

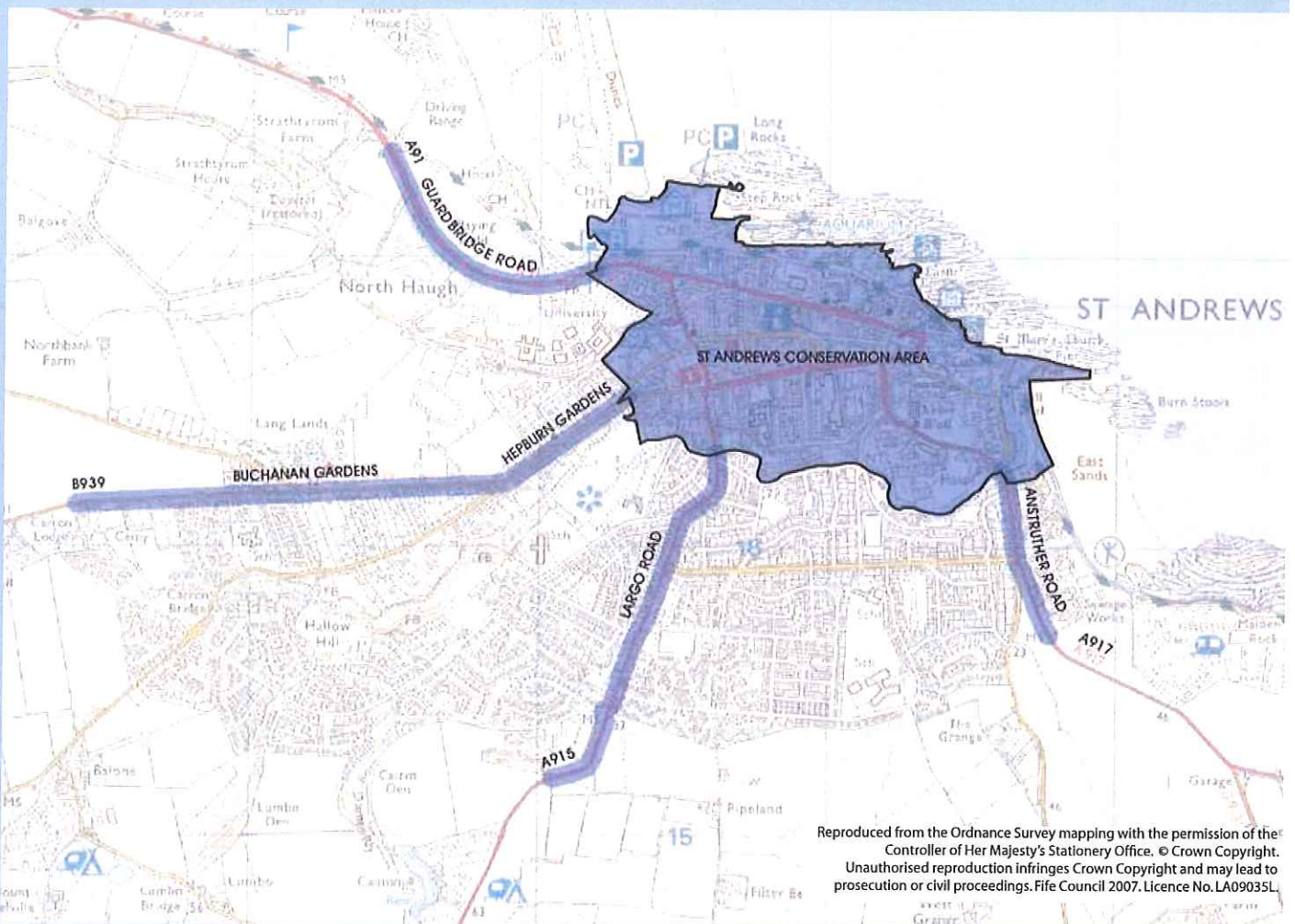
EXTRACT



# St Andrews Design Guidelines

for buildings, streets and shop fronts in St Andrews  
Conservation Area and on the main approaches





1. Area covered by the Guidelines

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The built environment of St Andrews town centre has been planned, designed, influenced and shaped by successive generations to meet the needs of its community. Cumulative local custom and practice has combined with significant external influences and the geography of the location to define its character and create its identity. The result is historic townscape of outstanding quality.

1.2 Nevertheless, the town centre has inevitably changed in response to evolving social and economic needs. To halt this process would cause it to lose its functional relevance and lead to decline. At the same time, there must also be presumption of little or no change to the significant historic buildings and townscape, open spaces and vistas. The quality of public realm is also recognised as an important factor in attracting inward investment. Further, first impressions on approaching the town are a factor in the public's perception of its quality.

1.3 In response to these concerns, and to safeguard and enhance the town centre fabric, this document sets out appropriate principles to guide public and private works in St Andrews central conservation area and the townscape on its main approaches. Figure 1 shows the area covered by the Guidelines.

## 1.4 Key objectives of the St Andrews Design Guidelines are to:

- raise awareness of the architectural and townscape qualities which contribute to the town's unique character and identity;
- guide future development projects and planning decisions so they are compatible with the heritage and, where appropriate, use it as the inspiration for contemporary design of the highest quality;
- ensure an appropriate approach to conservation, repair, adaptation, improvement and renewal of historic buildings and streetscape; restoring original materials and details where practicable;
- provide a framework to prioritise investment in the public realm that will create safe, attractive streets that are comfortable to use;
- set standards for day-to-day management and maintenance;
- ensure that the overall environmental quality in the town centre is consistent and matches its world class aspirations.

## 3.0 DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

### 3.1 This section sets broad guidelines for development proposals in terms of town centre function, setting and layout

#### SAFEGUARDING TOWN CENTRE FUNCTION

3.2 The extent to which the traditional economic and community status of the town centre has been retained is both valuable and vulnerable and, if lost, would be very difficult to reinstate. It can only be sustained by ensuring that the town centre remains both attractive and accessible to the people it serves: residents, students, academics, business people, and visitors.

3.3 The dilemma is that the circulation and parking of cars throughout St Andrews town centre is seen as important for the viability of shops while, at the same time, it detracts from its environmental quality and appeal as a shopping location, and inhibits the opportunities for improvement. A balance must be reached taking account of the importance of accessibility, but giving design priority to meeting the wider functional needs of the town centre efficiently and creating an environment of high aesthetic quality to delight its users.

3.4 To this end, pedestrian friendly areas/shared surfaces are to be created in places such as Market Street to provide enhanced areas for seating, pedestrian movement etc, but vehicular access will still be required for essential access for residents, servicing and public transport; full pedestrianisation over the entire length is not considered appropriate at this time.

3.5 Further parking opportunities are being considered for additional peripheral town parking to serve the needs of shoppers, workers and business users. This linked with Park and Ride will allow a reduction in parking in some town centre streets to provide more aesthetically pleasing parking and loading layouts and creating additional space for pedestrian movement and street activities.

#### Guideline 1

Ensure the town centre continues to be easily and sustainably accessible to the communities it serves by facilitating movement by foot, bicycle, or public transport, and catering for the needs of those with limited mobility.

#### Guideline 2

Safeguard the environmental qualities which contribute to the amenity of the residential community by resolving vehicular access and parking issues.

#### Guideline 3

Bring life to the streets by creating spaces for promoting traditional activities and uses, including open-air markets.

## Feu riggs

3.16 Apart from University grounds and some late 19th century and modern buildings, the feu riggs are still expressed in the width of the building frontages forming the terraced street facades, and set the rhythm of the townscape. The OS map of 1854 (figure 36) shows that development has frequently taken place back along the riggs, giving the town centre a high density development 'footprint'. Local Plan policy is to safeguard the remaining riggs, so that they are expressed by the space rather than built development: the opportunity for future development here is considered limited.

### Guideline 13

Resist future development of the remaining riggs; protect walls, surfaces, planting including orchards, and any other historic features.

### Guideline 14

Continue to govern building alterations and redevelopment by the orientation of the traditional development pattern and the rhythm given by the width of the feu riggs.

## Building lines

3.17 None of the main east-west streets laid out in the medieval plan is straight or uniform in width, (See figure 36). The variation arises from slight irregularities in alignment and step-backs in building frontages, and adds a subtle but very important informality to the town plan. By contrast, frontages on the later north-south links, such as Bell Street, follow straight building lines.

### Guideline 15

Maintain the pattern of alignment of building frontages in any new development along the main town centre streets.

## Street vistas

3.18 Vistas along and outward from the main streets are an important aspect of the townscape. These can be encroached upon by visual clutter which may take the form of new structures,

signage and parking. Poorly located planting, especially of trees, can also obscure critical views over time and may be inappropriate in a historical townscape.

3.19 North Street and South Street give vistas along the length of the medieval town and their alignment emphasises the significance of the Cathedral precinct as an end view. Wynds and gates give glimpses of backland development, courts and gardens. Vistas to the north, along North Castle Street towards the Castle, and on Golf Place towards the links and West Sands, are reminders of the coastal location. Figures 37-39 show examples of the axial and detail qualities to be protected.

### Guideline 16

Protect axial vistas from encroachment by buildings, street furniture, parking, signage and inappropriate planting, especially trees.

## Open space

3.20 There is considerable landscape value in the privately owned open spaces within the town centre, which are visible from the public realm and may be accessible to the public by arrangement; they are often the location for significant mature trees. The larger areas include University quadrangles, Madras College, the castle grounds, Cathedral precinct and Holy Trinity churchyard. There are also many gardens some of which are concealed, but including the detached gardens of the terraced properties on Greyfriars Gardens, Queens Gardens and Baker Lane, and the backlands of St Johns Garden. See figures 40-43: Visible green space.

### Guideline 17

Protect areas of open space in the town centre from development.

### Guideline 18

Encourage the management of visible private open space and encourage arrangements for the public to have access where appropriate.

## Axial and detail qualities to be protected



37. Views of the Castle (down South and North Castle Street)



38. Views of the Cathedral (along North Street)



39. Views of rear gardens and university quads through archways and gates (St Salvator's College)

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

### Disability Discrimination Act (2005)

3.21 The legislation requires that physical barriers to access should be removed. In the public realm this includes the use of smooth surfaces to accommodate people with impaired mobility; the use of colour differentiation to prevent items merging into the surroundings and the removal of obstacles/ use of tactile paving to assist navigation by people with impaired sight.

#### Guideline 19

Ensure that all streetscape and building proposals take account of the need for compliance with the Disability Access and Discrimination Act.

### Archaeology

3.22 The whole of the medieval burgh of St Andrews is a designated Archaeological Area of Regional Importance and has considerable archaeological potential. Any development or other sub-surface disturbance works, including streetscape improvements and pipe-laying should be preceded by an archaeological assessment, since surfaces, walls, buildings and foundations may very well be ancient. Professional archaeological monitoring may be required before and during any development works.

#### Guideline 20

Contact the Fife Council archaeologist in relation to all development proposals that involve sub-surface disturbance works in the historic core.

### Sustainability

3.23 Sustainable development provides solutions that take account of the long term needs of future generations as well as those of the present. This will be a key consideration in assessing proposals, and all new development in Fife will be expected to achieve high levels of environmental performance. Transport, mixed use and density are central issues to the creation of sustainable places, and an integrated approach is needed to all aspects of a development in order to achieve sustainability.

3.24 Environmental performance should address a range of design issues, including day lighting, natural ventilation, energy efficiency, the potential for renewable energy, waste management, and the promotion of sustainable materials and modern building technologies. In this context the BREEAM Standard for commercial buildings and the ECO Homes standard for residential development should be adopted as quality indicators. The environmental target for all new development should seek to achieve good to very good as a minimum. Choice of materials and construction should take account of the performance of a structure over its life time and the potential maintenance issues and costs, not just the initial capital cost.

### Guideline 21

Ensure that new development proposals adopt an integrated approach to sustainability and meet or exceed Fife Council's requirements for environmental performance.

### Guideline 22

Encourage the use of innovative building technologies where appropriate.

## Visible open space



40. Bow Butts on the Scores



41. Putting Green on the East Sands



42. Private enclosed gardens (Dean's Court University Hall of Residence)



43. Private on-street gardens (Queen's Gardens)