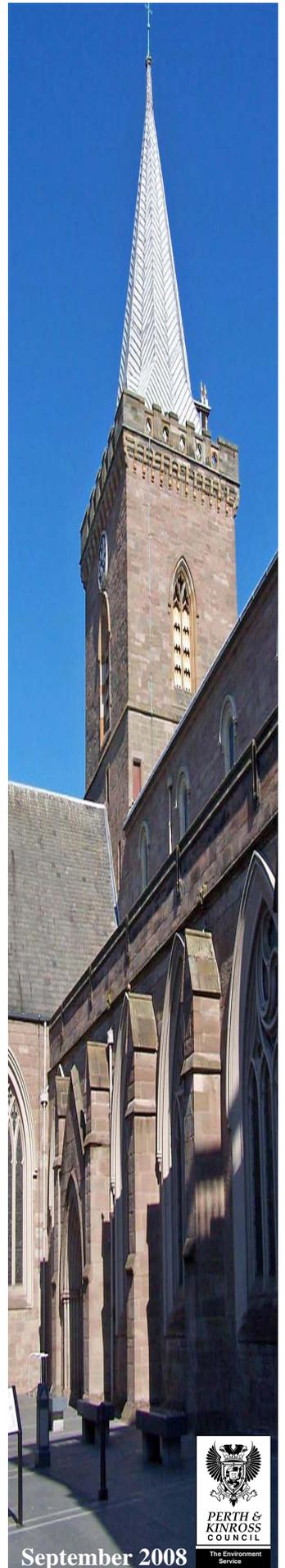


# Perth Central Conservation Area Appraisal



September 2008



## CONTENTS

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION	1
Conservation areas	
Introduction, purpose and justification	1
Reason for conservation area designation	1
Purpose of the Conservation Area Appraisal	2
Location, history and development	2
Regional/ local context	3
Geology and topography	3
Reasons for location	4
Settlement development	4
Character and appearance	7
Activity and movement	9
Street pattern and topography	10
Buildings and townscape:	10
Character areas	10
Character area details	11
Chapter 2 CHARACTER AREAS	11
Character area 1 - City Centre	12
Character area 2 - City Mills	19
Character area 3 - George Street / Rose Terrace	26
Character area 4 - Tay Street & Greyfriars	34
Character area 5 - Marshall Place	42
Character area 6 - A.K. Bell Library / Perth Station	49
Chapter 3 GENERAL TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS	56
Spaces	56
Trees and Landscaping	57
Negative factors:	58
Built environment	58
Buildings at risk survey	58
Public realm:	59
Street furniture	59
Surfaces	60
Street name signage	60
Sensitivity analysis:	61
Archaeology	61
Development pressures	61
Assessment of significance	63
Chapter 4 PROPOSALS	63
Opportunities for development and regeneration	63
Opportunities for planning action:	66
Design guidance	66
Planning/design briefs	66
Article 4 Directions	66
Advertisement Control	66
Need for building repair or urgent works	67
Trees	67
Opportunities for enhancement	67

Chapter 5 CONSERVATION STRATEGY	68	
Using the Conservation Area Appraisal	68	
Monitoring and Review	69	
APPENDICES	70	
Trees in Conservation Areas	70	
Article 4 Direction	70	
MAPS		
Map 1	Location of Perth within Perth & Kinross boundary	2
Map 2	Perth c.1792	5
Map 3	Perth c.1884	5
Map 4	Perth c.1901	5
Map 5	Setting	7
Map 6	Character areas and conservation area boundary	11
Map 7	Character area 1	13
Map 8	Character area 2	20
Map 9	Character area 3	27
Map 10	Character area 4	35
Map 11	Character area 5	43
Map 12	Character area 6	50
Map 13	Archaeology	62
Map 14	Development and regeneration opportunities	64

# **INTRODUCTION**

## **Conservation Areas**

1.1 Conservation areas are crucial to the conservation of our built environment. There are over 600 conservation areas in Scotland. They contain groups of buildings extending over areas of a village or town and can also include public parks, woods and historic land. To safeguard them for the enjoyment and benefit of future generations any new development should preserve or enhance their varied character. The local planning authority is required to determine which parts of its area are of special architectural and/or historic interest. It may propose and designate these as conservation areas. The public will be consulted on any proposal to designate conservation areas or change their boundaries.

1.2 Conservation areas must be safeguarded and enhanced. This is defined through:

- Defining the character that merits protection, including the space between buildings;
- Use of appropriate controls over development, demolition and advertising;
- Financial assistance, where appropriate, for works of repair and restoration;
- Protection of trees;
- Interpretation schemes, through leaflets or exhibitions;
- The implementation of enhancement schemes based upon a conservation area appraisal.

1.3 Designation as a conservation area does not place a ban upon all new development within its boundaries. However new development will normally only be granted planning permission if it can be demonstrated that it will not harm the character or visual quality of the area. New development should also positively enhance the area through good design rather than just create a neutral effect.

## **Introduction, purpose and justification**

### **Reason for conservation area designation**

2.1 Perth City Centre has diverse townscape character, with areas of high quality Georgian and Victorian development. It is an active retail centre also serving residents from surrounding smaller towns, at the same time retaining important elements of its historical built environment. It is popular with tourists for its unique character and appearance, good amenities, and ideal location as the “Gateway to the Highlands”.

2.2 Perth’s seven original conservation areas were designated between 1972 and 1981. These covered a large proportion of the central area but omitted significant areas of special architectural or historic character. The aim is to consolidate these areas and, with the addition of further areas of the city centre, create a single new conservation area. The City’s heritage is a unique advantage, and by designation as a conservation area it can be safeguarded, and new developments monitored to ensure they are of a sufficiently high standard of design.

2.3 Development plan policies indicate that there will be a presumption against development within conservation areas which would harm the character or appearance of, or which would not preserve or enhance the areas.

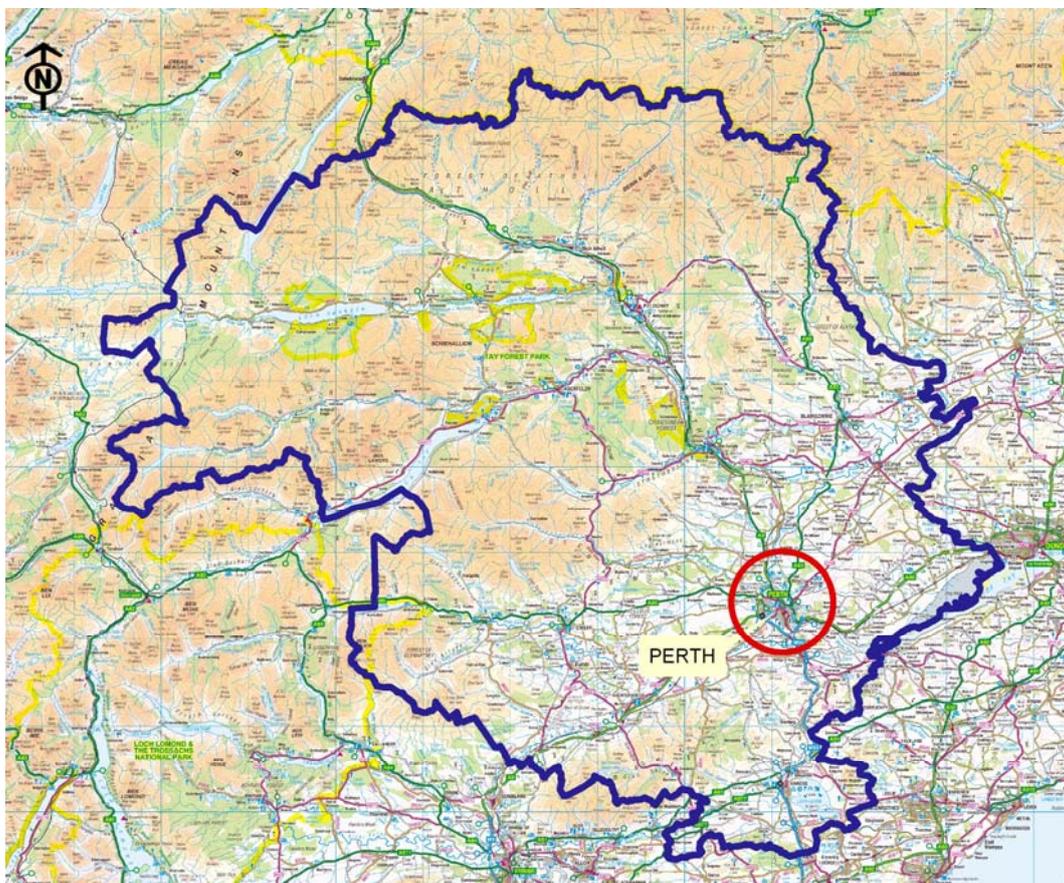
### **Purpose of the Conservation Area Appraisal**

2.4 A Conservation Area Appraisal is a management tool which helps to identify the special interest and changing needs of an area. It serves as supplementary planning guidance to the development plan. The appraisal provides the basis for the development of a programme of action that is compatible with the sensitivities of the historic area and can enable the local authority to fulfil its statutory duties to protect and enhance that particular area.

2.5 Appraisals also assist development control and management. They provide the opportunity to inform residents about the special needs and characteristics of the area and help developers identify and formulate development proposals. If a conservation area's special interest has been clearly defined and published in an Appraisal then this definition may help those thinking to invest in the area and can be used to guide the form and content of new development.

## **Location, history and development**

**Map 1: Location of Perth within Perth & Kinross Council boundary**



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### **Regional/ local context**

3.1 The burgh of Perth is situated on the River Tay, 32.5km west of Dundee and 76km north of Edinburgh. It is the main settlement in Perth and Kinross, which covers 5268km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of 138 400. The city itself has a population of 43 501 (2001 figures). It is surrounded by fertile agricultural land, both arable and grazing. Due to its situation on a major historic NE-SW trade route it has been an important trade centre since the medieval period and retains a working harbour connecting the city with Europe, the Baltic and Scandinavia.

3.2 Perth became a Royal Burgh in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century under David I, and was one of the few walled cities in Scotland. This medieval character is not quite as evident as it may be in, for example, Edinburgh or Stirling, due to the lack of an obvious castle site. Perth did have a castle, but it was a timber construction situated to the north of the medieval burgh, and was destroyed by flooding in 1209. Excavations for the Concert Hall development revealed a huge ditch which may have been part of the castle site, and which would support the tradition that the castle was located in this area.

3.3 Burgh defences are first mentioned in the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century, and stone walls in the early 14<sup>th</sup>. Although these walls/defences have not survived, the wet ditch or lade that acted as a secondary defence is still open and visible at points. The city centre retains some aspects of the medieval herringbone street layout based on plots extending north and south from the two parallel main streets, High Street and South Street. Furthermore, extensive excavation of sites within the city centre, particularly in the 1970s, has shown the medieval archaeology to be among the most impressive and revealing in Scotland, as a result of the waterlogged conditions.

3.4 Perth is popular with tourists due to its proximity to historic and scenic areas of Perthshire, and the attractive character, notable architecture and the quality of the retail environment of the city itself. The city centre encompasses a broad range of architectural styles including Georgian terraces, Victorian villas and Art Deco facades, all situated around the medieval Parish Kirk of St John's, parts of which date from 1440.

### **Geology and topography**

3.5 Perth is situated on a slightly elevated platform on the west bank of the Tay, with the Rivers Almond and Earn entering the river to the north and south of Perth respectively. The area would have originally been a tree-covered platform surrounded by marshes, perhaps leading to the city's name meaning "wood" or "copse" in modern Welsh, so possibly having a similar meaning in a British or Pictish dialect.

3.6 The city is low-lying and prone to flooding, with a new flood prevention system completed in 2001 after the most recent severe flooding in 1993. The city is contained on either side by the North Inch and South Inch, public parks and meadow reclaimed from marshland.

3.7 Extensive geological development has left Perthshire with a varied landscape consisting of mountains, deep valleys and lochs in the north, and broad plains

bisected by the hills of the Sidlaws and Ochils in the south. The soil quality is therefore varied but includes some excellent agricultural land surrounding Perth.

3.8 Building stone was quarried on a large scale from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, including whinstone and slate, but primarily sandstone, resulting in the widespread use of sandstone in Perth's buildings. The clay soil near Perth was exploited in order to commercially produce bricks and tiles by the 1700s.

### **Reasons for location**

3.9 Perth is situated at a fording point of the Tay, as well as the highest tidal navigational point and, until Victorian times, the lowest bridging point. The original settlement would have been based on the slightly raised area of Watergate, bounded by marshland and the river itself, and approached by either a main causeway from the west or the river. The position would have meant that the site was easy to defend, and well-placed to develop into a trading centre.

3.10 Perth is also strategically close to the important early royal centre of Scone, crowning place of the Kings of Scotland; the Pictish centre of Forteviot, and the religious centre of Dunkeld. The burgh seems to have taken over from Scone by the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and was represented in parliament in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, illustrating its importance in spite of not being the official Scottish capital.

3.11 The city is itself based around the Medieval Parish Kirk of St John's, the siting of which is thought to pre-date the foundation of the Royal Burgh. The first recorded mention is from an 1126 grant to the Benedictines of Dunfermline. The Kirk has, since the 1300s, given Perth the alternative name of St. Johnstoun, now used for the city's football team (St. Johnstone).

3.12 There is a great deal of evidence for Roman activity around Perth, with a gravelled Roman road known to have led from Falkirk to Ardoch and along the Gask Ridge to Bertha where it crossed the Tay and continued to Cargill. Traditionally the Roman settlement of Bertha is supposed to have been situated to the north of Perth, although no physical evidence of it has yet been found. Perth itself is more likely to have begun as a Pictish settlement.

### **Settlement development**

3.13 As mentioned, considerable evidence survives to illustrate the importance of Perth in the medieval period, not least St John's Parish Kirk. The Kirk is on a roughly central raised point from which the settlement has radiated out. There were further religious foundations, including chapels and hospitals, but these did not survive the 16<sup>th</sup> century Reformation, after which the overall appearance of the city would have changed considerably. The King James VI Hospital of 1748- 1752 stands on the original site of Scotland's Carthusian Friary in Hospital Street. It was built for a church foundation to care for the sick and destitute, set up after receiving the revenues of the friaries and chapels abolished after the reformation. The site of the Franciscan friary of Greyfriars has been used as the city's cemetery since 1580.

3.14 The first building in Perth mentioned in early charters is the Dominican Friary in the North Port area, near the present site of Carpenter Court. This was where the 1266 Treaty of Perth was signed between kings Alexander III of Scotland and

# Town development

**Map 2: c. 1792**



Map courtesy of  
A.K. Bell Local Studies,  
A.K. Bell Library, Perth

**Map 3: c. 1884**



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**Map 4: c. 1901**



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Magnus IV of Norway. James I, underlining Perth's favoured Royal position, held a General Council in 1427 here, and a Parliament in 1429. Perth was the site of one of the first conventions of Royal Burghs in 1555, and in 1563, 1597 and 1618 General Assemblies were convened in Perth by the church of the reformed religion.

3.15 Perth was active on the Presbyterian side in the Civil Wars of the 1640s. The victory of Montrose at the battle of Tibbermore (1644) occasioned a period of Royalist occupation until the town was captured by Cromwell's army, who constructed a citadel in the north-east corner of the South Inch in 1652. Several of the city's buildings were demolished to provide stone for the citadel, and even grave slabs from Greyfriars were used. The citadel was given to the city after Cromwell's death, and the process of dismantling it began soon after. It is now no longer visible above ground, and a car park is now located over part of it. The site has been excavated, and is scheduled as an ancient monument. After the restoration of Charles II, Perth supported the Jacobite uprising and was strengthened and re-fortified by Jacobite supporters in 1715 and 1745.

3.16 The harbour is a significant contributing factor in the development of Perth, and known sites include the earliest at the end of the High Street shown on Petit's 1715 town plan. Also on Petit's plan is the later site at the end of what is now Canal Street, which at the time was the town lade. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the harbour moved approximately one mile out of town to its present site at Friarton. Although its role and location have gradually changed since the late medieval period, it continues to facilitate trade with the east coast of England and elsewhere in Northern and Eastern Europe, enhanced by recent dredging activity.

3.17 A fundamental aspect of settlement development in the city is the bridge, or bridges. The first record of a bridge is from 1207, when it is reported to have been destroyed by flooding. It was replaced and thereafter recorded as having been repaired on several occasions. A new bridge was built in 1617 but destroyed by flooding in 1621. It was not replaced until Smeaton's Bridge was completed to the north of the original in 1771. This increased the importance of the hamlet of Bridgend, and allowed the city to expand outside the medieval defences to the north and south in two new grid-plan developments. These were based on Marshall Place in the south (completed 1801), and Charlotte Street in the north (completed 1783). The medieval plan was rationalised to allow these new developments to be accessed easily, with the addition of George Street and St John Street. Smeaton's Bridge survives, now A-listed and a scheduled ancient monument, and is still in use. An additional crossing was built in 1900, and replaced by the Queen's Bridge in 1960.

3.18 Rutherford's 1774 map of Perth is the first accurately surveyed plan of the city. It demonstrates that at this stage Perth was still largely contained within the medieval city walls, although there was an increase in building cover and the impact of Smeaton's bridge was beginning to be evident. Around this time, the population of Perth expanded significantly. St Paul's church, the first post-reformation church in Perth, was built in 1806-1807 in order to cope with the overflow of worshippers at St John's, and also to be an "architectural ornament to encourage further development" (Gifford 2007). It worked as a new landmark, paving the way for further expansion to the west of the city.

3.19 In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Perth was one of the most important economies in Scotland, along with Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee. By the 17<sup>th</sup> century, due to limitations of the harbour and problems with flooding, it had fallen to eighth place. The mainstays of the economy remained, however, and during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, both industry and agricultural trade were strengthened, with notable manufacturing areas including glass, brick, textiles, printing, ship-building and whisky. The railway arrived in 1848, further enabling trade and expansion. The existing railway bridge was built in 1863. In the 1870s, the Tay Street embankment was added, giving a new frontage to the city. This was further landscaped in the late 1990s with the addition of the new flood prevention system.

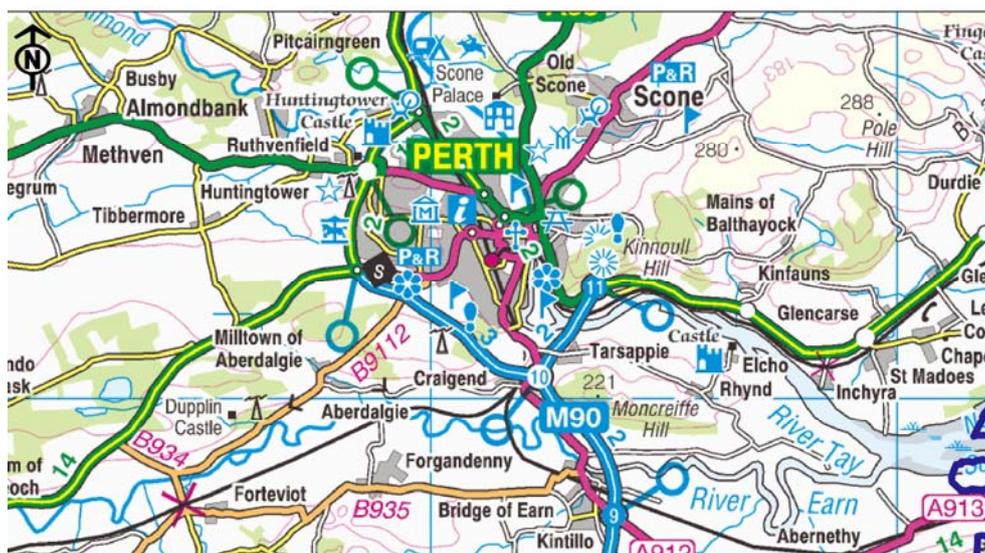
3.20 Perth today is popular as a retail centre for the surrounding area, with a range of specialist and independent retailers, as well as a pedestrianised high street and the St John's shopping centre. Development opportunities such as the redundant City Hall are intended to enhance the city's retail offer whilst utilising its unique historic character.

3.21 Although most of the key industries, for example whisky, have moved out of the city, new focuses for employment and the local economy include large businesses such as Norwich Union, the Royal Bank of Scotland, and energy suppliers such as Scottish and Southern Energy. Perth College is now included as a member of the University of the Highlands and Islands Millennium Institute.

3.22 Residential properties are concentrated in the suburbs surrounding the inner core, although many city centre Georgian and Victorian terraces and villas have been retained and are still in use. Although there have been some losses in terms of notable historic buildings, the townscape remains varied and unique. In recent years there have been some impressive new additions, including Perth Concert Hall and an extension to the AK Bell Library.

## Character and appearance

Map 5: Setting



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4.1 The conservation area encompasses the majority of the area within the inner ring road, with one or two areas beyond this line. This delineates the identifiable core of the city and contains the greatest concentration of buildings and areas of historic and architectural interest. This area contains a number of differing character areas which will be considered individually for the purposes of the study.

4.2 Overall, the area is bounded by the two large parks; the North Inch and South Inch, by the river, and by the train station in the south-west, so the city centre is in itself quite compact. The riverside location and views out to the two parks and the woodland of Kinnoull Hill on the other side of the river give Perth a uniquely attractive setting, and have helped to protect the city from urban sprawl.

4.3 Significant views within and out of the town include: West along the High Street to the spire of St Paul's and east to the spire of St John's; east along South Street and Marshall Place to Kinnoull Hill; north along Princes Street towards St John's; north along George Street to the Museum and Art Gallery; west along Canal Street to the former St Leonard's Parish Church, and east across the Tay to the Kinnoull Aisle; north along Tay Street to Smeaton's Bridge, and out of the city to the North and South Inches.



**Above left:** West along High Street towards St. Paul's.

**Above:** East along Marshall Place to Kinnoull Hill.

**Left:** North towards St. John's Church from the spire at the Episcopal Church in Princes Street, c. 1929.

Image courtesy of A.K. Bell Local Studies, A.K. Bell Library, Perth

4.4 There are five main routes into the city centre: From the west, looking along South Street with the backdrop of Kinnoull Hill; from the north-west coming past St Catherine's Retail Park towards St Ninian's Cathedral; from the east over the Queen's bridge on to the Tay Street embankment; from the north-east over Smeaton's Bridge entering the Georgian suburb bordering the North Inch; and from the south, passing the South Inch and entering Princes Street looking towards the spire of St John's. The most impressive views of the city are from above, from Craigie Hill, Kinnoull Hill and Moncrieffe Hill.



**St. Ninian's Church from Dunkeld Road    View of Georgian suburb from Lochie Brae**

### **Activity and movement**

4.5 Perth has two parallel main streets; High Street and South Street. The High Street, pedestrianised in 1989, forms the centre of the main shopping area. The majority of the shops in St John Street, High Street and the St John's Centre are national chains, with independent retailers situated elsewhere, most notably George Street, Old High Street and Princes Street. A variety of events such as farmers' markets have developed to utilise the pedestrianised spaces of High Street, King Edward Street and St John's Place.

4.6 Due to pedestrianisation of the High Street and, more recently in 2004 the area around St John's Parish Kirk, traffic in the city centre is limited but can be very busy along South Street, the main east-west traffic route through the city centre. Traffic is busiest on the inner ring road, with high concentrations at the junctions of Atholl Street/ Barrack Street/ Caledonian Road; York Place/Caledonian Road, and at the two bridges. This has had an impact on localised air quality, the improvement of which is a long-term aim for city centre enhancement and traffic management schemes.

4.7 Perth's central area recreational facilities include Perth Museum and Art Gallery (one of the oldest provincial museums in Scotland), the Fergusson Gallery, Perth Concert Hall, the Art Deco Playhouse cinema, the AK Bell Library and sports and leisure activities available nearby at the North and South Inch, Perth Leisure Pool and Dewar's Ice Rink.



**Perth Concert Hall**

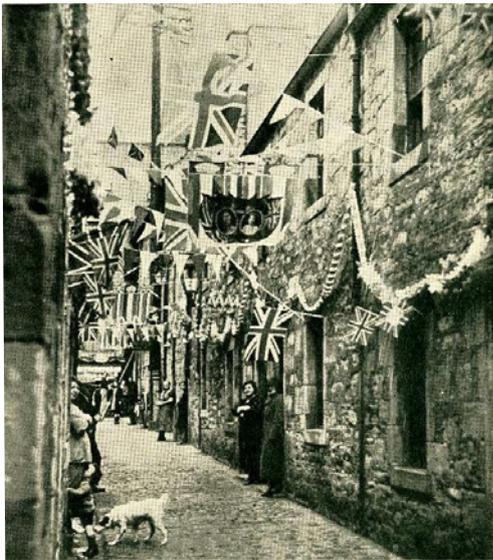


**AK Bell Library**

4.8 The number of bars and restaurants in the city centre, and the active live music scene, means that it can also be busy during evenings and weekends. There is some seasonal variation in activity due to Perth being a popular tourist base, and also the festival calendar, most notably Perth Festival of the Arts.

### **Street pattern and topography**

4.9 As previously discussed, Perth retains a semblance of its incarnation as a walled medieval Burgh, in terms of the relatively compact city centre and the herringbone street pattern of vennels leading off and linking the two parallel east-west main streets. The original city walls would have been situated at approximately the present lines of Mill Street, South Methven Street and Canal Street, and on the



east the river provided a natural defence. Later additions to the city centre such as Rose Terrace and Marshall Place are linked by George Street, St John's Street, and Princes Street, a north-south route through the city. The city centre is now largely contained in the area originally within the walls along with the Georgian additions by an outer traffic route (not a complete ring road due to the presence of the station in the south-east corner). The juxtaposition of small vennels and wider, more regularly placed shopping streets gives an indication of the varied nature of the street pattern within this contained area.

**Cow Vennel c.1937**

Photograph courtesy of A.K. Bell Local Studies, A.K. Bell Library, Perth

4.10 The main contributing factor to the city's topography is the River Tay on the east side of the city. The settlement's low-lying, relatively flat topography means that there are only subtle variations in height, occasionally due to artificial reclamation, and largely concealed by the built-up nature of the city. The ground level rises away from the river outside the city centre, giving unrivalled views of the city from the surrounding hills.

## **Buildings and townscape**

### **Character Areas**

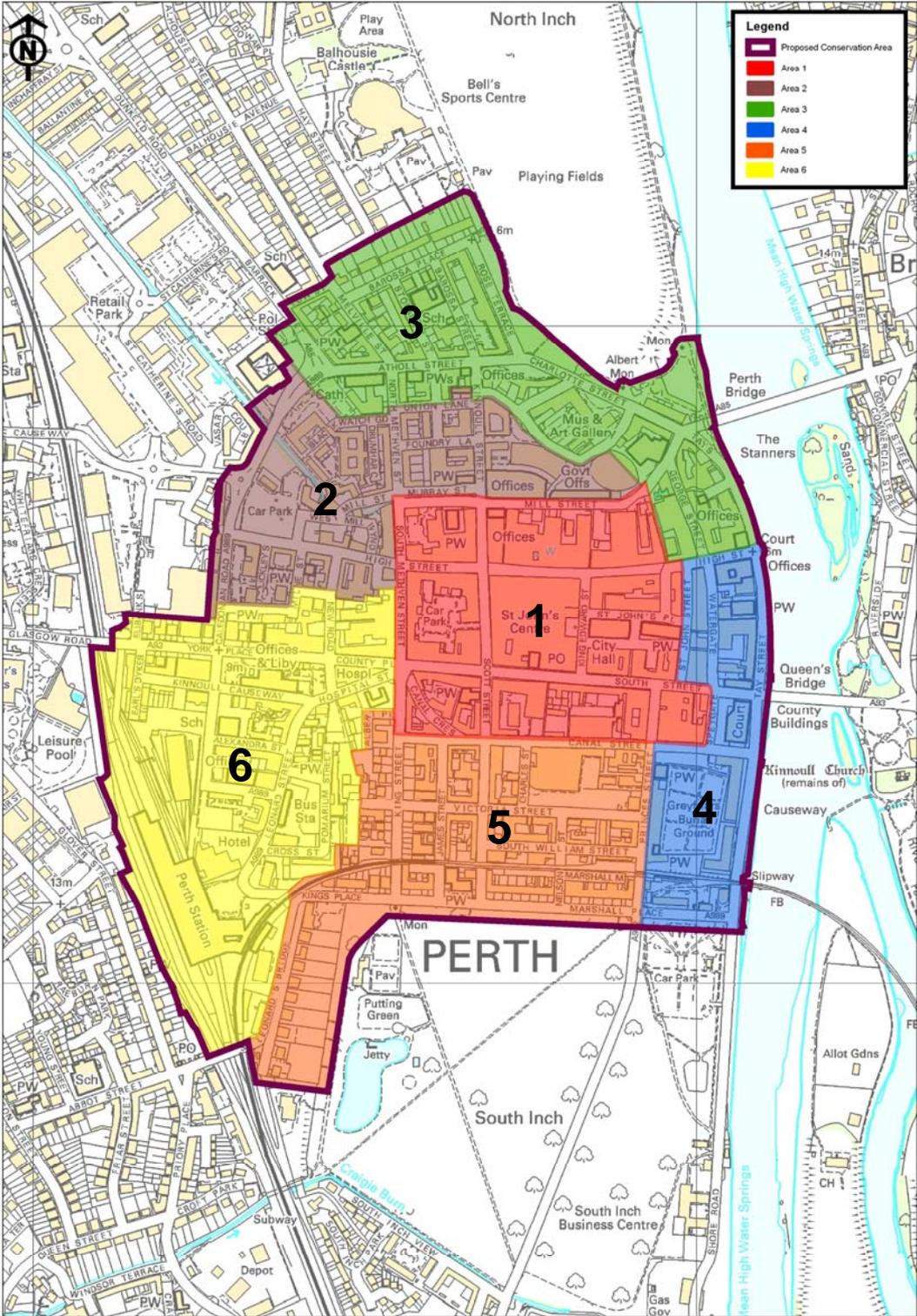
4.11 The first impression of Perth's townscape is its variety. Although there are some areas of uniform development, for example the Georgian terraces on Barossa Place and Marshall Place, the nature of the city's built environment is primarily a vibrant mix of styles and periods from vernacular to neo-classical. As a result, it is difficult to summarise the buildings and townscape of the entire conservation area. For this purpose, the overall area will be broken down into sections, each of which has an identifiable character. Of course the nature of the townscape is such that in practice each character type will overlap slightly into the neighbouring areas, and there will be common characteristics between some areas.

**Character area details**

4.12 Each character area described in the appraisal has been surveyed to identify the details and materials which contribute to its distinctiveness. Typical details for each area have been included in each character area section.

**CHARACTER AREAS**

**Map 6: Character areas and conservation area boundary**

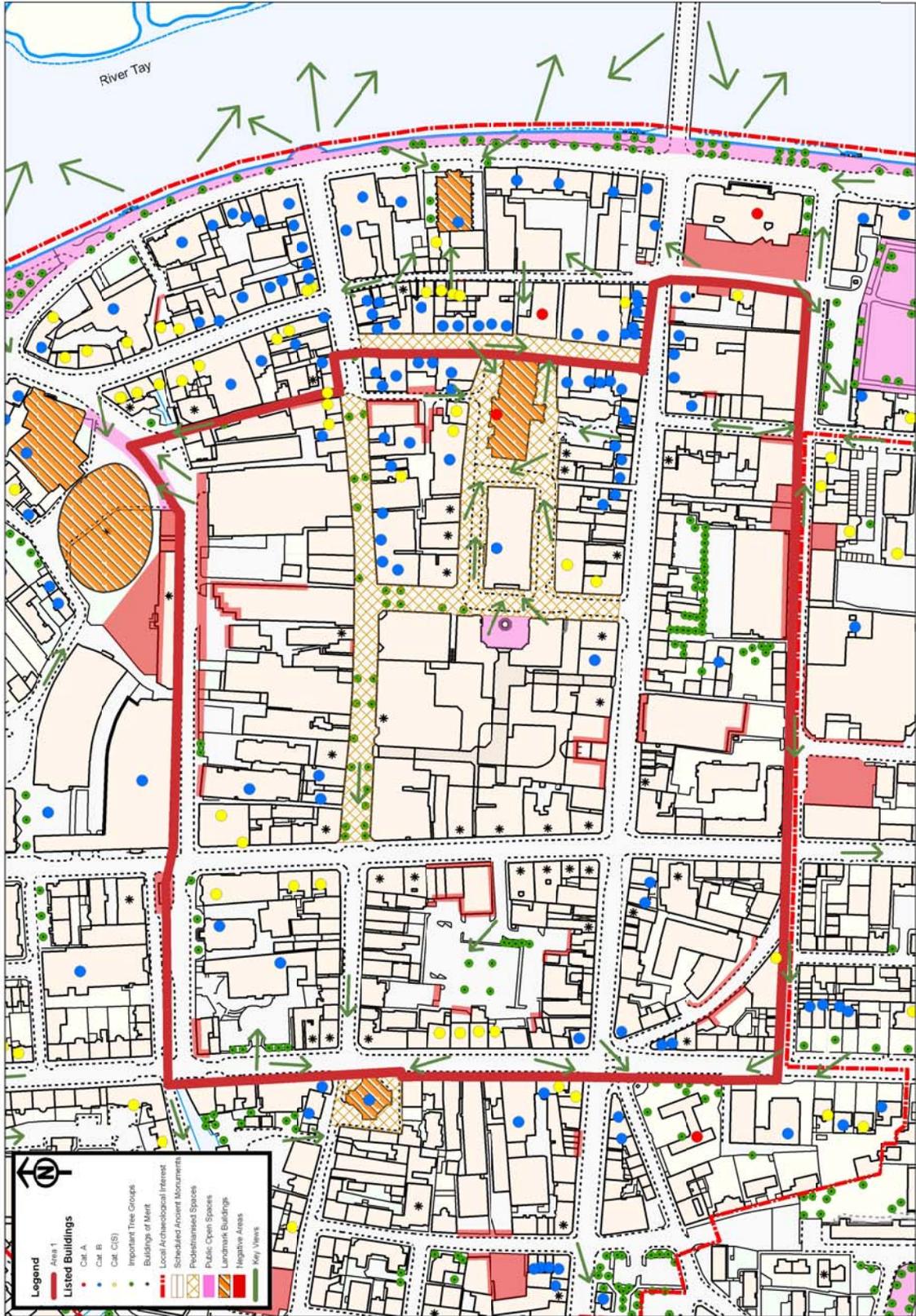


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**Character Area 1**

**City Centre**

Map 7: Character area 1



## Area 1 City centre

*Incorporating W-E South Methven Street (east side) to St John Street; N-S Mill Street (south side) to Canal Street (north side).*

*Key buildings: St John's Kirk, the former City Hall.*

*Other important buildings: Perth Theatre, the former Sandeman's public library, North Church, the former Sharp's Educational Institute.*

5.1 This area is primarily characterised by city centre retail premises - large national chain shops and units on the high street, and more specialist shopping on St John Street – both of which are pedestrianised. St John's Parish Kirk is the focal point for the area, also in a (recently) pedestrianised area surrounded by cafes and restaurants. The area also contains South Street, the historic secondary east-west street and main traffic route through the city centre. The area retains a number of lanes or vennels leading north and south from and between South Street and High Street, some of which have names hinting at their role in the medieval burgh's trade, such as Flesher's Vennel.



**Specialist shop in St. John's Street**



**Boots the Chemist—national chain**

5.2 High Street and South street have largely restricted retail uses to ground floors, and many of the buildings have accommodation or offices above. Although many of the shopfronts and facades are representing national chains and have a resulting corporate identity, there are still many historic shopfronts of note, for example 12 South Street (a rare late 18<sup>th</sup> century bow-fronted shop); 29-37 South Street; and a number on St John Street, particularly 12 (design of 1895, now B-listed), 18 and 33. See Lindsay Ann Lennie, *The Historic Shopfronts of Perth, An Architectural History* (Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust, undated), for more detailed information.

5.3 The most notable characteristics of the main retail area are in the upper floor facades, which vary widely in character and allow for a contrasting roofline of varying heights and pitches. This cumulative effect is most noticeable looking west from the Queen's Bridge along South Street.

5.4 There is a high concentration of listed buildings in this area, particularly on St John Street and clustered at the eastern end of South Street, as well as at intervals along High Street and St John's Place. St John's Kirk, a townscape landmark and arguably the most important building in the city due to its importance in the founding of the medieval burgh. The Kirk was rebuilt in the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century, and although it



has since been restored and added to on many occasions, sections of the building still survive from this period. The façade of the Salutation Hotel, claiming to be the oldest established hotel in Scotland, terminates the view down St John Street.

**St. John's Kirk**

5.5 The western end of Mill Street contains several notable buildings originally with civic functions, although the street itself is lacking in character due to its location at the rear of the main shopping street and the use of Murray Street as a local bus station. Key buildings include: the tenement block on the corner of Kinnoull Street with arcading on the ground floor and an Edwardian Baroque corner entrance; the former Sandeman Public Library; North Church, and the former Sharp's Educational Institute of 1860, next to North Church but facing over a courtyard to South Methven Street. Further east along the south side of Mill Street is the rear of the 1898 Perth Theatre, reconstructed following fire in 1924.



**Sandemans & North Church**



**Sportsters, former educational institute**

5.6 The north-south cross-streets of Kinnoull Street/Scott Street and Methven Street, cut or improved during the Victorian period, are characterised by multi-storey tenements and mercantile buildings such as 4 Kinnoull Street/197 High Street and 16-18 South Methven Street. Often their designs accentuate their townscape function at what were new cross-roads by the use of prominent corner features such as towers and cupolas. These prominent corners have created one of Perth's most uniquely recognisable townscape patterns.

**Surveys of Specific Issues**  
**Area 1**  
**Windows & doors**



Materials & Details



## Roofscapes



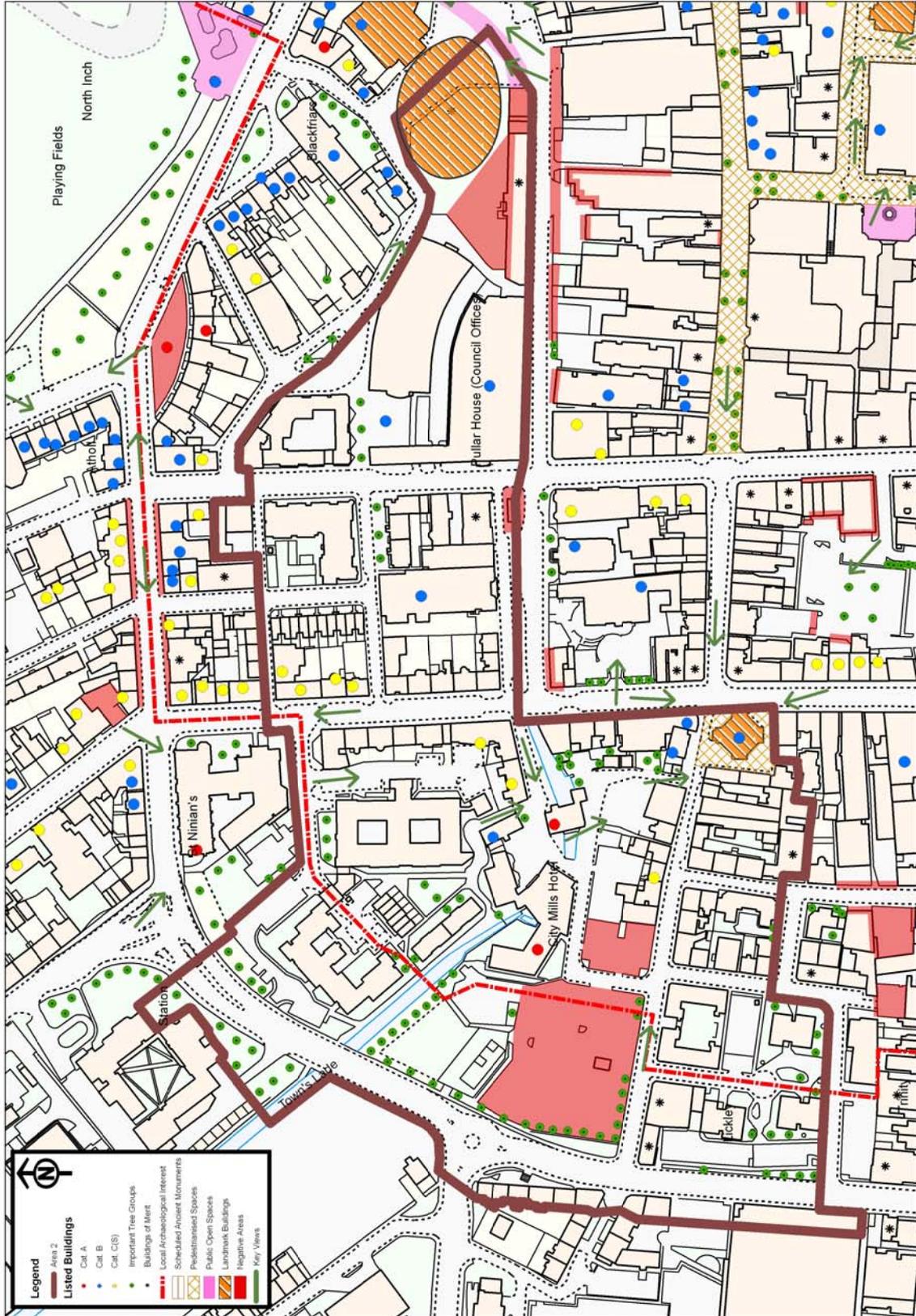
## Shopfronts



## **Character Area 2**

### **City Mills**

Map 8: Character area 2



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## Area 2 City Mills:

*Incorporating W-E: Northern section Caledonian Road, Kinnoull Street, Mill Street, including Old High Street and City Mills complex.*

*Key buildings: Upper and Lower city Mills; St Paul's Church.*

*Other important buildings: Pullar House, Fair Maid's House, Hal o' the Wynd House, the former Glasite Meeting House, Playhouse Cinema.*

6.1 The street layout of this area is less uniform than the city centre, incorporating as it does the Town's Lade and former mill complex. The area generally preserves the street layout and large-scale plots developed for industrial and ancillary uses outwith the line of the medieval city defences and downwind of the city centre.

6.2 St Paul's Church of 1807 initiated further development to the west of the city, and its spire is a major focal point of this area. It is situated in the small setted area of St Paul's Square at the junction of Old High Street and North Methven Street, opposite the 1839 former Glasite Meeting House. Old High Street is primarily small-scale retail with flats above. Although the area is somewhat blighted by the large car parks and proximity to heavy traffic routes and the retail park, there is a pleasant walk into this side of the city along the lade towards the City Mills. The area also contains a concentration of fairly plain but good quality unlisted tenement buildings.



**St. Paul's Church, c.1905**

Photograph courtesy of Perth Museum and Art Gallery, Perth



**Lower City Mill & Lade**

6.3 The main section of Murray Street is used as a local bus station, but is bordered by several notable buildings. Those on the south side are covered as part of Area 1 City Centre. On the north side is the 1897 Congregational Church (unlisted), and the Art Deco Playhouse Cinema, 1933. This is B-listed, with marble facings and some internal deco fixtures intact. Further along Mill Street is the Pullar building which once housed Perth's largest industry and employed 2600 people as Pullar's North British Dye Works in 1900. It is now used by Perth and Kinross Council after conversion to office use in 2000.

**Playhouse Cinema & Congregational Church**



6.4 A recent addition to the townscape of this part of Perth is the 2005 Concert Hall, a large primarily oval building between Pullar House and Perth Museum and Art Gallery, with a ribbed green copper curved roof. Although controversial, it is a high quality landmark addition and has so far proved very successful, increasing pedestrian and commercial activity in the area throughout the day and evening.

6.5 In North Port is the Fair Maid's House, used by Sir Walter Scott as the model for the home of Catherine Glover in *The Fair Maid of Perth* (1828). It is a late medieval building, bought by the Glover incorporation in 1693 and used as a meeting house, but was largely reconstructed in 1893. In Mill Wynd, the medieval route from the High Street to the mills, is Hal o' the Wynd House (late 18<sup>th</sup> century), the building on which the home of Catherine's suitor is based.



**Fair Maids House, 1935**

Photograph courtesy of the University of St Andrews Library



**Present day**

6.6 The City Mills were served by the lade bringing water from the River Almond. The site was a hub of industry in the city by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, but only the two mills remain. The Lower City Mill, completed by 1805, was used for barley and oatmeal. It was restored in the 1980s with working machinery. The 1792 Upper City Mills, consisting two wheat mills linked by a granary, became a hotel in 1971. Undershot wheels and the king-post roof are still visible within the building.

Area 2  
Windows and doors



Materials and details



Roofscapes



Shopfronts



**Character Area 3**  
**George Street / Rose Terrace**

Map 9: Character area 3



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### Area 3 George Street/ Rose Terrace:

*Incorporating W-E Atholl Street, Melville Street, Barossa Place, Rose Terrace; N-S Atholl Crescent, Charlotte Street, George Street and the northern section of Tay Street.*

*Key buildings: Smeaton's Bridge, Perth Museum, and Art Gallery, Old Academy, St. Ninian's Cathedral.*

*Other important buildings: Terraces in Rose Terrace, Charlotte Street, Atholl Crescent, George Hotel.*

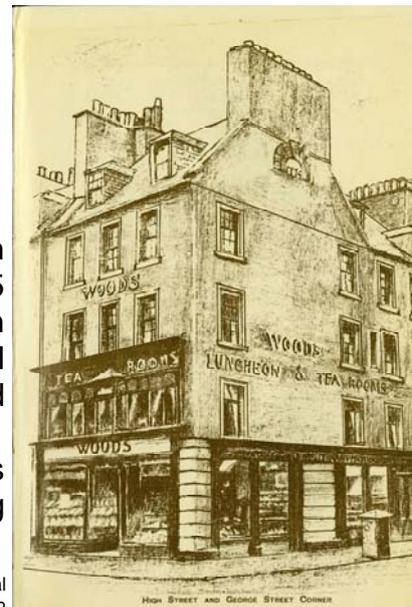
7.1 This area includes Thomas Hay Marshall's late 18<sup>th</sup> century additions to the north of the city centre, and the end of the 1774 Smeaton's Bridge, and is therefore marked by important views across the river and to the North Inch. It is remarkable for the extent of the survival of the Georgian developments. George Street is notable for its specialist shopping and many good quality shopfronts, and its curved aspect emphasising Perth Museum and Art Gallery at the top of the street.

**Smeaton's Bridge from Tay Street**



**Left: View from George Street up to Perth's Museum & Art Gallery**

**Below: Corner of George Street / High Street, 1932**



7.2 Included is the north side of the section of High Street closest to Tay Street, notable for the 1905 shopfront by Adam Currie at number 21, now Aitken and Niven. Across George Street are the Gothic Council Offices on the corner of Tay Street, built 1877-9, and restored in 1895 following severe fire damage. At 9-11 High Street is the former National Bank, and at 13-17 is a late 17<sup>th</sup> century rendered six-bay tenement building with shops below.

Image courtesy of A.K. Bell Local Studies, A.K. Bell Library, Perth

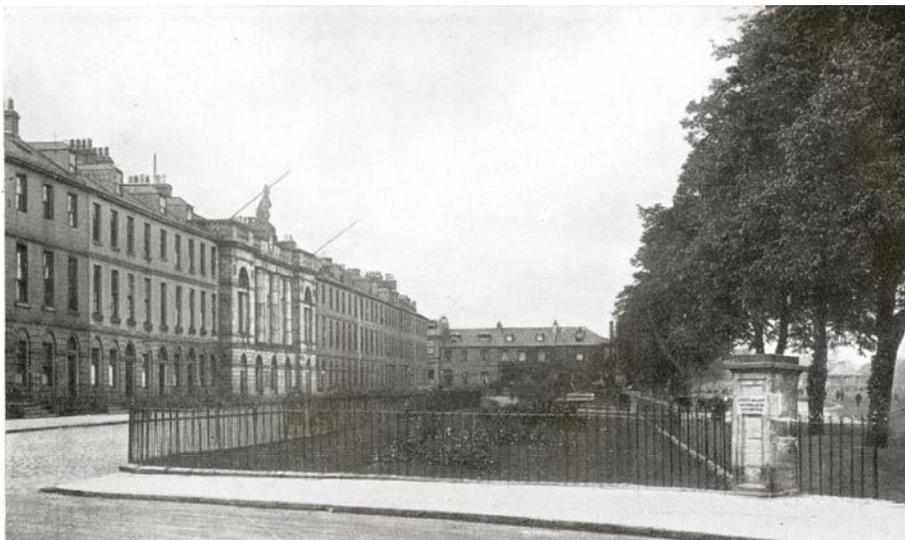
7.3 There is an extremely high concentration of notable buildings in the area, with the majority of buildings listed. It has a fairly uniform character, particularly in the Georgian grid-plan development, and apparent, for example, in Charlotte Street where the eaves height of the buildings on the north side remains the same but the buildings increase in height to allow for the sloping ground level.

7.4 The main focus for pedestrian activity is George Street. Tay Street is particularly attractive for views of the bridges and the North Inch, and includes a path under Smeaton's bridge to the landscaped area of the North Inch containing the war memorial statue and the Albert Memorial, continuing as the perimeter path around the Inch. The Tay Street flood prevention scheme, overlapping into character Area 4, with its associated high-quality hard landscaping and public art is a notable modern addition to Perth's street scene.

7.5 Rose Terrace, built around 1800, with the Old Academy as a central point, acts as an edge to the Georgian development with an open aspect looking on to the North Inch.

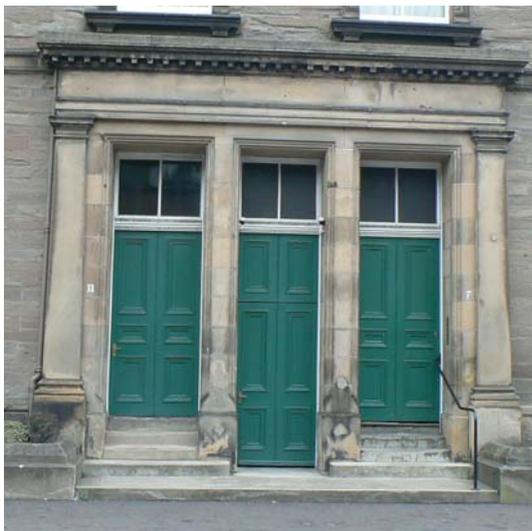


**Rose Terrace, above present day and below in 1933**



Photograph courtesy of A.K. Bell Local Studies, A.K. Bell Library, Perth

Area 3  
Windows and doors



Materials and details



Roofscapes

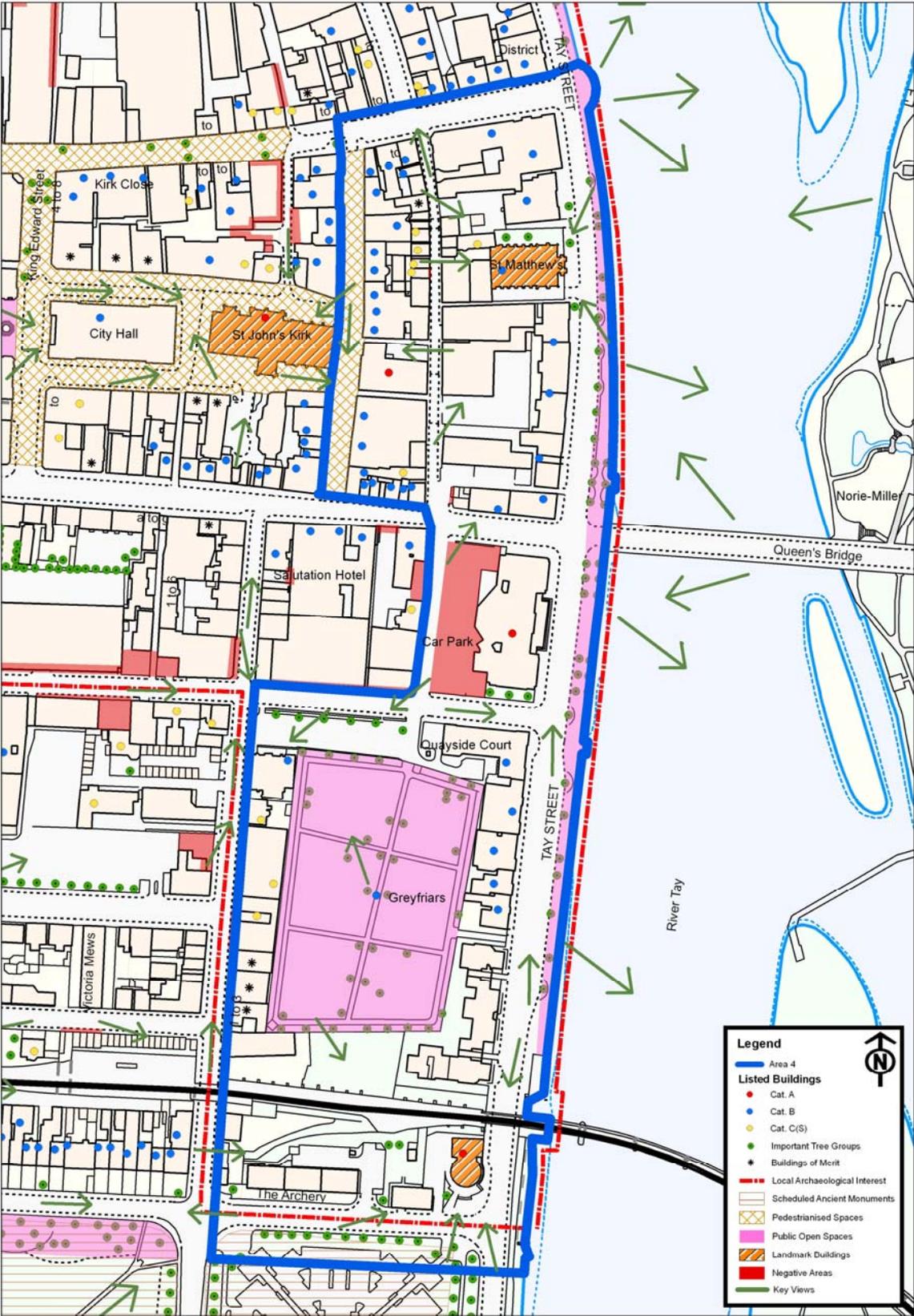


Shopfronts



**Character Area 4**  
**Tay Street & Greyfriars**

Map 10: Character area 4



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## Area 4 Tay Street & Greyfriar:

*Incorporating W-E St John Street (east side), Watergate, Tay Street, N-S High Street, South Street, Canal Street, Marshall Place (east end), Greyfriars cemetery.*

*Key buildings: Fergusson Gallery, Sheriff Court.*

*Other important buildings: St Matthew's Church, the former Clydesdale Bank, Council Chambers.*

8.1 Watergate is thought to be the oldest area of settlement in Perth, and was until 1966 the site of an early 17th century timber-fronted house. The street was of particular importance in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries when properties on the east side would have had plots behind leading to the river. It no longer has any properties dating to earlier than the 18<sup>th</sup> century.



**Sheriff Court**



**St John the Baptist Episcopal Church**

8.2 Greyfriars Burial Ground serves as both an important historic site and a green space in the city centre. It is maintained as a nature conservation site, with mature trees and some grass given over to meadow to encourage wild flora and fauna. A recent enhancement project provided a shelter for the most important monuments in the burial ground, the earliest of which dates from 1580. Next to the Burial Ground is the B-listed St John the Baptist Episcopal Church of 1851.

8.3 The main focal point at the south end is the Fergusson Gallery, the former Perth Waterworks of 1832, converted to a gallery for J. D. Fergusson's works and other temporary exhibitions in 1992. It is visible from afar due to the high chimney, and has a prominent corner site at one of the main entry points to the city, separated from the rest of Tay Street by the railway viaduct. It is particularly notable for the cast iron rotunda, a very early surviving example of a cast iron structure.



**J.D. Fergusson's gallery, former waterworks**

8.4 The car park at the north-east corner of the South Inch, opposite the Fergusson Gallery, was landscaped in the mid-1990s to lessen its detrimental impact on the area. This car park is built over the site of Cromwell's Citadel, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

8.5 From this point going north Tay Street's west side is characterised by its large-scale public buildings, including two churches (St Matthew's Church, a significant landmark, and Middle Church, now a residential conversion), the Greek Revival Sheriff Court by Robert Smirke, 1822, Gowrie House, Victoria Buildings, and the Baroque Council Chamber on the corner with High Street, built in 1899 as the headquarters of General Accident Fire and Life Assurance Corporation. On the east side are the city's three bridges, a wide paved area with viewing platforms for the river, and open views across to Kinnoull Hill.

8.6 Planned in 1806, the Tay Street embankment was completed in the 1880's with buildings on the west side open to the river, and gave a new presence to the city as viewed from the east. The embankment was replaced in the late 1990's with the new flood prevention scheme and new landscaping and public art put in place at that time. Tay Street contains a rich assortment of buildings of architectural quality, mostly listed, and its diverse architecture has been described by Nick Haynes as a "Stylistic melting pot".

**Area 4**  
**Windows & doors**



Materials & Details



**Materials & Details cont.**



**Roofscapes**



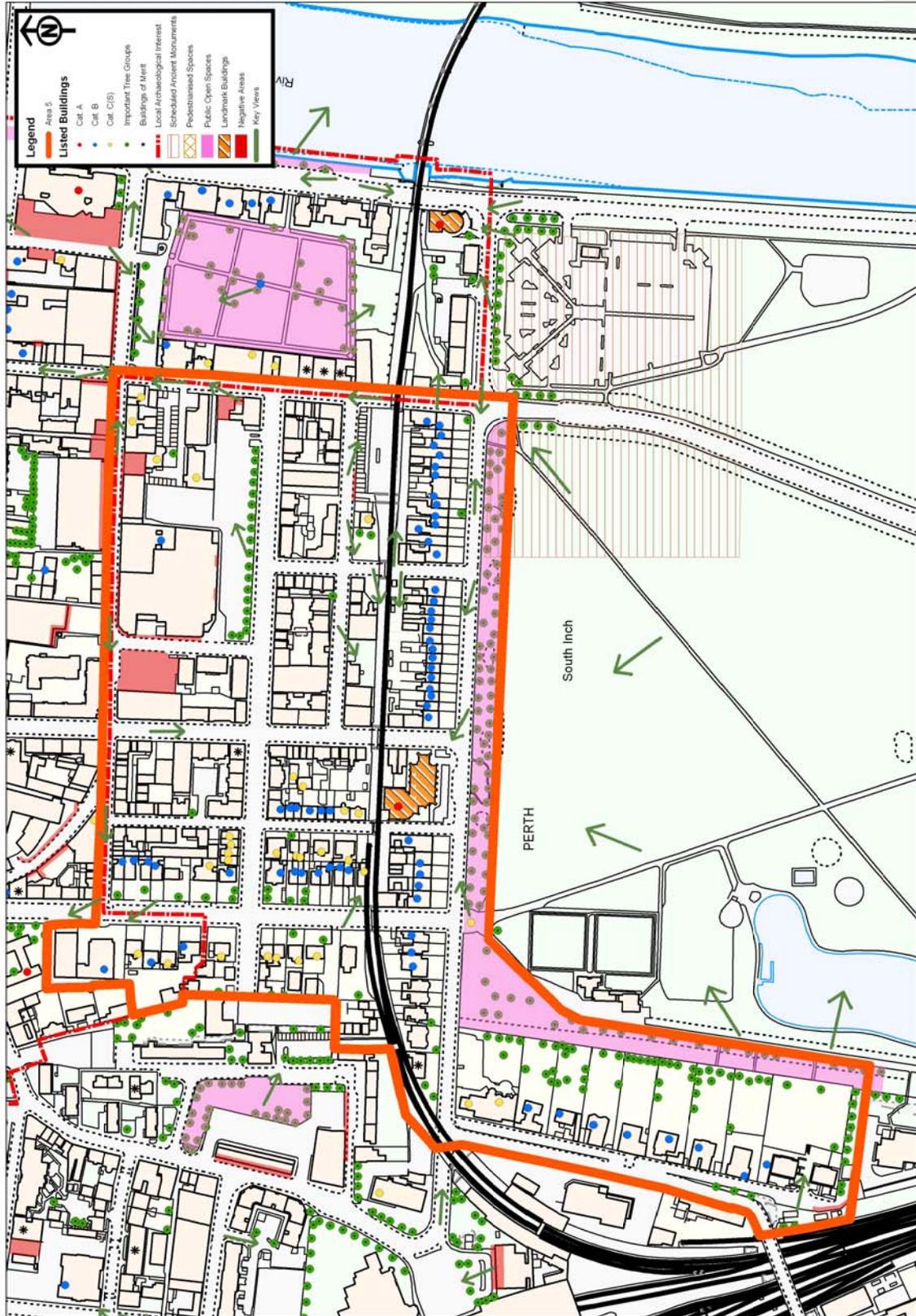
Shopfronts



**Character Area 5**

**Marshall Place**

Map 11: Character area 5



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## Area 5 Marshall Place

*Incorporating W-E King Street to Princes Street; N-S Canal Street to Marshall Place/King's Place and including St Leonard's Bank.*

*Key Buildings: St Leonards in the Fields*

*Other important buildings: former St Leonard's Parish Church, Marshall Place terraces, St Leonard's Bank villas and King Street villas, James Street cottages.*

9.1 This area is primarily residential, including the planned Marshall Place by Robert Reid, 1801. These two terrace blocks were continued in King James Place, but the proposed development was foreshortened to accommodate St Leonard's in the Fields of 1885, a Scots Late Gothic church with a distinctive crown steeple. King's Place continues with villas of a similar late 19<sup>th</sup> century date apart from number 6, a Georgian villa with Baroque detailing. The rail line runs along the rear of these properties on a raised viaduct.



**Marshall Place & St. Leonard's in the Fields Church**

9.2 This street line marks the southern edge to the city centre, with views out to the mature trees and open ground of the South Inch. The railings along this edge of the park are no longer in place, but the gateposts of the main entrance remain on either side of the Walter Scott statue of 1845, moved here from the High Street in 1877.

9.3 St Leonard's Bank is a series of east-facing villas in large grounds, looking across the South Inch and backing on to the street. The plots for these were laid out in 1828, and the villas largely date from the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

9.4 Canal Street, originally the route of the town lade by the southern wall of the burgh, is now the setting for a large multi-storey car park and three further open car parks on Speygate, in front of Greyfriars Burial Ground, and on the corner of Charles Street.



**Love's Auction Rooms**

This area was historically the site of light industrial uses such as timber yards and coach works. There are some notable buildings remaining, including Love's Auction Rooms, a half-timbered building of 1900, and the Arts and Crafts courtyard development of Spey Court, 1920. The street has a closed vista west to the former St Leonard's Parish Church, and east across the Tay to Kinnoull Aisle.

9.5 Further residential properties in the area include the cottages and two-storey terrace of James Street. King Street was laid out at a similar time, providing villa sites from approximately 1830. Further tenements are situated on Victoria Street; unlisted but giving a vital contribution to townscape character. The private gardens of this area form part of its distinctiveness. Its peaceful, secluded setting belies its proximity to the city centre.



**Cottage & garden in James Street**



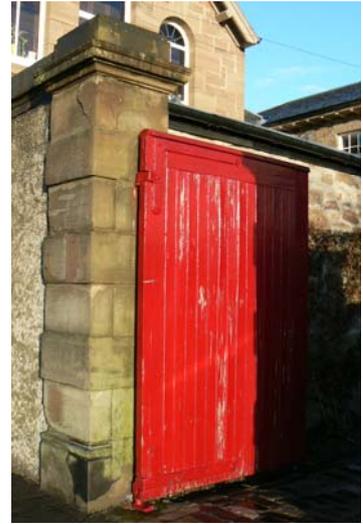
**Victoria Street tenement block**

9.6 Retail in this area is concentrated on Princes Street, another key route into the city from the south, with views north to the distinctive spire of St John's, and south to the Inch. The street now has a variety of specialist retailers, and some new shopfronts and developments that detract from its characteristically varied upper floor facades. One notable building is found at numbers 38-48, a nine-bay pedimented former warehouse of 1890, arcaded at the ground floor.

Area 5  
Windows and doors



Materials and details



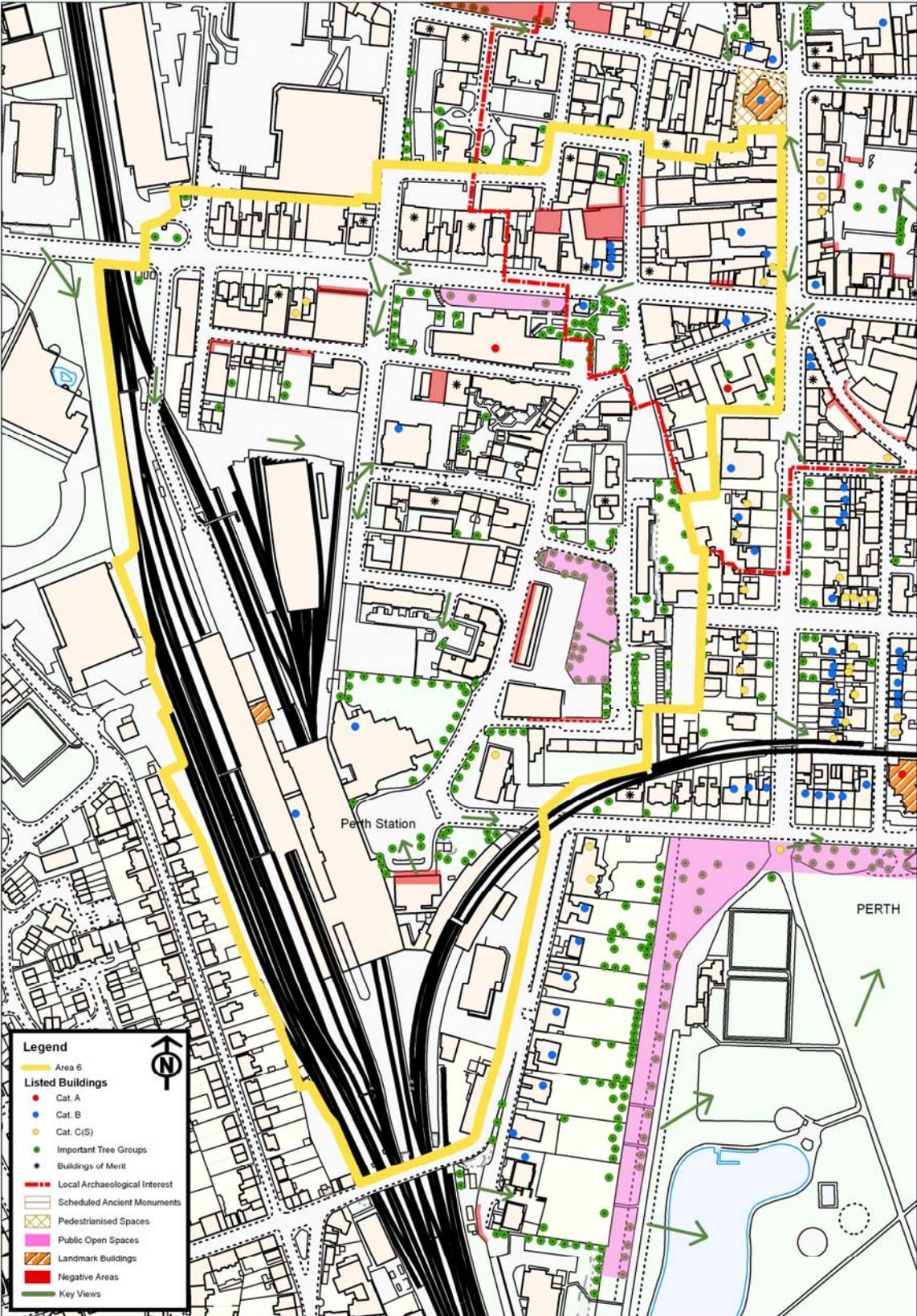
Roofscapes



## **Character Area 6**

**A.K. Bell Library/ Perth station**

Map 12: Character area 6



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## Area 6 A.K. Bell Library/ Perth station

*Incorporating N-S County Place/York Place to Perth Station, E-W railway line/sidings, Caledonian Road to southern end of South Methven Street.*

*Key buildings: King James VI Hospital, A.K. Bell Library.*

*Other important buildings: Perth Station, Station Hotel, Caledonian Road School.*

10.1 Like Area 2, City Mills, this part of Perth was historically a focus of poorer housing and industrial/service uses, leading to its present mixed character. However its role in Perth's Key position within the development of the rail network and its historic layout lend it an underlying interest and quality. This area contains several distinctive buildings including the King James VI hospital of 1774 and the former infirmary, now the A. K. Bell Library. Of the six character areas this has the lowest concentration of listed buildings and a higher incidence of areas of poor quality townscape, for example the bus station and its environs. This area, particularly as it may be the first impression of Perth for visitors arriving, is a focus for improvement.



King James VI hospital



Bus Station

10.2 The 1849 station building with its Tudor Gothic octagonal tower was designed by William Tite. Multiple phases of extensions, particularly the new awnings and platforms of 1884-86 and the booking hall, have largely obscured the original building.



Train station present day



Same view, pre. 1884

10.3 The Station Hotel of 1888 and Caledonian Road Primary School of 1890, both by Andrew Heiton Jr., are key architectural highlights. The hotel is recorded as having been visited on several occasions by Queen Victoria on her way to Balmoral. Other prominent hotels in the vicinity mark this area as both the historic and current transport hub.

10.4 Residential property is largely contained in new blocks around the bus station, including two large-scale modernist blocks; a slab and tower backing on to the bus station. Retail is on ground floors on York Place, County Place, Hospital Street and Leonard Street. The corner of Hospital Street and County Place is notable for the B-listed end tenement block of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, with a bowed corner bay, mirroring a similar block diagonally opposite on the corner of King Street and Canal Crescent.



**Corner block at King Street / Canal Crescent**

10.5 York Place is characterised by good quality two-storey villas, used as offices. The corner tenement block at 1-9 York Place is particularly dramatic with its copper dome and Baroque detailing, with shopfronts below in cast iron. Trinity Church of 1860 is unlisted, but important in the scheme of the street with the presence of its twin pyramid roofs. Also attractive is the 1938 Arts and Crafts Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland on Pomarium Street, with its accompanying housing.



**1-9 York Place**

Area 6  
Windows and doors



Materials and details



Roofscapes



Shopfronts



## GENERAL TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS

### Spaces

11.1 All spaces, regardless of ownership and accessibility (ie. public and private spaces) contribute to the amenity and character of an area, as indicated in Planning Advice Note 65, 'Planning and Open Space'. The term 'open space' covers green space consisting of any vegetated land or geological feature in a town and civic space including squares, market places and other paved or hard landscaped areas.

11.2 Although outwith the conservation area, the North and South Inches, the River Tay itself, Norie Miller Riverside Walk and Kinnoull Hill form a crescent of open, green space enclosing the city centre. These spaces are essential to the character of the central area and provide a vital visual and amenity resource.

11.3 Due to the built-up nature within the conservation area, a low proportion of properties have gardens. The villas on St Leonard's Bank have extensive grounds,



but these are only visible on the park side of the properties. Small private gardens are also evident at the front of properties on James Street, Marshall Place, King James Place, King's Place, Barossa Place and King Street but elsewhere gardens are not a notable feature of residential properties. This lack of private green space in the area, although ameliorated to an extent by the views out, contributes to the need for sensitive landscaping of public areas.

**King Street villa with private garden**

11.4 A number of public or commercial buildings have landscaped grounds which contribute to the amenity of the area, even if not publicly accessible, including the AK Bell Library, Station Hotel, Royal George Hotel and King James VI Hospital.

11.5 Pedestrian activity is focused on South Street, High Street, St John's Street and St John's Place in terms of shopping and bars/ restaurants. Pedestrians have been prioritised in these areas through various

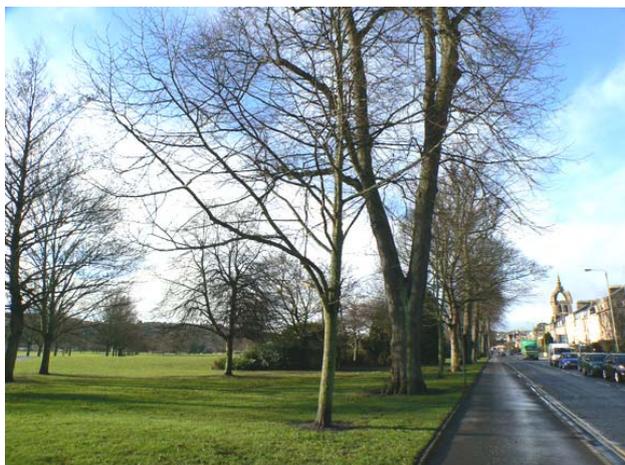
### Tay Street flood prevention scheme incorporating public art, soft & hard landscaping



streetscaping schemes over the past two decades. Civic spaces are located here; in the market place on King Edward Street, and also on Tay Street, where there are a number of seating areas and a wide pavement area enhanced by public art.

### **Trees and landscaping**

11.6 Protection for trees in conservation areas and Tree Preservation Orders are described in more detail in paragraphs 19.9-19.11 and at Appendix 1.



11.7 As described above, views out to the green spaces around the city centre are an essential factor in the character of the conservation area. The area boundary includes the mature trees along the northern edge of the South Inch and on the North Inch in front of Rose Terrace. The southern edge of the North Inch is also contained, including the hard and soft landscaping of the area around the flood gate, war memorial and the Albert Memorial.

### **South Inch avenue of trees**

11.8 The largest area of green space within the city centre is Greyfriars Burial Ground which contains meadow and mature trees, managed specifically to encourage wildlife whilst preventing the monuments from being obscured and to avoid damage. There are landscaped paths through the grounds and benches, making it a pleasant part of a riverside walk.



**Greyfriars Burial Ground**



**Tree avenue, North Inch**

## Negative factors

### Built environment

12.1 Major areas detracting from the townscape include: the bus station and surrounding area; the car parks at the east end of Old High Street; flats at St Catherine's Square; multi-storey car park on Canal Street; Speygate; Matalan on Victoria Street.



**Matalan, Victoria Street**



**Multi-storey car park, Canal Street**

12.2 Other negative factors include unsympathetic replacement shopfronts and signage in the main shopping area detracting from the visual quality of upper floors. Measures for tackling and enhancing such areas are described at paragraphs 18.1-19.4.



**Poor shopfronts in South Street and the High Street**

### Buildings at risk survey

13.1 The former St Paul's Church is the one building within the proposed area that is currently included on the Scottish Civic Trust's Buildings at Risk Register. Urgent works have been carried out in order to stabilise the building. As a significant building in terms of its history and townscape value, it is a priority for repair and reuse.

**St. Paul's Church, present day**



## Public realm

### 14.1 Street furniture

Within the conservation area there is a variety of street furniture which includes traffic signs, bollards, directional finger posts for pedestrians, lamp posts, bus shelters, telephone boxes, litter bins, and seating.

14.2 Traditional street furniture remains in a few locations. There are examples of Victorian lampposts and lanterns on Smeaton's Bridge, outside the Council Chambers in High Street and in the pedestrian lane which connects George Street with the north end of Skinnergate.

14.3 Some rows of cast iron bollards exist, although these are sometimes interspersed with more recent, standardised designs. There are only three Giles Gilbert Scott K6 telephone boxes remaining in the conservation area, two existing beside the City Hall and one located in King Street near the King James VI Hospital.



**From left: Park bench, new & old bollards, red telephone boxes, litter bin**

14.4 Contemporary enhancement projects in Tay Street and St John Street include street furniture, gates and public art designed as part of the overall design scheme. Interpretation boards, providing information about the history and built heritage of the old town, are located throughout the city centre.

### Tay Street public art, gates & street furniture



14.5 Recent public realm schemes have been guided by an urban design framework, but the scope of this could be extended as in some cases its intentions have been eroded. Most street furniture within the conservation area is of a standardised design, which can in some cases work reasonably well, such as certain 'heritage' design finger posts, seating and litter bins. There is a degree of

visual clutter in some parts of the city centre, including the High Street. Certain types of street lights are particularly poor for spillage of light into the night sky. There needs to be an overall, co-ordinated approach to street furniture in the conservation area as there are various standardised designs, not always used in a targeted, contextual way. Street furniture within the conservation area should be sympathetic to and help to define the area, and it should also be practical and well maintained.

#### 14.6 Surfaces

Tay Street has been significantly enhanced as a public realm area recently with the removal of tarmac parking surfaces, wider paved areas along the river front, flagstone paving and granite setts, and street furniture specifically designed as part of the overall design scheme. Natural stone surfaces have also been used in St John's Street, now pedestrianised, and for the public space around the new Concert Hall. A few pedestrian lanes have been re-surfaced recently using flagstone paving.

14.7 Part of High Street, the north end of King Edward Street and Skinnergate were pedestrianised in the 1980's using concrete setts of three colour tones. The setts cover the full width of the street with no kerbing.

15.8 There are a few cobbled streets or lanes which still exist and should be maintained. These include Mill Wynd, West Mill Street, St Paul's Square, South St John's Place and Kirkside lane, North Port, George Lane, Water Vennel off Tay Street and the main entrance into Greyfriars Burial Ground. In the case of St John's Place the granite cobbles have been compromised severely by surface patching with tarmac and concrete after utility repair works.



**Cobbled street with tarmac patching, variety of stone kerbs with old & new cobbling**

14.9 Original granite or whin kerbs exist in some locations in the town centre, including St John's Place, east end of High Street, George Street and George Lane. Stone kerbing has been used in the Tay Street enhancement scheme.

14.10 Elsewhere in the conservation area the common surface material for street pavements is tarmac and to a lesser extent concrete paving slabs. Where any street surfaces are replaced, consideration should always be given to the use of traditional materials to enhance the character of the conservation area.

#### 14.11 Street name signage

Road traffic signage can have a significant visual impact on the setting of historic buildings or streetscapes. Several road traffic signs have been rationalised recently

in the city centre. Groups of highway symbols and text have been incorporated into single backing plates and assemblies and height of lettering kept to the minimum. Further rationalisation of street signage should be considered when traffic signs need to be replaced or updated.

14.12 Very few traditional street name signs still exist. Nearly all of these signs are relatively recent aluminium metal plates with painted black lettering on white background. There are some older examples of painted cast iron lettering and it is important that these are retained and not replaced with modern street name signage.

#### **Traditional signage**



### **Sensitivity analysis**

#### **Archaeology**

15.1 There are two scheduled monuments in this area: Smeaton's Bridge, also A-listed, and the site of Cromwell's Citadel in the north-east corner of the South Inch. Perth city centre as a whole is archaeologically sensitive owing to the extent of survival of medieval archaeology because of the waterlogged ground conditions. From the 1970s up to the present, significant excavations carried out in advance of development have revealed deep and complex medieval archaeological deposits.

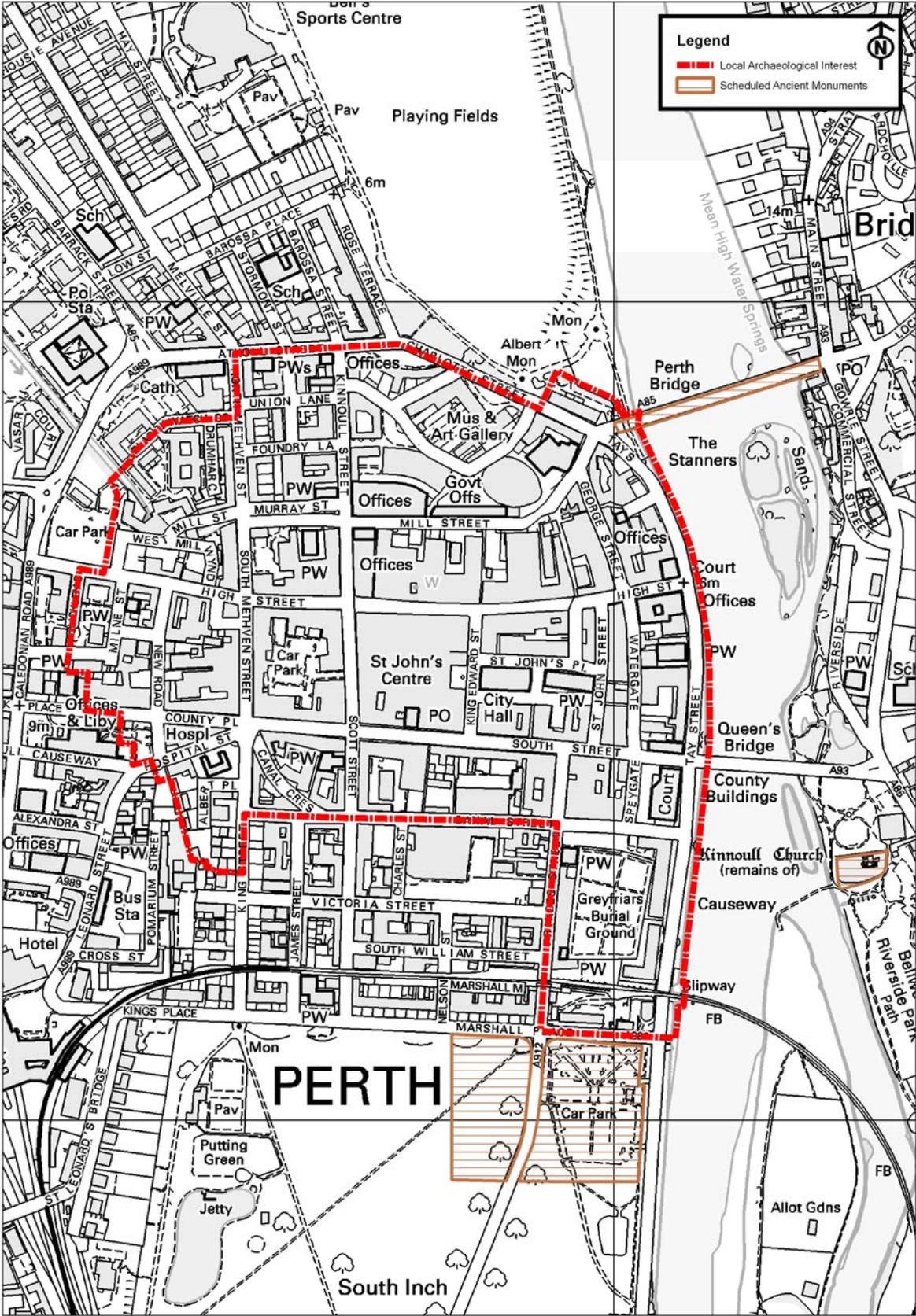
15.2 The extent of medieval Perth is indicated in Map 13, overleaf. This is an area of archaeological interest identified in the development plan where the Council shall seek to protect archaeological remains from avoidable disturbance. Where development is proposed there will be a strong presumption in favour of preservation in situ. Where this is not possible, appropriate archaeological recording will be required.

#### **Development pressures**

15.3 Perth's past and projected population growth has led to pressure for additional housing of all sizes and tenures, but especially to cater for affordable and smaller household sizes. This in turn places pressure upon the area's services and transportation provision. The historic environment of the city centre may come under pressure for subdivision of buildings and plots, and use of brownfield and garden ground for development. Although this presents risks to the historic environment, it could also have beneficial effects if carefully managed, bringing vacant floorspace back into use and contributing to sustainable uses for redundant sites and buildings.

15.4 Retail growth is a strong contributor to Perth's economy but again leads to pressure for change to existing units and additional floorspace. Small, historic retail units may come under pressure for unsympathetic change or be at risk from operators favouring larger floorplate premises. However the benefits to the local

Map 13: Archaeology



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economy of a mixture of unit sizes, with smaller premises ideal for Perth's small, specialist retailers, must be stressed. The Council has produced planning briefs for a number of sites envisaged for retail/mixed use to assist in creating a varied and high quality retail environment, to which historic buildings and shopfronts make a strong contribution.

15.5 Perth has experienced a growing cultural sector with the establishment of the Perth Concert Hall, the Perth Festival of the Arts and a host of other cultural and educational facilities and events. The intention to further enhance this cultural offer may place pressures on the historic environment. However, again it provides a good opportunity to prioritise re-use and rationalisation of existing historic building stock where it can readily be adapted for new uses.

### **Assessment of significance**

16.1 The historic burgh of Perth and its environs are popular with tourists from within and outwith the UK owing to the aesthetic qualities of the city and its proximity to historic and scenic parts of Perthshire and the Highlands. It has a rich history as an important settlement in a national context, for example as a trade centre and focus of royal administration in medieval Scotland.

16.2 The townscape is unique as a result of its medieval origins and the views out to the river, surrounding hills and parkland. This, and the variety and quality of its architecture, particularly the extent and completeness of the Georgian buildings, make it significant on a European scale.

## **PROPOSALS**

### **Opportunities for development and regeneration**

Note: Read in conjunction with map overleaf

17.1 Throughout the central area, sites providing the potential for redevelopment have been identified through the development plan process. These are shown in map 14. These areas have the potential to contribute positively to the character and appearance of the city, as well as contributing to the Council's aims for regeneration, affordable housing, cultural uses, retail growth, enhanced accessibility/public transport provision and so on.

17.2 This will be achieved using a variety of tools, combining Planning/Design briefs, design guidance, partnership working and various management measures described in the Planning Action section 19.

17.3 Perth City Hall, King Edward Street and St John's Place  
City Hall has been competitively marketed for conversion into a speciality shopping centre with restaurants and market stalls.

#### **17.4 Mill Street/High Street**

A planning brief was issued in 2000 identifying the area for a major mixed- use development with the principle objectives of supporting the development of the Concert Hall and city centre retailing, to enhance pedestrian linkages and to improve the amenity of the Mill Street/Pullar House/ Concert Hall area.



#### 17.5 Thimblerow Car Park and Paul Street Car Park area

The Thimblerow site is identified for retail, affordable housing and a multi-storey car park, and the west Paul Street car park as part of a wider site for affordable housing at high density.

#### 17.6 Scott Street/Charles Street

Identified for affordable and low-cost housing at high density.

#### 17.7 St Paul's Church, Kinnoull Street/High Street

Discussions are ongoing to secure a sustainable re-use of the building which could be a variety of commercial, cultural or community uses.

#### 17.8 Railway Station, Caledonian Road/Leonard Street

Proposed as a transport interchange incorporating the bus station. This project will include the restoration of the listed railway station building and associated office, retail and residential development.

#### 17.9 Bus Station, Leonard Street

Depending upon the outcome above, this site could be developed for affordable housing at high density.

#### 17.10 Caledonian Road Primary School

A variety of potential uses can be considered for the building once it ceases to function as a school, including affordable housing and artistic/cultural uses. Potential re-use schemes should retain, and be sensitive to, the special architectural and historic character of the building.

#### 17.11 St John's RC Primary School, Stormont Street

The site is proposed for a redevelopment scheme of affordable and low-cost housing at high density.

17.12 The following areas have been identified as priorities for potential townscape improvements:

- High Street, between Methven Street and Kinnoull Street
- South Street
- Canal Street
- Leonard Street and Kinnoull Causeway
- Mill Street/Horsecross
- Reinstatement of boundary ironwork along the inner ring road (Marshall Place and Atholl Place/Atholl Crescent) and York Place/Caledonian Road

Urban design studies will be carried out to guide proposals. Further consultation will be carried out when options for more detailed proposals have been developed. The Council will also encourage development which enhances the appearance of these areas.

## Opportunities for planning action

### Design guidance

18.1 Council-wide design guidance on Place-making is under development, taking the form of a suite of documents providing advice for a variety of contexts including the public realm, urban design, heritage sites and the rural environment. These can be used in conjunction with the conservation area appraisal to assist designers in assessing the context of a site to better inform the design process.

### Planning/design briefs

18.2 These will be provided for significant or sensitive sites, such as those described in section 17, to ensure early identification of and engagement with the relevant issues on each site. Guidance will be included to maximise the design quality and enhancement opportunities for each site.

### Article 4 Directions

18.3 Article 4 Directions, which remove certain permitted development rights, apply in the existing city centre conservation areas. It is proposed that the Article 4 Directions will remain in force once the new Perth City Conservation Area is designated. The existing Directions will require review and up-dating to cover a wider total area than previously. An updated 'Article 4 Direction' to cover the whole of the Perth City Conservation Area will be formulated for Scottish Ministers approval.

18.4 As part of the revision and updating process consideration has been given to specific Article 4 Directions for each of the six character areas so that certain classes of development, such as those relating to houses, could be omitted from directions relating to character areas where there are very few or no houses, such as areas 1 and 4. However, it is thought that this will lead to unnecessary confusion and will be more cumbersome to process and manage. In terms of restricting certain classes of permitted development the new conservation area should be treated as a whole entity. Certain classes of development will be more prevalent and some will be less according to existing land uses and property types in each character area. (Further information on Article 4 Directions and a sample Direction contained in Appendix 2).

### Advertisement Control

18.5 Additional advertisement controls are in place within five out of the seven existing city centre conservation areas. In 1995 the then District Council extended the level of advertisement control through Regulation 11 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (Scotland) Regulations 1984. A Regulation 11 direction controls normally permitted forms of 'minor' advertisement which can have an impact in areas of environmental quality. Certain types of advertisements, such as shop or business signage, can have a significant impact on historic building frontages and on the overall quality of the townscape.

18.6 It is proposed that the additional advertisement controls will remain in force and be up-dated and extended to cover the whole of the new Perth City Conservation Area. A revised Regulation 11 direction will be drafted for consultation and Scottish Ministers approval. (Classes of permitted advertisement to be removed under

Regulation 11 of the Control of Advertisements Regulations 1984 are shown at Appendix 2).

18.7 Consideration has been given to revising the Regulation 11 direction to include only some of the character areas where there are large numbers of commercial properties, such as in areas 1 (city centre), 2 (city mills) and 6 (library/train station area). However, there are pockets of commercial land uses in the other character areas and possibility of changes to the use of some buildings. Large or unsympathetic signage can have an impact in the town centre, mixed use areas and residential areas and therefore it is proposed to cover the whole of the new conservation area. This should also avoid confusion and provide a management tool which clearly relates to and is defined by the conservation area.

#### Need for building repair or urgent works

18.8 Urgent repair works have been carried out by the Council to St Paul's Church in 2007. Further repair works to the steeple may be necessary. The Council will monitor this listed building.

#### Trees

18.9 Any proposals to fell or lop trees within the conservation area will be subject to certain planning controls under the Town and Country Planning Act. These controls are explained further at Appendix 1.

18.10 There are tree groups outwith the proposed conservation area boundary to the north and south and across the River Tay which are important to the setting of the conservation area. The North and South Inches are protected green spaces under the development plan.

18.11 Development plan policy indicates that groups of trees which are considered important in terms of visual amenity will be protected by the use of Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's), particularly where they are considered to be under real threat. Tree groups which are considered significant to the setting of the conservation area and are vulnerable will be considered for tree protection status.

## **Opportunities for enhancement**

19.1 Targeted briefs will be used to guide the development of the sites identified above.

19.2 Grant funds such as the Façade Enhancement Scheme run by Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust will be targeted to areas of the historic environment in need of enhancement. Other grant schemes, such as Historic Scotland's Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) will be investigated as appropriate.

19.3 City Centre Management initiatives can be used to assist the enhancement of both the economic and historic environment of the central area.

19.4 Guidance will be issued on the design of signage in the city centre to ensure it is designed responsibly to preserve the character of the conservation area.

## CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Using the Conservation Area Appraisal

20.1 The Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) provides a sound basis for development management and for initiatives to promote environmental and economic improvements. Key issues and features that contribute to the character of Perth are addressed and proposals will be put forward for enhancing the character of the area. This will be done through local consultation with amenity groups, businesses and other community organisations. Public meetings and exhibitions will also be arranged.

20.2 The CAA provides a framework for on-going management of the conservation area in medium terms as well as the near future. The key objectives are:

To ensure maintenance of the integrity of the conservation area;

To prevent erosion of character through small-scale change;

To enable future evolution and change as long as they are appropriately controlled.

20.3 Implementing these objectives will depend on a number of factors:

- Development proposals must be in accordance with current development plan policies relating to conservation area status and special character of the historic buildings, open spaces and tree groups. Design, materials and detailing will require to be in accordance with design guidelines prepared by the local planning authority; Development proposals should demonstrate a sustainable approach, including use of materials and sustainability of use;
  - Adaptive re-use of buildings and mixed use projects to ensure a reverse in physical, visual or economic decline will be positively considered subject to compatibility with neighbouring property and uses;
- The potential for economic regeneration will be considered as a positive factor, subject to compatibility with neighbours.

20.4 Whilst current planning policies provide a framework for protection of the conservation area, it is important to ensure implementation and enforcement where necessary. A combination of guidance, information and planning tools will be used in this management role, as indicated below:

- Conservation area guidance: design advice will be provided for owners and occupiers of residential and commercial property with regard to building alteration and improvements, and there will also be advice for any new build site infill;
- Grant aid: the local planning authority will provide information regarding what grant schemes may be available from partnership agencies and other organisations for certain types of repair and enhancement works;
- Enforcement action: the planning authority has produced an enforcement charter which will identify any unauthorised works within and adjacent to conservation areas as priorities for action;
- Article 4 Directions: All of Perth's existing city centre conservation areas are covered by Article 4 Directions.

- Repairs notices: the planning authority will seek to work with owners of listed buildings but will take action in terms of undertaking urgent works requiring repairs where owners allow buildings to fall into disrepair;
- Compulsory purchase orders: the planning authority will exercise its rights to acquire buildings in disrepair to assist their repair and conversion in partnership with other agencies;
- Education and training: the planning authority is in the process of establishing links with Historic Scotland and Scottish Enterprise to facilitate conservation training programmes for building contractors and other interested parties or private individuals. PKHT has recently secured resources from the Heritage Lottery Fund to develop an interpretive and outreach education programme in conjunction with other agencies to promote understanding and enjoyment of conservation areas.

20.5 There is a firm commitment from the planning authority to ensure the protection and enhancement of Perth Conservation Area and to use statutory planning powers when these are required. The importance of public consultation with local civic amenity and community groups and local businesses is fully understood and this will continue after the conservation area has been designated and established.

## **Monitoring and review**

The conservation area will be monitored through:-

21.1 Photographic surveys: a detailed survey of all buildings and open spaces within the conservation area is undertaken as part of the appraisal and will form the basis for area-specific design guidance and for monitoring future change;

21.2 Observation: officers from the planning authority will visit the conservation area at regular intervals and check on the progress of any restoration and enhancement schemes and also observe any other works occurring which may be unauthorised;

21.3 Liaison: officers will liaise with local amenity groups, the public and other interested parties as necessary;

21.4 Review: The Conservation Area Appraisal will be monitored and reviewed from time to time depending upon budget constraints and other priorities.

## **APPENDICES**

### **1) Trees within Conservation Area**

All trees within the conservation area will be covered by the Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. Under this Act the local planning authority must be given six weeks notice of the intention to uproot, fell or lop trees. The planning authority then has the opportunity to discuss suitable management of the tree(s) with the owners, such as thinning rather than lopping. The planning authority would also have the option to propose TPO protection. Failure to give notice will render the person liable to the same penalties as for contravention of a TPO, which could involve a fine not exceeding £20,000 per tree.

### **2) Article 4 Direction**

Alterations to listed buildings are covered by listed building legislation and the need to obtain listed building consent, but unlisted buildings (except proposed demolition) are not covered by this legislation. Small scale developments or alterations to unlisted buildings or open spaces may not be significant individually but cumulatively can erode the visual fabric of the townscape and there is the potential, without development management, for such developments to appear.

Classes of development which are usually 'permitted development' include small extensions or some types of alterations to the exterior of houses, including replacement windows; small buildings or alterations within the curtilage of houses; some satellite dishes; construction or alteration of walls, fences or gates; some forms of telecommunications development; some types of development by statutory undertakers (water, gas, electricity, road transport, post office and sewerage) and certain types of development by local authorities, including lamp standards and street furniture. In Perth city centre the townscape is particularly vulnerable to some if not all of these classes of permitted development. For example, developments within the curtilage of mature gardens and possible loss of trees; window and door alterations or replacements; the alteration of stone boundary walls or railings; visual clutter of telecommunications and electricity apparatus on or near buildings; alterations to roads, parking areas or hard landscaped areas, and visual proliferation of road signage.

Under Article 4 of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992, the local planning authority can seek the approval of the Scottish Ministers for Directions that restrict permitted development rights. Development is not precluded, but such alterations will require planning permission and special attention will be paid to the potential effect of proposals.

Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997  
Form of Direction by Planning Authority under Article 4(8)  
Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)  
(Scotland) Order 1992

**Perth Central Conservation Area**

The Perth & Kinross Council (Restriction of Permitted Development)  
(Perth Central) Direction 2007

Perth & Kinross Council in terms of article 4(1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 (SI 1992/223) being satisfied that it is expedient that all or any development comprising:-

- Class 1 - the enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse;
- Class 3 - the provision within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse of any building or enclosure, swimming or other pool required for a purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse, or the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of such a building or enclosure;
- Class 6 - the installation, alteration or replacement of a microwave antenna on a dwellinghouse or within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse;
- Class 7 - the erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure;
- Class 16 - the use of land, other than a building, as a caravan site;
- Class 27 - the carrying out on land within the boundaries of a private road or private way of works required for the maintenance or improvement of the road or way;
- Class 30 - the erection or construction and the maintenance, improvement or other alteration by a local authority;
- Class 38 - water undertakings;
- Class 39 - public gas transporters;
- Class 40 - electricity undertakings;
- Class 41 - tramway or road transport undertakings;
- Class 43 - universal service providers; and,
- Class 43A - sewerage undertakings;

should not be carried out within the Conservation Area of Perth Central (area of land as described in the Schedule hereto) unless permission is granted on an application in that behalf, hereby directs that the permission granted by article 3 in respect of:-

Classes 1, 3, 6, 7, 16, 27, 30, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43 and 43A, as described above, shall not apply.

This direction may be cited as the Perth & Kinross Council (Restriction of Permitted Development) (Perth Central) Direction 2007.

Signature .....

Designation .....

Planning Service  
The Environment Service  
Perth and Kinross Council  
Pullar House  
35 Kinnoull Street  
Perth PH1 5GD

#### SCHEDULE

The area of land outlined in black on the plan annexed and executed as relative hereto, in the district of Perth & Kinross Council.

Note: The plan annexed to the Direction should be executed in the same way as the Direction and duly docquetted with reference thereto.

## Classes of advertisement controlled under Regulation 11 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) (Scotland) Regulations 1984

**The following classes of advertisement as shown in the tables (which normally have `deemed consent') will come under planning control and will require advertisement consent:-**

<b>Description of Advertisement</b>
<p><b>Class II (3):</b> Advertisements relating to any institution of a religious, educational, cultural, recreational or medical or similar character to any hotel, inn or public house or hostel, situated on the land on which any such advertisement is displayed.</p>
<p><b>Class III (3):</b> Advertisements relating to the carrying out of building or similar work on the land on which they are displayed, not being land which is normally used, whether at regular intervals or otherwise for the purpose of carrying out such work.</p>
<p><b>Class IV (1)</b> Advertisements displayed on business premises wholly with reference to all of the following matters; the business or other activity carried on, the goods sold or services provided, and the name and qualification of the person carrying on such business or activity or manufacturing or supplying such goods or services on those premises.</p>
<p><b>Class IV (2)</b> Advertisement displayed on any forecourt of business premises wholly with reference to all or any of the matters specified in <b>Class IV (1)</b>.</p>

## Sources

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