



From mountain to sea

Huntly

Conservation Area Appraisal

August 2025

Visit www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk



Contents

1	Introduction	3
1.1	What is a Conservation Area?	3
1.2	Implications of a conservation area designation	3
2	Justification for Huntly Conservation Area	6
3	Historical Development	7
3.1	Location	7
3.2	Early History	7
3.3	18 th Century	7
3.4	19 th Century	9
3.5	20 th Century	11
3.6	1950 to Present Day	11
4	Townscape Appraisal	12
4.1	Topography	12
4.2	Gateways	12
4.3	Conservation Area Boundary and Edges	13
4.4	Character Areas	14
4.5	Plot and Street Pattern	15
4.6	Architectural Character	16
4.7	Open Space	17
4.8	Buildings at Risk	17
4.9	Condition	18
4.10	Townscape Detail	19
4.11	Building Materials	20
4.12	Landscape and Trees	22
5	Appendices	24
5.1	Appendix I – Conservation Area Boundary Map	25
5.2	Appendix II – List of listed buildings within the conservation area	26
5.4	Bibliography	29

1 Introduction

The local authority has a statutory (legal) duty to review existing conservation areas and review settlements that have been identified as potential conservation areas. It is proposed by Aberdeenshire Council to review the boundary of the Huntly Conservation Area.

This document provides a full review of the settlement, identifying the special characteristics of its history, development, architecture, and appearance. It is then used to assess if the settlement is worthy of conservation area status and to inform planning advice.

This document is designed to be used as part of a public consultation process with the local community. It will form part of the reporting to council committee where a final decision on whether to adopt the proposal is made.

1.1 What is a conservation area?

Conservation areas were first introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states that for a settlement to be designated as a conservation area it must:

‘Be an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’.

Aberdeenshire currently has 40 conservation areas varying in character from central Stonehaven to the small coastal settlement of Pennan, all of which represent a grouping of buildings and open space which have one, some or all of the following characteristics:

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

1.2 Implications of conservation area designation

In a conservation area it is the buildings and the spaces between that contribute to the special character: buildings, structures, memorials, parks, gardens, landscapes, and trees. It is not always large change but small incremental change that can be damaging to our most attractive and sensitive settlements.

Therefore, building and property owners in a conservation area need to apply for planning permission for changes to the external appearance of their properties that would normally be classed as permitted development. Although to encourage owners to care for their property, this does not apply to 'like for like' repairs and maintenance.

Trees also often contribute significantly to the character of a conservation area. It is an offence for any person to cut, lop, top, uproot, wilfully damage, or destroy any tree in a conservation area unless six weeks' notice has been given to the local authority, during which this time the planning authority may wish to introduce a Tree Preservation Order.

Conservation Area Consent will also be needed for the demolition of any unlisted building, over 115 cubic metres in size, located within conservation areas.

There may be other permissions required, so please check with the local authority before undertaking works. The benefit of the planning application process is that the local authority can assess if an application preserves or enhances the special character of the settlement. It also gives the community an opportunity to comment on the proposal.

1.3 Purpose of this document

The Conservation Area Appraisal forms part of a suite of documents including a Conservation Area Management Plan. The purpose and function of these documents are detailed below:

Conservation Area Appraisal - this document provides a full review of the settlement. It identifies the special characteristics of the area's history, development, architecture, open space, landscape, and appearance, and is also known as a Townscape Appraisal. It is used to assess if the settlement has a special character and if it is worthy of conservation area status. It is also used to identify any areas of enhancement and the proposed boundary.

Conservation Area Management Plan – this document builds on the information obtained as part of the appraisal process and lays out a detailed plan for the conservation, management, and enhancement of the settlement.

Should the proposal be adopted, the appraisal and the management plan become supplementary planning advice to the policies set out in the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan.

1.4 Community consultation

The draft documents are produced to form the basis of a public consultation exercise where those people most directly impacted are consulted on the proposal. This includes the local community, community groups, landowners, tenants, and other interested parties. Their views are sought not only on the proposal but also on how they view the settlement, what they deem to be important, and the aspects of the

settlement that matter to them. The community's views are then incorporated into the final draft which is presented to Marr Area Committee.

1.5 Final approval of proposal

Once the final Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan have been drafted and a full, open and transparent public consultation process has been undertaken, the resulting recommendation is put forward to the relevant Council Area Committee for a final decision.

2 Justification for Huntly Conservation Area

The Huntly Conservation Area was designated in December 1975 by the then Gordon District Council with the boundary of the Conservation Area being drawn to include the original 'grid iron' road layout of the planned town. In January 1988 the conservation area was extended to include the war memorial and the original Gordon School building and was further extended in 2013 to incorporate all the planned town. The Huntly we recognise today is largely centred around the grid iron street pattern, a concept applied by the Duke of Gordon in the 18th century, whose aspirations, values and ideas survives largely intact today.

The layering of history within Huntly and the different character areas contribute to its interest. The oldest part of the town, The Square, is the commercial centre and is dominated by large and grand commercial and civic buildings. There is a notable contrast between the simplicity of the 18th century architecture of the planned town and the more ornate 19th century buildings within the Victorian and Edwardian expansion.

Although there are modern additions to the conservation area, the essence of the planned town with a range of buildings from the simple vernacular along Old Road to the civic buildings and retail core of the Square has been retained. The townscape, overall layout, and character remains largely unaltered and reflects its historical importance and close relationship with its rural surroundings, ensuring that Huntly continues to merit its conservation area designation. The role that people have played in Huntly's development, and their continued involvement, should be specially noted and commended.



3 Historical Development

3.1 Location

Huntly has always been an important focus of routeways as a market town at the bridging points across the Rivers Deveron and Bogie on historical routes linking Aberdeen and Elgin, and Banff and Braemar. It is located approximately 39 miles northwest of Aberdeen, 18 miles from Turriff and 22 miles from Inverurie on the A96. Huntly lies in the parish of Huntly Strathbogie and Drumblade, within the Marr administrative district of Aberdeenshire, and is covered by the Huntly Community Council.

3.2 Early History

The town of Huntly is said to have originally developed from two small settlements positioned on the ridge of ground which today is occupied by Old Road and Lennox Terrace. To the east was “The Raws” or “Milltown of Strathbogie” and to the west, close to what is now the cemetery, was Torriesoul”. In the late 12th century, William the Lion granted Strathbogie to Duncan, Earl of Fife, to subdue the rebellious tribes in the north. The Earl of Fife recognised the strategic importance of “The Raws” and built his castle there known as the Peel of Strathbogie. At this time, the settlement as we know today began to be documented beginning with the building of the castle.

The name Huntly did not exist until Duncan’s descendant lost Strathbogie to the Gordons of Huntly in Berwickshire in 1318-19. Sir John Gordon moved his principal seat from the Borders to Strathbogie and set about improving the northern estate. This resulted in greater prosperity of the surrounding settlements, and in 1545 a charter was granted to the Earl of Huntly promoting the town of Torriesoul into a free burgh of barony. The Gordons were Roman Catholic, and the castle was ransacked during the Reformation (1525-1560) and again during troubles of the late 16th century. The Marquis of Huntly rebuilt the castle but much of it was again destroyed by Parliamentary troops during the Civil War (1644-1645) along with the rows of thatched cottages in “The Raws”; only the original road pattern remains today.

During the 17th century “The Raws” supported many prosperous trades such as merchants, shoemakers, masons, blacksmiths, glovers, dyers and a hostelry, and Huntly was starting to become an important centre of spinning and weaving.

3.3 18th Century

In the 18th Century, as both farming and trade expanded across the northeast of Scotland, the Duke of Gordon established a new planned town to take advantage of the growing economy, raising the population which at the time was just 300 inhabitants. The grid iron pattern of the settlement that we see today was created by combining smaller side roads and a main arterial road (Bogie Street to Duke Street and Deveron Street) leading into The Square which also functioned as a marketplace as shown in Figure 1. The name Huntly was used in official records from 1727.



Figure 1: Rob Military Survey 1747-55

During the early 18th century, a cottage weaving industry began to grow in “The Raws” using locally grown flax and moved to small watermills along the Bogie. In 1737 Cosmo, 3rd Duke of Gordon, invited the Belfast linen manufacturer Hugh McVeagh to set up business in Huntly. At the same time, he devised a plan for a new village for the weavers and supervised its layout. After the Jacobite rising of 1745, the Gordons were debarred from holding lucrative government offices. Alexander, 4th Duke, instead made improvements to his estates to generate income and offered new feus within the town with the focus on a grid iron plan for the settlement. Small crofts and terraced cottages were built as both homes and workplaces, and a large town square provided a focal point and marketplace. At this time, Huntly also benefited from the military roads built after the “Forty-Five” and communications improved with turnpikes firstly to Fochabers and later Dunbennan and Rhynie.

The Gordons began to spend more time at their other estates, finally leaving Huntly in 1752. The executors of the 3rd Duke built Huntly Lodge (now Castle Hotel) to the north of the castle as a house for his widow, using stone taken from the old castle.

By 1772 there were 53 flaxdressers in the town and the surrounding land was divided into small crofts each growing flax. The industry centred on West Wynd, now Deveron Street, with small watermills on the River Boyndie.

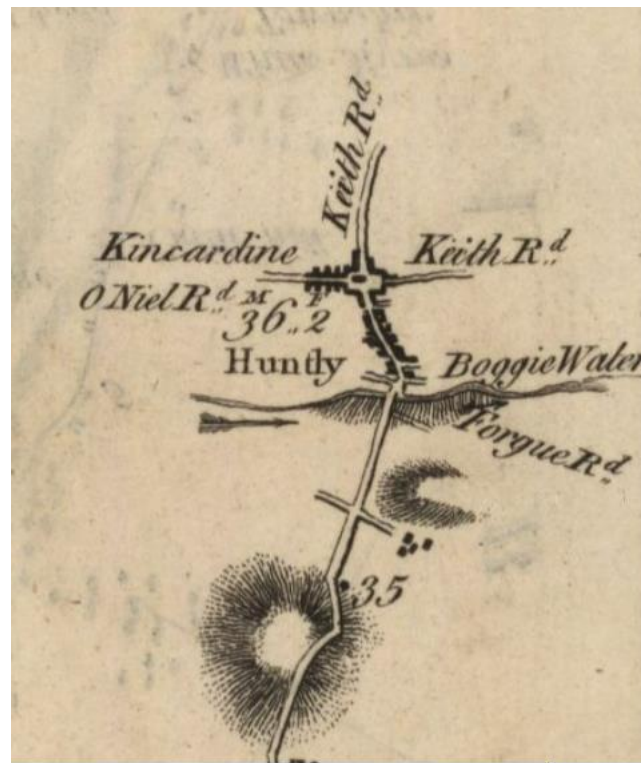


Figure 2: Taylor and Skinner 1776

Figure 2 shows the town's development, with expansion down Duke Street/Bogie Street towards the River Bogie. Castle Street was the main commercial thoroughfare at this time since all traffic had to pass along it. With the increase in importance of Gordon Street, a new turnpike road from George V Avenue to Rhynie was created. Prior to this, Gordon Street would have had low thatched cottages, with their gables facing onto the street, whilst most of the buildings around The Square were two storeyed and had slated roofs.

The Statistical Account of 1794 states that there were two principal streets in the town of Huntly, which crossed each other at right angles forming The Square. Here, markets were held weekly. The prison and townhouse, which had originally stood in The Square, had by this time been demolished and dwelling houses had been built. The Account further states that there are two bridges which assist in entry and exit of Huntly. The bridge over the Bogie Water was modern, had 3 arches and was able to carry heavy loads. The bridge over the River Deveron was described as "ancient but very strong". By the end of the 18th century the population of Huntly is thought to have been around 2,000.

3.4 19th Century

In 1800 Huntly was thriving with the exporting of leather, linen cloth webs, pork, butter, eggs and cheese. Probably the most prosperous industry was McDonald's bleaching works. Imports included iron, lint and various merchant's goods. A regular market was held in The Square, and its importance is reflected in the buildings which remain from this period. As a result of the Napoleonic War (1803-1815), the local flax

based linen trade was impacted, with imported flax recognised as producing better-quality linen. However, the town began instead to weave with wool, consolidating its agricultural trading leading to further growth with the building of new mills, a whisky distillery and tannery, utilising deserted flax mills. This diversification resulted in Huntly becoming a thriving industrial town which grew quickly to both the north and south.



Figure 3: Ordnance Survey 1874

Trade continued to flourish with the arrival of the railway in 1845 by which time the Duke of Gordon's original planned town layout was complete, as can be seen in Figure 3. Buildings were being replaced with larger and more ornate structures, incorporating iron work and carved stone elements, which is notable around The Square with the Brander Library dating from 1835, the former Clydesdale Bank (now the Bank Restaurant) built in 1842 and the Huntly Hotel and Gordon Arms both dating from the late 19th century. Houses constructed to the west were built in an irregular fashion, giving variety to the settlement, and differing greatly from the long straight roads of George Street and King Street (previously Back Street) and the minor roads which ran between them. In the late 19th century villas were constructed within easy reach of the train station.

Notable buildings in Huntly constructed in the 19th century include Gordon Schools (1841 by Archibald Simpson), the Parish Church of Huntly (1805), St Margaret's Church (1834), Strathbogie Parish Church (1841), Christ Church Episcopal Church (1848) and Stewart's Hall (1875).

3.5 20th Century

Huntly continued to flourish during the first half of the 20th century, with further construction of many grand buildings including Scott's Hospital (1901 by A. Marshall Mackenzie), the Linden Centre (1903), and 1 and 1A Bogie Street shopping terrace (1907). During this time the Edwardian expansion of the town continued with the creation of Richmond Road, Albert Terrace and Gladstone Road as shown in Figure 4 below.



Figure 4: Ordnance Survey 1928

In the 1930s, more new buildings were added to Huntly, including the Post Office in The Square, the Police Station on Castle Street, the extension to Gordon Schools and local authority housing. Later developments were added to the edge of the town, out with the original planned town.

In 1935, the 8th Duke of Gordon died, thus ending Huntly's long association with the Gordons. His son sold the Huntly Estate, including the feudal superiority of the town and 12,000 acres of farmland in 1936, opting instead to focus on his English estate at Goodwood.

3.6 1950 to Present Day

During the 1960s, a bypass was created to protect Huntly from the increase in traffic travelling between Aberdeen and Inverness. This was successful in protecting Huntly's historic character, ensuring it has remained largely intact. In more recent years, Huntly has become more of a commuter town as the number of local shops and businesses have declined, as has happened in many other towns across Scotland. Huntly does, however, still retain its market town character which is celebrated each year by the Huntly Hairst in September. In response to the decline of the town centre and the large number of vacant units and buildings, several community groups and individuals are driving the regeneration of the town centre. This has been successful so far through the repurposing of vacant buildings and seeking funds to restore the buildings around The Square, most notably the restoration of No.30 The Square (formerly Cruickshanks).

4 Townscape Appraisal

4.1 Topography

The Statistical Account of 1845 states that the parish of Huntly originally consisted of two parishes, Dunbennan (translates to “foot of the hill”) and Kinoir. Huntly is situated at the termination of the two straths formed by the rivers Bogie and Deveron. The hill between these rivers, the Clashmach means “grey-headed hill”. Huntly is surrounded by hills, Clashmach Hill to the southwest, The Bin Hill to the west and Tap o’Noth all of which are visible from locations within the town, resulting in an attractive setting. The town itself is relatively level, with a gentle slope to the southeast, most notable when travelling down Duke Street/Bogie Street, Provost Street and Bleachfield Street.



4.2 Gateways

Gateways to conservation areas should be clearly defined by traditional building materials, high quality designed buildings and complimentary street furniture, e.g. street lighting. The four principal gateways into the Huntly Conservation Area reflects the historical development along the main arterial routes from east to west and north to south. These gateways and the development along these have shaped the historic character of the conservation areas as they form the basis of the planned town.

On approach from the east (A97 Bogie Street) the road crosses the River Bogie and is the original route for vehicular traffic into the settlement. On entering the conservation area, the impression of a mill town is given with cottages positioned along the riverside with the tightly positioned cottages of Jake Forbes Close directly behind. The area is characterised by greenery and cottages positioned within large individual plots. The open feel quickly changes to the densely populated as the road curves into the settlement.



The approach from the south (Gordon Street/Upperkirk Gate junction) is the main vehicular and pedestrian route towards The Square. Gordon Street has been extended and improved over time and continues to operate as a mixed-use street with a range of frontages and building scales. The reinstated traditional shopfronts at No.47 and No.49-55 act as a clear distinction as the gateway of the conservation area.

The approach from the west (Deveron Street) links the Square with the west side of Huntly and is a route well used by residents. It continues to operate as a working mixed-use street with a range of shop frontages and building scales. This gateway differs greatly from the east as it provides an undisrupted view into The Square.

The entrance to the north of the conservation area is from the tree lined avenue from the ruins of Huntly Castle (scheduled monument) and the original building of the Gordon's School with its grand archway (category A listed), with the boundary of the conservation area being marked by the war memorial. The category B listed war memorial was erected in 1920 and is positioned on the Gordon Street, The Square and Castle Street axis.

Entering on alternative routes into the conservation area differs in that a traveller is met with the Victorian and Edwardian expansion with large villas, granite boundary walls with railings and hedging, particularly on Bleachfield Street and Victoria Road.

4.3 Conservation Area Boundary and Edges

The existing boundary encompasses the entirety of the original planned town's grid iron street pattern, which has resulted in a large conservation area including areas which have lost their special character. Therefore, it is proposed that the boundary is amended to be kept as tight as possible around the historic core and streets which continue to be of high quality in relation to use of traditional materials and which continue to maintain their special character. The boundary of the Huntly Conservation Area encompasses the three distinctive character areas of Huntly, providing a clear distinction between the historic core of the settlement and later phases of expansion.

The northeast boundary is kept tight around the rear of the properties on Gordon Street, starting at the junction of Upperkirk Gate, encompassing Deveron Street up to and including Chapel Street. The boundary to the west includes the south side of Westpark Street and the war memorial before incorporating the area of Castle Street and The Square. The boundary stretches to the south, incorporating the older streets of the settlement, McVeagh Street, Old Road, Duke Street and Bogie Street. The boundary extends to the southeast taking in Gladstone Road, Albert Terrace and Richmond Road and where Church Street and Princess Street meet Upperkirk Gate.

Gordon Schools is not included within the boundary of the conservation area however it is designated as a Listed building which provides statutory protection. Similarly, Christ Church Episcopal Church on Provost Street is not included within the boundary, but it is also a Listed building.

4.4 Character Areas

Huntly is divided into three-character areas. Firstly, the original area of the planned settlement (pre-late-19th century as shown in Figure 3), which today is the area to the northeast of the Square taking in George Street and King Street and the minor streets in between, Duke Street and Bogie Street to the east and Gordon Street across to Church Street. This part of the planned town was the former industrial, commercial, retail, educational and civic centre for this part of Aberdeenshire from the mid-19th to mid-20th century, which is reflected in the range of buildings. The density of buildings is relatively high within this area with little public open space and few trees, which creates an enclosure like feel. Many of the buildings within this area of the conservation area are simple and traditional in appearance, built in terraces straight to the pavement with large plots to the rear. The Parish Church of Huntly on Church Street and the large trees within the churchyard acts a natural boundary between the differing character areas.



Secondly, The Square is considered to be one of Aberdeenshire's most splendid civic areas, where commercial, retail and civic buildings of impressive scale sit side by side. These buildings have been built in a variety of materials and design which contribute to the vitality and interest of The Square. On approach to The Square, travellers pass through long narrow streets which are largely shaded however, this opens on entry to The Square where they are met with the statue, standing stones and drinking fountain in the centre. The variety of uses of the buildings, along with shoppers, buses and cars give The Square its important centre of town atmosphere.

Finally, there is the Victorian and Edwardian expansion to the southeast, which reflects a period when Huntly benefited from the arrival of the railway in 1845 and the increase in trade and wealth this brought to the town. Church Street is the natural boundary between the older areas (pre-late 19th century) of the Huntly Conservation Area and the Victorian and Edwardian expansion. The character of the area is defined by traditional materials, mature trees and boundary walls to enclose certain areas, such as Albert Terrace. The established villas are attractive in terms of their form and are varied in design, often with embellishments like finials, feature windows or even towers, largely set back in generous plots. The area is further characterised by granite boundary walls, some with wrought iron railings and gates or hedging. All these characteristics provide a contrasting appearance from the rest of the settlement. The church in Church Street and the tall mature trees within its boundary is a distinctive focal point within this area of the settlement, as is the bowling green on Richmond Road, which provided a break in the surrounding landscaping and boundary walls. Alexander Scott's Hospital is a Category A listed building by A Marshall Mackenzie, constructed in 1901. It sits within landscaped grounds and is a prominent feature on Gladstone Road. There has been modern in fill development between villas, most of which are single or 1 ½ storey properties constructed in complementary materials and with boundary walls, which does not result in them visually competing with the villas.

What binds all of Huntly together is the iron grid pattern of the settlement and the strong cohesion in the use of materials. Together these provide continuity across the differing ages of construction and plot size which otherwise are in contrast with each other.

4.5 Plot and Street Pattern

The differences in street pattern and plot sizes in Huntly are indicative of the period of development. McVeagh Street and Old Road (both depicted on the 1747-55 Roy Military Map, Figure 1), joining at the east end of Bogie Street do not follow the rigid grid iron formation of the planned town as these originated from the early settlement "The Raws", which today can be seen in the route of Old Road and Lennox Terrace. These streets are nestled alongside small lanes which have grown within an informal street pattern, finalising with Jake Forbes Close, an attractive grouping of later 18th century dwellings. Old Road was the original main route into the settlement, later being replaced by Bogie Street and Duke Street as the main route. These streets have now been absorbed into the grid iron pattern and although most of the original houses were replaced during the 18th and 19th centuries, the street pattern remains intact.

The grid iron pattern is one of the strongest features of Huntly, implemented by the Duke of Gordon in 1776. The Square, at its centre, with the main through roads of Gordon Street, Castle Street, Duke Street and Deveron Street form the earliest part of this structure. The main streets in these areas, such as Gordon Street and Deveron Street, are wider while the back lanes and minor streets are narrower. The central streets near The Square, are characterised by narrow roads with property frontages situated directly onto narrow pavements. The densely constructed street pattern creates the appearance of terraces even where there are a variety of property sizes and styles. Within this grid iron pattern, plot sizes were traditionally narrow, but could be long, reflecting the need to grow food or for the drying of linen or wool in the 18th and 19th centuries.

In contrast, as the town grows during the late 19th and early 20th century expansion (Richmond Road, Victoria Road, Gladstone Road and Bleachfield Street) the density of buildings begins to reduce. Streets widen, and the area becomes characterised by large villas in established plots, with gardens to the front and rear, creating a leafy street scene with attractive boundary treatments. This variance in plot size and pattern is a reflection of how Huntly evolved between the 18th and 20th centuries.



The subdivision of larger plots to make way for modern development should be given careful consideration as this can erode the visual amenity of the settlement and there is not a historic trend of this happening in Huntly.

4.6 Architectural Character

The variety of architecture and contrast between the simplicity of the cottages and smaller dwellings of the 18th and 19th centuries with the grandeur and prominence of the civic and commercial architecture found in The Square and the Victorian and Edwardian expansion to the south, all play an important role in creating the unique character of the settlement worthy of preservation.

Although there are clear differences between the styles of buildings in the Huntly Conservation Area, there is a shared architectural character among them. This is reflected in the traditional materials and detailing including elements such as sash

and case windows, decorative door furniture, chimneys, traditional dormers, slate roofing and traditional boundary treatments, following simple vernacular principles, which contribute to the overall character of the settlement. Further traditional detailing, such as shop frontages, decorative cast iron architectural elements, and a variety of architectural styles contribute positively towards the appearance of the town centre.

The majority of the buildings within the Huntly Conservation Area date from the 18th to the early 20th centuries, although many are on the site of earlier buildings. The layout, scale, form and design of the buildings and their interrelationship with each other provides an excellent example of a Scottish planned town with a special character and interest. Most of the buildings retain their simplicity and symmetry of their original architectural style which reflects the economic and social background to their construction.

There are pockets of unique buildings throughout the Huntly Conservation Area such as Jake Forbes Close, a small collection of late 18th century cottages which reflect the early development in Huntly as well as impressive civic buildings located around the settlement. Together, the buildings make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation and are important as evidence of Huntly's development and evolution.

4.7 Open Space

One of the distinguishing characteristics of the Huntly Conservation Area is the dense urban form resulting in little natural open space, particularly in the pre-late 19th century areas of development. This is a sharp contrast with the openness of the River Bogie and Deveron River and the hills beyond. Within the Victorian and Edwardian expansion, particularly around Richmond Road, Albert Terrance and Gladstone Street, mature gardens provide green spaces around individual properties.

The Square is one of the few areas of open space within the Huntly Conservation Area. Historic photographs show The Square previously being an undeveloped space, with informal separation between vehicles and pedestrians. Further photographs from 1984 show that a landscaping scheme had been introduced with planting and formal parking areas. This was further developed with an enhancement scheme in 2000, which improved the public realm and introduced complementary materials and street furniture. Currently The Square and the structures within it such as the Duke of Richmond statue and the Pictish stones are underutilised and could be improved to create an attractive focus within the town centre.

4.8 Development Opportunities/Risks

There have been considerable regeneration works carried out to the buildings located within The Square in recent years, with further plans to enhance the area. With the closure of banks and the decline in retail, many large properties fell into decline with no identified use for the buildings. Following investment from individual retailers and groups such as Deveron Projects and the Huntly Development Trust, some of the prominent buildings on The Square have been restored and repurposed bringing an exciting new chapter to the town centre. However, at the time of writing of

this document, the Huntly Hotel has been identified by the community as being in a poor condition having been vacant for over a decade. There have been no forthcoming plans for the building from the property owner.

Infill development within larger plots should be minimised, as the narrow central streets off The Square have been largely impacted by this. These properties have frontages situated directly onto narrow pavements, giving the appearance of terraces even where there is a variety of property size, however, they have large feues to the rear. The conservation area would benefit from the retention of these feues where they remain.

4.9 Condition

Overall, Huntly is a pleasant settlement, with many buildings and areas being well maintained, however there are some areas and buildings where dereliction, lack of maintenance and neglect has had a negative impact on the amenity and appearance of the area. This is particularly noticeable on the streets that come off The Square such as Deveron Road, Duke Street and Gordon Street, which are also the main roads into the town centre.

The conservation area benefits from properties where timber windows have been retained, albeit various designs can be found. There are many properties with uPVC windows and doors, particularly around Chapel Street and Nelson Street. Similarly, the introduction of roof lights, where roof space has been converted, has often seen oversized modern designs rather than conservation style rooflights of traditional proportions being installed.

Cast iron rainwater goods are noted on a number of properties within the Huntly Conservation Area, however there are also a considerable number with uPVC rainwater goods, which erodes the overall appearance of the conservation area. A small number of solar panels and air source heat pumps are visible on properties within the settlement. Positioning of micro-renewables needs to be carefully considered to ensure that the appearance and character of the conservation area is not negatively impacted.

Huntly has a wealth of public buildings mostly dating from the 19th century, principal among these are the Brander Library (1835), the Bank Restaurant (former Clydesdale Bank 1842) and Stewart's Hall (1875) which continue to be well used. With specific reference to The Square, Bogie Street and Gordon Street, unsympathetic attention to signage and street furniture within these areas could drastically alter the scale and appearance of the buildings and their surroundings.

Huntly has several high-quality shopfronts, but many are oversized and of non-traditional materials. There has been some work recently to reinstate traditional shop fronts within the conservation area, such as No.55 Gordon Street (Gordon Rural Action) and the neighbouring premises "The Bikery". The appearance of the streetscape is an important element in the character of a town centre. Good design of shop fronts can give a very strong message to customers about the pride they have

in the area and its heritage, increasing the attractiveness of the centre to potential customers and the viability of businesses.

Huntly Hotel closed in 2014, and the condition of the building quickly deteriorated. Owing to the highly prominent location of the hotel in the centre of Huntly, on The Square, there has been considerable interest in the building due to the negative impact this has had on the wider conservation area. At the time of writing there has been no visible improvement to the exterior of the building.

4.10 Townscape Detail

As well as the above-mentioned high-quality buildings in Huntly, there are several other structures within Huntly which contribute to the townscape and its history, particularly those found in The Square. Located near the centre of The Square is a statue of the Duke of Richmond and Gordon by Alexander Brodie 1863. The Duke wears the uniform of the Sussex militia, of which he was the Colonel. At the base of the statue are two Pictish stones (the 'stan'n stanes' of Strathbogie) which previously formed part of a stone circle and were placed here in the late 18th century. One of the stones was carved with a Pictish horseshoe but this has eroded away. The Robertson Fountain, at the south end of The Square, dates from 1882 and was erected in memory of James Robertson, Bank Agent and Distiller. Out with The Square, in front of the original Gordon's Schools is the war memorial, designed in a classical style constructed in granite, erected in 1920.



Street furniture can significantly contribute both positively and negatively to the appearance of a conservation area, through sensitive/insensitive lighting, bins and signage.

Two traditional details that can be found in the Huntly Conservation Area, and which should be preserved, restored or reintroduced, are the road names plates, attractive black and white metal sign plates, and the traditional painting of property numbers on walls beside doors. These are more attractive than modern alternatives and help to maintain the historic interest of the settlement.



Modern street lighting is found throughout the Huntly Conservation Area except for The Square, where two differing styles of heritage lanterns can be found. Around the perimeter are large overhanging heritage style lanterns and in the centre are smaller upright heritage lanterns. Having heritage style lanterns in the centre of Huntly helps to enhance the character of the settlement and their replacement like for like or installation is encouraged. The use of heritage style lighting throughout the entire conservation area is encouraged to provide consistency but also to mark the boundary.

Roads and footpaths throughout the conservation area predominately tarmac, with The Square having Caithness stone flag pavements and paving setts used as a shared surface for the pavement and road for a small section of Duke Street leading from The Square. Within The Square, granite benches and metal railings have been used to enhance the public realm, however there is no soft landscaping or green space within the town centre, with buildings constructed up to the pavements, limiting the amount of pedestrian and vehicle space available.

There have been newer additions to the street furniture with plastic waste bins positioned around the settlement and within The Square as well as standard yellow grit bins, which are out of place in historic settings. The Square is cluttered with road signage which detracts from the attractive appearance of the area.

4.11 Building Materials

Traditional materials to be found in the conservation are:

- Cast Iron

- Wrought Iron
- Vertical Timber Boarding
- Dressed Timber
- Scotch and Welsh Slate
- Clay Chimney Pots
- Field Stone
- Granite
- Whinstone
- Riven/Fissile Stone
- Lime Mortar, Harl and Wash.
- Lead
- Single Plate Glazing

Modern Materials are also found in the conservation area and are associated with later repair and newer forms of construction. They are not a direct replacement of existing traditional materials, and many are found not to be sympathetic to the character of Huntly including:

- Corrugated Cement Sheet (Asbestos entrained)
 - Mineral Roofing Felt
 - Concrete Block
 - Galvanised Steel
 - Extruded Plastics
 - PVC
 - Cement Mortar, Harl & Render
 - Pre-Cast Concrete Elements
 - Acrylic Paints
-

4.12 Landscape and Trees

The Huntly Conservation Area is densely built up, particularly in the pre-late 19th century streets, with there being no tradition of planting street trees in Huntly, therefore trees are not a dominant element and as a result, where they are found, they are extremely important to the street scene. Trees are more commonly found in the churchyard and adjacent gardens in Church Street and Provost Street, the garden at the corner of New Road and Bogie Street and in the gardens of the Victorian and Edwardian expansion of the town (Queen Street, Gladstone Road etc.)

There is one Tree Preservation Order (TPO) within the boundary of the Huntly Conservation Area.

- AC TPO 133 (2023) Huntly Parish Church. Four sycamore trees, 3 lime trees, one oak tree and one sequoia tree.

4.13 Aspects of the settlement vulnerable to climate change

The most prevalent challenge for Huntly is severe weather and the impact this can have on traditionally constructed properties from warmer winters, frequent intense rainfall and high winds and storms. Regular maintenance and carefully designed alterations to a property can ensure that the building is protected from the worst of these. More information can be found in Historic Environment Scotland's Climate Change Adaptation for Traditional Buildings.

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=a0138f5b-c173-4e09-818f-a7ac00ad04fb>

4.14 Aspects of the built heritage that would benefit from a holistic approach to energy efficiency

Buildings that already exist are a huge past investment in carbon spent during the building's construction including extraction of materials, manufacture, transport, installation, and waste generated during construction. By retaining an existing building, you are not wasting the embodied carbon in its original construction, and you are not adding to its carbon cost through the process of demolition.

Retrofitting a traditional building in a material that has a high carbon cost in production or not compatible with traditional construction could be counter intuitive. Historic Environment Scotland (HES) promote a holistic approach to emissions reduction.

- 1) Reduce your heat loss – this covers aspects such as ensuring your external fabric is in well maintained to avoid damp. Ensuring windows and doors are in good condition or improved in a sustainable manner. Ensuring the property is well insulated.

- 2) Improve space and water heating – this can include looking at more efficient heat sources i.e., using your fireplaces, biomass, ground source heat pumps, air source heat pumps or even just a more efficient boiler.
- 3) Electricity generation – this should always be carried out last, there is no point installing solar panels, wind power or hydro power until you have first undertaken steps 1 and 2.

4.15 Buildings, structures, and spaces identified by the community as important

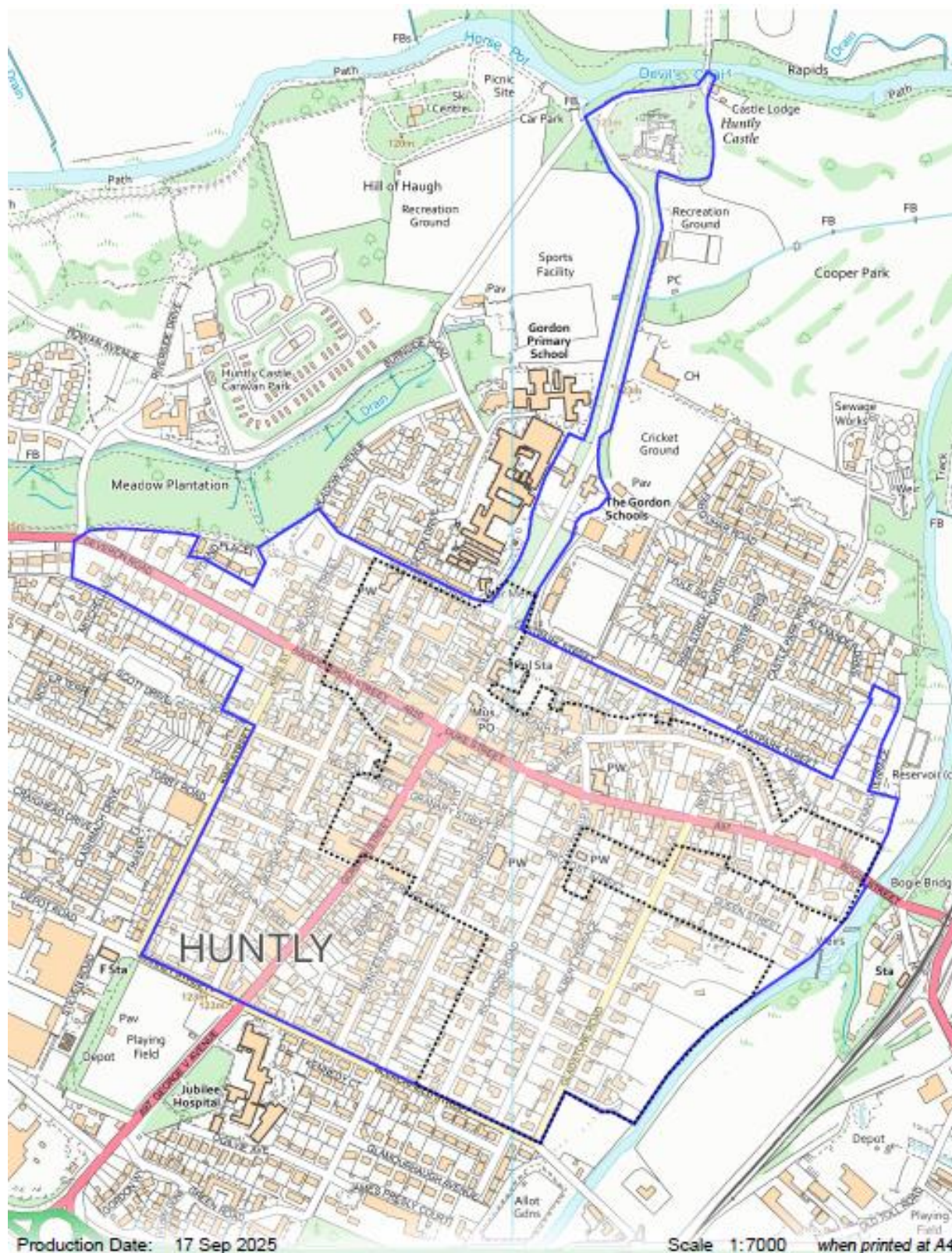
***TO BE COMPLETED FOLLOWING PUBLIC CONSULTATION EXERCISES**

5 Appendices

5.1 Appendix I – Conservation Area Boundary Map

5.2 Appendix I – List of listed buildings within the conservation area

5.3 Bibliography



HES Reference	Statutory Title	Category
LB34916	23-25 Gordon Street	B
LB34920	14 Gordon Street	C
LB34915	Reid and Gordon's 21 Gordon Street and Nelson Street	C
LB34919	10 Gordon Street	C
LB34914	Stewart's Hall 15, 17 Gordon Street	C
LB34913	7-11 Gordon Street	C
LB34918	Bank of Scotland, 2 Gordon Street	B
LB34912	1 Gordon Street Corner of Square	B
LB34923	Clydesdale Bank 2 Square and Gordon Street	B
LB34935	The Square, Gordon Arms Hotel	C
LB34934	32 The Square	C
LB34933	26 The Square	C
LB34932	28 The Square	B
LB34931	24 and 30 The Square	B
LB34930	22,23 The Square	C
LB34929	18, The Square, Huntly Hotel	C
LB34928	Brander Library, 17 Square	B
LB34927	Post Office 15, 16 Square	B
LB34922	Duke of Richmond Statue, The Square	B
LB34926	8, 9 Square	C

LB34925	7 The Square, Aberdeen Savings Bank	C
LB34924	The Square Fountain	C
LB34937	8-12 Castle Street	B
LB34938	14 Castle Street	C
LB34939	16, 18 Castle Street	C
LB34940	20, 22 Castle Street	B
LB34941	30 Castle Street	B
LB34942	Huntly War Memorial	B
LB34936	19 Castle Street	B
LB34944	Balvenie House 3 West Park Street	B
LB34945	St. Margaret's R.C. Church, Westpark Street and Chapel Street	A
LB34948	31 Deveron Street	C
LB34947	29 Deveron Street	B
LB34946	27 Deveron Street with Pend to 25	C
LB34965	Granary Building, Richmond Lane and Granary Street	C
LB34952	1-5 Duke Street	C
LB34953	7-11 Duke Street	C
LB34954	43-45 Duke Street	C
LB34908	6 Church Street	B

LB34909	8 Church Street and Johnston and Carmichael's Office	B
LB34899	Parish Church of Huntly Church Street	B
LB34910	10 Church Street	C
LB34911	12 Church Street	C
LB34900	3 Church Street and 35 Duke Street	B
LB34901	5 Church Street	C
LB34902	9 Church Street	B
LB34903	11, 13 Church Street	C
LB34904	15, 17 Church Street	B
LB34905	19 Church Street	C
LB34906	23 Church Street	C
LB34907	25 Church Street	B
LB34951	32 Old Road	C
LB34955	Stathbogie Parish Church Bogie Street	B
LB34959	1 and 1A Bogie Street	B
LB34956	54 Bogie Street	C
LB34957	56 Bogie Street	C
LB34958	58 Bogie Street	B
LB34962	Scott's Hospital, Gladstone Road	A
LB34964	Howglen Gladstone Road	B

5.4 Bibliography

Sharples, J. Walker, D. Woodworth, M., 2015. Aberdeenshire: South and Aberdeen. Yale University Press. London

The Statistical Accounts of Scotland 1791-1845. Huntly, *County of Aberdeen, NSA, Vol.XII.1845, University of Edinburgh*, accessed 2 July 2025.

https://stataccscot.ed.ac.uk/static/statacc/dist/viewer/nsa-vol12-Parish_record_for_Huntly_in_the_county_of_Aberdeen_in_volume_12_of_account_2/nsa-vol12-p1036-parish-aberdeen-huntly?search=huntly

The Statistical Accounts of Scotland 1791-1845. Huntly, *County of Aberdeen, OSA, Vol.XI.1794, University of Edinburgh*, accessed 2 July 2025.

https://stataccscot.ed.ac.uk/static/statacc/dist/viewer/osa-vol11-Parish_record_for_Huntly_in_the_county_of_Aberdeen_in_volume_11_of_account_1/osa-vol11-p467-parish-aberdeen-huntly?search=huntly

Aberdeenshire Council, January 2020. Huntly Conservation Area Management Plan

Aberdeenshire Council, 2013. Huntly Conservation Area Review

Gordon District Council 1978. Huntly Conservation Area

For further information concerning the contents of this document, contributions for its improvement or any matters concerning conservation areas or listed buildings, contact the Historic Environment Team.

Historic Environment Team,
Aberdeenshire Council,
Westburn Road
Aberdeen
AB16 5GB