Aberdeenshire COUNCIL

From mountain to sea

Pennan

Conservation Area Management Plan

February 2026

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1 Introduction

1.1 Why is Pennan a conservation area?

Pennan is an excellent example of an early Aberdeenshire fishing village in a highly unusual and dramatic location. Tightly huddled above the shoreline and beneath the rugged steep cliffs, the gabled form of white rendered cottages, provides a unique special character, not found in any other location within Aberdeenshire. The linear form of the original village has been well preserved, as has the strong cohesive traditional scale and simple plan form of the buildings. There is a pattern of uniformity created from the simple, traditional, pitched roof, fisherman's cottages, with many traditional materials and styles having been used in its continued maintenance. Features such as the informality of pavements and boundaries and the high density of properties mirrored by the limited open spaces, generally given over to drying greens and sheds, as well as the traditional gabled form of the buildings, against the openness of the main street, all help to contribute towards the special character of Pennan.

The Pennan we see and recognise today is largely a result of the village's expansion during the 18th and 19th centuries due to the extension and improvement of the harbour and the subsequent growth of the fishing industry. During this time improvements to properties were carried out to heighten them and increase living accommodation, which is largely how the buildings remain today.

Pennan's character is steeped in local diversity and distinctiveness by its layout, building style, materials and cultural traditions. Yearly, visitors are drawn to the small yet instantly recognisable village which has survived centuries despite locational challenges. Pennan is considered one of Aberdeenshire's most exceptional coastal settlements, therefore, its conservation area status is justifiable.

1.2 Buildings and spaces identified by the community as important

This section has been completed following public consultation exercises. The buildings and spaces described below have been identified by the community as being important to the Pennan Conservation Area.

From the responses provided, it has shown a strong community pride within Pennan and there is a desire to continue to preserve and enhance the character of the village. It was noted that respondents felt that the special interest of the village is created by the buildings collectively, with some individual properties being of particular interest, especially people's homes. The overall feeling that the village provides to respondents was also mentioned as well as the risk of the overall character being damaged by numerous small changes.

The harbour area was identified as being important to Pennan as both a gathering place for locals and visitors but also as a form of coastal protection to the village. The harbour is used as a gathering place, with the 'Coastal Cuppie', a small kiosk at the harbour which sells refreshments, enhancing its appeal. It is an area in the village which brings the community together and acts as the heart of the village. Similarly, the Bankhead, a path which runs the length of the village, constructed 1953-1955

following a severe storm in 1953, was also identified as being as being important to Pennan as was the desire for its continued maintenance.

The public hall has played a significant role in the lives of the community in Pennan, with regular events being held as well as parties and weddings, creating many happy memories for residents. The building also includes the public toilets which are open daily for the use of visitors.

The Pennan Inn was identified as being vital to the community and visitors alike. The historic interiors and low doorways of the building were also identified as well as its link, along with the phone box, with the film ‘Local Hero’, which attracts visitors to the village.



2 What does conservation area status mean for you?

2.1 Additional planning considerations in a conservation area

There is a need for repairs and alterations, energy efficiency improvements and modern living improvements to properties within conservation areas to allow for their continued use. Due to being designated a conservation area, it is the role of the Planning Service to advise on any alterations, improvements or new development, to ensure it complements and enhances the special character of the settlement. A number of buildings within Pennan are protected by listed building status which means that alterations require Listed Building Consent.

Building and property owners within the Pennan Conservation Area should apply for planning permission for changes to the external appearance of their properties, although this does not apply to 'like for like' repairs and maintenance. Certain permitted development rights (development that can be carried out without applying for consent), are removed within conservation areas to protect the special character and appearance of the settlement. If in doubt, please check with the Planning Service before undertaking any works.

It is not always large change but small incremental change that can erode a settlement's special character. For example, the removal of wooden doors and windows, the erection of gates, fences, garages, sheds, porches, storage tanks, the installation of satellite antennae, signage and small but unsympathetic extensions. In isolation these may appear minor but over time can start to erode the special character and appearance of a conservation area.

Trees 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 and permission is obtained.

Conservation Area Consent is required for the demolition of any unlisted building over 115 cubic metres located within the Pennan Conservation Area. Please note that it is a criminal offence to demolish any building within a conservation area without the necessary consent. There is a presumption to retain buildings that contribute positively to the conservation area, as buildings which already exist are a past investment in carbon spent during the building's construction through the extraction of materials, manufacture, transport, installation and waste generated during construction, which all form part of its embodied energy. 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 therefore the Planning Service would seek restoration and sympathetic conversion to be considered before proposals to demolish are investigated.

2.2 Article 4 Directions

In addition to the measures above, it is proposed to add extra controls within the Pennan Conservation Area which will put extra restrictions on groups like Statutory Undertakers and the Local Authority to bring their obligations more in line with those

of the owners of domestic and non-domestic properties and provide consistency in planning decisions within the conservation area.

For a full list of the Article 4 Directions relevant to Pennan please see Appendix II – Article 4 Directions.



3 Conservation Area Management Plan

3.1 What is the purpose of a Conservation Area Management Plan?

This document is designed to act as a supportive document to the Pennan Conservation Area Appraisal. The Conservation Area Management Plan provides guidance on the permissions which may be required before carrying out works and the policy and guidance on how to undertake works to a property.

Management plans are a legislative document which local authorities are required to produce for all conservation areas, however they are tailored to fit with the requirements of a community and the specific character of the settlement. It is envisioned that this document will be of value in providing guidance to property owners on the ongoing care of their properties and how traditional buildings can be sensitively altered and retrofitted, as well as for the use of Development Management Officers in the assessment of new development that falls within the conservation area boundary to ensure consistency in decision making.

3.2 Sustainability of Pennan

Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Service recognises that the historic environment is not static, and it can make a dynamic and positive contribution to those living, working and visiting the area. Historic settlements like Pennan need to continually adapt and meet the changing needs of the community, whether this be through new housing or alterations to existing properties.

Every settlement faces its own individual challenges, which for Pennan is the coastal environment, climate change, the requirement for tourism and the effect this has on the settlement. However, these can all be managed in a sustainable manner to help with the needs for modern life and ensure the continued existence of the village.

The preservation and enhancement of the historic environment can assist with these challenges as well as protect the unique appearance and character of the settlement, which once lost or damaged cannot be replaced. Buildings that already exist are a past investment in carbon spent during the building's construction including extraction of materials, manufacture, transport, installation, and waste generated during construction, which form part of its embodied energy. By retaining and upgrading an existing building, the embodied carbon in its original construction is not lost. Therefore, the continued use and adaption of these buildings are a sustainable approach.

It is the intention of the Planning Service to produce this guidance for property owners in Pennan to assist them with the continued maintenance of their properties as well as the wider settlement through the management of open spaces and character areas, all of which contribute to the overall attractive nature of the settlement. The below guidance is provided under several themes, to help ensure the continued existence of a sustainable Pennan Conservation Area for future generations.

3.3 Natural Processes

Climate Change

Climate change is the effect of years of rapid industrialisation, a dependency on fossil fuels and population growth, resulting in excessive levels of greenhouse gas emissions. The changes we have seen to the climate through increased rainfall, more extreme weather events, increased temperatures, rising sea levels and coastal erosion, are all set to continue for years to come. These changes impact our historic environment, and we must therefore be able to adapt our buildings to withstand the effects of climate change to allow for their continued use.

Pennan is located in an area which is vulnerable to natural hazards and weather extremes, however, constructing the properties with the gable end to the sea reduced their exposure to high winds and steep roof pitches allow for rainwater to shed rapidly has helped their survival. Outlined below are additional measures homeowners may wish to consider, to ensure their properties are equipped for the additional pressures of climate change.

Flooding

Pennan has been identified in the North East Local Plan District: Local Flood Risk Management Plan (2022) to be a Potentially Vulnerable Area to flooding, which due to climate change, is likely to become more prevalent in coming years. Although a sea wall and construction of the Bankhead in 1953 following a devastating storm, there are additional measures which could be implemented by property owners to reduce the impact of flooding. There are many products available which can be used to temporarily protect a building including air-brick covers which go over sub-floor ventilation and barriers/boards which seal openings such as doors and windows. Rainwater goods of a greater diameter than existing can cope with greater amounts of rainfall. Maintenance of drainage around the property is also important and should not be obstructed. The high permeability of many traditional construction materials e.g. timber and lime mortars, can be advantageous by allowing properties to dry out.

Coastal Erosion

The Bankhead, which runs the length of the village from the harbour to the carpark at the west end, was built between 1953 and 1955 after a severe storm in January 1953 destroyed all but a couple of buildings on the seaward side of the road. The then Banff and Buchan County Council built the Bankhead as the risk from the sea to property and life was high. Today the risk of coastal erosion continues, with the sea defences of Pennan subject to rough high seas year-round, putting pressure on the infrastructure, which is of great concern to the community.

A feasibility study is to be published in March 2025, providing analysis of the integrity of the existing sea defences in Pennan and to identify risk areas and outline future works that are required to protect Pennan for the future. This is a piece of work which is being led by the local community and Aberdeenshire Council.

Landslips

Aberdeenshire Council, will continue, in accordance with policy, to provide advice in the event of a landslip occurring or where residents have concerns about the potential for a landslip. Inspection of the site will also be carried out following significant weather events that have the potential to affect the slopes to advise of any increased risk. Works would only be carried out to the slopes by Aberdeenshire Council if there is a risk to a Council owned asset, such as the access road.

Further prevention measures

To ensure that Pennan can be best prepared for extreme weather events, other measures such as regular clearing of gulleys/drains, regular inspection and repair works to the harbour walls/Bankhead and maintenance of the existing flood defences should be conducted to protect Pennan as best as possible.

3.4 Human Processes

Energy Efficiency and Retrofit

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 commits Scotland to some of the most ambitious carbon reduction targets in the world. Several measures are available for traditionally constructed properties within conservation areas to ensure they are as energy efficient as possible and therefore extending their lifespan. This is described as the retrofit of traditional buildings and can be done in several ways. The introduction of insulation, draughtproofing or the upgrading of heating systems, when used in conjunction with each other, can successfully reduce the energy demand of a property. Before any retrofit work is carried out to a building, it is essential that it is in a good condition and any areas of damp are dealt with. A building in a poor condition cannot be thermally efficient.

We would recommend seeking advice prior to any works being carried out to ensure the proposed method is suitable for the property and will not cause any adverse effects such as condensation or material decay, as many products available are not suited to traditionally constructed buildings.

Micro renewables

From May 2024, there has been a relaxation of permitted development rights within conservation areas regarding micro-renewables, however this does not apply to listed buildings. This has seen changes in what requires full planning permission and the requirement for Prior Notification/Prior Approval. The Recent changes are outlined in the Scottish Government's Planning circular 1/2024: householder permitted development rights:
https://www.gov.scot/publications/circular-1-2024-householder-permitted-development-rights/pages/6/

The introduction of micro-renewables is not the first or only way to make a building 'carbon conscious', especially one of traditional construction. Steps should be taken to reduce energy demand, through reduced heat loss, the installation of insulation, and more efficient methods of heating before investing in micro-renewables.

If you require additional information and guidance, please contact the local planning authority:
https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications/check-if-you-need-planning-permission/

Insulation

Unless a property is listed many retrofit measures, such as the introduction of internal wall or roof insulation, can be carried out without permission from the Planning Service. Measures which would alter the appearance of the exterior of the property, such as external wall insulation, would require permission from the Planning Service, whether the building is listed or not.

The use of breathable and vapour permeable insulation is the most effective in traditionally constructed properties as it promotes the movement of moisture through the building. Many forms of insulation do not allow for the movement of moisture and can result in the build-up of condensation resulting in damp to the interior. We would recommend seeking advice prior to any works being carried out to ensure the proposed method is suitable for the property.

Windows

The preference of the Planning Service would be for the repair of original timber units over their replacement. Where windows are single glazed, it may be possible to upgrade these to incorporate slim double glazing. The replacement with a double-glazed timber unit following the previous design and style, with concealed trickle ventilation, would also be acceptable. This is to ensure the proposed window style is appropriate to the age and construction of the property.

Due to the coastal environment, the material of window fixings, such as fastenings and sash lifts, would be a personal choice as this would have low impact on the appearance of the property, however if the building is listed, the Planning Service would seek replication of the existing ironmongery in terms of appearance and material.

Modern timber windows can achieve the same performance standards of their uPVC counterparts with the advantage of being a more sustainable building material. Historic Environment Scotland provide detailed guidance and research on this topic, which can be accessed via their website under Publications:

https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/

From May 2024, there has been a relaxation of permitted development rights within conservation areas regarding the replacement of windows, however this does not apply to listed buildings. This has seen changes in what requires full planning permission and the requirement for Prior Notification/Prior Approval. The Recent changes are outlined in the Scottish Government's Planning circular 1/2024: householder permitted development rights: https://www.gov.scot/publications/circular-1-2024-householder-permitted-development-rights/pages/7/

If you require additional information and guidance, please contact the local planning authority: https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications/check-if-you-need-planning-permission/

Guidance

Historic Environment Scotland are the government agency who take a lead role in the research and guidance on improving energy efficiency in traditional buildings, a sample of which are given below. These and a wider selection of guidance, case studies and research are available online from the link below. Further guidance can also be sought from the Planning Service.

Short Guide 1 – Fabric Improvement for Energy Efficiency

Short Guide 8 – Micro-renewables in the Historic Environment

Short Guide 11 – Climate Change Adaption for Traditional Buildings.

https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/

Please note that works to a building may require a building warrant. Please check with Building Standards prior to the commencement of any works.

https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/building-standards

3.5 Traditional Materials and Property Maintenance

Stonework

The main building material in the historic core of Pennan is local red sandstone which plays a significant role in shaping the appearance and character of the conservation area. The local sandstone is a very friable (soft) stone and can be easily damaged by incompatible materials.

The use of lime mortar is preferable over the use of cement as it allows the movement and expulsion of moisture and discourages the retention of moisture build up within buildings. Lime pointing should be retained or replicated on a like for like basis matching the specification (mix) and finish of the original mortar. The Planning Service will encourage the replacement of existing cement pointing with traditional lime mortars.

The painting or applying of any cementitious or nonbreathable form of coating to the face of the exposed sandstone would be discouraged as it can result in its accelerated decay. Similarly, the cleaning of the stonework would be discouraged unless proven necessary, and then encouraged to be carried out by scrubbing by hand with non-ferrous brushes and a low-pressure water source.

Harl/Render

Although the main construction material is the local red sandstone, most buildings in Pennan have a white painted rendered surface treatment on top of the sandstone. The white rendered cottages have become something of a trademark in the settlement, therefore its retention would be encouraged. Originally, the buildings would have been harled/rendered with lime-based products to protect the soft sandstone from the harsh weather conditions. Many have been replaced with cement-based renders, which were prevalent with post war construction.

Cement based products can accelerate the decay of soft sandstone by trapping moisture into the structure and stopping it from being able to escape and causing damp and moisture build up within the property. When the opportunity arises, the Planning Service would recommend the reinstatement of a traditional lime harl/render where any existing cement-based renders need replacing.

Roofs

Roofs, including chimneys, stone skews, clay ridge tiles and chimney pots have a positive impact on the traditional character of the conservation area. Within Pennan there is a mixture of roofing materials. The majority of roofs are Welsh slate, with a few examples of traditional natural clay pantiles with a slate eaves course. Clay pantile roofs would have been prevalent within Pennan, being replaced with concrete alternatives in recent years. The Planning Service would encourage the retention and

reinstatement of traditional roofing in existing properties and in any new development.

Dormers

A variety of dormers can be found within the Pennan Conservation Area. They were likely introduced on 1½ storey houses built from the mid-19th Century when they were heightened to accommodate increased domestic living space or added during the rebuilding of dwellings. They not only shape the character of the individual buildings but the wider streetscape.

Several properties have large box dormers, which are out of character and scale with the conservation area and would not be encouraged within new design. Replacement with smaller more traditionally proportioned dormers would be encouraged if the opportunity arises.

Rooflights

There is a handful of original cast iron rooflights within Pennan, with many having been replaced by modern alternatives often larger in size. The retention of original cast iron rooflights, especially in 'non-living' spaces of attics and subservient structures, is encouraged.

Where new rooflights are to be introduced on traditional buildings or in new development, it is recommended they are the minimum size necessary, and are a true top hung (hinged) conservation unit with vertical proportions and subdivided into two panes by a central glazing bar. On symmetrical elevations the positioning of rooflights should be considered to create a balanced appearance of the building's frontage.

Rainwater Goods

Cast iron gutters and downpipes are a robust material which when maintained can last for over 100 years and are fully recyclable. If well maintained, they play a significant role in shaping the character of individual buildings, however, if left unpainted they will start to erode and rust rapidly, which is exacerbated in coastal locations. Some companies who supply cast iron rainwater goods offer pre-painted rainwater goods which removes the onus from property owners to paint them following installation, providing protection even in coastal settings. Encouragement is given to the reinstatement of cast iron gutters where they have already been replaced.

Within conservation areas alternative materials for rainwater goods can be acceptable on non-listed buildings, such as aluminium or steel in a black finish. Any repairs or replacement fittings, gutters and downpipe should be undertaken on a like for like basis.

There is a presumption against the replacement of original cast iron rainwater goods with uPVC fittings, which came into development in the 1950s as a cheap alternative

to rainwater goods. Not only do they have negative impact on the appearance of properties, but they are more fragile and prone to accidental damage.

Doors

There is no distinct pattern to the design of doors in Pennan. Some properties retain or replicate the simple timber boarded doors, and some have more detailed panelled door designs with associated ironmongery more associated with the development of the settlement in the 19th century. It should be noted that a historic doorway is not solely the door, but also surrounding elements such as door furniture (letter boxes, door knockers, boot scrapers, painted numbers), other exterior ironmongery and any decorative glasswork.

The retention of traditional doors and associated door furniture contribute to the character of Pennan, and their retention is encouraged. Replacements should respect the originals in terms of the design and construction and should reflect the doors styles found within the conservation area. The retention of original door fittings and fixings is also encouraged.

Boundary Treatments

One of the significant and unusual features of Pennan is the lack of boundary treatments and the open nature of the whole settlement. The lack of fences and gates to provide private areas is a feature found within some other Aberdeenshire fishing villages where properties are built closely together. The small number of private areas directly outside properties is offset by the public spaces in the village. These open spaces are evidence of the social and developmental history of Pennan, which would be lost by the insertion of gates into these closes/passageways. Where new development is proposed within the conservation area, the omission of boundary treatments should be considered within the design to continue to promote its open nature.

Where any traditional boundary treatments are found, the age and construction of these various elements all contribute to the interest of the townscape of Pennan, and the Planning Authority would encourage their retention.

Satellite Dishes and Aerials

Where satellite dishes and aerials need to be fixed to a property, they should be located in a position that is as discreet as possible so as not to negatively impact on the appearance of the building and the wider character and appearance of the conservation area. Where a satellite dish or aerial is no longer in use, its removal is encouraged.

A previous application was made in 2019 for the erection of a mast at the west end of the village, directly adjacent to the public hall. It was deemed to be in an inappropriate location and was refused permission. If any future applications were to be brought forward for a similar scheme within Pennan, the applicant would be required to fully consider the proposal. The Planning Service would seek for a

discreet location to be sought which would not impose on the appearance or character of any individual building or the wider conservation area. It would also be recommended that the structure be of the minimum height necessary and of a recessive colour so as not to draw attention to it when appreciating the famous streetscape from the cliffs above.

3.6 New Development

Extensions

Proposals to extend a property located within the conservation area should not be considered in isolation but in context to the wider townscape. This is to ensure it respects the character, scale and proportions of neighbouring buildings. Any new extension should follow the established building line of its neighbours and use detailing and materials which are distinctive or complimentary to the settlement. This could also include a high-quality contemporary approach if appropriate.

New Build

Where a new build is proposed its design should be such that the scale, proportions, and form relate to each other and the neighbouring buildings and/or open space and the wider area, and the highest possible standard of professional design is expected. The replication of traditional elements, such as dormers should complement the character of the conservation area in terms of proportions and materials.

The proposed materials used in the design of a new building should be complementary with those found in the Pennan Conservation Area, such as white wet dash render or timber cladding to replicate ancillary structures. For small structures, metal profile sheet roofing would be appropriate to reflect the traditional sheds found within the village, but on larger buildings such as a dwelling, reclaimed slate or pantiles would be most appropriate.

New construction does not have to be traditional in terms of its design, however the materials, scale, position and orientation have to be carefully considered to ensure that they complement the conservation area, its characteristics and respect the special importance of the settlement.

Ancillary Buildings

The few remaining traditional sheds found along the shoreline with vertical timber cladding and corrugated iron or clay pantile roofing are particularly important in terms of material. Within fishing communities, the timberwork was often coated with bitumen, and many were deliberately charred to make the timber more fire and rot resistant. There are few remaining in existence across Aberdeenshire therefore their retention is encouraged.

Proposals to erect or replace an ancillary building located within the conservation area should respect the historic and coastal setting through its scale, design and materials to ensure that it respects the character of Pennan. Where a conversion of an ancillary building to a new use is proposed the Planning Service would ask that the original character of the property and pattern of the development is not lost. The use of materials within its conversion should complement those traditionally found in Pennan either through the use of render or timber cladding. As with new build, conversion of ancillary structures does not have to be traditional in terms of its

design, however it should complement the conservation area, its characteristics and respect the special importance of the settlement.

3.7 Tourism

Historic Environment Scotland in their report Our Past, Our Future (2023) outline that over 18 million people visited heritage attractions in 2019, with half of all international visitors reporting heritage as the key motivation for visiting Scotland (SHEA and VisitScotland). An online survey conducted in September 2021 by Aberdeenshire Council's Archaeology Service indicated that 93% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that heritage and the historic environment makes a positive difference to their lives. This increase in tourism to historic sites and locations makes an important contribution to the local economy.

VisitAberdeenshire's 2024 Annual Consumer Research (Nov 2024) reported "an 'ideal' holiday destination would meet both emotional and functional needs; being relaxing, offering value for money, quality accommodation and somewhere rich in culture and heritage". Local food and drink, walks and heritage were identified as being important activities in the responses and beach holidays as one of the favoured holiday types, all of which are available to those visiting Pennan. Also identified within VisitAberdeenshire's Consumer Research was the increase in the use of social media such as Instagram to influence holiday makers as to where to visit.

Over the last three centuries, Pennan has adapted from a thriving fishing village to one dependent on tourism, the biggest industry within the conservation area today. Many properties are second or holiday homes and the Pennan Inn, which opened in the 1970s, has recently been taken under new management. The 'Coastal Cuppie', is located at the harbour selling refreshments to visitors.

Pennan's greatest fortune came from the film 'Local Hero' (1983), when the village caught the attention of the film makers, providing a dramatic location for the setting of the film. In the film, representatives of a US petro-chemical firm seek to build a refinery in a coastal village but decide to preserve the village instead and build the refinery offshore. One of the main characters updates his manager each night from the red phone box on the shorefront.

'Local Hero' and more recently, social media, has resulted in attracting thousands of visitors annually to the village, drawn by the dramatic and picturesque scenery, the coastal setting, the famous phone box and other surrounding landmarks such as the harbour. This creates considerable visitor spend both in Pennan and surrounding areas.

Street Furniture

The visual appearance of Pennan is important for both residents and visitors in making it an attractive place to live, work and visit. The sensitive nature of Pennan merits high-quality street furniture, in terms of street lighting, waste bins and seating, as these significantly add to the overall appearance of the conservation area. Currently, Pennan has complementary street furniture, with cast iron waste bins,

benches, letter box and road sign, which are all appropriate for the conservation area and the Planning Service would encourage their retention.

There are unique pieces of street furniture which are found in Pennan, links with the history of the village which should be preserved. A barometer situated in the gable of the Pennan Inn was installed in the village in 1864. This illustrates Pennan's history as a working harbour and serves as a memorial to those fishermen who lost their lives in storms.

Another significant piece of street furniture found in Pennan is the red phone box. Many settlements within Aberdeenshire retain their phone boxes, however Pennan's has become iconic due to the filming of Local Hero in the village in the early 1980s. Although the phone box was not the one used during filming, it has become a tourist attraction with visitors coming to the village because of the scenes in the film in which the phone box was used. The phone box is category C listed.

Small areas of improvement could be carried out to the public areas within Pennan, such as ensuring the timber clad section of sea wall is regularly maintained and painted, and the area of car parking to the west of the settlement where the recycling and waste bins are located would benefit from screening to obscure the bins.

Public Areas

Due to the tight plan form of the settlement, there is little in terms of private gardens within the village however this results in several public areas throughout Pennan which are used by residents and visitors alike.

Pennan Public Hall is a well-used space within the village with an active community group who organise the hosting of functions and events. The building includes the public toilets which are open daily and are well used by visitors to Pennan. It was originally an accommodation hut at the First World War aerodrome at Lenabo near Longside in Aberdeenshire.

The Bankhead is a path which runs the length of the village from the harbour to the carpark/village hall. It was built between 1953 and 1955 after a severe storm in January 1953 destroyed all but a couple of buildings on the seaward side of the road. It now serves as a safe route of travel from one end of the village to the other avoiding the road.

The former drying greens are situated on a grassed area along the shoreline at the west end of the village. This was previously used for the drying of fishing nets and are evidence of past activities of a once flourishing fishing community.

Although commercial fishing boats no longer use Pennan harbour, there are a limited number of moorings available for small commercial and leisure crafts, small yachts and kayaks over the summer months. The harbour is managed by the Pennan Harbour

Trust who are an active group managing and improving the harbour. The harbour we see today was built between 1845 and 1903, with extensions built to both piers between 1905 and 1908. The improvements of the harbour resulted in an increase in the population of Pennan. Without the harbour, Pennan would not have developed and grown into the unique village we see today. The harbour's commercial decline, and the village's population decrease, coincided with the increase in size of herring fishing vessels in the mid-late 19th century, the boats becoming too large to land at Pennan's small harbour. The harbour is category B listed.

4 Enhancement Opportunities

4.1 Funding

There are a variety of funding opportunities available to community groups and charitable organisations which can be used to enhance the appearance of a settlement, nature restoration, biodiversity and other community led improvements. Due to the continuing change of funding which is available it is not possible to list these within this document, however, below are some funding bodies which might be of assistance for heritage led improvements in conservation areas:

- Historic Environment Scotland
- The Architectural Heritage Fund
- The Association for Industrial Archaeology
- Dalrymple Donaldson Fund
- SUEZ Communities Trust
- The Wolfson Foundation

Further information can be provided on current funding available to communities by contacting Aberdeenshire Council's Economic Development team at econdev@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

4.2 Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis

SWOT Analysis can be a useful tool to help visualise the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for a conservation area. They can be viewed alongside one another and help bring together/summarise the content of the conservation area appraisal.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Harbour area • Unique and dramatic setting • Tourist area • Layout of settlement – organic • Unique fishing village with strong links to the harbour and fishing history • Amenity and interest provided by the coastal location • Gabled form of buildings • Continued use of dwellings as second homes/holiday homes, supporting tourism	• Bin areas outside village hall • Large number of second/holiday homes • Inappropriate alteration of windows, doors, external fixtures with modern materials, such as uPVC, aluminium and cement-based renders • Wide variety of different window and door styles detract from consistency • Varying styles of dormer – some large box dormers that detract from the simple proportion of the original traditional pitched roofs. • Coastal climate – require additional maintenance of fabric
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Retrofit of traditional properties • Reinstatement of lost features/materials	• Climate change • Further development within the Conservation Area • Recent development increase

• Development designed and constructed in a way to preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area • Design that carefully considers types of materials, finish and colours used. • Improvement of Bankhead	• Lack of investment in upkeep of properties • Lack of building maintenance and/or repair by property owners and engagement of local people • Unsympathetic development that undermines character of conservation area

4.3 Training and outreach opportunities for residents

Resources are available from other organisations, who provide guidance and training on a range of topics that relate to traditional buildings, such as Historic Environment Scotland, SPAB and the Scottish Lime Centre Trust.

4.4 Recommendations for future enhancements

Sites suitable for adaptive re-use or redevelopment

As identified in the conservation area appraisal there are a small number of buildings within Pennan that are currently lying vacant or in need of repair, detracting from the unique character of the area. In recent years proposals have been brought forward for the redevelopment of some of these buildings. Further opportunities may exist in the further reuse of sites to further enhance the conservation area.

- Storage facility in front of Pennan Inn with no positive contribution to the conservation area due to the materials used in its construction.

- Garage/boat shed positioned between numbers 43 and 47.

Repair and maintenance strategy

Generally, the properties within Pennan are in good condition with only small areas of improvement required. The importance of property maintenance should not be underestimated, such as replacing slipped or missing slates, repairing damaged leadwork or replacing cracked rainwater goods but planned regular maintenance such as painting timberwork and cleaning out gutters. The effects of these being unattended can lead to damage to both the internal and external fabric of the building and issues such as wet or dry rot.

An opportunity for improvement for the properties in Pennan would be the removal of cement renders when the opportunity arises. Properties have been constructed using the local red sandstone, which is very soft and friable and susceptible to erosion. Due to the nature of cement, it does not allow for the stone beneath to breath and dry out, causing untold damage and deterioration to the sandstone. It is therefore recommended that the use of a lime based harl is encouraged when the opportunity

arises to ensure the properties are functioning as intended. It may be desirable to undertake research and survey work by a lime specialist to assist in this.

Street scape improvements strategy

The current lamp standards along the shore are an early form of heritage style column which complements the wider appearance of the designated area. They are beginning to show their age and will soon require replacement. Lanterns in a heritage style should be sought. The lamps on the hill down to the settlement are of a more modern design; it would be beneficial for these to be upgraded to a heritage style to denote the entrance to the conservation area.

Wall mounted lighting is attached to some dwellings along the shore which can cause damage to the stonework of a property when removed. When works are being carried out to improve streetlighting in Pennan, it may be prudent to further explore the possibility of the removal of these lights by the relevant departments in Aberdeenshire Council.

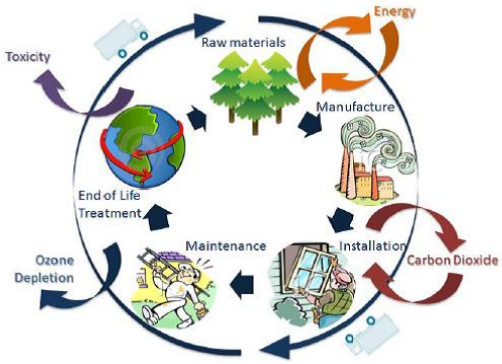
The roadways and pathways play a significant role in the overall appearance of the settlement, and it would therefore be beneficial to ensure that any works carried out by utility companies are controlled to ensure that repair works do not detract from the character of the area.

Climate change strategy

Scotland's pre-1919 traditionally constructed buildings equate to around 20% of its total building stock. Around 40% of Scotland's total carbon emissions come from domestic energy consumption. But to understand the contribution these buildings make; it is important to first understand the difference between embodied and operational carbon.

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. These all form part of its embodied energy. 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.

'There is nothing more sustainable than a building that already exists'



Operational carbon emissions are those generated when the building is in use i.e. heating, lighting. So, should old buildings simply be retrofitted to modern standards?

There needs to be a considered approach, 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. The carbon cost in its production and installation could outweigh the operational reduction in carbon emissions. 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.

For further guidance research and case studies on this topic please visit https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/

Short Guide 1 – Fabric improvement for energy efficiency
Short Guide 11 – Climate change adaption for traditional buildings
Short Guide 8 – Micro renewables in the historic environment

5 Planning Policy Context

To give some background to planning, applications for any form of development or redevelopment are assessed based on planning policies. This section covers the national and local policies which shape how planning applications, which impact on the historic environment, are assessed through the planning process.

5.1 National and Local Strategies, Plans and Advice

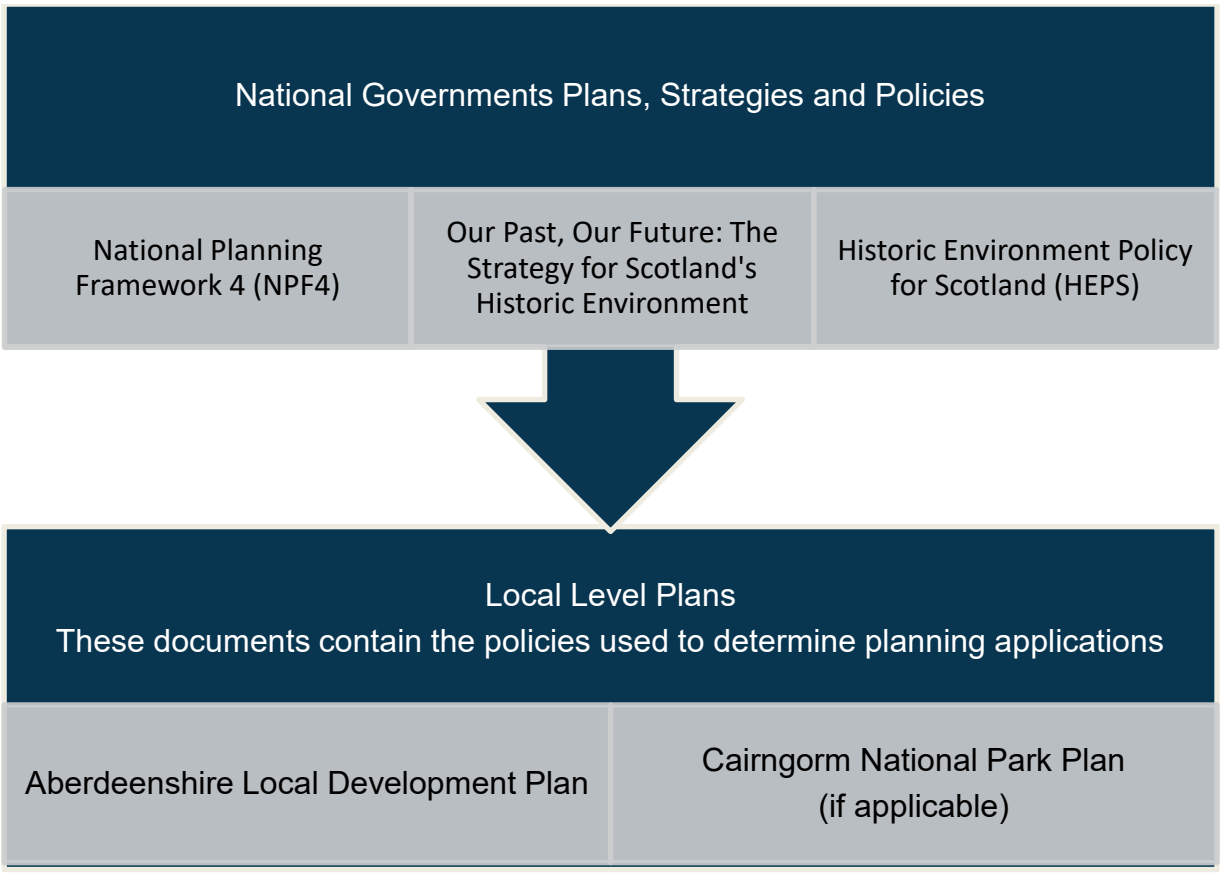


Table 1 – National and local strategies and plans

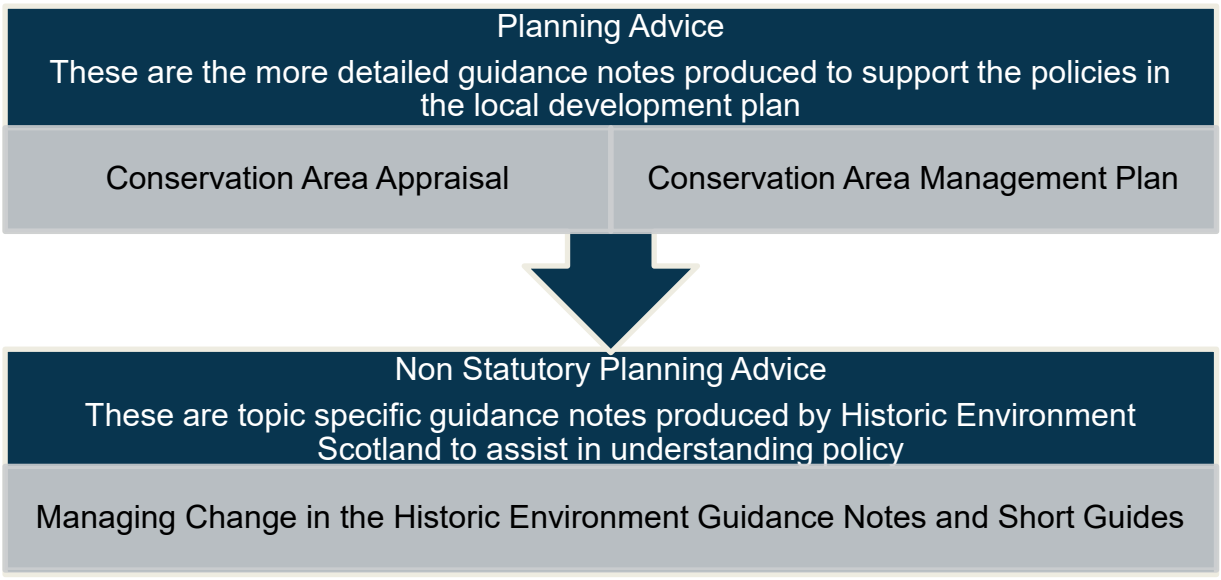


Table 2 – Planning advice which supports national and local strategies and plans

5.2 Aberdeenshire Council – Historic Environment Policy

The historic environment policies applied to planning applications for change in a conservation area are held within the most up to date Aberdeenshire or Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (if applicable).

5.3 Aberdeenshire Council – Historic Environment Team Strategy

Aberdeenshire Council recognises that protecting and improving the historic environment is important to the distinctiveness and sense of place within Aberdeenshire. Local history helps create a clear identity for the area and strengthens connections between people and places. The historic environment is important to the character of the area and to the quality of life of the people who live and work here, and it is an economic asset to the area.

The Historic Environment Team within Aberdeenshire Council assist not only with the management of development through the planning process but are also involved in a wide range of work promoting, protecting, and enhancing built heritage. The full range of the Historic Environment Team's work is detailed in the Historic Environment Team Strategy

http://publications.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/dataset/built-heritage-strategy

6 Monitoring and Review

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 requires the local authority to undertake regular reviews of the conservation area. This is an opportunity to engage with the local community, to set out plans for management and to monitor the condition of the conservation area since the last review. Conservation Area reviews seek to identify what makes a place special and assist the local authority when reviewing the boundaries, identifying possible enhancements, considering if the designation is still suitable and monitoring the success or otherwise of change management in the settlement. At the point of next review:

- The conservation area management plan will be used as a benchmarking tool in terms of what ‘we’ as a local authority said we would do and the overall success of the plan.
- A photographic record of the settlement will also be undertaken, to be used as a tool to monitor the condition of the conservation area since the last review point.

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.

Helpful links

Aberdeenshire Council contact planning team

https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications/contact/

Find out if you live in a conservation area

https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/built-heritage/conservation-area/

Find out if your property is listed

https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/listing-scheduling-and-designations/listed-buildings/search-for-a-listed-building/

Find Historic Environment Scotland Guidance

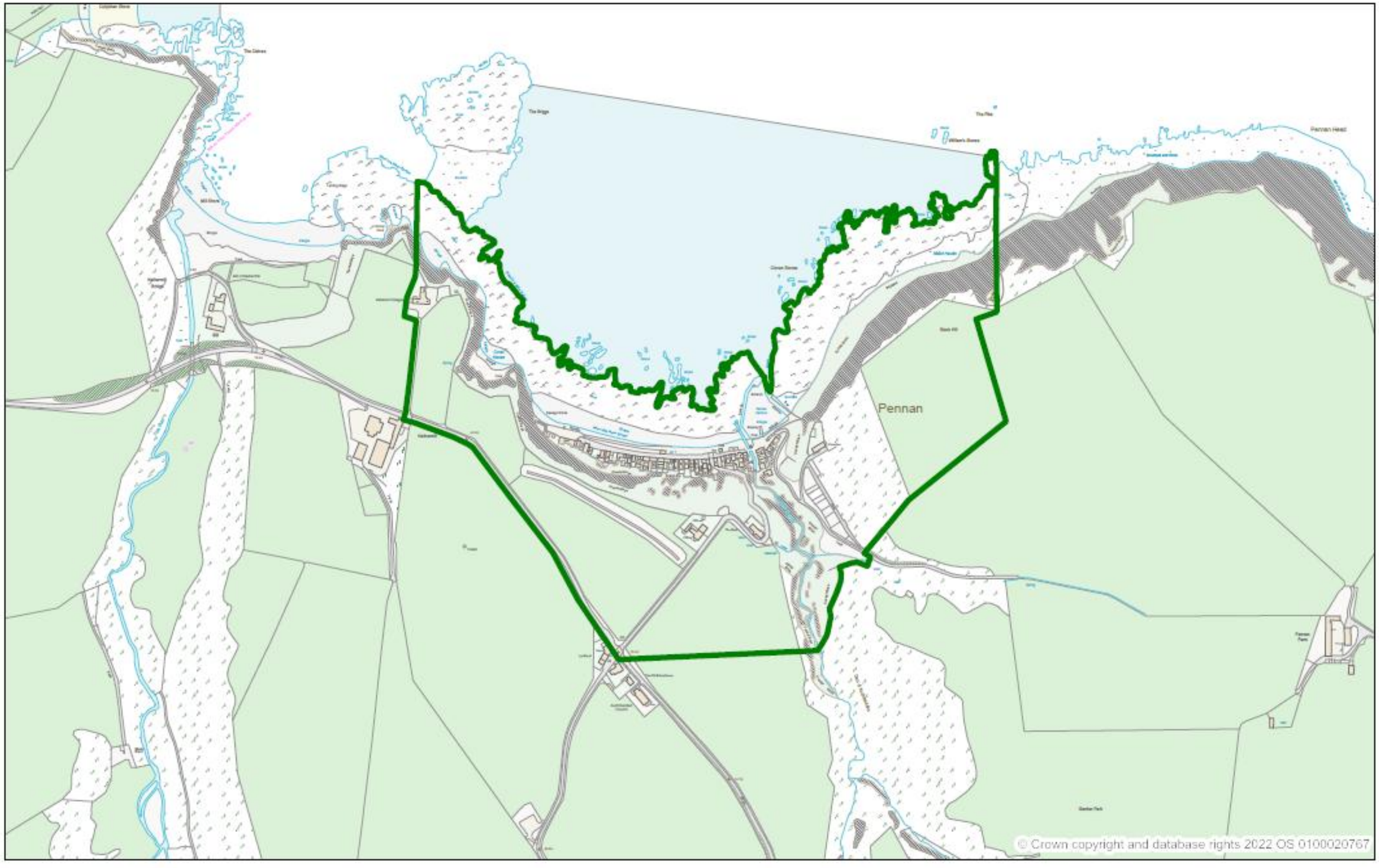
https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/

Search Aberdeenshire's Historic Environment Record

https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/smrpub/default.aspx

7 Appendices

7.1 Appendix I – Conservation Area Boundary Map



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24th May 2022

Aberdeenshire COUNCIL

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7.2 Appendix II – Article 4 Directions

PART 10 - REPAIRS TO SERVICES

Class 28 – The carrying out of any works for the purposes of inspecting, repairing or renewing any sewer, main, pipe, cable or other apparatus, including breaking open any land for that purpose.

PART 12- DEVELOPMENT BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Class 30 – The erection or construction and the maintenance, improvement or other alteration by a local authority of –

(a) Any building, works or equipment not exceeding 4 metres in height or 200 cubic metres in capacity on land belonging to or maintained by them being building, works or equipment required for the purposes of any function exercised by them on that land otherwise than as statutory undertakers;

(b) Street furniture required in connection with the operation of any public service administered by them

Class 31 – Carrying out of works by a road's authority

Class 33 – Carrying out of works, within their own district, by a local authority

PART 13 - DEVELOPMENT BY STATUTORY UNDERTAKERS

Class 38 – Water undertakings

Class 39 – Development by a public gas transporter

Class 40 – Electricity undertakings

Class 43 – Universal Service Provider

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