

PERTH CENTRAL AREAL LOCAL PLAN 1997

WRITTEN STATEMENT

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Housing

Background

- 3.6 The Central Area of Perth has traditionally accounted for much of the city's private rented accommodation, and, to a lesser extent its privately owned houses. Although upper floor housing is widespread throughout the Central Area there are also significant parts, particularly to the west and south, where ground floor housing is also the norm. In the past a significant proportion of the housing stock was in a poor condition, or below tolerable standard, or lacking basic amenities and there was also a high vacancy rate, particularly in upper floor housing, often due to the attitude of commercial or institutional owners.

Survey Conclusions

- 3.7 Between 1981 and 1991 the following trends have emerged:
- ◆ A 29% increase in households in the Central Area from 1625 to 2110.
 - ◆ A reduction in household size from 1.82 to 1.62 persons per household. (household size in the Perth area as a whole fell during the same period from 2.68 to 2.45).
 - ◆ A significant reduction in the number of houses in a poor condition and lacking basic amenities (See **Diagram 6**).
 - ◆ A reduction in privately/rented accommodation and an increase in privately owned houses (See **Diagram 7**).
 - ◆ A continued vacancy rate of approximately 8% of stock (194 houses).
 - ◆ A significant amount of property conversion to housing by the private sector and more recently new build housing by housing associations.
 - ◆ Continuing demand for Central Area housing particularly by the young, old and special need groups.

Opportunities

- 3.8 Due to changes in land use patterns within the Central Area, there would appear to be significant opportunities to provide further housing in the area. These opportunities would arise through -
- (i) The reuse of vacant or under-used upper floor properties throughout the Central Area.
 - (ii) The conversion of buildings to housing which have ceased to have commercial viability and/or which are worthy of retention because of their architectural or townscape value.
 - (iii) New build on cleared sites or sites where the buildings are not worthy or capable of retention.

- 3.9 In addition there is scope to strengthen and improve the residential amenity of the areas of ground floor housing within the south, west, and north west of the Central Area by:-
- ◆ Making housing the primary land use zoning in these areas (See **Map 1**).
 - ◆ Limiting through traffic and traffic speed within these areas by introducing speed restrictions and traffic calming measures and giving priority to parking for residents.

Employment

Background

- 3.10 The Central Area is an important employment location for residents of Perth and the District as a whole. The employment structure in the Central Area is dominated by employment in the retail, business and public service sectors.

Survey Conclusions

- 3.11 Within the last 10 years there have been changes to employment patterns in the city, with decentralisation of major employers from the Central Area to peripheral locations. It is difficult to make accurate comparisons with previous surveys of the Central Area's employment structure because of changes in basic data but the following trends have occurred since 1981:
- ◆ Growth in both retail and public sector employment (34% and 31% of total employment respectively, in 1991).
 - ◆ Decline in office/business employment (13% of total employment in 1991).
 - ◆ Decline in industrial employment (6% of total employment in 1991).

Opportunities

- 3.12 Decentralisation of employment has a number of implications for the city as a whole. Although employment which is concentrated in a town centre can be served more easily by public transport than peripheral developments, a spreading of employment locations throughout the city can ease peak time traffic congestion in the town centre, and can reduce the demand for long stay parking. However decentralisation of employment can have implications for spending patterns within the Central Area - such as lunch time shopping by office staff. Employment creating uses should be found for development sites within the Central Area to aid vitality and viability.

Business and Industry

Background

- 3.13 Historically, there has been a great variety of size of office accommodation within the Central Area. Most offices have traditionally been small and located on the periphery of the main retail core, although these were supplemented by a few large offices located in prestigious premises and accounting for the majority of the area's commercial floor space. In the 1970's and 1980's there was a growing trend for commercial/financial services with a high degree of public contact to locate or seek to locate in the main retail core. Changes in legislation and

Government advice have recently encouraged this trend which had previously been resisted through the Local Plan's policies discouraging changes of use from retail to non-retail uses within the retail core and discouraging the change of use from housing to offices (See **Map 2**).

- 3.14 Much of the industry tended to be small-scale and service related and was located in the small workshops on the periphery of the Central Area although these were supplemented by a few large industrial uses which accounted for the majority of the Central Area's industrial floor space. These large industrial uses have now located to the industrial estates on the periphery of Perth or elsewhere leaving only the small scale and service related uses within the centre.
- 3.15 The reorganisation of Local Government in 1996 resulted in a considerable transfer of staff from Dundee to Perth creating demand for office premises within Perth which was satisfied in the short term through the take up of the existing available supply.

Survey Conclusions

- 3.16 Since the 1970's the following trends have emerged:
- ◆ A reduction in commercial floor space in the Central Area as a consequence of the relocation of large offices such as the General Accident to locations outwith the town centre.
 - ◆ A reduction in industrial floor space in the Central Area as a consequence of the relocation of industry such as Pullars and Gloags to locations outwith the town centre and elsewhere.
 - ◆ A continuing demand for smaller office and business premises in the Central Area.

Opportunities

- 3.17 Decentralisation of office and industrial premises from the Central Area is, in some ways, inevitable as companies seek to take advantage of purpose built premises, lower rents, the availability of on site parking and increased accessibility to the main road network, and it is clear that this trend will continue given the peripheral business land identified in the Perth Area Local Plan. However, there is likely to be a continued demand for small-scale business and industrial premises within the Central Area because it is the focus for so much other business activity. Proposals to create new centralised office accommodation for Perth & Kinross Council should release office property that the Council occupy for office or other uses.

Retailing

Background

- 3.18 Perth is the major centre for retailing in the Perth & Kinross area and beyond. The Central Area continues to represent the focus for retailing activity in Perth despite the growth in both durable and convenience retailing elsewhere in the city (See **Map 3**).
- 3.19 Perth enjoys a good reputation as a retailing centre and growth in shopping in recent years has been complemented through the work of the Perth Partnership both by environmental improvements, notably the pedestrianisation of the High Street, and the promotion of Perth as a quality shopping centre. Perth's attractiveness is based on its accessibility, the high quality of

its environment, and the good range and quality of shops, both multiple and independents, which it provides. Competition between retail centres is ever increasing, and its catchment area is facing increasing competition from places such as Dundee, Stirling and the Fife towns.

Survey Conclusions

3.20 Since the previous Local Plan survey of retailing was undertaken in 1976 the following trends have emerged:-

- ◆ A 24% increase in gross retail floor space from 77,800 square metres to 96,500 square metres, primarily as a consequence of the opening of the St John's Centre and the William Low and Presto supermarkets (although the Presto supermarket has recently closed) (See **Diagram 8**).
- ◆ Little change in the proportion of retail floorspace devoted to the sale of convenience goods but a 26% reduction in the number of shops selling these goods due to the presence of supermarkets in the Central Area.
- ◆ Most shops (92%) continue to be small, with a gross floor space of under 500 square metres.
- ◆ A slight increase in the number of non-retail uses in main shopping streets, despite the previous Plan's policy to resist such uses. This trend has occurred mainly due to changes in legislation which includes "quasi retail" uses within the Retail Use Classes Order.
- ◆ A continuing low vacancy rate of 7% of retail floor space.

Diagram 8 - Perth Central Area Retail Floorspace 1993.

Opportunities

- 3.21 **Retail Growth:** The growth in retail floorspace and the continuing relatively low vacancy rate in the main shopping streets, despite the 1990's retailing recession, indicates that the location and scale of St Catherine's Retail Park, the St Johns Centre and the peripheral superstores have not had an overall detrimental effect on the main retail core. The dynamic nature of retailing means that there is constant change in the type of retailing activity within the main retail core. There is no reason to resist this change unless it has an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the area. Strategic guidance supports the further development of Perth's central shopping area as a major durable goods shopping centre by supporting an extension of the prime shopping area allied to further pedestrianisation and additional short-term parking provision. There would appear to be opportunities to extend the prime shopping area westwards along the High Street to improve links with the Retail Park, or to extend the existing retail core northwards by encouraging limited retail development at Pullars, along the Skinnergate or generally between High Street and Mill Street. In addition there would appear to be opportunities for development in King Edward Street/South St John's Place/South Street to take advantage of proximity to the St John's Centre and bolster the retailing function of South Street. In contrast, with the proposed redevelopment of the former CWS shops in Scott Street/Canal Street for housing, the scope for southward extension of the retail core beyond South Street seems much less obvious.
- 3.22 Development opportunities for additional retailing might including a speciality mall, more standard units for multiple shops, discount food stores or a department store. An assessment of the impact of any additional retailing on the vitality and viability of the existing retail core and on traffic and parking demand within the Central Area would be required of prospective developers in accordance with the criteria outlined in NPPG8.
- 3.23 **Tourism and Marketing:** The role of Central Area shopping as a visitor attraction is one which is becoming increasingly recognised and should be supported by further marketing and seeking to link retailing with additional tourist attractions in the centre of Perth. It may also be possible to encourage the regeneration of certain streets specifically with specialised or tourist related shops, although this matter is something which is difficult to achieve through planning legislation and would need to be done by agreement with property owners. Such initiatives would need to be tied into improvements to parking, visitor information, interpretive facilities, environmental improvements and marketing.
- 3.24 **Non-Retail Uses:** It is recognised that non-retail uses (whether they be cafes, restaurants, pubs, professional offices or leisure outlets) have a place within the Central Area since they add vitality and provide services which are needed and, in turn, generate greater public activity in the centre outwith the working day. Such uses are restricted by policy within the main shopping streets to prevent them undermining the retail function of the prime retail core, but it would appear appropriate to permit certain non-retail uses within specific locations where they would not have an adverse impact on other land uses or residential amenity. There may be scope for the development of more specialised areas within the town centre, such as the development of a cafe and restaurant quarter in and around St John's Place where there is already a concentration of such uses in an area which has not proved attractive to retailers.
- 3.25 **Shopfronts:** The quality of the shopping environment is an important factor in attracting both visitors and inward investment. Significant improvements have been made to this environment most notably in the pedestrianisation of the High Street. There would appear to be scope to further enhance the quality of the shopping environment through additional improvements to

street design, finishes and fittings (probably at public expense) and property frontages through partnership schemes with the private sector.

Leisure, Culture, Tourism and Education

Background

- 3.26 The city centre provides a diversity of leisure and cultural land uses and activities which act as a focus for community life and civic functions for both the City and the Perth & Kinross area. The Central Area contains a cinema, a theatre, discotheques, licensed premises, the City Halls, the Museum and Art Galleries. The amenity of the area also benefits from its proximity to the North and South Inches and the River Tay. The quality and variety of hotel facilities reflect the area's importance as a tourist and conference centre. Although the area lacks a 4 star quality hotel there are currently 5 major hotels in the Central Area all of which have conference facilities and one of which also has a leisure suite. The area also contains the main municipal and church buildings of the city. Caledonian Road Primary School remains open in the town centre, despite a previous threat of closure.

Survey Conclusions

- 3.27 Over recent years there has been a slight increase in the number of leisure uses within the Central Area but there is still a continuing lack of a major tourist attraction. The quality and range of restaurants has also improved and awareness of the area's attractions has been increased through marketing by the Perth Partnership and its promotion of the Food Festival. A more co-ordinated approach to the promotion of the hotel/conference market by Perthshire Tourist Board has resulted in the growing importance of this market to the economy of the city but it is evident that some hotel and conference facilities fall below modern standards and require significant investment - particularly the City Halls. Detailed study has concluded that the provision of a 4 star quality hotel although desirable would be a high risk commercial venture. The importance of culture/arts to the area is evidenced by the Festival of the Arts although there is a lack of quality performance/rehearsal facilities within the area and pedestrianised areas are currently only used for leisure/cultural activities on a limited basis.

Opportunities

- 3.28 **Leisure:** Central Area uses in support of retailing are vital for the continued health of the town centre. Crucial in this are licensed premises, cafes and restaurants which should complement the retail function for both local shoppers and visitors but should not have an adverse impact on retailing or residential amenity. The development of a specialised restaurant quarter, perhaps with pavement cafes in and around St John's Place would be of benefit to retailing in the city and would also provide better eating and drinking facilities in association with the development of St John's Square as a focal point for leisure and cultural uses in the town centre.
- 3.29 **Culture:** There is demand from local arts/music groups for performance/rehearsal facilities due to a lack of suitable facilities within the area. The Sandeman Library could be converted to provide such facilities.
- 3.30 There would appear to be opportunities to make greater use of both existing and proposed pedestrianised areas for leisure/cultural activities such as street entertainment and open air markets providing they do not interfere with service/emergency vehicle access although some control by licensing may be desirable.

- 3.31 **Tourism:** Tourism has an important and growing role in the Central Area and it is an important destination for visitors and tourists as a shopping centre. Despite important visitor attractions in and around Perth such as Scone Palace, Perth Leisure Pool and Caithness Glass, there is no major tourist attraction in the Central Area and the development of such a facility would add greatly to the attractiveness of the city for visitors and, therefore, benefit the town centre as a whole.
- 3.32 **Conferences:** The importance of Perth for both small and large conferences is also growing. The cost of refurbishing the City Halls to meet standards associated with modern conference facilities and their location with limited parking and access suggest that their retention in this location may no longer be viable. Relocation of such facilities to another city centre location with adjacent parking and enough space to provide modern multi-purpose facilities would improve their attraction and viability. There may also be opportunities to provide additional mid range conference facilities in association with existing hotels to improve the quality of the hotel product in the area.
- 3.33 **Education:** The provision of nursery places, and crèches for workers and shoppers has been considered in the past and various attempts have been made to assess the likely level of demand and the means of providing such a facility. Although the land use implications of such a facility are limited, such a facility would have an important supportive role for other Central Area functions.

Environment and Conservation

Background

- 3.34 The attractiveness of the Central Area is due partly to the quality of its built environment and also to its setting between the Inches and the River and the views out, particularly to Kinnoull Hill. It contains a high proportion of Perth's most architecturally and historically significant buildings and areas. In fact the area contains almost 13% of the total number of Listed Buildings in the Perth & Kinross area and a significant proportion of the Central Area falls within one of 7 Conservation Areas, 5 of which are Outstanding. Additional controls exist within the Conservation Areas to protect trees and prevent buildings from demolition and the Council have also extended the level of control, through Article 4 and Regulation 11 Directions, to control normally permitted forms of minor development and advertisement in recognition of the impact that these can have in areas of environmental quality if they are not the subject of control. Details of these controls are contained in the Technical Appendix. The Central Area is also of exceptional archaeological significance because of the depth, importance and consistent high quality of its medieval and later archaeological remains. Developers have been required to ensure that these remains are protected or recorded in the area of greatest significance. (See **Map 4**). Although the area is by definition urban there are nonetheless sites of natural and wildlife interest most notably the Town Lade, the banks of the River Tay and Greyfriars Cemetery.

Survey Conclusions

- 3.35 Significant improvements have been made in recent years both to individual buildings and areas by means of grant aid under Listed Building and Housing legislation and by public investment, particularly environmental improvements to streets undertaken through the Perth Partnership. The most significant project has been the pedestrianisation of the High Street but, in addition, improvements have also taken place in the Skinnergate, Horse Cross, the railway station, Mill Street/Murray Street and to a number of vennels. A number of significant Listed

Buildings have been restored and/or given new uses such as the Lower City Mills, the Old Water Works and the new Library in York Place. Archaeological investigations have been undertaken in a number of locations prior to development which have added to the knowledge of the evolution and growth of the Central Area. The development of public art has also had a significant and welcome impact on the quality of the Central Area as has the Perth in Bloom campaign covering both cleanliness and floral enhancement.

- 3.36 There is, however, a continuing presence of buildings of architectural/historic significance which are in a poor condition or have ceased to be commercially viable and which require rehabilitation and a new use, and areas with poor streetscape which are dominated by the presence of cars. There has been little effort to protect or enhance the natural or wildlife interest of the Central Area.

Opportunities

- 3.37 **Environment - Buildings and Public Space:** Despite the environmental improvements which have been undertaken, and which have strengthened Perth's image and improved its quality as a shopping and tourist attraction, there are still a number of buildings which require improvement and public space where further pedestrianisation or environmental improvement are desirable.
- 3.38 Buildings which require rehabilitation and/or a new use include Pullars, St Paul's Church, and the former Sandeman Library. The City Halls also require major investment to meet standards associated with modern conference facilities but this may be a less viable opinion than relocating the facility to another location. There are other buildings which have reached the end of their useful life and are likely to be redeveloped for either commercial or residential purposes, such as the CWS property in Scott Street, and buildings which could be enhanced where there may be opportunities for development such as the Salvation Army Halls in King Edward Street/South St John's Place.
- 3.39 The condition and quality of public spaces within the Central Area are as important to its overall environmental quality as the condition and quality of individual buildings within it. There is scope to improve existing areas of public space within the Central Area through pedestrianisation and environmental improvements and to create new public spaces in areas which are to be redeveloped, since the grid iron layout of the Central Area means that it lacks generous public spaces and squares.
- 3.40 There is significant scope for further pedestrianisation and environmental improvement in the heart of the city around the City Halls, St John's Kirk and into St John Street. It is desirable to limit parking and traffic penetration in this area and to improve the quality of the environment through the use of natural traditional materials to improve the setting of St John's Kirk and provide space for greater leisure/cultural use of the area in the form of pavement cafes, street markets and civic events. The scale of improvements which can be undertaken and the extent to which traffic penetration and parking can be limited are dependent on whether or not it is viable to retain the City Halls in this location. Relocation of the City Halls to an alternative Central Area location would reduce the demand for vehicle access and provide opportunities for a larger public space to be created on the site.
- 3.41 A second major area for improvement is in Tay Street where the riverside is an under-utilised resource which should be improved through environmental enhancement and improved pedestrian facilities linked with flood prevention measures. The proposed improvements will provide further opportunities for leisure/cultural use of this area and interpretation of the river and riverside environment.

- 3.42 Scope also exists to improve the Horse Cross area as an important public space in association with the redevelopment of the Pullars Buildings/the printing works/ offices/stores, and any extension/improvement of access to the rear of the museum.
- 3.43 Additional opportunities exist for further pedestrianisation in St Paul's Square and to provide traffic calming/traffic management measures in South Street, the Old High Street, West Mill Street and George Street associated with other environmental improvements in the streetscape and/or surrounding buildings.
- 3.44 The majority of the above schemes require the loss of on street parking. It is recognised that demand for car parking spaces currently outstrips supply and that the provision of an appropriate level of parking particularly to meet demand by shoppers and visitors, is essential to the vitality and viability of the town centre. The Plan makes provision to increase the supply of short term parking and environmental improvement schemes which involve the loss of parking should be phased to coincide with enhancement of the short term car parking supply.
- 3.45 **Archaeology:** Archaeological assessment and, where necessary, excavations will routinely be required to be undertaken by developers in advance of any ground disturbance in the area designated as being of archaeological interest. This area should be extended to incorporate Atholl Street and North Methven Street to allow investigation of possible archaeological remains relating to the Dominican Friary (Blackfriars) and the town defences.
- 3.46 **Conservation:** Schemes for the enhancement of Conservation Areas have not been developed to any great extent with the exception of a town scheme for Marshall Place. Innovative schemes should be developed for their enhancement and improvements to individual listed buildings should continue to be encouraged through the provision of grant aid. The Council will continue to work in conjunction with Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust in this regard.
- 3.47 **Vennels:** Considerable improvements have been made to the historic pedestrian routes within the Central Area both as a result of private investment and as a result of the improvement programme implemented through the Perth Partnership. There are a number of these vennels which still require improvement and additional improvements should be carried out to give increased priority to pedestrian movement within the Central Area. Where possible improvements to the remaining vennels should be carried out in association with private investment in adjacent buildings and land.
- 3.48 **Shopfronts:** It is recognised in a number of shopping streets that the quality of buildings, and in particular, shopfronts and signage is in need of some improvement and George Street, South Methven Street and South Street require particular attention. Whilst this matter can be addressed by the Planning Authority for new development through the application of design guidelines contained in Annex 1 and enforcement action against offenders, the commercial sector and individual building owners have a significant part to play and should be encouraged to undertake appropriate improvements to shopfronts and building facades by the provision of design guidance and grant aid.
- 3.49 **Landscaping/Open Space:** The Central Area generally lacks green spaces and soft landscaping with the exception of Greyfriars Cemetery and areas such as the High Street and certain car parks where street trees have been introduced as part of environmental improvement schemes. The accessibility to Greyfriars Cemetery should be increased and improvements undertaken and interpretive facilities provided to highlight its historic interest. Existing street trees should be protected and additional soft landscaping should be installed

where possible and where it would enhance the streetscape or increase the wildlife interest/nature conservation value of the area.

- 3.50 **Nature Conservation:** Nature Conservation and wildlife interest within the Central Area should be protected and enhanced through the retention of existing habitats, the creation of new habitats, and sympathetic management of public and open spaces and environmental improvement schemes.
- 3.51 **Flooding:** The Central Area suffered severe flooding during January 1993 from direct inundation by the River Tay and Craigie Burn and to a lesser extent via the drainage system from ground water penetration. It is accepted that action is required to prevent both flooding in the Central Area and the wider Perth Area. In the Central Area direct defences, including flood walls along Tay Street and around the town lade at Horse Cross, and improvements to infrastructure are required and these will be implemented as part of the Flood Prevention Scheme prepared by the former Regional Council once approved by the Scottish Office.

Traffic and Parking

Background

- 3.52 Rising car ownership and traffic growth have resulted in increased traffic flow and congestion within Perth. In the Central Area the principal problems are with peak time flows, conflict between pedestrians and vehicles in main shopping streets, and parking. The opening of the western bypass in 1985 helped by removing some of the non-essential through traffic although traffic growth since that time has exacerbated traffic problems associated with peak hour commuter flows.

Survey Conclusions

- 3.53 Since 1985 the following trends are evident:
- ◆ Rising car ownership and national traffic growth has brought some traffic flows up to and in some instances beyond those that existed prior to the opening of the bypass (See **Diagram 9**).
 - ◆ Traffic patterns have been altered as a consequence of the pedestrianisation of the High Street, and other more minor pedestrian schemes, and the relocation of major commercial and industrial users/employers.
 - ◆ Congestion continues to be a problem during peak hour commuter flows and at other times with particular problems associated with delay and queuing at Perth Bridge and at the Dunkeld Road/Atholl Street roundabout.
 - ◆ Rising car ownership and traffic growth have increased the demand for both public and private parking. There are at present 1252 on street and 3039 off street car parking spaces in the Central Area, compared with approximately 1272 and 3178 respectively in 1971. The Regional Council estimated there was a need for 300 short stay and 250 long stay car parking spaces to meet current demand. There has been an 81% increase in the number of residents' cars in the area since 1981 from 458 to 836 cars (See **Map 5**).

- ◆ The perception that traffic and car parking is a major problem is generally limited to those who live and work in Perth and its environs as surveys have revealed that visitors do not consider accessibility and parking to be a serious problem.

Opportunities

- 3.54 Significant environmental improvements could eventually be made by reducing the impact of motor vehicles within the Central Area and giving increased priority to pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport. Improvements should be made to the environment in conjunction with measures to alleviate traffic growth and enhance short term car parking provision.
- 3.55 **Traffic Penetration:** A first step should be to remove unnecessary through traffic which still uses the Central Area despite the completion of the bypass. The Perth Area Local Plan recommends the provision of a third bridge over the River Tay to the north of the Central Area and this would relieve congestion on both sides of the river at Perth Bridge.
- 3.56 Congestion within the Central Area should be further reduced by discouraging traffic from entering the area or parts of it. It is recognised that a purely restrictive approach could have an adverse effect on business and result in traffic being transferred to other parts of the city or to the city's trade being diverted to other peripheral developments or other towns where traffic movement and parking were easier. The inner ring road will need to remain as a major traffic route around the Central Area but considerable scope exists to reduce vehicular penetration within the inner ring except for vehicles requiring access.
- 3.57 **Pedestrianisation:** A particular priority should be to extend pedestrian priority measures in the retail and civic core of the city to build on the public support and success of the High Street pedestrianisation scheme. Opportunities exist to restrict or prevent unnecessary traffic from entering St Johns Place and South St John's Place and to pedestrianise St John Street to create a coherent pedestrianised heart to the city. Additional opportunities exist for pedestrianisation in St Paul's Square. Where parking places are to be lost pedestrianisation should be phased to allow the provision of alternative parking.
- 3.58 **Traffic Calming:** In addition to full pedestrianisation measures, scope exists in other streets - notably South Street, the Old High Street, West Mill Street and George Street - to reduce through traffic or by traffic calming to discourage non essential vehicular movements. Reducing through traffic or traffic calming methods also provides opportunities to increase priority given to public transport and other transport modes by giving increased space for bus lanes and cycle lanes although the former is likely to be more applicable to main arterial routes outwith the Central Area. Scope also exists within what are primarily residential parts of the Central Area to introduce traffic calming to improve the environmental quality of these areas for residents particularly in areas where there is ground floor housing.
- 3.59 **Public Transport and Transport Integration:** There is a limited need for public transport for journeys within the Central Area because of its size aside from catering for those with limited physical ability such as the elderly and/or the disabled. It is clear however that public transport to and from the Central Area is required to allow those living in other parts of the city and District without cars to gain access to the area and to create a more sustainable transport network. Development of public transport could help reduce traffic growth by encouraging private motorists to shift to or link with different transport modes. The most common mode of public transport used to gain access to the Central Area is currently the bus because of the limited rural rail network. The development of public transport should focus on the development of bus services in the short term as the investment required to improve rail services would be considerable and could only be achieved in the long term as part of a general improvement to the rail network. Public transport to/from the Central Area should be improved by - (i) developing both general bus services and 'Park and Ride' schemes (ii) developing bus priority schemes (iii) promoting the services available through increased

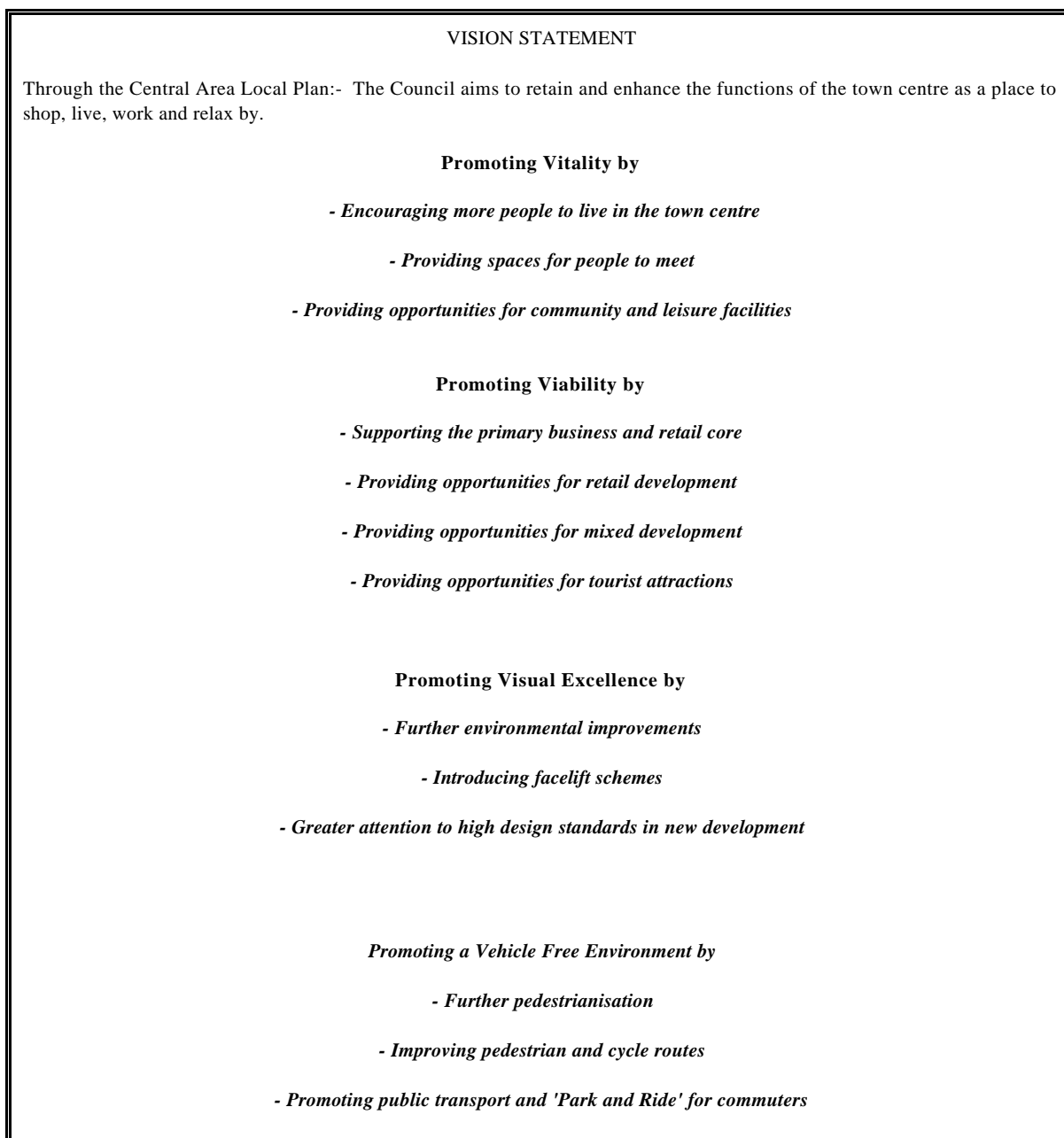
information and (iv) improving the standard and location of waiting facilities to benefit the operation of the public transport network and maximise opportunities for the integration of transport modes.

- 3.60 **Cycling:** There are opportunities to provide better facilities for cyclists within the Central Areas roads hierarchy given the relatively small amount of space required to give priority to cyclists. Cycling lanes, including contraflows where appropriate, should be accommodated within existing roads of sufficient width and opportunities taken to give increased priority to cyclists, in conjunction with public transport, at junctions by amending the road layout. Opportunities should be taken to build cycling lanes and provide cyclists' facilities in environmental improvement schemes such as Tay Street. Where no opportunities exist to amend the road layout on important routes, Traffic Orders should be amended to permit cyclists to use footpaths and pedestrianised areas. The promotion of cycling should reduce traffic growth and benefit tourism by providing links to proposed long distance touring routes.
- 3.61 **Parking:** The former Regional Council estimated that an additional 250 long stay and 300 short stay spaces were required within the Central Area to cope with current levels of demand. Whilst the level of demand may be reduced if usage of public transport increases it is clear that the provision of additional car parking - and the retention of existing parking - is more of a restraint to further pedestrianisation and traffic calming measures than the maintenance of traffic circulation.
- 3.62 Lack of development sites, high land costs and the sensitive nature of the Central Area townscape means that scope for the provision of either surface, multi-storey or stacked mechanical parking is limited. The right level of parking is crucial to the continued commercial success of the Central Area, but the number of spaces required needs to be related to their location, their price, the length of stay permitted, their security and their attractiveness as well as other aids such as good signposting to car parks, information within car parks and well signed pedestrian routes into the heart of the city and to attractions and services within it. It is also clear that safe parking is required to encourage visitors to make use of facilities within the town centre in the evening as well as during the day, thereby promoting its vitality, and that secure parking is desirable for residents parking overnight.
- 3.63 It is recognised that multi-storey or stacked mechanical car parking is likely to require some private sector input, perhaps as a joint venture with a commercial development. Sites for additional car parking in the Central Area should be located close to the main radial and arterial routes to minimise traffic penetration and thereby facilitate additional pedestrianisation. Car parking within the Central Area should be provided primarily for shoppers and visitors to aid the vitality and viability of the town centre and reduce peak hour congestion. Pricing structures and the length of stay permitted should reflect this priority and discourage long stay/commuter parking within the area. The design of car parks should minimise visual intrusion and maximise security and safety of drivers. A multi-storey or stacked mechanical car park should be encouraged as part of a redevelopment of Pullars as the site would appear to be the most capable of accommodating such development with limited visual impact and impact on accessibility. Multi-storey or stacked mechanical car parks would also be considered acceptable where they are incorporated into the redevelopment of existing surface car parks such as those at Thimblelow or Scott Street. Planning agreements should be used to secure additional parking in developments which generate parking demand.

Summary

3.64 The survey reveals a number of issues which require to be addressed and the recommended strategy for their resolution in terms of the proposed land use and development framework for the Central Area is summarised below in the vision statement (See **Diagram 10**). Full details of policies, proposals, recommendations and opportunities are contained within the main text of the Plan and identified on the Proposals Map.

Diagram 10: Vision Statement



4.0

GENERAL LAND USE POLICIES (Aims, Objectives and Policies Applicable to All Parts of The Central Area)

- 4.1 The Aims, Objectives, Policies and Recommendations contained in this section are statements of the Council's attitude towards land use, development and transportation in the Central Area. They form the basis of the Land Use Framework outlined in Section 5.0 and indicated on the Proposals Map and, in the absence of more detailed guidance, will be used in making development control decisions for specific sites.

POPULATION AND HOUSING

AIMS

To encourage the growth of population and maximise housing opportunities in the Central Area.

OBJECTIVES

To support a mix of housing tenure within the Central Area.

To support housing developments especially for first time buyers and social housing for the elderly and special need groups.

To encourage the reuse of vacant residential property particularly in upper floors and the upgrading or replacement of any remaining poor quality housing.

To encourage the conversion of non-residential property to housing, particularly buildings of high townscape quality and Listed Buildings.

To encourage the redevelopment of vacant/derelict sites for housing purposes outwith the main shopping streets, including ground floor housing where a suitable environment can be created.

To improve the amenity of existing residential areas.

POLICIES

Pol 1 - There will be a general presumption against the loss of property which is currently used or was last used as residential accommodation. Exceptions to this policy will only be permitted where the Council is satisfied that - (i) the property could not on its own or in conjunction with adjoining properties be brought up to modern standards at reasonable cost or (ii) its retention would prevent development/ redevelopment/expansion of retail, commercial or leisure uses which the Council considers acceptable or desirable under the policies and proposals of the Local Plan (See **Pol 37, Pol 41, Pol 43 and Pol 44**).

Pol 2 - Through the use of its powers under the Housing Acts the Council will examine residential properties which are vacant and/or in disrepair and lacking amenities to determine their suitability for improvement individually or as part of comprehensive improvement schemes in conjunction with Scottish homes and the private sector (See **Pol 43 and Pol 44**).

Pol 3 - Where sites become available for redevelopment within the Central Area and the demolition of existing buildings is either desirable or inevitable, the Council in conjunction with Scottish Homes will investigate the opportunities for new or replacement housing on the site either as the sole use or as part of a mixed development depending on the limitations of the site (See **Pol 43 and Pol 44**).

JUSTIFICATION

A resident population in the Central Area adds to the viability and vitality of the town centre by helping to support services and creating a presence in the area in the evenings and weekends when the majority of the working population are absent. There is significant demand for housing in the Central Area particularly from young single people, the elderly, and special needs groups. The retention of existing houses and where possible the introduction of new houses in the Central Area aids sustainability by supporting the concentration of services within the town centre and offsetting the requirements to use good quality land for housing development on the edge of Perth thereby minimising transport requirements and helping limit the spread of the urban area into the countryside.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

AIMS

To maintain the role of the Central Area as a major focus for employment for Perth and the Kinross are especially in the service sector.

OBJECTIVES

To encourage the redevelopment or rehabilitation of property for commercial/office uses.

To provide commercial/office premises for new and existing firms seeking a town centre location.

To identify and provide accessible office accommodation for Perth & Kinross Council.

POLICIES

Pol 4 - The Council will encourage development/redevelopment/ expansion of commercial/office uses provided that (i) where practicable existing residential use is retained (ii) prime retail frontages are protected and (iii) the amenity or viability of other land uses are not adversely affected (See **Pol 1 and Pol 41**).

Pol 5 - The Council will permit new sources of employment in the Central Area within the general land use framework provided by the accompanying Proposals Map. In every case, however, the Council will have to be satisfied that the proposal will be compatible with existing adjacent land uses.

JUSTIFICATION

The Central Area is a major focus for employment within the City and the Perth & Kinross area and this role is one which should be encouraged to add to the vitality and viability of the centre, maximise the services available to the public and other businesses in a compact area and minimise the loss of agricultural land on the periphery of the city to light industrial and business uses.

SHOPPING/TOURISM

AIMS

To maintain and enhance the role of the Central Area as the major focus for shopping in Perth and the Perth & Kinross area and to enhance its tourism function.

OBJECTIVES

To encourage retail developments which complement the existing shopping provision.

To provide shopping and associated facilities within a compact and accessible area.

To encourage the development of tourist attractions and facilities within the Central Area.

To improve the quality of the environment in main shopping streets.

To improve the standard and quality of information and guidance for visitors.

POLICIES

Pol 6 - Within the Central Area, proposals for new retail developments will be encouraged within the general land use framework provided by the accompanying Proposals Map taking into account their location, their impact on the vitality and viability of the area and circulation patterns within it (See **Pol 37 and Pol 42**).

Pol 7 - The Council will not permit non-retail uses to dominate the ground floors of shopping areas to an extent that undermines the retail function or adversely affects residential amenity (See **Pol 38, Pol 39 and Pol 41**).

Pol 8 - The Council will support the development of a major tourist attraction in the Central Area providing it can satisfy car parking and access demands, and will have a minimal impact on adjacent land uses.

Pol 9 - The Council supports the provision of additional signing and tourist information facilities

JUSTIFICATION

The Central Area is the main shopping centre for Perth and the Perth & Kinross area and its future health and well being depends on maintaining the retail function within a clearly defined and accessible area and enhancing its vitality and viability by permitting a suitable scale of leisure/service uses to complement that function.

ENVIRONMENT/CONSERVATION

AIMS

To maintain and enhance the high quality of the town centre environment.

OBJECTIVES

To ensure that development is sustainable.

To protect and enhance buildings, groups of buildings, areas of townscape interest, trees and important public and open space.

To ensure that new developments, or any physical changes, are compatible with the form and character of the existing town centre.

To ensure the preservation and recovery of the city's archaeological and historical heritage.

To protect and improve Listed Buildings.

To seek new uses for vacant Listed Buildings and other buildings of townscape importance.

To protect and enhance Conservation Areas.

To protect the natural heritage of the area.

To preserve and enhance existing areas of public space and where possible to provide new areas of public space.

To preserve existing areas of open space and where possible to provide new areas of open space and additional soft planting.

To improve the environment of historic pedestrian routes.

POLICIES

Pol 10 - Any development must seek to conserve resources and keep environmental impacts to a minimum.

Pol 11 - Proposals for new buildings, changes to the appearance of existing buildings (including signs, new shop fronts and advertisements) will be assessed having regard to the design guidelines contained in Annex 1 to the Plan (See **Pol 40**).

Pol 12 - Where practical, and where the quality of the building merits it, preference will be given to the adaption and extension of existing buildings in a sympathetic manner rather than redevelopment.

Pol 13 - The Council will protect sites of archaeological significance (See **Pol 57**).

Pol 14 - The Council will make use of its powers under the Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 to protect Listed Buildings and their setting and exercise control within Conservation Areas (See **Pol 49 - Pol 56 and Rec 4**).

Pol 15 - There will be a presumption against the demolition of Listed Buildings and a presumption in favour of consent for development involving their sympathetic restoration.

Pol 16 - Changes of use of Listed Buildings will be favourably considered where this ensures their retention in an appropriate manner and would not have an adverse effect on adjoining land uses.

Pol 17 - The Council will not permit existing areas of public and open space to be developed and will support the creation of additional public and open spaces as part of environmental improvement schemes or in conjunction with new development.

Pol 18 - There will be a presumption against the removal of existing trees and soft landscaping unless this is justified on the grounds of health, safety, or wider community benefits. The Council will support additional tree planting and soft landscaping as part of environmental improvement schemes and new development and will support the use of native species where appropriate.

Pol 19 - The Council supports the retention where possible of historic pedestrian routes through the Central Area and will seek their improvement as part of environmental improvement schemes or in conjunction with new development.

Pol 20 - The Council will work in conjunction with the Perthshire Public Arts Trust to secure additional public art works as part of environmental improvement schemes or in conjunction with new development.

Pol 21 - The Council will not normally grant consent for any development which would have an adverse effect upon any site supporting species mentioned in Schedule 1, 5 and 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended. A list of protected species is contained in the Technical Appendix.

Pol 22 - The Council recognises the community and education benefits associated with nature conservation and will therefore seek to retain existing habitats and realise opportunities for habitat creation and sympathetic management in environmental improvement schemes and public and open spaces.

Pol 23 - The Council supports the provision of suitably designed street furniture and will seek to provide additional street furniture or replace existing street furniture, as part of environmental improvement schemes or in conjunction with new development in accordance with the design guidelines contained in Annex 1 to the Plan.

Pol 24 - Proposals for new telecommunications development in the Central Area will be considered on their individual merits having demonstrated that:-

1. There are no satisfactory alternative sites available and there is no reasonable prospect of sharing existing facilities;
2. There is no adverse effect on the character of a Conservation Area, the setting of a Conservation Area and/or on the setting of a listed building (where the

character of a listed building is affected, an application for listed building consent will also be required (see **Pol 14**).

RECOMMENDATION

Rec 1 - In the case of telecommunications development which constitutes permitted development in terms of the GPDO 1992, the code system operator and the licensing authority will have regard to environmental issues of the Central Area of the city. As appropriate the licensing authority will impose conditions to minimise the visual impact of the development generally and, when appropriate, on the setting of listed buildings and Conservation Areas and in the need for listed building consent.

JUSTIFICATION

The Central Area contains landscaped areas, sites of wildlife interest and a large number of buildings and areas of architectural and historic interest which form an important part of the heritage of Perth and the Perth & Kinross area and which the Council has a duty to protect and enhance.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING

AIMS

To seek to adjust the balance between private motor vehicles and other transport modes in favour of pedestrians, public transport and cycling.

OBJECTIVES

To seek to reduce through traffic and other unnecessary traffic within the town centre, including the provision of a new bridge over the River Tay to the north of the town centre.

To seek to limit vehicular penetration within the inner ring road.

To seek to provide additional pedestrian priority areas, especially in the main retail and civic core.

To seek to provide improved facilities and routes for cyclists.

To seek to provide additional short-term shopper/visitor car parking within the town centre, and to improve signing to car parks.

To seek to discourage long-term parking within the town centre apart from parking for residents, and to seek alternatives such as peripheral car parking, park and ride etc for commuters.

POLICIES

Pol 25 - The Council supports the former Regional Council's investigation of new build and traffic management options within the Central Area as part of the Perth Area Transport Study and will use this as the basis of preparing a balanced and integrated transport strategy addressing the role of all transport modes.

Pol 26 - The Council supports the introduction of measures which discourage traffic penetration within the inner ring road and which give increased priority to public transport, pedestrians, and cyclists.

Pol 27 - The Council supports improvements to waiting facilities at locations which will benefit the operation of the public transport network.

Pol 28 - The Council will use its powers under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 to pedestrianise areas within the main historic and retail core for reasons of amenity as encouraged within the general land use framework provided by the accompanying Proposals Map and subject to their acceptability in terms of their impact on traffic circulation and parking provision within the Central Area.

Pol 29 - The Council will encourage the provision of facilities which afford easier access and mobility for the disabled.

Pol 30 - The Council will encourage the provision of facilities and routes for cyclists.

Pol 31 - The Council will require an appropriate level of off-street parking to be provided for all new build housing development within the Central Area.

Pol 32 - Provision for private non residential parking and servicing for new and existing developments will be limited to levels which are essential to meet the needs of the use.

Pol 33 - The Council will support the provision of non residential parking outwith the Central Area linked with the use of public transport as an alternative means of providing parking for new developments within the Central Area.

Pol 34 - The Council supports the discouragement of long term parking within the Central Area and the encouragement of the short term use of existing parking spaces through pricing and timing structures and the development of new short-term car parks.

Pol 35 - The Council will support the provision of new public parking within the Central Area provided it is for short term use and is located close to the main radial and arterial routes whilst still being well related to the main retail core (See **Pol 46 and Pol 47**).

Pol 36 - The Council supports improvements to the signing of existing car parks.

JUSTIFICATION

The Central Area is an important destination for workers, shoppers and visitors but traffic growth and parking demand can no longer be sustained without constraint within the Central Area without causing an adverse impact on accessibility and environmental quality.

THE LAND USE FRAMEWORK - (Policies and Recommendations Applicable to **Certain Parts of the Central Area)**

- 5.1 The general land use policies contained in the previous section have implications for land use patterns within the Central Area and activities and changes which are proposed during the Plan period. Additional guidance is required to provide details of the types of development which are acceptable in particular locations, any additional controls specific to particular types of development and/or locations, and any actions which the Council wish performed by others in particular locations. Therefore, to supplement the general land use policies applicable to all parts of the Central Area outlined in Section 4.0, the following policies and recommendations will apply to particular parts of the Central Area in the manner shown in the Proposals Map.

PRIMARY BUSINESS AND RETAIL USES

POLICIES

Pol 37 - Within the area zoned for primary business and retail uses the Council will encourage the location of uses within Class 1 of the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1989 (**Retail Uses**) and support developments which create additional retail floor space (See **Pol 1 and Pol 6**).

Pol 38 - Uses within Class 2 and Class 3 of the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1989 (**Office and Restaurant Uses**) will only be permitted to locate within ground floor premises within the area zoned for Primary Business and Retail Uses where it can be shown that - (i) it will not result in 'bunching' of three or more such uses being located next to each other within any one street block (ii) the amenity of the surrounding area will not be adversely affected by the use (iii) there is a high and continuous degree of public contact involved in the normal day to day running of the use (iv) an adequate and attractive window display or appropriate frontage treatment can be provided or (v) within specific areas where the concentration of such uses is considered desirable (See **Pol 7 and Pol 39**).

Pol 39 - The Council will support applications for uses within Class 3 of the Town & Country (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1989 (**Restaurant Uses**) within St John's Place and South St John's Place including the use of pavement areas subject to licensing and design (See **Pol 7 and Pol 23 and Pol 38**).

Pol 40 - The Council will work in conjunction with the private sector and Scottish Enterprise Tayside to improve facades and shopfront design in shopping streets by developing grant aided improvement schemes (See **Pol 11**).

RECOMMENDATION

Rec 2 - The Council recommends to the Town Centre Management Team that they work in conjunction with the private sector and Scottish Enterprise Tayside with the objective of encouraging quality specialised shops within certain streets.

Rec 3 - The Council recommends in the Town Centre Management Team that they develop the use of pedestrianised areas for street entertainment and open air markets subject to appropriate licensing.

JUSTIFICATION

This area contains all the primary shopping streets and forms the commercial hub of the town. The maintenance and development of retail activity and associated uses within this area will aid the vitality and viability of the town centre.

SECONDARY BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL USES

POLICIES

Pol 41 - Within the area zoned for Secondary Business and Commercial Uses, the Council will support business, commercial, retail and other development providing that residential amenity is not adversely affected and existing residential use is retained or incorporated into new development (See **Pol 1 and Pol 4**).

Pol 42 - Proposals for major retail development will only be permitted within the area zoned for Secondary Business and Commercial Uses where they relate well in terms of location and scale to the prime shopping area, the area zoned for primary business and retail uses, and to the Central Area as a whole (See **Pol 6**).

JUSTIFICATION

This area contains a variety of uses with the potential for additional development because of proximity to the prime shopping area although a degree of protection is required to ensure that residential property is retained and the vitality and viability of the town centre is not adversely affected.

RESIDENTIAL USES

POLICIES

Pol 43 - The Council will resist the loss of property which is currently used or was last used as residential accommodation, including ground floor housing, within the area zoned for Residential uses (See **Pol 1 - Pol 3**).

Pol 44 - The Council will support applications for residential uses, including ground floor housing, within the area zoned for Residential Uses providing residential amenity is not affected by adjoining land uses (See **Pol 1 - Pol 3**).

Pol 45 - The Council will encourage the provision of traffic calming measures in residential areas.

JUSTIFICATION

These areas are primarily residential and priority should be given to preserving and enhancing a satisfactory residential environment.

CAR PARKS

POLICIES

Pol 46 - The Council will support the development of additional car parking within existing car parks in the form of multi-storey or stacked mechanical car parks or through the rationalisation or extension of existing car parks all subject to the impact on visual amenity traffic circulation within the Central Area (See **Pol 35**).

Pol 47 - The Council will support the development of existing car parks for alternative land uses provided replacement car parking can be provided elsewhere (See **Pol 35**).

Pol 48 - The Council will support improvements to the environment of existing car parks.

JUSTIFICATION

Development of car parks for additional car parking or alternative land uses would maximise the use of scarce land resources within the Central Area.

CONSERVATION AREAS

POLICIES

Pol 49 - The Council requires six weeks notice of any proposal to cut down, top, lop, damage or destroy any trees within a Conservation Area. The Council will use the period to assess the amenity value of the tree(s) concerned and, where appropriate take action to ensure their retention or replacement (See **Pol 14**).

Pol 50 - The Council will require applications for outline planning permission within Conservation Areas to be accompanied by drawings and illustrations which give an accurate representation of the proposed building and its relationship to adjoining development (See **Pol 14**).

Pol 51 - The Council will make use of its powers under the Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 to control demolition within Conservation Areas and to ensure that repairs are carried out to buildings of architectural or historic interest (See **Pol 14**).

Pol 52 - The Council will make use of its additional powers under Article 4 of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 to control certain classes of minor development within Conservation Areas which would normally be permitted and will revise these controls to take account of legislative changes as appropriate. Details of the classes of minor development which are controlled are contained in the Technical Appendix (See **Pol 14**).

Pol 53 - The Council will make use of its additional powers under Regulation 11 of the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) (Scotland) Regulations 1984 to control certain classes of minor advertisement within Conservation Areas which would normally be permitted. Details of the classes of minor advertisement which are controlled are contained in the Technical Appendix (See **Pol 14**).

Pol 54 - Proposals for new buildings, changes to the appearance of existing buildings and, where appropriate, demolition of buildings will be assessed having regard to the design guidelines applicable to Conservation Areas contained in Annex 1 (See **Pol 14**).

Pol 55 - The Council will investigate the scope for enhancement schemes in Conservation Areas and will progress such schemes where appropriate (See **Pol 14**).

Pol 56 - The Council will maintain roads with traditional surface materials within Conservation Areas to a high standard and ensure that such materials are retained following repair, maintenance or servicing work.

RECOMMENDATION

Rec 4 - The Council recommends to Historic Scotland that they give grants or loans towards the repair or maintenance of buildings within Outstanding Conservation Areas in Perth and provide funds and assistance to develop town schemes in these areas (See **Pol 14**).

JUSTIFICATION

The Georgian terraces to the north and south of the town centre, Tay Street and the area around St John's Kirk and St John Street, together with King Street and the City Mills have special architectural and historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance.

AREA OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST

POLICIES

Pol 57 - Within the Area of Archaeological Interest the Council shall seek to protect archaeological remains from avoidable disturbance. Where development is proposed there will be a strong presumption in favour of preservation in situ and where in exceptional circumstances preservation of the archaeological remains is not feasible, the developer, if necessary through appropriate conditions attached to planning consents, will be required to make provision for the excavation and recording of threatened features prior to the development commencing (See **Pol 13**).

JUSTIFICATION

Archaeological investigations in the centre of Perth have provided a wealth of knowledge about medieval town life which it has not been possible to gain elsewhere in Scotland. As a matter of both national and local importance there is therefore both the need to protect archaeological remains from disturbance and to ensure where this is not possible or necessary that they are properly recorded.

OPPORTUNITY SITES - (Policies Applicable to Specific Sites in the Central Area)

- 6.1 There are a number of sites within the Plan Area which - (i) appear to offer scope for development even although there may in some cases be constraints which have hindered development in the past or (ii) may have development potential as a consequence of changes of use or ownership which may occur within the Plan period. In certain cases there may be tentative proposals by the Council as previous or other bodies for particular sites which are not yet far enough advanced to be termed proposals. For each of the sites listed below and identified on the Proposal Map suggested uses or forms of development which would be acceptable to the Council are indicated. These sites should not be considered in isolation from the overall strategy of the Plan but should be seen as an attempt to put forward positive opportunities for development and to give a lead to developers. The development sites which have been identified therefore conform to the overall Land Use Framework of the Plan and the prevailing planning policies for the wider area in which the Opportunity Site falls should be noted.

Opportunity Sites- Gap Sites and Vacant Ground which could be Redeveloped

| <u>Ref No on Proposals Map</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Opportunity</u> |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| 01 | Murray Street/Foundry Lane | This site could be redeveloped for residential use including special needs or affordable housing although retail/commercial uses will be sought for the ground floor Murray Street frontage (Pol 43 - Pol 45). |
| 02 | Smiley's, Princes Street | This vacant site could be redevelopment for commercial/residential use if linked with P8 (See Pol 41 and Pol 42). |
| 03 | Site adjacent to St Paul's | The building and ground adjacent to St Paul's Square could be redeveloped for retail use, tourist related use, or residential use (provided that the ground floor frontage on to St Paul's Square is solely for commercial use) in conjunction with 013 and P20-P21 and P28 (see Policy 37-40). |
| 04 | Kirkgate | This ground to the rear of the High Street could be developed as a servicing yard (See Pol 37 - Pol 40). |
| 05 | North William Street | This vacant site could be redeveloped for residential use, including special needs or affordable housing (Pol 43- Pol 45). |
| 06 | Canal Street | This gap site could be redeveloped for residential use (See Pol 41 and Pol 42). |

Opportunity Sites - Redundant Buildings, Buildings in Poor Condition or of Poor Townscape Quality which could be Rehabilitated or Redeveloped

| <u>Ref No on Proposals Map</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Opportunity</u> |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| 07 | Sandeman Library | This Listed Building has recently been vacated and could be reused as an Art Centre (See Pol 41 and Pol 42). |
| 08 | Garage building/car park, York Place/New Row | If the present uses cease, the site could be redeveloped for commercial/residential use (See Pol 41 - Pol 45). |
| 09 | Target Centre Milne Street | If the present use ceases, the building could be redeveloped for residential use (See Pol 43 - Pol 45). |
| 010 | Printing works/store/offices | These buildings may become surplus to requirements and could be redeveloped in conjunction with O15, O17 and P12 for office, retail, residential or major cultural uses (See Pol 41 and Pol 42). |
| 011 | St Andrew's Church, Atholl Street | This Church is surplus to requirements and could be converted, rather than demolished, for commercial/residential/community uses (See Pol 43 - Pol 45). |
| 012 | Perth Foundry, Murray Street | This vacant building could be converted to commercial/residential use with ground floor retail use on Murray Street, or used to extend the cinema itself (See Pol 41 and Pol 42). |
| 013 | St Paul's Church | This Listed Building could be converted to tourist related use to create a major attraction within the Central Area in association with 03 and P20 - P21 and P28 (See Pol 37 - Pol 40). |
| 014 | Former Gloags Bottling Plant and Store, Kinnoull Street | The former bottling plant is of limited townscape quality and could be demolished to allow the site to be redeveloped for housing, including special needs or affordable housing, although alternative compatible ground floor uses such as community uses or limited retail use would be acceptable on the main Kinnoull Street frontage. The church building used as a store should be converted to housing or community use (See Pol 43 - Pol 45). |

Opportunity Sites - Car Parks and Ground Devoted to Transport Related Uses which could be Redeveloped

| <u>Ref No on Proposals Map</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Opportunity</u> |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| 015 | South side of Mill Street | These vacant sites and car parks could be used to extend retail premises in High Street to improve links between High Street and Mill Street perhaps linked to 010, 017 and P12 ; to create new frontages to Mill Street; to landscape the existing car parks; or otherwise for the creation of new car parks or extension of existing car parks in line with Policy 34 (See Pol 37 - Pol 42). |
| 016 | Mill Wynd Car Park | This car park could be redeveloped as a tourist attraction if alternative parking was provided elsewhere (See Pol 46 and Pol 47). |
| 017 | Horse Cross Car Park | This car park could be pedestrianised to create a major public space in conjunction with 010 or 015 or in conjunction with an extension to create a new rear to the museum, or alternatively traffic flow and car parking could be reorganised and environmental improvements undertaken in association with P23 (See Pol 46 and Pol 47). |
| 018 | Bus Station and adjacent condition open space. | The bus station facilities are in a poor condition and the site is too large for the current operation. The bus station waiting facilities and surrounding environment could be improved and adapted to an appropriate scale to meet the demands of operators from this location. Part of the site could be developed for alternative uses. (See Pol 41 and Pol 42). |
| 019 | Thimblelow Car Park Caledonian Road/High Street | This car park could be developed as a multi-storey or stacked mechanical car park in association with mixed uses incorporating ground floor retail use on the High Street and accessibility from Caledonian Road could be improved by creating an additional access from the existing roundabout (See Pol 46 and Pol 47). |
| 020 | Mill Street/Murray Street | The bus facilities at Mill Street/Murray Street could be developed by providing waiting facilities adjacent to the stances and improving pedestrian links with surrounding streets (See Pol 41 and Pol 42). |

PROPOSALS

(Development Proposals and Environmental Improvements Applicable to **Specific Sites** in the Central Area)

7.1 Proposals are intended developments which are likely to occur within the Plan period because they have planning permission or a firm degree of commitment by the implementing authority or developer.

Proposals for Residential Development

| <u>Ref No on Proposals Map</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Proposal</u> | <u>Implementing Body</u> |
|--------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------|
| P1 | Co-op Building, Scott Street/ Canal Street/ | Rehabilitation/redevelopment of former Co-op building for residential use. | Perth Housing Association |
| P2 | Victoria Street/South William Street | Redevelopment of former store for residential use. | Perth Housing Association |
| P3 | Nelson Street/ South William Street | Redevelopment of site of former College Annex for residential use. | Perth Housing Association |
| P4 | Cleared site, Kinnoull Street | Redevelopment of site of former night-club for sheltered housing. | PKC/Housing Association |
| P5 | Grassicks Garage, Leonard Street | Redevelopment of site of former garage for residential use. | Perth Housing Association |

Proposals for Commercial/Mixed Use Development

| <u>Ref No on Proposals Map</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Proposal</u> | <u>Implementing Body</u> |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| P6 | Conservative Club, George Street | Rehabilitation/redevelopment of former Conservative Club for office use. | Private |
| P7 | South Street/Cow Vennel | Redevelopment of former store and car park site in association with P13 for residential/office use with ground floor retail use on South Street. | Private |

| <u>Ref No on Proposals Map</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Proposal</u> | <u>Implementing Body</u> |
|--------------------------------|---|---|--------------------------|
| P8 | South end of Tay Street | Redevelopment of car park and former Territorial Army buildings for office/residential use and creation of new access to Greyfriars Cemetery in association with P17 . | Private |
| P9 | King Edward Street/ South Street/Fleshers Vennel | Rehabilitation/redevelopment of entire block for speciality shopping mall and leisure uses to complement P15 . | Private/PKC |
| P10 | Gap site, South Street/ Speygate | Redevelopment of gap site primarily for residential use with limited ground floor retail use on South Street. | PKC |
| P11 | Gateway Centre, North Methven Street | Extension to Gateway Centre to form Carers Centre with improved car parking and landscaping | PKVAS |
| P12 | Pullars, Mill Street | Rehabilitation and redevelopment of former Pullars building for offices for unitary authority and multi-storey car park for short term use. In the event that this proposal does not proceed alternative use of the site for offices and residential use with limited ground floor retail use on Kinnoull Street and Mill Street would be accepted. | Private/PKC |

Proposals for Environmental Improvements

| <u>Ref No on Proposals Map</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Proposal</u> | <u>Implementing Body</u> |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|---|--------------------------|
| P13 | Cow Vennel | Resurfacing of vennel in natural traditional materials in association with P7 | SET/TRC |
| P14 | Tay Street | Erection of flood wall and improvement of riverside environment through resurfacing and improved pedestrian facilities. | SET/TRC/PKC |

| <u>Ref No on Proposals Map</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Proposal</u> | <u>Implementing Body</u> |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| P15 | St John's Square | Consideration will be given to the creation of a major new civic space through the removal and relocation of the City Halls in addition to pedestrianisation and environmental improvement in St John's Place, South St John's Place and King Edward Street. | SET/PKC |
| P16 | St John Street | Pedestrianisation and resurfacing in natural traditional materials. | SET/PKC |
| P17 | Greyfriars Cemetery | Landscape improvements, interpretation and restoration of Listed Monuments, and creation of access in conjunction with P8 . | SET/PKC |
| P18 | South Street | Introduction of traffic management measures, improved public transport facilities, and widening of pavement in association with P27 . | SET/PKC |
| P19 | West Mill Street | Pedestrianisation to prevent use as a through route. | PKC |
| P20 | St Paul's Square | Pedestrianisation and resurfacing in natural traditional materials in association with 03, 013, P21 and P28 . | SET/PKC |
| P21 | Old High Street/Mill Wynd | Introduction of traffic management measures and resurfacing in natural traditional materials in association with 03, 013, P20 and P28 . | SET/PKC |
| P22 | Scott Street Car Park | Improvements to pedestrian routes and environment of car park in association with P24 . | SET/PKC |
| P23 | Horse Cross | Installation of flood defences, including creation of flood wall around town lade. | PKC |

Proposals for Facelift Schemes

| <u>Ref No on Proposals</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Proposal</u> | <u>Implementing Body</u> |
|----------------------------|----------------------|--|--------------------------|
| P24 | South Methven Street | Facelift scheme to improve property facades in conjunction with P22 . | SET/PKC/Private |
| P25 | George Street | Facelift scheme to improve property facades. | SET/PKC/Private |
| P26 | Marshall Place | Town scheme to improve character and appearance of Outstanding Conservation Area. | PET/PKC/Private |
| P27 | South Street | Facelift scheme to improve property facades in association with P18 . | SET/PKC/Private |
| P28 | St Paul's Square | Facelift scheme to improve property facades in association with 03 and 013, and P20 and P21 . | SET/PKC/Private |

ANNEX 1

DESIGN GUIDANCE

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Higher standards of living, the desire to improve houses and working conditions and the introduction of new retailing techniques create pressures for change which directly affect buildings in the Central Area. In some cases this results in alterations to the appearance of the existing buildings, but, in others, permission is sought from the Council to demolish the buildings concerned and erect entirely new structures on the cleared site.
- 1.2 Although there are many buildings of such architectural or historic importance that little or no physical change should be permitted to them, further alterations and demolitions within the Central Area as a whole are inevitable. If these alterations are to be carried out in sympathy with the traditional character of the town centre there is a need for guidance on the form of future development and, in general, this need is greatest in areas where traditional design features still predominate.
- 1.3 In addition, standardisation in the design and materials used in the construction and maintenance of roads and footways and installation of street furniture have created pressures for change which can have a significant impact on the character and quality of townscape and the appearance of streets as a whole. There are areas where traditional materials and designs should be retained and well maintained because of their importance to the surrounding townscape and where guidance should be provided to ensure that any new materials or street furniture is appropriate in terms of quality, design and location.
- 1.4 To reflect the difference between the traditional and non traditional parts of the centre, to recognise the difference in quality within the traditional area, and to take account of the **General Land Use Policies** and **Conservation Area Policies** contained in the Plan, the guidance in this Annex relates to three distinct sub-divisions of the Central Area as a whole (See **Figure 1**).
- 1.5 The first of these sub-divisions or zones, which can be regarded as the most important from a townscape and streetscape point of view, comprise the **Conservation Areas** and it is in this zone that the strictest design standards will be applied.
- 1.6 A **Secondary Area** comprising most of the remaining buildings of townscape importance (which in general surround the Conservation Area) will be the subject of less stringent standards.
- 1.7 In areas outwith the **Conservation Areas** and **Secondary Areas**, very little of the traditional character remains, and whilst the Council will still be seeking good standards of design in such areas, particularly adjacent to buildings of townscape importance, there is more scope for innovative rather traditionally based design.

DESIGN GUIDELINES APPLICABLE TO CONSERVATION AREAS AND SECONDARY AREAS

General

- 1.8 The Council will require applications for outline planning permission within **Conservation Areas**, or where it is proposed to alter or demolish a building of townscape importance in the **Secondary Areas**, to be accompanied by drawings and illustrations which give an accurate representation of the design of the proposed building and its relationship to adjoining development.
- 1.9 Where practical, preference over new development will be given to the adaptation of existing buildings where these are of townscape importance.
- 1.10 Proposals for new developments that, in the opinion of the Council, are likely to affect materially the character of **Conservation Areas** will be advertised and account taken of any representations received before a decision is made on the application. The same procedure may be employed in the case of major developments proposed within **Secondary Areas**.

New Buildings

- 1.11 Where new buildings are proposed to replace existing buildings that are considered unsuitable for repair, they will not be judged as separate entities but will require, in terms of scale, style and materials, to respect the character of neighbouring buildings.
- 1.12 Where proposals are to replace buildings in the main shopping streets then facades based on traditional elements and proportions - some examples of which are depicted in **Figure 2** are likely to be acceptable, and modern interpretations of these elements may also be suitable. Within **Conservation Areas**, however, there is less scope for new buildings of current fashion or more pretentious design.

Shopfronts, Fascias, Advertisements and Alterations

- 1.13 Any new shopfront or fascia must be properly related to the building in which it is incorporated. Uniform depth fascia boards spread across a variety of building styles are not acceptable. Fascias should not extend closer than 300mm to the edge of any property.
- 1.14 The depth of any fascia should either be made to fit the space designed for it or, where no such definition exists, its depth should not exceed 700mm or one half of the vertical size between the top of the shopfront and the sill of the first floor window, whichever is the smaller. Where lettering is applied directly to the face of the building without the use of the fascia board its height will be subject to the same conditions. Lettering should generally be restricted to 300mm in height unless on a large scale building.
- 1.15 In **Conservation Areas** and on Listed Buildings illuminated box type fascia signs and illuminated box type projecting signs will not be allowed and only the actual letters showing the name of the shop, or a symbol depicting the house image, may be illuminated. Encouragement will be given to the use of traditional, hand painted signs which may be externally lit. Lighting of traditional hand painted signs should be in sympathy with both the building and the Conservation Area.

- 1.16 Not more than one projecting sign will be allowed on each public elevation of a particular shop or business. The lower edge of any sign must be at least 2450mm above pavement level and the outer edge must be set back at least 500mm from the kerb line.
- 1.17 In considering all applications for advertisements within the Central Area the Council will give special attention to their position and purpose and will seek to achieve the highest standard of design, with a view to such features being used to make a positive contribution to the general amenity of the area.
- 1.18 The Council will make use of its additional powers under Regulation 11 of the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) (Scotland) Regulations 1984 to control certain classes of minor advertisement within **Conservation Areas** (including canopies) which would normally be permitted. Details of the classes of minor advertisement which are controlled are contained in the Technical Appendix. Relatively minor advertisements may therefore require consent. Advice should be sought on the need for consent for any advertisement proposed within **Conservation Areas** and guidance obtained on the design standards to be applied.
- 1.19 In **Conservation Areas** no canopies which are considered to be adverts will be permitted. Where **Conservation Areas** contain shop fronts only the traditional boxed sloping blind will be permitted.
- 1.20 In **Conservation Areas** external shutters will not be permitted. In **Conservation Areas** and **Secondary Areas** the Council will encourage the protection of goods in shop windows through the use of internal shutters or grilles or armour placed or laminated glass. Detachable mesh grilles will not be permitted on Listed Buildings.
- 1.21 In **Conservation Areas** the Council will make use of its additional powers under Article 4 of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 to control certain classes of minor development which are normally permitted and do not require consent. Details of the classes of minor development which are controlled are contained in the Technical Appendix. Relatively minor alterations may therefore require consent. Advice should be sought on the need for consent for any alterations proposed within **Conservation Areas** and guidance obtained as to the design standards to be applied.

Attic Extensions and Dormer Windows

- 1.22 Increasingly attic space and substandard accommodation in the roofs of buildings in the Central Area are being renovated for living accommodation. Whilst this trend is to be welcomed as a way of improving the housing stock it must be recognised that bulky extensions in the roofspace often have an adverse impact on the character of the existing building and street scene. In particular large "box" dormers with horizontal windows and heavy fascia boards tend to clash with the proportions and rhythm of traditional building facades and reduce the interest and delicacy of the skyline.
- 1.23 A variety of traditional dormers are found within the Central Area and some of the most common types are indicated in **Figure 3**. Where possible, traditional dormers should be retained, copied or adapted to suit modern requirements.
- 1.24 Flat roofed "box" dormers will not be permitted on the front elevations of Listed Buildings or other buildings within **Conservation Areas**. This restriction will also apply to the rear of properties visible from public places.

- 1.25 Where flat roofed "box" dormers are to be allowed they will be considered on their design merits and subject to the following criteria:-
- i) "Box" dormers should not convert a pitched roof into a flat roof and to avoid this appearance (a) should be set well back from the lower edge of the roof, and (b) should be set well below the level of the roof ridge.
 - ii) Windows in the dormer should relate to the windows on the facade of the building.
 - iii) Slate hanging should not dominate the dormer. Wherever possible, windows should extend for the full height of the dormer, and slate hanging should normally be limited to areas between windows.
 - iv) In some cases "box" dormers may be incorporated within existing traditional dormers.
 - v) Examples of suitable "box" dormers are shown on **Figure 3**

Design Elements and Materials

- 1.26 The following design guidance should be read in conjunction with **Figure 2**.

ROOF ZONE

- 1.27 In **Conservation Areas** the use of slates will be encouraged and the use of other materials will not be permitted. In **Secondary Areas** a wider range of materials will be permitted. Slates, asbestos cement, plain grey tiles, lead or copper sheet roofing may be acceptable in certain cases.

ROOFLIGHTING, DORMERS, ETC.

- 1.28 A number of traditional patterns are shown. These and other traditional forms may be copied or adapted to suit modern requirements. Velux rooflights of square or vertical proportions or areas of patent glazing may be incorporated within the roof zone.

BUILDING HEIGHT

- 1.29 The height of any new building should be the same height or not less or more than one storey difference to that of the adjoining building.

WALLS AND WINDOWS, ETC (VERTICAL ZONE)

- 1.30 In **Conservation Areas** and **Secondary Areas** the use of stone, reconstructed stone, faced concrete block or stucco with mouldings will be encouraged. Wet dash roughcast may be acceptable in certain areas. In all cases the choice of material must relate to the immediate surroundings. In **Secondary Areas** the use of dry dash roughcast above ground floor level may be permitted in certain areas.

WINDOWS

- 1.31 Most of the traditional properties in the Central Area incorporate housing at an upper level with simple windows of uniform proportions. This overall theme should be maintained and newbuilding forms should show the same degree of vertical emphasis and general relationship of solid to void.

SHOPFRONTS

- 1.32 A wide variety of different types and styles are acceptable but it is important that the shopfront is designed so that it appears to support the building above it. **Figure 2** indicates the following types and styles -
- A** Part of the late 18th Century painted stuccoed front in provincial renaissance style. Superimposed pilasters. No fascia. Lettering applied direct to the face of the building. Simple shopfront.
 - B** Part of mid 18th Century rubble facade recently restored and finished in wet dash. New shopfront and archway set in smooth render.
 - C** Simple 19th Century facade. Carefully designed modern shopfront set behind traditional fascia and columns.
 - D** Late 18th Century painted stuccoed facade with margins. Very intricate and ornate shopfront; not original but contains all the elements of traditional shopfront design.

STREETSCAPE

- 1.33 Within **Conservation Areas** the retention of traditional street furniture, traditional design features and traditional natural surfacing materials will be encouraged as part of any new development or work to streetscape. Within **Secondary Areas** street furniture may be of more modern design providing it is sympathetic to the surrounding townscape and surfacing materials may be man made (ie. concrete, aggregates etc) providing they relate well in terms of texture, colour and scale to the surrounding townscape and streetscape. Street furniture and other fixed elements within the street should be carefully sited to reduce clutter and to minimise risk to disabled people including the visually impaired. New trees should be adequately prepared, protected against vandalism and root damage and located away from drains and buildings.

DESIGN GUIDELINES APPLICABLE TO AREAS OUTWITH CONSERVATION AREAS AND SECONDARY AREAS

- 1.34 In areas outwith **Conservation Areas** and **Secondary Areas** more innovative design will generally be acceptable although in terms of alterations to both townscape and streetscape although, with regard to the former, in all cases the height of new buildings should be the same height or not less or not more than one storey difference to that of the adjoining building.

- 1.35 The same design guidelines which apply to **Conservation Areas** and **Secondary Areas** will apply in areas outwith these zones where proposals for alterations to streetscape or townscape are adjacent to Listed Buildings or other buildings of townscape importance.

27 June 2002

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