

Cullen
Conservation Area Review

February 2023



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Contributors

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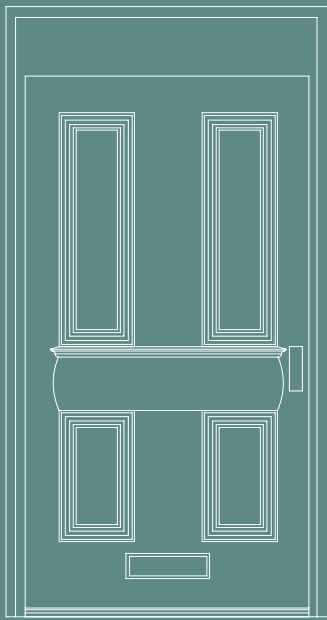
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1.0

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

LDN Architects was appointed by the Moray Council in September 2022, as Conservation Accredited Architects, to carry out appraisals on five of the designated Conservation Areas within Moray.

It is important to understand the criteria for designating a Conservation Area in order to assess it. Historic Environment Scotland's selection guidance is as follows –

“Areas of ‘special architectural or historic interest’ will be selected based on a range of factors which may include:

- areas of significant architectural or historic interest in terms of specific listed buildings and/or scheduled monuments;*
- areas of significant architectural or historic interest in terms of building groupings, which may or may not include listed buildings and/or scheduled monuments, and open spaces which they abut;*
- areas with features of architectural or historic interest such as street pattern, planned towns and villages and historic gardens and designed landscapes; and other areas of distinctive architectural or historic character.”*

“The characteristics and values that contribute to a conservation area’s special architectural or historic interest are:

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



Date of Site Assessments: 14 October 2022
20 October 2022
09 November 2022

Date of Designation: 1972 by Banffshire County Council

What is a Conservation Area?

It is important that periodical reviews are carried out to ensure that the special interest of the Conservation Area is preserved. The purpose of the appraisal is to carry out a detailed assessment of the current townscape, which includes a building-by-building analysis, to identify areas of risk, areas of significance, opportunities, and priorities for enhancement.

This assessment also includes a review of public realm and greenspace (including trees) as these elements each contribute to a sense of place. The information gathered as part of this proposal will be used to assess the current position of the Conservation Area boundary and allow recommendations to be made for any amendment should it be relevant. The content of the report is also there to provide guidance on appropriate materials, style and colour to assist, and encourage, residents to develop proposals that are sympathetic to the character of the conservation area.

The following report focuses on Conservation Area Appraisal for the coastal town of Cullen, Moray. The Conservation Area of Cullen is divided into two locations: Seatown Cullen, an outstanding conservation area, and Victoria Street.



Conservation Areas have special architectural character or social historical interest created by the buildings and spaces – street layout, open space and the public realm - around these. The Planning Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (Scotland) Act 1997 designated Conservation Areas for protection – the Scottish Government and Planning Authorities are required by law to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of these historical environments.

Why?

In order to maintain the special architectural character of Conservation Areas it is important that they are preserved to ensure that the elements that make them distinct are not lost through inappropriate change. Where appropriate, enhancements can be made to these areas to benefit not only the historical environment but also the residents.

What does this mean for the residents?

Whilst consents will be required from the Local Authority for certain elements (as listed out below), it does not mean that improvements and development cannot occur within these areas. Sympathetic improvements using the appropriate traditional materials are encouraged and they will bring benefit to the building owners. For example, historical buildings were constructed with traditional materials, and it is these materials that not only create the character, but they also ensure that the building fabric performs (when appropriately maintained). When modern materials are added such as uPVC elements, these not only change the character, but they also change the properties and performance of the building which can be to the detriment of the fabric. If you are proposing any of the following changes to your property then you should contact the Moray Council to confirm if you require planning permission, conservation area consent, or advertising consent depending on your proposal.

- Alterations – changes to the principal form, changes to fenestration (opening to include doors and windows), changes to materials such as roof, external finishes (including the painting of the building), replacement windows, doors and rainwater goods.
- Any extension to your property
- Any structures within the curtilage of a building.
- Walls, fences and other boundary treatments for domestic properties
- Demolition of unlisted buildings
- Removal of trees
- Works to shopfronts and advertisement displays

If your property is listed then you may also require listed building consent to ensure that any proposal including (alterations and extensions) do not have a detrimental effect on the character, integrity, or setting of the building. You should contact the Moray Council to establish if this is required or not.

2.0

Historical Development

2.1 History

The Planned Town

The 'planned' town of Cullen was founded in 1820 by Lewis Grant Ogilvy the fifth Earl of Seafield on the hill above Cullen bay. Old Cullen prospered in the second half of the eighteenth century due to the manufacture of linen. The plan of the old town was however ill-conceived with poor sanitation and by 1811 George MacWilliam was commissioned to develop a town plan with straight streets and a large central civic square. Peter Brown altered the plan in 1817 with further modifications being carried out by William Robertson at the time of construction. A number of buildings within Cullen can be attributed to William Robertson not least the Seafield Arms Hotel, Stables and Town Hall. The demolition of the old town was carried out in 1826.

William Robertson (1786 – 1841) started his architectural journey in Cullen before moving to Elgin where he practiced for the remainder of his career. The architectural practice he founded was continued by AW Reid, one of his nephews, who carried out much work in Elgin. William Robertson is described by David W. Walker and Mathew Woodworth as

"...possibly the north of Scotland's first native classical architect of substance"

Seatown

The origins of Fishertown, or as it is now known as Seatown, is believed to date to 600AD. A Historic Environment Record (HER) – NJ56NW0006 – dates Castle Hill to early medieval origins 400 – 900 AD.

Similarly, to all of the coastal settlements, it is likely that Fishertown grew during the development of the fishing industry. This can be identified by the building types from the earlier modest fishing cottages to the grander 19th Century buildings that were a show of the occupant's wealth. The historical OS maps show that Seatown had become much denser in terms of the built environment by the 1900s.

1832



1866

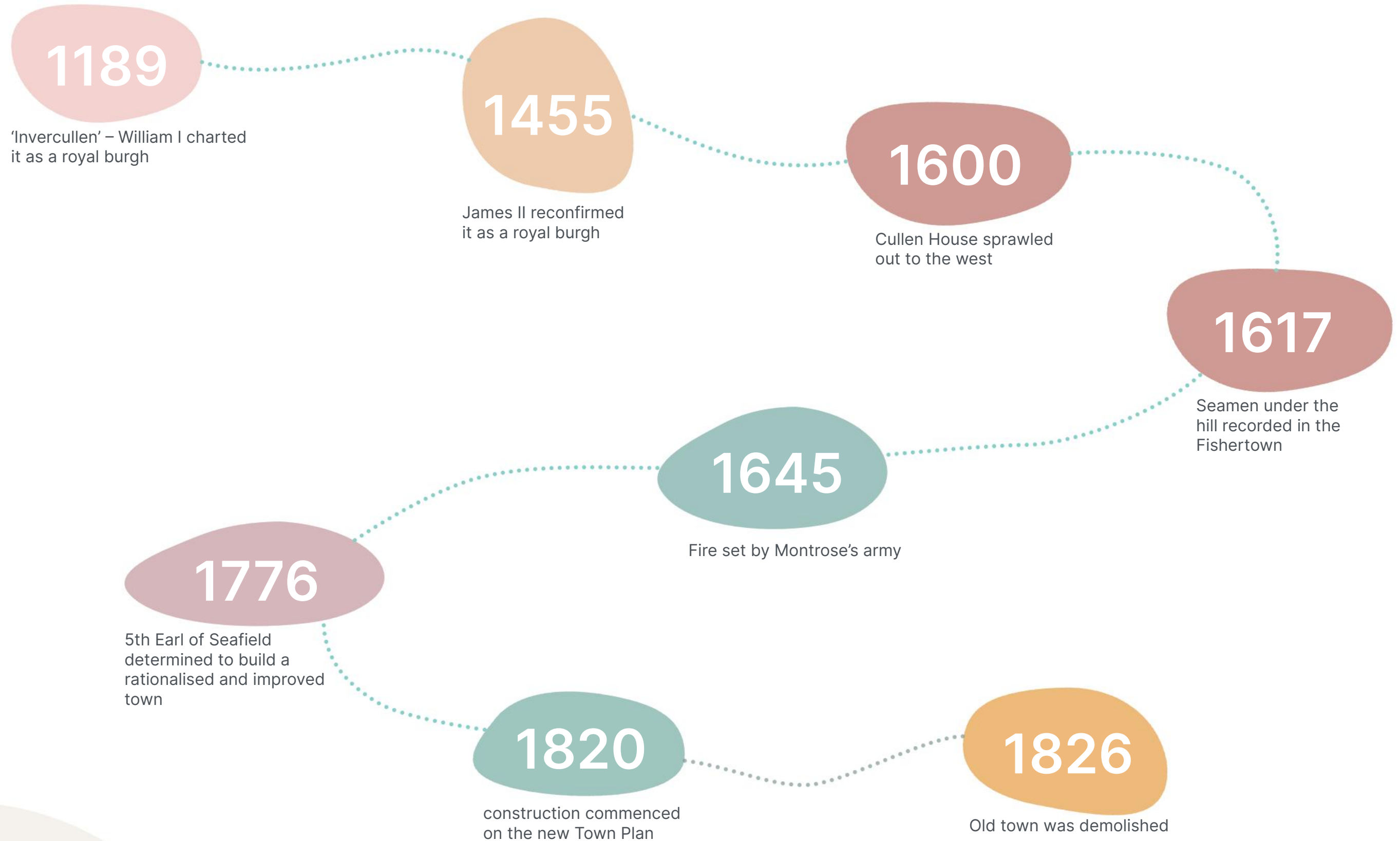


1902



Reference: 'The Buildings of Scotland ABERDEENSHIRE: NORTH AND MORAY; Walker, David W, Woodworth, Mathew; Pevsner Architectural Guide; Yale University Press 2015'.

2.2 Timeline



2.3 Wider Context





3.0

Character and Appearance



3.1 The Buildings

The following information identifies buildings that, at the time of publishing this report, are listed by Historic Environment Scotland or on the Buildings at Risk Register Scotland. It is however important to note that the character of a conservation area is not about the listed buildings, it is the collection of buildings.

The adjacent map plots the listed buildings and those on the Buildings at Risk Register Scotland. The eclectic mix of building types within Seatown is what creates the unique *'sense of place'*, and it is this variety that enriches the conservation area. The Planned Town, whilst it also has significant merit, has a much more rigorous and repetitive character.

The character of the Conservation Area is created by the range of traditional materials and the architectural form. For example, the window material and fenestration is central to the character of the building. This detailing can also be used to date the building from the size of the opening to the type of timber sash and case window - six-over-six or two-over-two or one-over-one.

Seatown Outstanding Conservation Area:

Listed Buildings: 269

Buildings at Risk: 2

Victoria Street Conservation Area:

Listed Buildings: 20

Buildings at Risk: 0

Seafield Street

Seafield Place

Grant Street

Seafield Arms Hotel

Deskford Street

Castle Street

Seatown

Cullen Town Hall

3.2 Setting





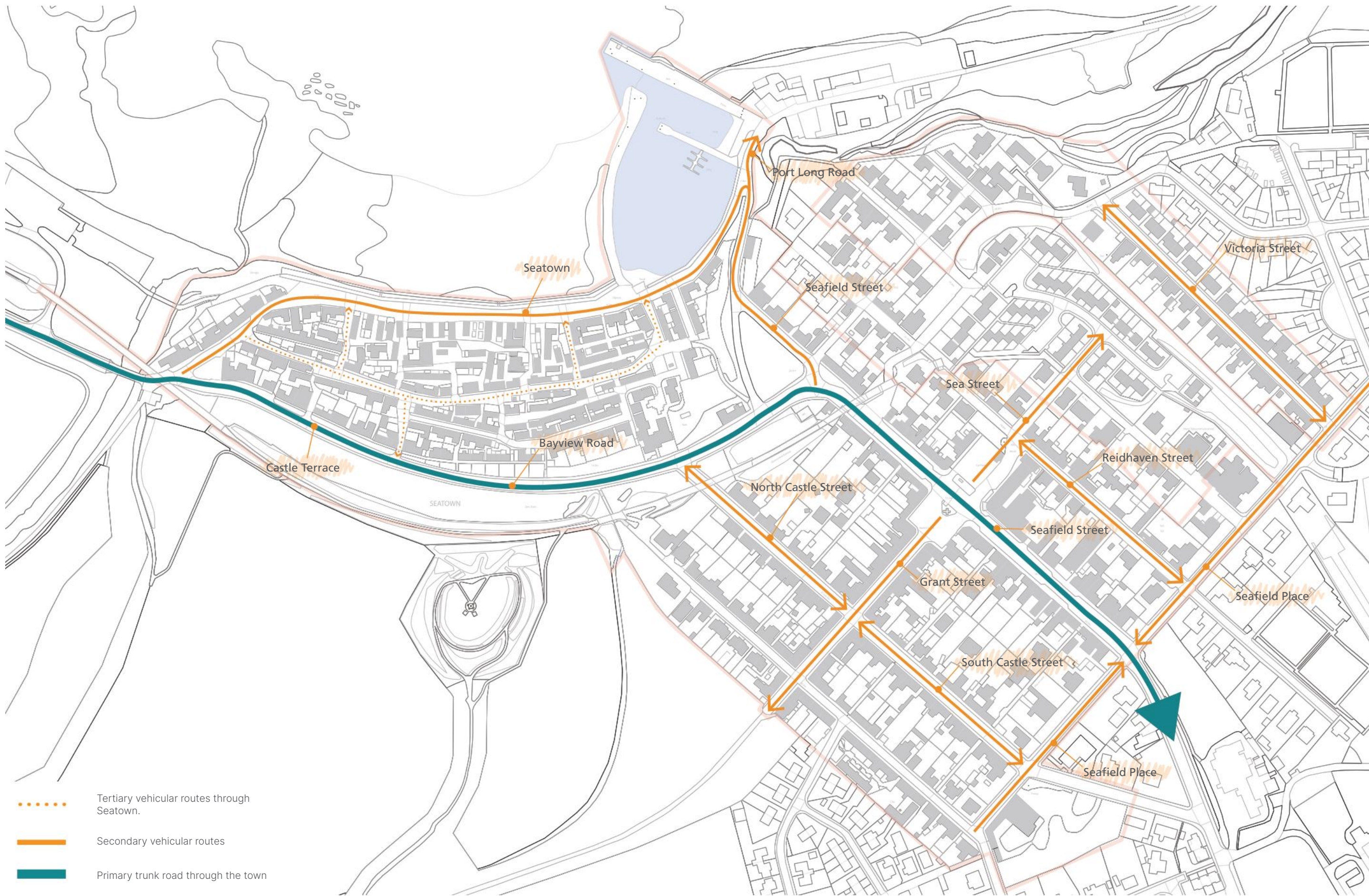
The Moray Coast has some of the most spectacular natural landscapes – steep coastal slopes, hidden coves and rugged cliff lines - with views over the Moray Firth. Cullen is the last coastal settlement within Moray before reaching Aberdeenshire. The coastline of Cullen is dominated by the *The Three Kings Beach Stack* – four metre tall quartzite stacks.

Another defining feature of Cullen is the viaduct which acts as the boundary between Seatown (the old Fishertown) and the Planned Town of Cullen. This was constructed in 1884-1886 (P M Barnett) for the Great North of Scotland Railway. The viaduct was Category B listed by Historic Environment Scotland in 1972. The railway closed in 1968 and has since been developed as a coastal footpath and a Sustrans national cycle path.

Thomas Telford is attributed to Cullen Harbour, 1817 with William Robertson carrying out alterations and additions in 1834 following the establishment of the new town. The harbour was category B listed in 1972.

The significance of Cullen cannot be attributed solely to the historical built environment - it is a combination of the built environment, the spaces created by such and the distinct natural landscape. There are a number of viewpoints within Cullen that allow you to orientate with the key features which defines the unique 'sense of place'.





- Tertiary vehicular routes through Seatown.
- Secondary vehicular routes
- Primary trunk road through the town

3.3 Activity and Movement

Cullen is bisected by the A98 a major coastal road connecting Fochabers in the west to the eastern coastal towns of Moray and Aberdeenshire before terminating in Fraserburgh. This road effectively divides Cullen into distinct areas; Seatown and the 1826 Planned Town which is further divided into two as the road cuts through the town square. The road starts as Castle Terrace to the west then as it moves east it becomes Bayview Road and then Seafield Street where the viaduct crosses. There are two defined crossing point for pedestrians: one at the southeast of the main square and the other on Bayview Road. Adjacent to the square there are dropped kerbs to the northwest and southeast. There is a continuous steady flow of traffic through Cullen either travelling east or west. There is opportunity to improve crossing points.

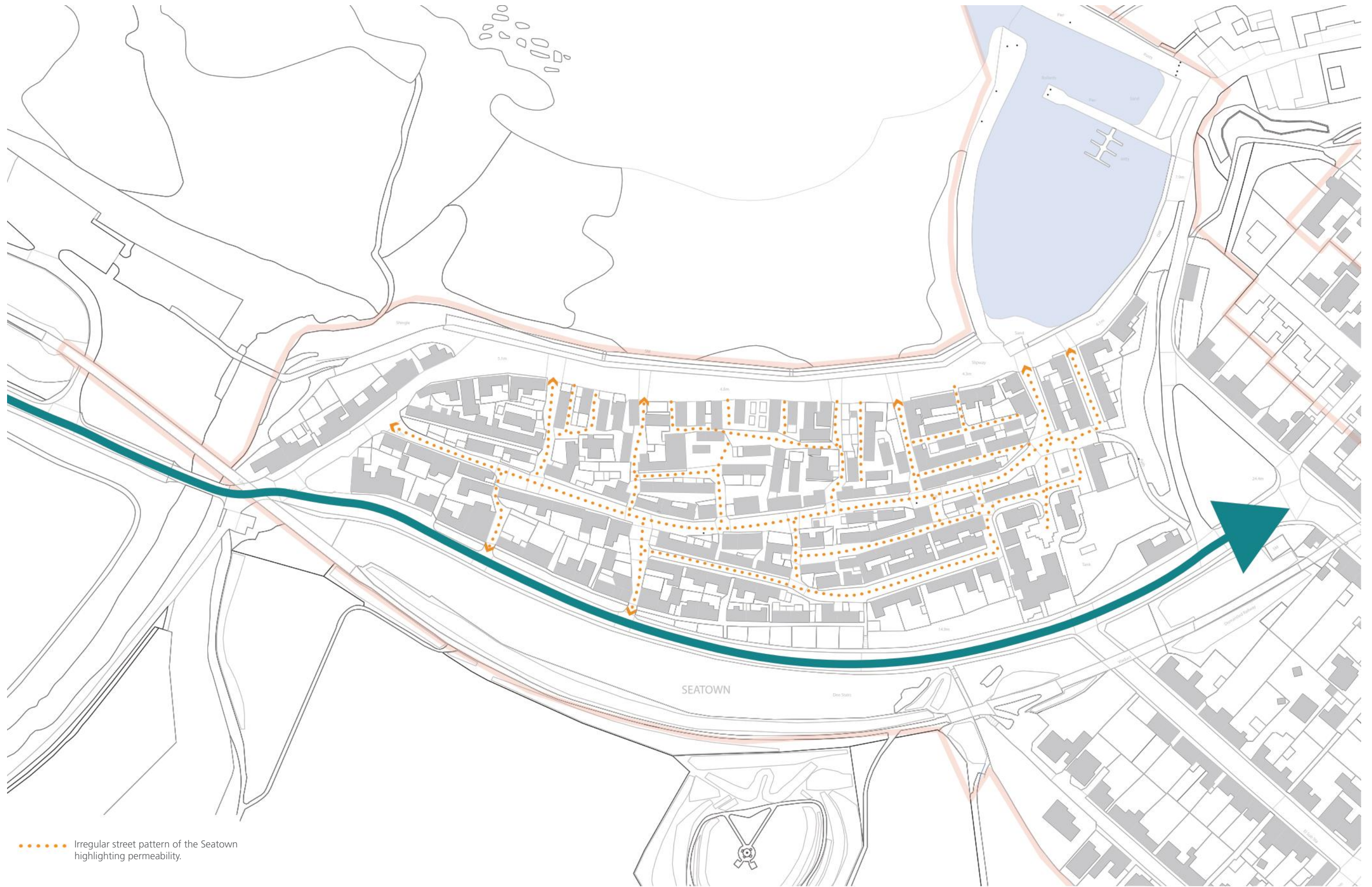
The Planned Town has clear secondary vehicular routes; Seafield Place; Grant Street; Reidhaven Street; Sea Street; Victoria Street and Castle Street. To the southwest the town plan is largely intact (1826) but to the northeast there is a later development in the location of the old railway that has no relation to the rigour of the town plan.

Seafield Street is the main artery running through the Conservation Area of the Planned Town with mixed use to include residential, commercial, hotel and independent local businesses. The old market square which once would have been the heart of the town's activity is now dominated by parking. There is an opportunity to work with the local community and businesses to develop and enhance the town square.

Within the Planned Town some of the pedestrian lanes, that allow permeability through the town blocks remain, but these key links have been neglected. There is opportunity to develop and enhance these routes with signage and lighting to encourage pedestrian flow.

Seatown is quite distinct to the Planned Town as it originated as a fishing town (Fishertown) with the character developing as more buildings were constructed. The pattern is dense with the irregular permeability more suited to pedestrian flow than vehicular traffic. Seatown has a special architectural character which has developed alongside the industry it derived from – the earliest buildings are single storey (with a low eaves level and small window openings) and as the industry thrived, larger more decorative buildings began to appear as a show of wealth. It is this strong social historical connection which gives Seatown a distinct *'sense of place'*. The mix of architecture detail, form and style is what makes Seatown special. The streetscape also varies from small alley ways, with some remaining cobbles, to wider routes. Depending on the direction of travel you can either get views into Seatown or glimpses out to Cullen Bay or up to Castle Hill. An exploration of Seatown is full of hidden architectural surprise. The form of the buildings to the north turn their gables onto the sea to protect the building from the inclement weather – this was a common principle for coastal towns to form a protective barrier with the buildings opening into the town further defining the *'sense of place'*.





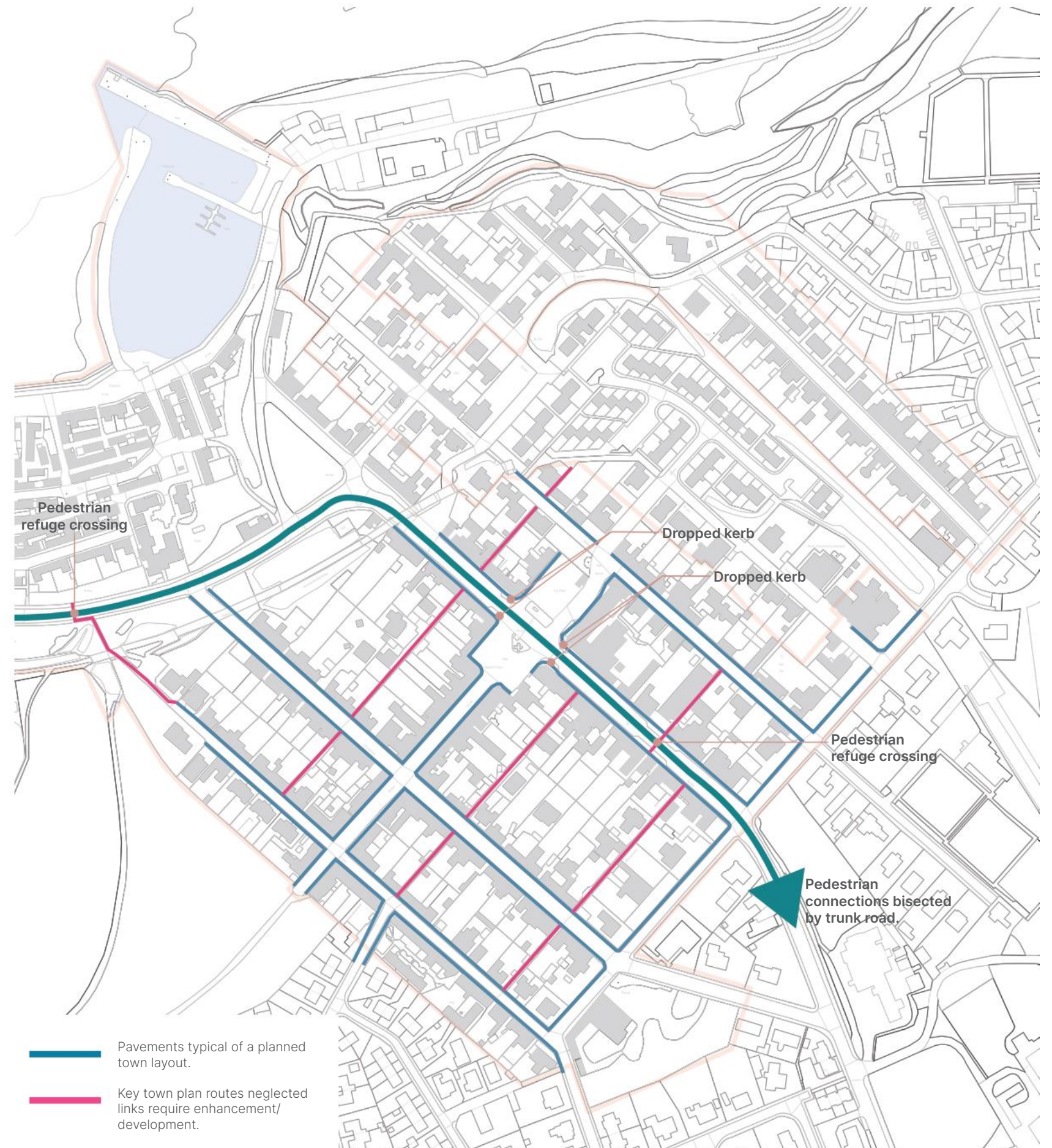
..... Irregular street pattern of the Seatown highlighting permeability.

3.4 Street Pattern Topography

Seatown is low lying adjacent to the coast and was developed due to its proximity to the sea. The land rises from Castle Terrace through to Bayview Road enclosing the eastern side of Seatown and bringing further definition to the sense of place. This steep rise creates a lane running along the front of these buildings facing Castle Terrace and separating them from their gardens. Some stone slabs still remain within the lane although the majority of the surface finish is now concrete. Along Castle Terrace lockblock has been used to change the surface finish outside the buildings in strips to define the entrances. The same detail has also been used at the the Methodist Church and some of the later buildings within Seatown. Generally, most of the surface finishes within Seatown are modern with kerbed pavements, tarmacadam and concrete.

From Seatown the land rises steeply to the south – Castle Hill and the Planned Town. The rise in the land levels is delineated by the old railway route and the viaduct. The viaduct is a significant feature of the Conservation area - it also creates a pedestrian / cycle route along the coast to Portknockie with key views down into Seatown.

Within the Planned Town, the surface finishes are all modern with kerbed pavements, tarmacadam and concrete. Similarly, to Seatown, Castle Street and Victoria Street, as examples have lockblock on the pavement outside the entrances of buildings.





3.5 Spaces

The relationship between the built form and the surrounding spaces is important to the town plan because these not only define the movement through the Conservation Area but they also create spaces for the community.

To the northwest above Seatown there is a defined green space bounded by Bayview Road and Seafield Street. This is currently the only green space that is in the conservation area and has magnificent views down into Seatown, across Cullen Bay and up to the viaduct and Castle Hill. Whilst it is a place to appreciate the conservation area of Seatown and the harbour, it currently does not offer any enhancement to the local area. There are opportunities to sympathetically develop this area to enhance the conservation area and bring benefit to the local community by considering how it could be used to -

- Gather
- Play
- Sit
- Educate

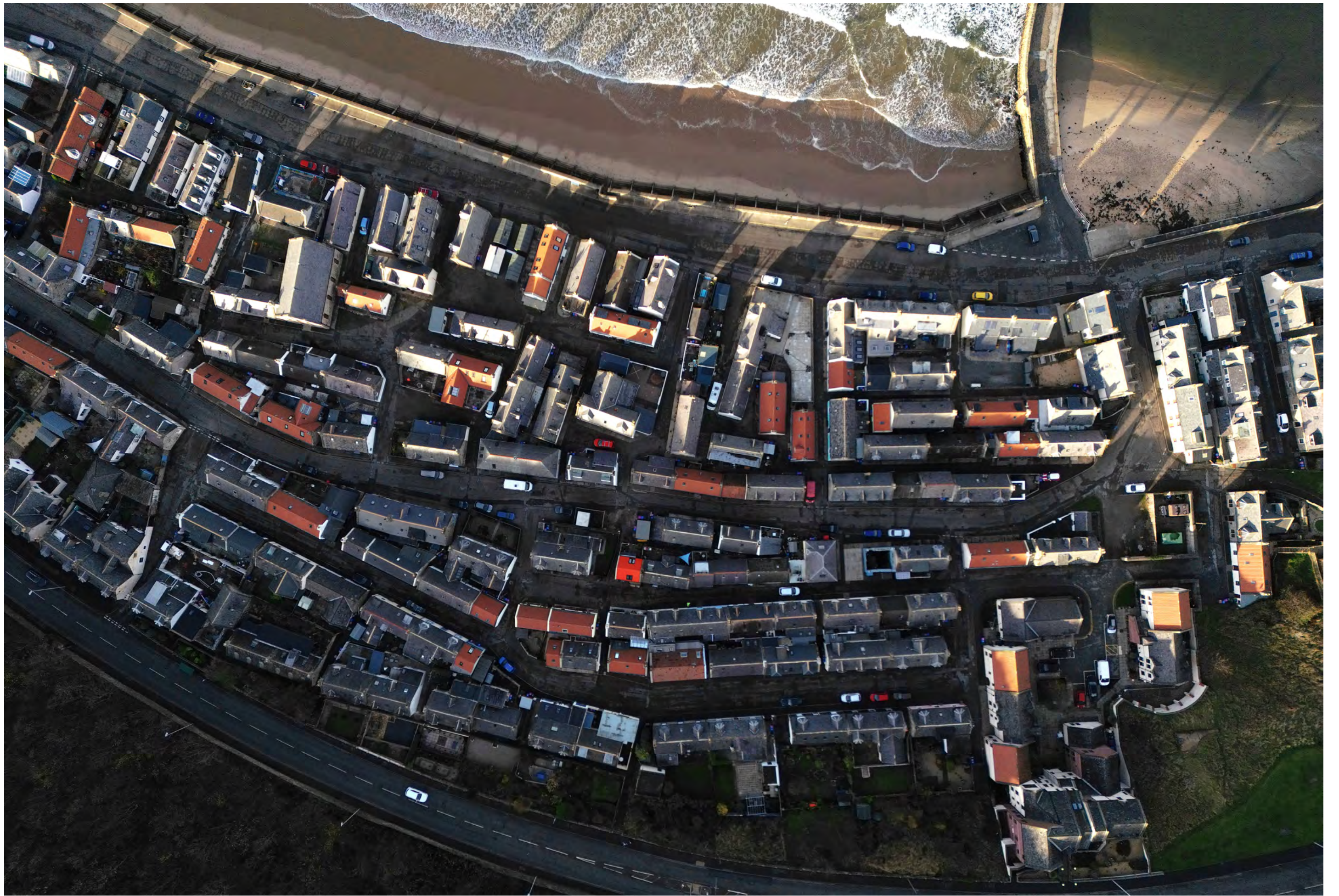
This could also be considered as an orientation point between Seatown and the Planned Town – its location could be defined as a key transition space between the two distinct architectural characteristics of the conservation area.

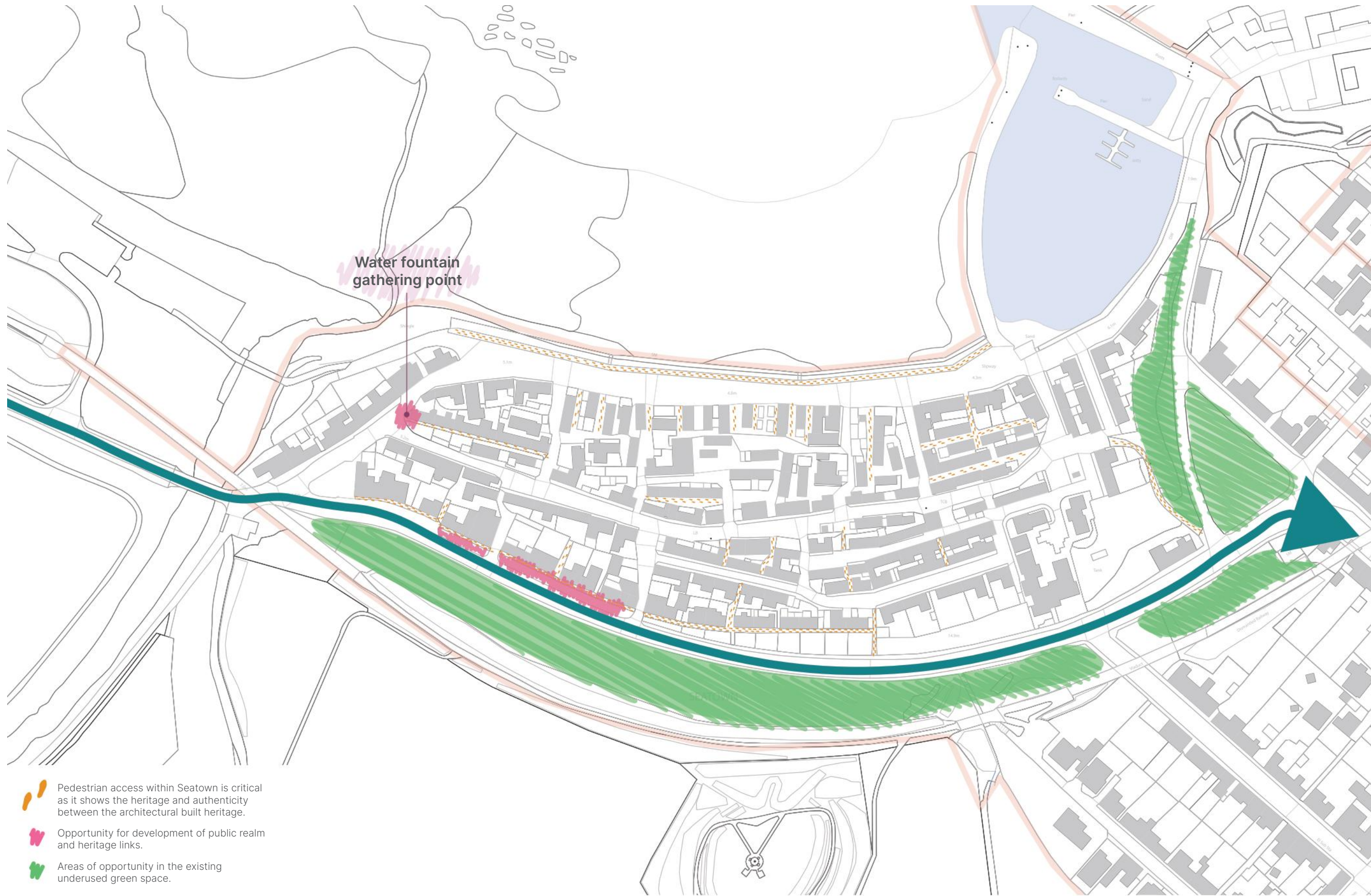
The Cullen viaduct (another key viewpoint) was an important transport link along the coast, whilst the route still exists, it has been truncated by the later development to the northeast. It does however reappear to the Southeast where there is a green belt that does not appear to be heavily utilised. This space is not only distinct because of its formation as part of the old railway line, but the trees also give it a character unlike the conservation area. This area is not currently part of the conservation area but there is an opportunity to bring it into a revised boundary and connect Victoria Street and the Planned Town. There are opportunities to sympathetically regenerate this area to bring the following benefits to the local community -




- Health - proximity to health centre
- Multi-generational community – gather, connect
- Bring activity to the northwest of the planned town to create a circular heritage trail encouraging activity and movement within Cullen

Seafield Place to the southeast consists of larger properties with the Street being lined with mature trees (within the property boundaries). Some of these properties have distinct architectural features; ornate ironwork; moulded wallhead rhones; decorative earbands; and decorate stone features. The architectural character of this street is quite distinct in comparison to the other character areas of Cullen, yet only one side of the street is included within the current boundary.







-  Pedestrian access within Seatown is critical as it shows the heritage and authenticity between the architectural built heritage.
-  Opportunity for development of public realm and heritage links.
-  Areas of opportunity in the existing underused green space.

3.6 Character Areas

Cullen is a place of significant architectural and social historical interest which gives it a unique 'sense of place'. There are two distinct areas forming the built environment of Cullen - Seatown and the Planned Town with the space between the two providing the connection. With quite different architectural styles the following appraisal separates the two for ease of reference.

Seatown

Form

It is the social historical development of Seatown that makes it so delightful – from the early single storey buildings with small window openings and low door lintels (historically the average height was much shorter than today), to the later one-and-a-half storey buildings, to those that were built to demonstrate wealth with ornate architectural detailing. Infill buildings have also been inserted where there were once gaps. The earlier historical OS maps for Cullen (1871 as an example) demonstrates that Seatown was not as densely populated as it is today. It is this eclectic mix of form – demonstrating the development of Seatown – which creates the special character that is present today. Two sides of the street can differ in terms of the date of the building's origin and the architectural style which makes it distinct.

Roofing

The roof line of Seatown is important because this forms a key view from vantage points within the Conservation Area.

There are four types of roof covering: slate, pantile, asbestos tile and metal sheeting (historical sinusoidal and some modern profiles on new developments). In the late 16th Century pantiles were used as a cheap ballast for merchant ships. With an abundance of a relatively cheap material these were utilised in areas across Scotland for roofing. The red clay is a defining feature of some of the buildings within Seatown. Typically, the lower courses were formed in slate to provide a better detail for the disposal of rainwater into the gutters. Whilst a number of pantile roofs remain, the dominant roofing material is now Welsh slate. There are also a few roofs slated in Scotch slate, laid to diminishing courses, but these are also now a minority. The use of Spanish slate has also been recorded and this is not an appropriate material not only in terms of aesthetic but also longevity in Scotland's climate, especially on the coast.

There are varying types of dormer throughout Seatown – they are mostly traditional in style but there are some instances of modern inappropriate box dormers. The dormers form part of the architectural and social development of Seatown – some dormers have been added to buildings that would not have used the attic space. There are then wallhead dormers and bracketed dormers that date from the building's construction. In the traditional form these enliven the roofspace and they have the historical social connection with the need for more space.

Rainwater Goods

Whilst Rainwater goods play an important part in the performance of a building, they can also add to the architectural character. Typically, throughout Seatown this are simple with half round cast iron gutters on rafter brackets with round downpipes. There are however exceptions on the decorative larger properties which have ornate bracketed moulded rones with round downpipes. Cast iron, which is the traditional material for the rainwater goods, remains prominent, however, a high proportion of buildings now have replacement uPVC rainwater goods. There are also a few in aluminium.

Stonework and pointing

The traditional finish to the original Fisherman's Cottage is a lime sneck point to the rubble stone walls – this is where the lime is taken from the joints to the highpoints of the stone. The lime allows the stone walls to breath and allows any moisture that penetrates the wall to dry out. Some examples of this finish still exists but there are now the minority. It is likely that this was coated in limewash to provide protection. In places this finish has been replaced with a modern cement render which varies from a smooth 'struck' finish (to represent stone ashlar) to a wet dash. This has not only changed the character of the building, but it will also affect the performance and can have detrimental impact on the performance of the fabric as it offers no breathability.

Moving to the next phase of development the window and door openings became larger with dressed stone elements being introduced in these locations. In some of the later 19th century buildings, the decorative elements have been formed in cast concrete.

In some locations the traditional stone skews have been either overcoated in cement or replaced with modern paving slabs.

Doors

There is a distinct decorative moulded timber door detail that can be found throughout Seatown – there are some minor changes to this dependant of the scale of the opening, but it is a distinct and unifying feature that should be preserved. There are also a number of examples of traditional panelled and tongue and grooved doors.

Modern inappropriate uPVC doors have been installed in some locations and there are also some modern timber doors of varying style all of which detract from the character. In these instances, consideration should be given to enhancing the style and detailing of the door that is appropriate to the period of the building.

Windows

The traditional, and dominant, window type is timber sash and case. The scale and fenestration of this varies throughout the conservation area dependant on when the building was constructed – smaller windows and panes are in the earlier buildings with the larger panes (2/2) or (1/1) in the later buildings.

Some windows have been replaced with modern timber casements or uPVC which have had a detrimental impact of the character of these buildings. Some windows have also been replaced in uPVC sash and case. Whilst it is acknowledged, that uPVC can be considered desirable for thermal improvements, the units do have a limited guarantee and they also affect the performance of the traditional fabric. There are options for improvements to be made to traditional timber sash and case windows which are not necessarily cost prohibitive.

Colour

Historically colour was much more prevalent on buildings then what is present in the built environment today. It is said that the Fisherman would utilise the paint that they coated their boats with to maintain their external joinery (windows and doors) and this is what created the variation in colour between buildings.

Seatown is an array of colour today however this is mostly due to modern additions with the painting of struck pointing, quoins and window inbands and outbands in vibrant colours. This overcoating is mostly associated with later cementitious finishes.

The Planned Town

Shopfronts

The principle commercial area in Cullen is Seafield Street. To the northeast, some buildings have been adapted to allow the formation of shopfronts which are of a modern style and form. Predominantly there are two forms to the shopfronts; a central door with windows either side (of residential proportion) in the Georgian style; and the more traditional shop front with a central door and glazed screens to either side.

There is a mix of signage with sympathetic simple painted timber signs and then more modern printed signs.

The detailing, form and signage of shopfronts can have a significant impact on the character of the area and also bring economic benefit.

Form

The form is rigorous with a defined street pattern and distinct town blocks. On Seafield street the buildings are mostly Georgian in style, however, there are some Victorian buildings with more emphasis on decorative features.

Roofing

There are four types of roof covering: slate, Knockfergan, pantiles and tiles. When the planned town was built the roofs would have been Scotch slate laid to diminishing courses, but this is now the minority with Welsh slate the dominant roofing material. The use of Spanish slate has also been recorded and this is not an appropriate material not only in terms of aesthetic but also longevity in Scotland's climate, especially on the coast. There is one oddity with the conservation area which is clay tiled roof on Seafield Place.

Rainwater Goods

Whilst Rainwater goods play an important part in the performance of a building, they can also add to the architectural character. Seafield Place has good examples of where these add to the character with decorative hoppers, rectangular downpipes, decorative earbands and moulded wallhead rones. These have been painted in a coloured finish to define them as an architectural detail not just a practical requirement for the disposal of rainwater.

Generally, throughout the planned town the form of the rainwater goods are half round gutters with round downpipes.

In regard to material whilst cast iron fittings remain and have a prominence there is a significant amount of replacement in uPVC.

Stonework and Pointing

The stonework is typically exposed coursed rubble with dressed stone margins. There are some raised margins which suggests these building may have had a traditional lime harl coating. The majority of the pointing has been replaced in cement and 'struck' to imitate ashlar. A number of buildings have also been inappropriately coated with a wet dash or smooth cement render.

Doors

There are varying traditional panelled timber doors throughout the Planned Town – the variation is dependant of the period and style of the building. The doors are another element that contributes to the overarching character of the building.

Modern timber doors or varying design and inappropriate uPVC doors have been installed in some locations. In these instances, consideration should be given to enhancing the style and detailing of the door that is appropriate to the period of the building.

Windows

The traditional, and dominant, window type is timber sash and case. The scale and fenestration of this varies throughout the conservation area dependant on when the building was constructed – the are examples of the Georgian 6/6 and the later 2/2 and 1/1. This variance is important in dating the buildings.

Some windows have been replaced with modern timber casements, aluminium or uPVC units which have had a detrimental impact of the character of these buildings. As noted previously, whilst it is acknowledged, that uPVC can be considered desirable for thermal improvements, the units do have a limited guarantee and they also affect the performance of the traditional fabric. There are options for improvements to be made to traditional timber sash and case windows which are not necessarily cost prohibitive.

Colour

There is some use of sympathetic heritage colours within the Planned Town, however, it has mostly been changed with the use of white and grey on external joinery being the most prominent.

The use of heritage colours can enliven the architecture and should be encouraged – the unification of colour is a modern style.

Seatown

Within Seatown typically the formation of the buildings defines the boundary treatment. Where boundaries have been formed, they vary from painted picket fences to a range of blockwork walls with a variety of finishes (bare, wet dash, painted, smooth render). There are some stone boundary walls, but these are mixed with most of a modern style.

Eclectic range of buildings



The Planned Town

Whilst the buildings within Seatown have limited external spaces, within the Planned Town this is different with generally all having defined external spaces. From the principal elevations within the Conservation Area, these areas are defined by blockwork walls with a variety of finishes (bare, wet dash, painted, smooth render), picket fences, some traditional stone walls, and metal and timber gates.

One of the distinct, and significant, features at the market square are the curved Principal Elevations to each of the four defining buildings. These soften the edges and encourage flow into the square. Numbers 9, 12 and 14 have each had subtle alterations which changes the detail of shopfront at each unit. What remains consistent is the return to the curve and the moulded tabling course.

Range of buildings



4.0

Negative Factors

4.1 Negative Factors

Whilst negative factors do exist throughout the Conservation Area, it is important that these do not become the key focus in the assessment of the significance of the area. For example, whilst inappropriate materials have an impact on the character, they also affect the performance of the building, however, with careful repair and conservation these changes can be reversed thereby restoring the character. Where the form (scale and any decorative stone dressing) and composition of the traditional building remains, there is significance and therefore reversible material change should not be seen as justification to withdraw protection.

In summary the key factors are:

1. Inappropriate alterations to buildings which includes –
 - the style of some extensions
 - changes to openings
 - changes to fenestration
 - inappropriate materiality
2. Underutilised space – including green areas
3. Public Realm – rationalisation and improvement could be brought to the following areas -
 - surfaces
 - signage
 - street furniture
 - street lighting

These factors should be considered as opportunities and used as performance indicators for monitoring future enhancements.

5.0

Design Guidance

5.1 Design Guidance

The most important principle of the following design guidance is that the traditional materials are not encouraged purely for the aesthetic characteristic of the Conservation Area, but it is the performance and longevity of the building. Both of which have environmental and economic benefit.

Repair and Maintenance

- Maintenance is always required whether it is a traditional or modern material
- Implement a regular regime - whilst there is a cost involved in maintenance this should avoid significant investment due to failure of the fabric

The appropriate repair and maintenance of traditional buildings is important not only for their preservation but also for their performance. A well-maintained building should reduce the requirement for intervals of significant investment and change.

Modern materials are commonly selected because they are believed to be better and more cost effective, however, their lifespan is limited, and a limited lifespan will result in additional investment within a set time frame. It is important to note that buildings will always require maintenance.

Roofing

- Consider what is appropriate to the building type – the building was designed and built based on this material

Historically, there were two key roof types: pantile and Scotch slating. Both of these materials bring a rich character to the Conservation Area. In Seatown, the pantile roofs still have a strong presence and these should be maintained and encouraged. Scotch slating laid to diminishing course is now a minority – over the years these have been replaced in Welsh slate due to the closure of the Scottish Quarries. Reclaimed Scotch slate is available and should be considered where practicable. Where this is not an option, salvaged Welsh slate would be a suitable alternative. Spanish slate, which is not native to the area, and is distinctively different from Scotch and Welsh should not be used. This is not only because of the impact on the character of the conservation area, but also the performance.



Rainwater Goods

- Longevity of Cast Iron Rainwater Goods – ensure the sizes are appropriate for area of the roof
- Apply a good paint specification – an appropriate primer, undercoat and top/ finish coats – if this is maintained, it protects the main components from decay and this is what brings the longevity

Cast iron rainwater goods have a stronger visual presence on a building because of their solidity. Not only does this add to the architectural character but if they are well maintained they have a long lifespan. There is a misconception that uPVC rainwater goods do not require maintenance, however, the rubber seals at joints fail over time, they are susceptible to solar gain (resulting in eventual failure because the plastic becomes brittle) and there is higher risk in these being brought down due to snow and ice. They can also be easily damaged.

Stonework and Pointing

- A traditional lime point or harling manages the moisture in your wall thereby improving the condition of the fabric and the internal environment

Whilst a traditional lime finish on the buildings brings character to the conservation area, there is a key performance criterion. Historically, lessons have been learnt by the use of cementitious mortars as coatings on traditional building fabric. It has quite clearly been established that they do not preserve the fabric - they can in fact exacerbate decay and create damp buildings. The technical compatibilities of the materials used on traditional buildings are critical in relation to the performance of the fabric.

The key characteristic of a traditional wall is its porosity which will always retain a level of moisture content (referred to as a water film) and it is this content that allows the essential capillary action to occur. The important drying process within the wall is not a vapour process, it is a liquid process should this be from the inside or outside face of the fabric.

The use of lime as an ingredient in traditional construction is important because it delivers a finer porosity and greater surface area than materials with a coarse and close to impermeable makeup - the former, in effect, becoming a poultice which draws moisture out of the wall using capillary action. This can either be the joints (lime pointing) or more effectively a lime harl as this has a much larger surface area.



Doors

- Traditional timber doors
- Apply a good paint specification – an appropriate primer, undercoat and top/ finish coats – if this is maintained, it protects the main components from decay and this is what brings the longevity

It is important to note that it is not 'one' element of a building that defines the character, it is a combination of all the elements. Traditional timber doors define the entrances to the buildings and there is a significant ornate door within Seatown that should be preserved and enhanced. The doors relate to the periods of architectural development of the conservation areas – for example the four panelled doors represent a later build period so they are also significant to their time. Again, it is this mix of development that enriches the overall character.



Windows

- Traditional timber sash and case
- Apply a good paint specification – an appropriate primer, undercoat and top/ finish coats – if this is maintained, it protects the main components from decay and this is what brings the longevity

The original fenestration of Sash and Case windows form part of the character of a traditional building. If left to deteriorate these can become difficult to manage for the residents. Sash and Case windows can however be repaired and upgraded – draught stripping and double glazing (consideration should be given to depth of the frames and astragals). If the units are beyond repair, replica sash and case windows can be made and fitted. If these are then appropriately maintained, they can have a significant lifespan. There is a common misconception that either of these options can be cost prohibitive and appropriate support and guidance should be made available to residents to dispel this notion. Not only does this benefit the character of the conservation area but it is also sustainable.



Extensions

- These can provide much needed additional accommodation to secure the building's future, however, it is important that any extension should enhance, and compliment, the traditional building

In order to preserve the historical built environment, it has to be accepted that some alteration may be required in order to accommodate changes within modern society. New developments and proposals should not be pastiche – it is important that they reflect the period in which they are constructed so the development of the building can be understood. These alterations can be sympathetic and complimentary to the character area through an understanding of form, proportion and the existing local materials and colour palette.

5.2 Sustainable Conservation

The way in which traditional buildings were constructed is quite different to methods that are used in modern construction. When problems arise with traditional buildings there can be a misconception that this is due to materials used during its construction. Sometimes this can simply be attributed to the fact the materials have been there since the construction – 100 years or in many case much longer – and now is the time to replace them because they had done what they were there to do. Traditional materials, when properly applied (or installed) and maintained, can stand the test of time.

Guarantees for modern materials generally are set at a specified time limit. uPVC windows for example tend to be guaranteed for 10 years and when they fail and are replaced the units tend to go straight to land fill (unless they can be reconditioned). uPVC is not biodegradable and sending these units to land fill is not sustainable or environmentally friendly. uPVC is prone to solar gain and over time, the colour will fade and the plastic will become brittle affecting the integrity of the unit whether that be windows, doors or rainwater goods. Whilst uPVC can be considered maintenance free, every element of a building will require maintenance and care at regular intervals.


Traditional buildings can be thermally upgraded to provide a comfortable internal environment that does not require significant energy use. It is important however that this is carried out in a manner that does not affect the performance of the fabric. When the performance of the fabric is affected, this can result in problems internally such as a rise in moisture levels.



6.0

Public Realm Audit



-  Heritage route of viaduct and railway through the town
-  Key green spaces
-  Key urban spaces

6.1 Public Realm Audit

The public realm is an important contributor to the conservation area as the treatment of this dominates the space between the buildings. The information below is an audit of what currently exists.

Planned Town

- Modern LED street lighting – there is one heritage lantern within the square (this may or may not illuminate)
- Some heritage directional signage for pedestrians
- A variety of seating: metal and timber benches; picnic benches
- Combination of railings - wrought iron railings to the northeast of the square; modern railings around the hotel
- Intrusive white bollards on Seafield Street
- Generally all surface treatment is modern – tarmacadam. With buildings opening out onto the footpath, some streets have lockblock at building entrances to define such
- Cars have dominance over pedestrians – whilst the coastal route is a necessary, and key, network consideration could be given to the adjacent areas

Within each of the areas there are opportunities to bring enhancement.

Seatown

Castle Terrace -

- Modern LED Streetlighting
- Key connectivity – lanes and views into Seatown
- Tarmacadam pavements with the surface changed to lockblock at building entrances to define such

Lane to Castle Terrace -

- Cast concrete surface
- the gardens are separated by the lane running along the front of the properties with these located alongside Castle Terrace – these provide a green buffer to the A98
- Cast concrete steps at the end of lane leading up to Castle Terrace
- Generally there is no lighting provision along the lane – just one at the end adjacent to the flight of steps up to Castle Terrace
- There is evidence of the old surface finish – slabs and setts

Generally -

- Heritage LED lamps provide the street lighting
- BT poles and overhead lines – whilst this in places appears slightly unruly it does bring a character
- Some of the buildings do not have any defined external space so in locations residents have added seating and planters to the pavements which softens the harder landscape
- Pedestrians have dominance over cars due to the form and scale of the streets
- Some streets funnel from narrow to wider and with that a more defined streetscape
- One of the detracting factors throughout Seatown is refuse bins. The number and lack of outdoor space results in these dominating the streetscape
- Parked Cars



7.0

Opportunity for Development, Enhancement

7.1 Enhancement and Development

There are opportunities throughout the Conservation Area for enhancement and development to bring benefit not only to the character but also the local community. This will however require investment. Consideration should be given to funding opportunities and how these could be utilised to assist interested parties.

Opportunities :

1. Develop a circular heritage trail within Cullen – by bringing people to the area and keeping them as long practicable could bring significant economic benefit
2. Open / Greenspace – three key spaces have been identified as part of this study which are currently underutilised
 - a. Consider the orientation / transition green space above Cullen Bay
 - b. Utilised the coastal space with key views across Cullen bay to Seatown, Castle Hill and the viaduct
 - c. The old railway valley
3. Market Square – consult with the local community and business to see how improvement could be brought to re-establish the market square
4. Enhancements on a building by building basis – restoration and conservation to include enhancement and reinstatement of traditional materials and detailing (roofing material, cast iron rainwater goods, application of lime to the stonework, timber doors and sash and case windows)
5. Sustainable Conservation – implementing the enhancements above will not only make the local environment more sustainable, but it will improve the internal environment of the building
6. Public Realm Improvements
 - a. Heritage LED lamps in the Planned Town (they exist in Seatown)
 - b. Consideration of surface treatment
 - c. Shop front improvements
7. Education and Learning
 - a. Understanding the repair and maintenance of traditional buildings
 - b. Traditional skills and future opportunities for the younger generations – career development
8. Investment in the local heritage



8.0

Conservation Strategy

8.1 Conservation Strategy

Whilst Seatown is no longer Fisherstown, the origin of the settlement and its development reflects the changing local industry and its associated community creating a rich built environment. As stated in the Burra Charter

'The policy for managing a place must be based on an understanding of its cultural significance.'

The distinction between the organic street pattern of Seatown and the rigour of 1820 Planned Town is symbolic of the historical development of Cullen. It is this difference that creates the significant *'sense of place'* that is unique to Cullen.

In order to safeguard the historic environment, it is also important to identify where change can be made to meet current and future needs without being detrimental to the cultural significance.

Due to the density of Seatown, there are limits to where change can be sympathetically accommodated without bringing detriment to the historic environment. This, however, varies between building and its associated open space. Where change has already been introduced there are opportunities to bring future enhancements; whether this be the sympathetic adaptation of extensions or the reinstatement of traditional detailing and this should be encouraged.

Within the Planned Town of Cullen, the distinct difference is that there is space to the rear of the buildings which presents opportunity to allow sympathetic adaptation and supplementary construction to meet the current and future needs without being detrimental. Where there are similarities to Seatown there is an opportunity to enhance the conservation area with the reinstatement and enhancement of traditional detailing and this should be encouraged.

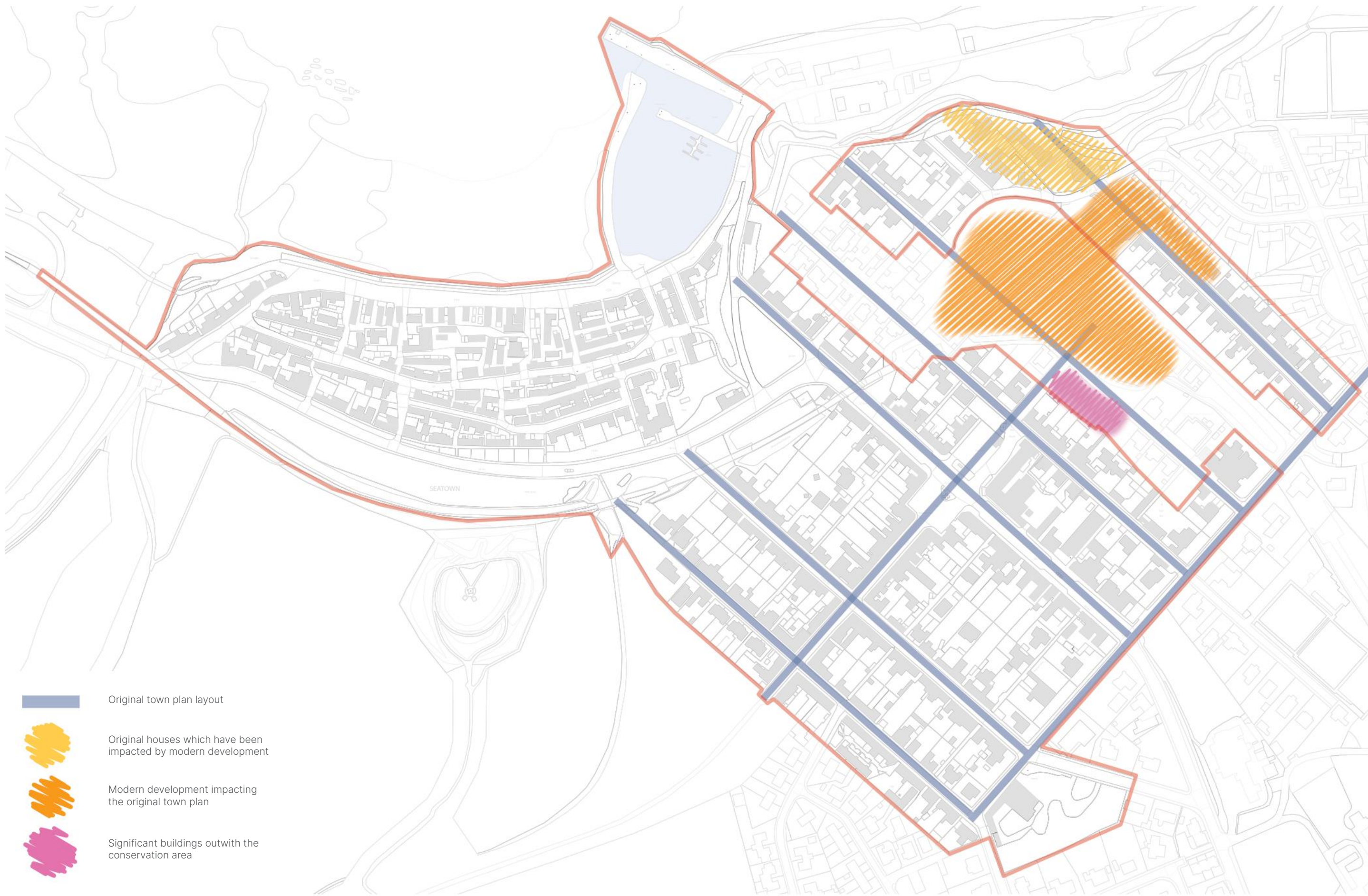
The over-arching conservation policy for Seatown is to **reveal maintain and enhance significance through meticulous preservation, conservation, restoration.**





The over-arching conservation policy for the Planned Town is to

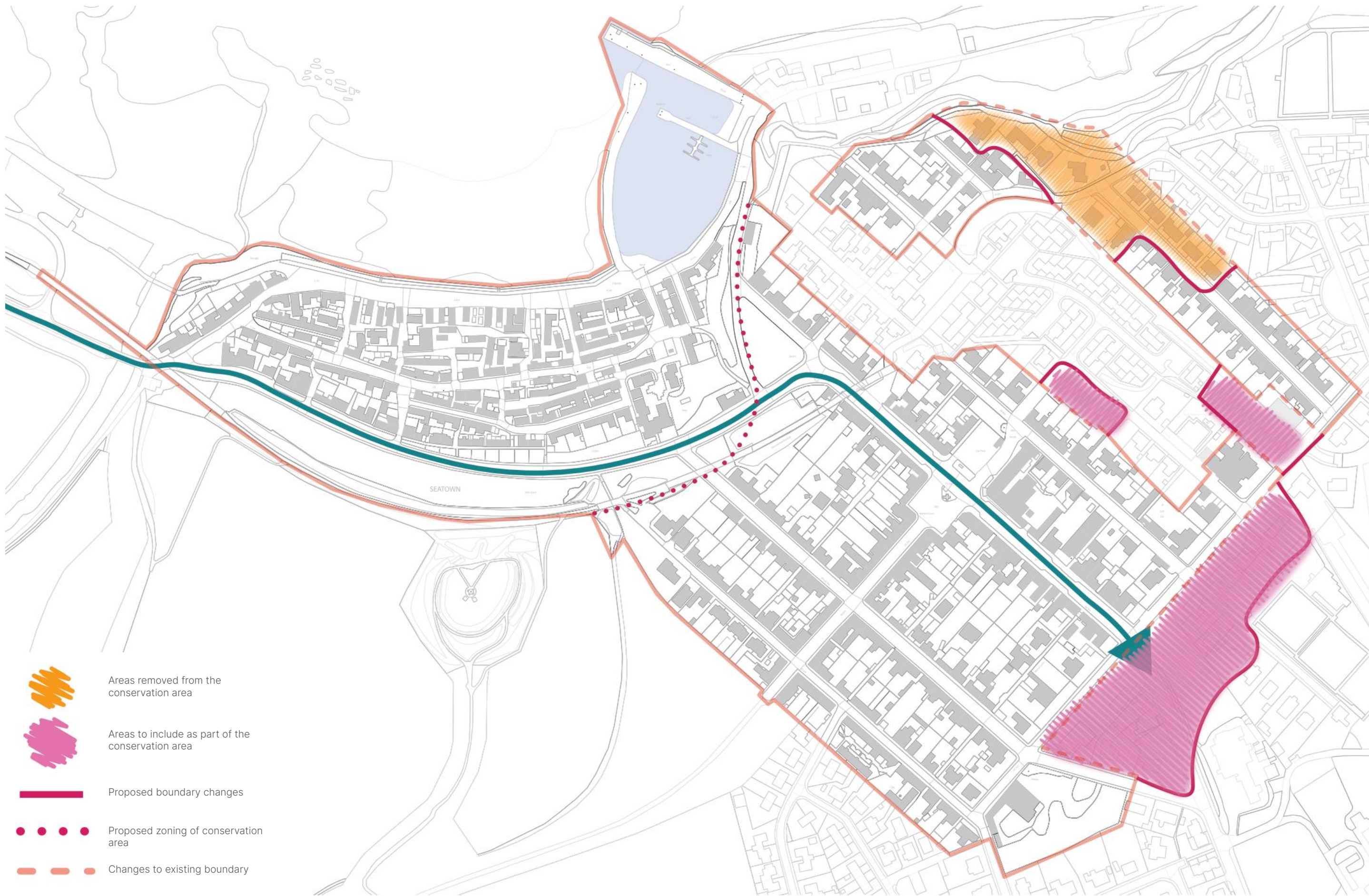
reveal, maintain, and enhance significance but some adaptation and supplementary construction may be considered to accommodate future compatible uses.





Maintaining our existing built heritage is infinitely sustainable and understanding how traditional fabric can be upgraded without having a detrimental effect on either the external fabric, and character, or the internal environment is critical.

The aim of the above policy is to protect the significance and allow informed decisions to be assessed and validated with rigour and consistency without bringing further detriment. These principles should be applied to the opportunities that have been identified in section 8.0.



-  Original town plan layout
-  Original houses which have been impacted by modern development
-  Modern development impacting the original town plan
-  Significant buildings outwith the conservation area



-  Areas removed from the conservation area
-  Areas to include as part of the conservation area
-  Proposed boundary changes
-  Proposed zoning of conservation area
-  Changes to existing boundary

8.2 Justification for Boundary Change

This appraisal has been developed from a thorough study of the two current conservation areas of Cullen: Seatown Outstanding Conservation Area (which encapsulates the Planned Town) and Victoria Street Conservation Area. This study has consisted of –

- Historical research
- A photographic survey of the principal elevation of each building within the Conservation Area
- A review of the street pattern and topography
- A review of the open space within Cullen (not restricted to the Conservation Area)
- A Public Realm Audit
- A study of each building within the Conservation Area which includes the recording of the principal materials and detailing, and the condition of such

The detailed study of all of these elements and the complete building stock within the conservation area has allowed the following to be identified –

- Opportunities for enhancement and development
- Negative factors – the focus should not however be on the negative but the opportunity that this can bring
- The level of modern building stock
- Impact of inappropriate material and alterations
- Space that is outwith the conservation area but has opportunity to bring enhancement
- Traditional buildings that contribute to the ‘*sense of place*’ within Cullen that are outwith the conservation area and deserving of protection

The above information has all contributed to the recommendation of boundary change within Cullen's Conservation Area as follows: -

Change 01

Seatown is a significant historic built environment that is quite distinct from the Planned Town and each should be recognised independently for their rich architectural character and heritage. Seatown should therefore be recognised as its own designated Outstanding Conservation Area instead of encapsulating the majority of the Planned Town

Change 02

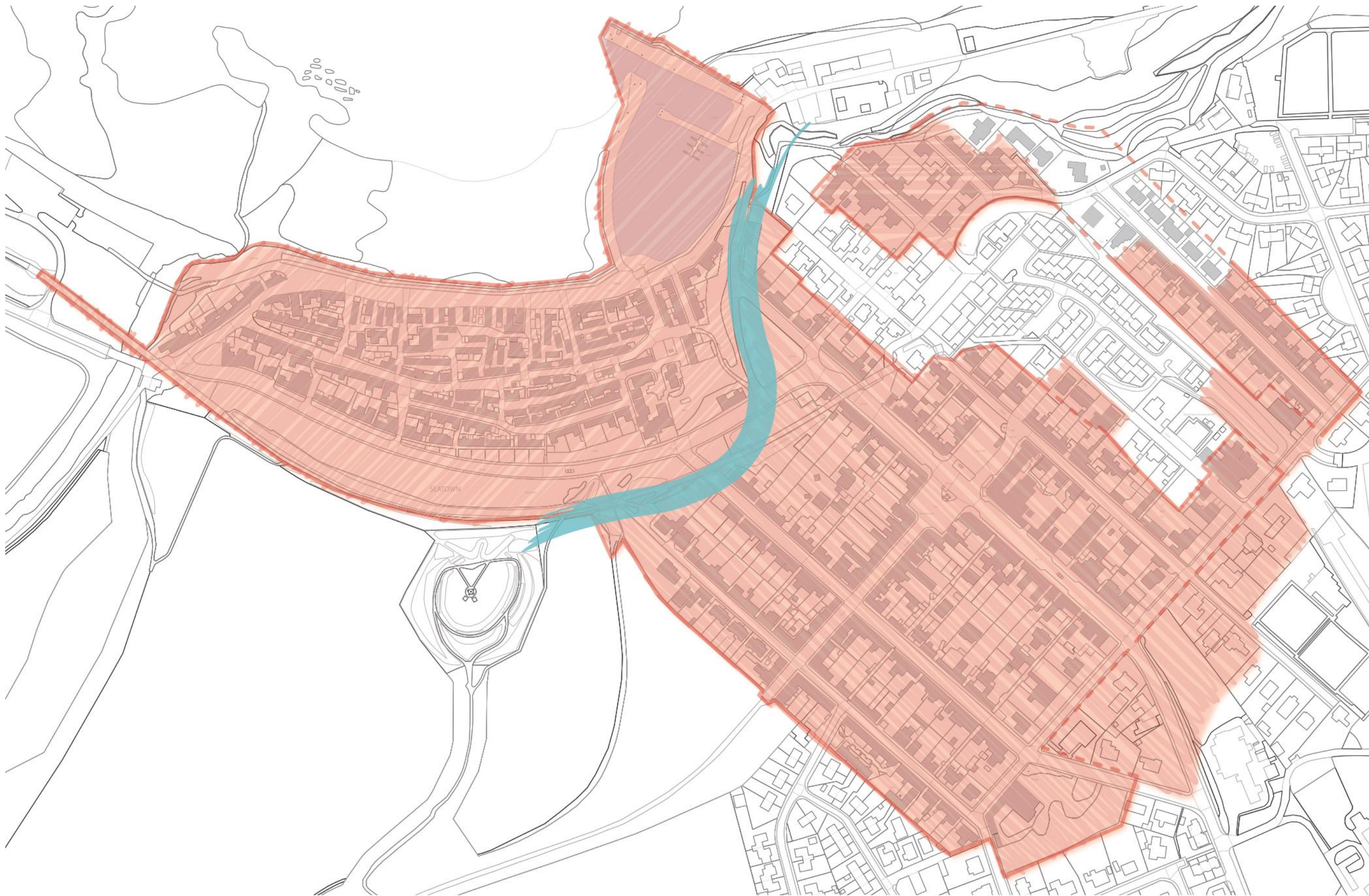
The Planned Town of Cullen is recognised as its own designated Outstanding Conservation Area with the identified greenspace (opportunity) used to link to Victoria Street creating one boundary

Change 03

The modern building stock to the northwest on Victoria Street is removed from the Conservation Area

Change 04

The conservation of the Planned Town of Cullen is extended to include part of the southeast side of Seafield Place and York Place. This is considered to be a significant omission of the planned town and contains a mix of rich architecture



9.0

Monitoring and Review



10.1 Monitoring and Review

It is important that periodical reviews are carried out to ensure that the *special interest* of the Conservation Area is preserved and there are not significant losses within a set timeframe.

Consideration should be given to the engagement with the local community who have invested in the area. This could be in the form of independent workshops with traditionally skilled professionals and contactors giving the local community an opportunity to ask questions. Improvements and enhancements to the conservation area could bring direct benefit to the residents whether this be –

- An improved environment to live and work
- A decrease in vacant, and in some cases, dilapidated residential properties
- A decrease in vacant, and in some cases, dilapidated commercial properties
- Increased footfall bringing economic benefit to the local area

Reviews of the Conservation Area should be carried out on a five-yearly cycle to ensure that any change is identified and managed. This next review should include –

- An updated photographic survey
- An updated building by building analysis to track any changes to materials whether it be enhancement or loss
- A review of whether any of the identified development opportunities have been undertaken and whether these have been successful
- Identification of any enhancements that have been undertaken

Date of next review – **2027**

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