridge as it continues south the distance between it and the river gradually increases. There are small lanes between the plots off Victoria Street, most of which have a selection of former commercial or outbuildings along them. To the

west, the lanes run up steep embankments to Church Street and York Road. Windsor Road is one of the steep lanes. To the north the street continues parallel to the river as Arthur Street [formerly The Gorbals] which is within the conservation area until it becomes King Street before Brewery House.

Part way along Victoria Street, the former Town House is a dominant feature on the west.

Key layout features contributing to the character of the conservation area are the linear form of Victoria Street, the formal layout of Dashwood Square and the strong, continuous building lines which are found along Albert Street, the part of Princes Street that lies within the conservation area and Arthur Street. The lanes that lead along the sides of former feudal plots and link up with the main streets are also very characteristic of the area creating a secondary street pattern.



Left:

A simplified street layout diagram of the conservation area showing the main streets and the little web of lanes and smaller streets.

Key:



The main streets



The lanes and smaller streets

Millcroft Road and Creebridge are parallel to the river, with a sharp corner at C-Listed Creebridge House Hotel. The building line on Millcroft Road is not continuous and the buildings are grouped or clustered. There are a few physical accesses to the river and glimpses to and across the river. This varied layout is a key characteristic of Millcroft Road.

The northern part of Creebridge is a tight terrace with no breaks on either side. It is nearly all C-Listed, two storey, vernacular dwellings. The west side includes single storey terraces towards the bridge which have long gardens sloping down to the river. The east side rear gardens back onto a handful of modern dwellings, shop units and a petrol station.

The southern part of Creebridge begins with a short tight terrace, two of which are C-Listed, only on the eastern side which forming the narrow road edge. The west side is a series of private gardens running down to the river each marked by

a variety of cast iron railings and stone walls and a detached two storey cottage in a large garden. There has been a great deal of new development to the east and the remaining cottages inside the conservation area are semi detached or detached. One of them is marked as a school on an earlier map. The key character of this street is the green space and open aspect to the river and the garden boundary treatments on the west side and how the dwellings follow the original track.

Road and Street Surfaces

The majority of the road surfaces are tarmac but in a number of areas such as Dashwood Square, enhancement schemes have introduced square paving slabs to create a simple decorative surface pattern. Many of the footways along Albert Street and Victoria Street have been paved in regular sized square concrete slabs with distinctive granite kerb stones.

Some surface quality has been lost where tarmac has been used and in some places slabs have been lifted and re-laid and seem to be a different shade. There are unmatching areas of tarmac at the northern end of Victoria Street. Although there are good kerb stones in Minnigaff there are also areas of tarmac that vary in quality close to the A-Listed bridge.

In the southern part of Creebridge, the main stretch of road surface is shared by pedestrians and is of varying quality particularly where it is prone to flooding. However, along Millcroft Road the narrow footway on the east side is tarmac with granite kerb edging. Artificial aggregate stones have been used where higher kerbs are needed.

The use of granite kerb stones is a link with the local geology of the region and the granite extraction industry and a significant feature within the conservation area.

Public and Private Spaces and Trees and Soft Landscaping

There are a number of formal spaces for sporting activities such as the tennis courts and the bowling green on York Road. There are also designed spaces for meeting such as the gravelled and walled space with an open sided public shelter at Jubilee Road, beside Dashwood Square. Dashwood Square is a formally laid out designed space which is well used by bus passengers. The benches allow people to rest and contemplate the war memorial in the centre of



Above: Tennis courts on York Road
Right: public space at corner of Jubilee Road



that space. Each of these spaces, and their trees, provide settings for different built elements of the conservation area.



Left: Public garden space off Victoria Street leading to Church Road. The low stone wall is topped by railings and steps and sloped paths along the terraced planting beds.

There is a small, public garden off Victoria Street where there is a stepped terrace rising up from the street and an area of lawn and planting at the higher level. This space forms a pleasant walking corridor (some of it unsuitable for wheeling) with a range of shrubs and colourful border plants in the planted terraced slope down to Albert Street.

Trees make an important contribution to the character of the conservation area but do not feature to any great degree in the public parts of Victoria Street, Albert Street or the majority of Arthur Street. They are found in many private gardens and in some open spaces throughout the conservation area where they contribute positively to the setting. Trees are also a significant positive feature of many of the lanes on the west and along York Road and Church Street to Dashwood Square. The gardens on the rear of the riverside buildings on Arthur Street have a number of mature trees which benefit the views across and along the river. Riverside Road has mature trees outside the boundary of the conservation area which form a backdrop to parts of the conservation area. On the east side of the river, trees along Millcroft Road and in the private gardens of Creebridge are key features, including those along the well-used recreational walking route beside the golf course in Creebridge Woods. The variety of trees throughout the conservation area is important to its character.

Soft landscaping is provided by grass verges along parts of Millcroft Road, the private and public gardens in many areas but particularly on the lanes and on the east of Arthur Street, west of Millcroft Lane and Creebridge. However, the main commercial streets of Victoria Street and Albert Street, as well as Dashwood Square and Prince's Street have very little soft landscaping unlike other parts of the conservation area.

Riverside Road provides a route along the river east of Victoria Road leading to a large open car park most of which is outside the conservation area but the path leads to the new Sparling Bridge and on south along the river as a cycle and pedestrian route. The route provides views into and across parts of the

conservation area and continues on the other side of the river along the less formal part of the conservation area in Creebridge.



Above: Railings at the Earl of Galloway monument off Victoria Street with the weir in the river in the view. The trees form a backdrop to other parts of Newton Stewart Conservation Area.

Gaps in the Streetscape, Sites with Derelict Buildings and Semi-derelict buildings

There are a number of places, both sites and buildings, that would benefit from new uses, restoration, maintenance or development in some form.

Some active small businesses in Church Street and Jubilee Road also have space close to them which has not been in productive use for some time, and has been allowed to become untidy in appearance.

Victoria Lane is part of the historic layout and industrial past of the conservation area contributing positively to its character in a number of ways. However, several buildings and sites along it are in poor condition. It would seem that the scale of these vacant and derelict buildings is more than the local economy can support and solutions need to be found which respect historic character and archaeology. However, owners have allowed them to become untidy and not undertaken maintenance. Frontage buildings in poor condition are important elements of the townscape and have the potential to be repaired and make a positive contribution to character. The historic uses of vacant plots have defined their shape but contamination issues now makes them difficult to develop; for example the site associated with an earlier tannery.



Sites off Church Street with potential for additional use and enhancement



Derelict sites in Victoria Lane



The poor condition of the Grapes Hotel on Victoria Street

The former Grapes Hotel is a building where the frontage is in very poor condition. It originates in the earlier part of the 19th century but sometime in its more recent history the roof was altered and the materials used have not been durable or maintained sufficiently. The building is in very poor condition and detracts significantly from the appearance of Victoria Street. However, with alteration and repair it could recover the positive contribution it once made to the streetscape.

Other sites have become vacant following demolition, one on Victoria Street and another on Millcroft Road but small scale development may come forward in a short timeframe.

Roofscape, Townscapes and Building Facades

Throughout the conservation area there is great variation in heights of the buildings which leads to variety in the roofscape. This shows how the town grew up without a clear plan or design but again at the whim of the builders of the time.

There are a number of buildings with distinctive high points which are more prominent in certain views. They include on Victoria Street the old Town Hall and the art deco style cinema. Some of the buildings stand out such as the ornate banks or former banks with high points which contribute positively to roofscape and general townscape.

Below: Part of the varied roofscape of Victoria Street



Below: A selection of the more traditional types of dormers.



Substantial chimneys and dormers in a variety of styles contribute a semblance of rhythm to the roofscape. Sometimes these chimneys and roof features are at a lower height than the buildings either side so there are few places where the roofline does not rise and fall in most of the streets. However, with the exception of McMillan Hall, the properties around Dashwood Square have grouped roofscapes.



The high point of Penninghame Church spire from the public gardens above Albert Street and from a gap in the buildings on Victoria Street.

The variations in high points and heights of the roofscape are a key feature of the character of the conservation area.

Below: The view from Princes Street towards Dashwood Square where the high points and variations of roofs are evident.





Views to the rear of Victoria Street where the height variations are very evident.

Elaborate balustrade at roof level and pilastered entrance unique in the street scene. The rear of the same building is very prominent in the streetscape of Goods Lane



Church spires on York Road and Church Street are visible as high points from a number of directions. In Victoria Street both the Old Town Hall and the Galloway Memorial Sculpture are high points in some of the views. The topography also

emphasises the heights of some elements. Higher up on Church Street, York Street and Windsor Road, there is no continuous roofscape theme. There are a number of terraces which for a short distance are continuous in height in Church Street and Jubilee Road but these change to terraces with dormers or two storey as they go towards York Road. This applies to the building facades too. There are some continuous building lines but they are for short distances only.

The buildings close to Dashwood Square on Princes Street have a regular roofscape.



Above: View to Flowerbank across the River Cree with the tree covered embankment along Millcroft Road giving rural character.

In Minnigaff the buildings on the east side of the river back onto it and are a variety of single storey and two storey gable roofs and are set at angles to each other. They have the character of a rural village, constrained by the geographical features of the river and the rising land to their east. The former mill building is singular in its hipped roof shape



Creebridge House originating in the 18th century now restyled with Georgian and later Victorian architectural style, east of Creebridge and Millcroft Road.

Windows, Doors and Architectural Embellishment

There is a great deal of variety of architectural detail across the whole conservation area. Some small vernacular buildings with their origins in cottages from the end of the 18th century and the early 19th century have kept their simple features.

Windows have evolved in design in the intervening years and the format has moved from multipane glazing to larger panes in 2 over 2 and 1 over 1 plate glass format, still made from timber with a sliding sash and case mechanism.



Above: Different styles of windows at the top of Albert Street and above shop in Victoria Street

Some of the buildings have smaller upper sashes than lower and this reflects the original design intention of the builder or architect. Buildings with particular window designs that can be seen in photos throughout this document include: the Ewart Institute (now Hillview Apartments); the Venetian tripartite style of the Old Town Hall on Victoria Street; and, the 6 over 6 Georgian pane format at Creebridge House Hotel.

Doors vary in design too. Many are formal 4 and 6 panel Georgian and Victorian style timber doors appearing on commercial buildings and dwellings. There are also a number of double leaf doors. On simpler buildings there are a surprising number of relatively formal entrances although some have been replaced with modern part glazed versions in materials other than timber or simple plain painted doors.

There is a range of dormer styles, some of which are of an early design and sympathetic to the overall building or part of the architectural design. The variety is a significant part of the character of the conservation area. Other dormers which have been added do not always relate well in scale and position to the remainder of the building or group.



A range of doors found in the conservation area. There are many other designs too.



There are a small number of mansard style roofs in Victoria Street which seem to have been an architectural trend to maximise the use of the roofspace. Some do not relate well to the design of the remainder of the building.

Buildings: Landmarks, Key Buildings and Building Types

There are many significant buildings on both sides of the river and the bridge itself is A-Listed and recognised as a very fine granite structure. Most of the buildings in the conservation areas make an interesting and significant positive contribution to the townscape, even those that have suffered from lack of maintenance. In the context of groups and terraces of buildings which have some similarity in elevation materials or roofline detail there are also a number of buildings that stand out in contrast which can be noted as landmarks. This does not lessen the contribution they make to the general character and pattern of the conservation area and only a selection of buildings are included in the photographs beginning on the following page.

The buildings that began as civic or ecclesiastical buildings are dominant in the higher York Road-Church Road part of the conservation area, interspersed among modest terraces and grand villas as well as modern detached developments.

On Victoria Street and Albert Street it is the banks and the cinema and the former Town Hall that are the dominant eyecatching buildings but looking along the frontage elevations and rooflines there are many unusual and unique architectural devices that attract the eye and give historical significance to other commercial and residential buildings.

At Millcroft Road and Creebridge the bridge over the river is a beautiful, rhythmic feature and leads to the former toll house and the very significant area which includes Creebridge House. On the southern side there are some elegant residential buildings and early 20th century dwellings which line the riverside and with gardens detached and beside the river, give the area a rural presence.

On the northern part of Millcroft Road the cottages are modest for the most part and their contrast in size with the taller, larger footprint mill building which dominates the river edge emphasises the link between the industrial work in the mill and the modest cottages of the workers. Thus the buildings in this group have equal historical significance even if they are not equally visible.



Former Ewart Institute - now Hillview Apartments - with belfry at one end and clock tower at the other, on York Road



Penninghame Parish Church, on Church Street; A-Listed, completed 1848, designed by architect William Burn



The dominant clock tower of the Old Town Hall, Victoria Street

Vernacular, 2-storey, 3-bay terrace on Creebridge.



Former bank, now The Vaults wine bar, Victoria Street

B Listed terrace of earlier Victorian villas with 2 over 2 pane windows and panelled doors in Princes Street.



Albert Street - Milvern, no.34 and the ornate architectural details on the Bank of Scotland building



St. Ninian's and St Mary's Catholic Church, B Listed mid 19th century church, presbytery and with school hall to rear.



A selection of three bay early and later Victorian properties which contribute in a positive way to the character of the mixed commercial and residential streets of the conservation area despite alterations not all of which are sensitive.

Sculptures and Works of Art

There a number of sculptures and statues through the conservation area or close to it which mark the influence and actions of certain people and historic events as they relate to Newton Stewart and Minnigaff. The following table shows the significant pieces with a little bit of information about each.



A tall grey granite Celtic cross, sited in Dashwood Square outside McMillan Hall. Erected in 1921, it was unveiled by the Right Honorable Sir Herbert Maxwell, Wigtownshire's Lord Lieutenant of; it has names from both World Wars I and II

Outside the conservation area a granite obelisk shaped war memorial in Minnigaff; urn on top;



raised on a stepped plinth.



Left: B-Listed monument erected to the memory of Randolph Stewart, 9th Earl of Galloway, who gave his family name to the town. It is octagonal in shape and an elaborately decorated 4 stage design with buttresses, friezes and gargoyles. It is by local mason and architect Richard Park from 1875 built from sandstone and granite.



Above right: Covenanter statue standing outside Newton Stewart Museum, attributed to John Corrie (or Currie) from the mid-19th century. The museum is within the converted B Listed former United Reformed Church designed by Richard Park, 1878 on York Road.



Sculptures of Robert Paterson, 18th and early 19th century stone mason famed for gravestones who became known as Old Mortality in Sir Walter Scott's book. Red sandstone by John Corrie, 1840 outside Newton Stewart Museum.

Shopfronts

The main shopping streets are Albert Street, Victoria Street and the first part of Arthur Street. The shop frontages range from very simple enlarged windows with and without emphasised margins to ornate traditional format fronts based on late Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian styles. The majority of the shop windows are quite simple. This applies to modern fronts too although the scale of som of these does not relate well to the whole building and they seem overly wide in a number of places. The shopping streets all have interrupted frontages as there are dwellings between them and occasional grand frontages of banks or civic buildings.

Alfred Place – modern shop frontage with traditional proportions.



There is some missing traditional detail on this frontage.



A selection of relatively simple shopfront with enlarged ground floor window openings and central doorway.



A very finely designed, traditional Victorian shopfront with traditional style ornate consoles and recessed doorway. The fascia has been adapted to accommodate a modern brand logo.

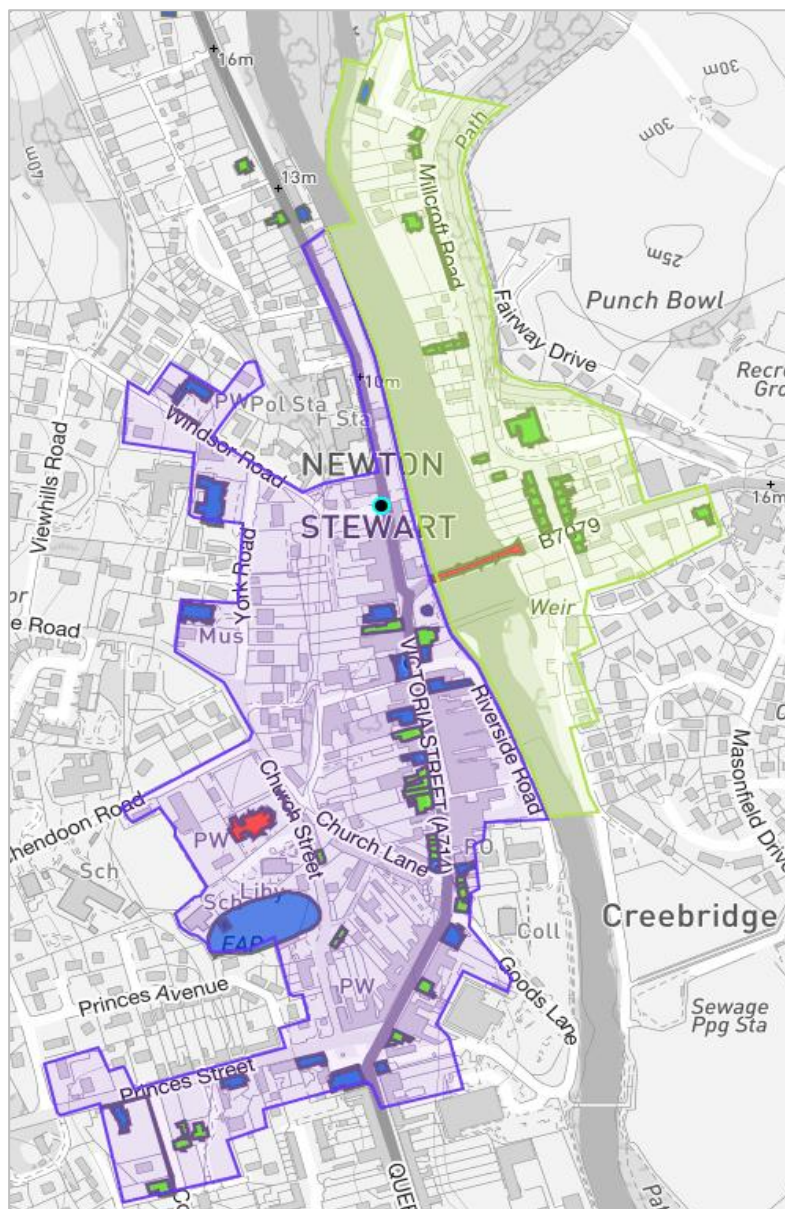


Shop on Morton's entry with front and side windows, some oversized fascia signs.
Shop on Albert Street - simple style in a simple building.

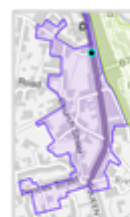


An unusual frontage on the mid-20th century cinema in Victoria Street

PART TWO: MANAGING THE CHARACTER AREAS



Key to Character Areas within Newton Stewart Conservation Area



A

Newton Stewart
on the west side
of river



B

**Minnigaff and
Creebridge**
on the east side of
river

Character Areas

A. Newton Stewart - west of the river comprises Victoria Street, Albert Street, Dashwood Square, Princes Street, Church Street, York Road, Windsor Street, Riverside Road and the small lanes.

B. Minnigaff and Creebridge - east side of the river comprises Millcroft Road; rows of houses along Creebridge; the Cree Bridge which crosses over the river and the weir in the river.

Newton Stewart Conservation Area has two areas with different character linked by Cree Bridge over the river.

Character Area A is the dominant business part of the historic town of Newton Stewart with shops, banks, hotels and pubs, cafés and cinema. Victoria Street, Albert Street and part of Arthur Street form the main high street; the lanes leading from it up to Church Street and York Road; part of Auchendoon Road; Dashwood Square and the first part of Princes Street and Corvisel Road; and the north part of Riverside Road and part of Goods Lane.

In the higher up part of this character area, there are a significant number of buildings which are Listed both category B and C and the A-Listed Penninghame Church. Many of the dominant individual buildings are civic or ecclesiastical in origin including former endowed schools, and some individual villas but there are also terraces of well-designed dwellings. Among these important buildings, some modernisation and unsympathetic alterations have taken place. The need to update and raise the internal living conditions is acknowledged but the methods used should retain the essential character and preserve the historic fabric of each building and the alterations should be made discreetly.



Above: Borrowdale, high up on the south side of Windsor Road, dark whinstone with granite dressings and a piended [hipped] roof.

Right: Lynwood facing Corvisel Road and Prospect House at right angles to it. Both grey whinstone one coursed with sandstone window margins and dressings and the other rubble built with painted margins and granite corners.

These 19th century villas emphasise the dominance of grey stone in many of the buildings in character area A.



However, there are also vernacular buildings both in groups and occurring individually which date from the late 18th century along with more modern bungalows and 2 storey houses. The vernacular buildings are for the most part rubble stone built, unpainted with simple sash and case style windows and are not at all embellished.

The materials and details used in the majority of the buildings are significant to character.

- The materials and design of new buildings and extensions should not compete or dilute the predominant character of the existing buildings closest to them.

Along with the buildings, the upper part of character area A includes many spaces such as parts of private gardens and public spaces which emphasise the impact of the buildings.

- To preserve the character, the existing spaces between buildings should remain.
- Creating long or large areas of built up frontages should be resisted.
- The layout of new development should be designed so as not to have continuous, dominant building lines which would diminish the setting of existing buildings.

In and around Dashwood Square the integrity of the frontages of the buildings is key to maintaining the formal character of this space.

- Proposals to differentiate buildings from their neighbours within terraces and groups must be strongly resisted to retain character.
- Careful attention should be paid to the design detail of any alterations that are proposed.

The high street area needs to be looked after more diligently in terms of maintenance.

- The introduction of modern approaches to shop fronts should be resisted especially those which would not relate well to the whole of the building by being too long across the frontage or with windows that are too deep.
- Recessed doorways in shops should be retained.
- The use of colour needs to be restricted to picking out the traditional shop front, the timber windows and the doors and some window margins rather than being applied to large areas of masonry.
- Buildings such as the Co-op which have very modern shop fronts and appear not to relate well to the upper floors of the traditional building they occupy should be improved when the opportunity arises.
- Upper floors should also be brought into productive use to improve general maintenance and the vitality of the high street.

The tradition in character area A of Newton Stewart conservation area has generally not been to paint the stone of formal facades although it has been used on rubble walls. There is very little render and what is there seems to be relatively modern. There are a number of buildings that have been painted in inappropriate paint which does not allow the stone beneath to release moisture.

- Maintaining lime-pointed stone frontages is key to ensuring that the stone remains in good order.
- Where there is rubble stone that is already painted, repointing it before repainting with an appropriate mineral paint is most effective.
- Rendering or lime harling off front elevations should only take place if it replaces what was there before.

More general improvement would be achieved by tidying places that are unkempt or empty. There are volunteers in Newton Stewart who do this occasionally but it is the responsibility of owners.

- Uses should be found for vacant sites behind Victoria Street and on Church Street.

- Building gap sites which have little prospect of becoming economically viable, should be tidied up to improve their general appearance without losing the positive elements that contribute to the character of the conservation area.
- The Grapes Hotel and others need to have vegetation removed and some basic maintenance carried out, as well as to the area behind which may have contamination issues.
- Vacant places and buildings should be looked at with a view to having some form of creative or productive interim or permanent use, be that with or without an economic return but perhaps in a way that benefits the general environment of the conservation area which helps attract more visitors.

Proposals for the flood mitigation measures should be considered alongside any objectives for improving the condition of some of the properties within the conservation area.

Character Area B is on the east side of the river including parts of Minnigaff and Creebridge and the less formal part of Creebridge on the south side of New Galloway Road. It includes the early 19th century Cree Bridge over the river and the toll house, the weir in the river, Millcroft Road and a short section of New Galloway Road.

The area sets retains much of its rural character in the vernacular style and placing of the cottages and dwellings on Millcroft Road. The cottages and dwellings make a positive contribution to the rural and historic character. This character should be preserved as far as possible.

- Flood defence measures for residential properties should be designed in a way that allows rural character to be re-established;
- Along Millcroft, proposals to replace cottages with modern buildings should not generally be accepted unless they can preserve character especially where sympathetic alterations and extensions would be significantly more sensitive.
- The introduction of new dwellings should generally be of a design similar to the modest 3 bay cottages facing the road or slightly taller;
- Mixed height design would be appropriate in some places at right angles to the road if more than one dwelling is proposed;

In line with national and local policy retaining, adapting or extending existing dwellings would be supported rather than demolition. This also applies to the southern part of Creebridge where the existing dwellings are mainly from the 19th century and the majority are on the east of the road access often in open gardens. In the event that new dwellings are proposed they should be positioned and designed to reflect the informal layout as it is at present.

Specific management and enhancement objectives for Newton Stewart Conservation Area

The most important aspect of management for Newton Stewart is that all the various initiatives for flood protection, business improvement ambitions and community development work together.

From the point of view of the character of the conservation area the following are the important general management points.

Views and street form

- Preserve the established historic building line of the retail high streets;
- Preserve the height, finish and form of existing buildings and ensure that inappropriate roofscape alterations are avoided;
- Ensure that render, harling, paint or other types of cladding are not introduced to the exterior of the traditional stone and lime buildings;
- Ensure that all options for the introduction of micro-renewable technology is carefully considered rather than an assumption made that it may be attached in every case;
- Additional, or alterations to existing, buildings within the mill area on Millcroft Road area should be very carefully designed to retain the character;
- Preserve the character of the lanes linking Victoria Street to York Road and Church Street and to Riverside Road;
- Preserve Dashwood Square and the architectural integrity of the buildings around it and improve them as required.

Building elevations and materials

- Street frontages should be formed by new development based on surrounding character;
- Slate roofs, dormers and front or visible elevations should retain their bare whinstone, granite and soft or strong red sandstone detail and repeated in some form in new development;
- Traditional windows should be retained and repaired in line with the Council's planning guidance;
- New windows in new development should ideally be timber and use a sliding sash and case mechanism;
- Modern cementitious and hard renders should not be permitted where they do not already exist but on new buildings simple smooth textures and subtle renders or harling may be appropriate;
- On street frontages, dormer or other roof alterations should be based on existing, successful designs and in keeping with the building.

Land-use, landscape and townscape improvements

- Uses should be found for the vacant sites to the rear of Victoria Street
- Sensitive design should be required for the re-use of other noted vacant spaces;
- Enhancement of prominent buildings such as the Grapes Hotel should be encouraged;
- Succession tree planting in the areas around the churches should be considered;

- Care needs to be taken not to dilute the existing haphazard character of the roofscape and the layout in some parts of the conservation area which would undermine its character.

APPENDIX 1: GENERAL ADVICE.

Preserving and enhancing the character of Newton Stewart Conservation Area

Each building or space within the conservation area makes a contribution to the street character of the whole of Newton Stewart Conservation Area.

- ~ Looking after each building properly by owners and occupiers through the use of good design and making a careful choice of materials for all maintenance and improvements is the best way of preserving or enhancing the character of the conservation area. The choices should be made based on sound understanding of traditional (pre-1920) building techniques and knowing that there are always alternative routes and materials to achieve a good outcome for the existing building.
- ~ Keeping the rain out of buildings is paramount as water can damage supporting timbers and plasterwork; checks should be made every year followed by regular and prompt maintenance of roofs and rainwater goods.
- ~ Using irreversible 'new' products for 'quick fix' solutions may make it difficult to carry out long-term repairs in the future.
- ~ Owners should be aware that maintenance should always form part of the annual budget for a building.
- ~ There is a general presumption against the demolition of buildings in a conservation area where they make a positive contribution to character.

There is both Supplementary Guidance available from the Council and national guidance available from Historic Environment Scotland.

Looking after stone and lime elevations.

Traditionally constructed, solid stone walls with lime mortar joints, is the most common building type in Newton Stewart Conservation Area; there are whinstone, and sandstone elevations and granite and sandstone dressings.

All solid stone and lime walls were built to have a normal wet and dry cycle which should be allowed to continue by using cement-free products: natural hydraulic lime [NHL] or lime putty based mortars, lime render, sand and lime mastic and permeable mineral paints will maintain this natural performance. Cement pointing can permanently damage the building stone.

Proposals for restoration or alteration of traditional buildings should take account of climate change. This includes using materials internally which will improve energy efficiency but continue to allow vapour moisture movement through the wall. Further ideas are found in Dumfries and Galloway Council's supplementary guidance [Historic Built Environment](#) and on the Historic Environment Scotland website.

Damp in stone and lime buildings

Injected damp proof courses are generally ineffective in solid stone walls because there are no through joints. The chemicals interfere with the intentional moisture movement through stone. In stone walls, electrolytic techniques may be effective to deter damp for a limited time only but the wires inevitably corrode when they come into contact with moisture regularly.

Equally, early brick buildings pointed with lime mortar may not benefit from injected damp treatment. Damp courses may be effective in 20th century and later brick walls if there is no existing damp course such as a slate course or a membrane included low down in the wall. It is much more effective to remove the source of the damp. In areas which flood this should not be assumed to be possible and using materials that are quick to dry out is more effective.

Removing sources of damp

- Good drainage around a building and from its roof is the best way of preventing damp.
- Hard surfaces close to historic walls provide poor drainage.
- Hard ground and raised planting beds close up to an elevation is likely to trap moisture against the wall and eventually allow damp to penetrate internally.
- Drainage should direct water away from a building as efficiently as possible especially as climate change predicts future rainfall to be heavy.
- Regular checks are required of the rhones, downpipes and concealed rainwater channels to make sure there are no leaks or loose attachments and to remove leaves and other debris.
- Rain water goods with the capacity for higher volumes of rain may be required.
- Cast iron rainwater goods are resilient as long as they are repainted and their fixings and joints are checked.
- Slipped slates should be repaired quickly and they will occur, especially after strong winds.
- Ground drains should be checked for leaks and blockages.
- Vegetation on buildings should be carefully and quickly removed to prevent roots causing gaps in the masonry or lifting lead flashings – buddleia and ivy are common
- Chimneys are important for ventilation and part of the character of the roofscape but introducing lead safes can reduce water penetration if this is a problem.

Windows, doors and timber shopfronts

Timber elements including windows and doors should be painted regularly with traditional weather resistant paint; natural plant oil based paints are good for nourishing new bare wood as well as providing a protective coating. Small areas of cracked or broken putty and damaged timber can be cleaned out and filled or repaired easily or by splicing in good timber. Sliding sash and case window pulleys and cords can be tightened, and draft strips added.

The same principles apply to timber shopfronts including the fascia traditionally used for shop signs. Hanging signs may be appropriate but including too many signs or too much information on any sign is neither attractive nor effective.

Alterations that affect the exterior of buildings

Internal alterations needing pipes and vents to exit through external walls should be planned carefully.

- Ensure that the entry points are discreet, ideally on less prominent elevations.
- Take the same care with alarms and telecoms equipment which may have the same impact.
- Remove old equipment and wires and make good gaps and holes with appropriate materials.

Repairs

Repairing external masonry can usually be carried out without permission if no change is taking place to materials.

- Granite, pale sandstone and red sandstone repairs should use trades specialised in stonework especially where there are moulded or carved stone features.
- Artificial stone repair mixes should be avoided to prevent long term damage.
- Sealants should never be applied to traditional stone and lime walls.

Links to Further Information from Historic Environment Scotland

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/adviceand-support/your-property/owningatraditional-property/traditional-buildings/>

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/adviceand-support/your-property/lookingafter-yourproperty/maintenance-of-traditional-buildings/>

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/adviceand-support/your-property/owningatraditional-property/living-in-a-conservationarea/>

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/adviceand-support/your-property/lookingafter-yourproperty/repair-of-traditional-building>