



Scalloway Conservation Area

Character Appraisal (Reviewed 2024)



Front cover (L – R): Main Street, Scalloway, 1930s, Shetland Museum and Archives; The Islands of Shetland, H. Moll, 1745, National Library of Scotland; New Street, Scalloway, Austin Taylor Photography.

This Conservation Area Appraisal is a revised and updated version of the document prepared for Shetland Islands Council by the Scottish Civic Trust and adopted in 2010.

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1 Introduction, Purpose and Justification

1.1 Date and reason for designation

The Shetland Islands area has 3 conservation areas; 2 in Lerwick and 1 in Scalloway. The Scalloway Conservation Area was designated in 1982 in recognition of its harbour setting and its buildings worthy of preservation.

1.2 What does conservation area status mean?

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states that conservation areas “are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.” Local authorities have a statutory duty to identify and designate such areas.

The main regulatory instrument afforded by conservation status is the control of demolition of unlisted buildings and structures through the mechanism of “conservation area consent” (CAC). This was introduced in 1974 in recognition of the importance that even relatively minor buildings can play to the overall character or appearance of a conservation area (in general terms, the demolition of a structure unless it is a listed building is deemed for the purposes of the Planning Acts not to involve the development of land).

Conservation area status also brings the following works under planning control:

- Removal of, or work to, trees;
- Development involving small house extensions, roof alterations, stone cleaning or painting of the exterior.

Conservation area designation enables planning authorities to implement stronger development management control via Article 4 Directions, which would otherwise not be possible. These can play a particularly important role in protecting unifying features (e.g. doors, windows and shop-fronts) and in arresting the incremental erosion of character and appearance by small-scale alterations that in themselves may not be significant but collectively and over time might have a negative impact.

It is recognised that the successful management of conservation areas can only be achieved with the support and input from stakeholders, and in particular local residents and property owners.

1.3 Purpose of appraisal

Planning Authorities have a duty to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas, although there is no imposed timeframe for doing so. The Act of 1997 also indicates that planning authorities must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the designated area.

A more considered and careful approach is therefore needed in considering development proposals in a conservation area.

In response to these statutory requirements, this appraisal document defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area and identifies opportunities for enhancement.

This document therefore seeks to:

1. define the special interest of the conservation area and identify the issues that threaten the special qualities of the conservation area;
2. provide guidelines to prevent harm and achieve enhancement;
3. provide Shetland Islands Council with a valuable tool with which to inform its planning practice and policies for the area.

1.4 Planning policy context

This appraisal provides useful advice to assist in the submission of, and subsequent assessment of, applications for development within the conservation area. It should be read in conjunction with the wider development plan policy framework produced by Shetland Islands Council.

The Development Plan in Shetland comprises the provisions of the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Shetland Local Development Plan (2014) (SLDP). NPF4, which was adopted by the Scottish Ministers, provides the national planning policy context and agenda for the assessment of all planning applications.

Whilst NPF4 must be read as a whole the principal policy relating to development within conservation areas is Policy 7 – Historic Assets and Places which includes the following provisions in relation to conservation areas:

Development proposals in or affecting conservation areas will only be supported where the character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting is preserved or enhanced. Relevant considerations include the:

- i. architectural and historic character of the area;

- ii. existing density, built form and layout; and
- iii. context and siting, quality of design and suitable materials.

Development proposals in conservation areas will ensure that existing natural and built features which contribute to the character of the conservation area and its setting, including structures, boundary walls, railings, trees and hedges, are retained.

Demolition of buildings in a conservation area which make a positive contribution to its character will only be supported where it has been demonstrated that:

- i. reasonable efforts have been made to retain, repair and reuse the building;
- ii. the building is of little townscape value;
- iii. the structural condition of the building prevents its retention at a reasonable cost; or
- iv. the form or location of the building makes its reuse extremely difficult.

Where demolition within a conservation area is to be followed by redevelopment, consent to demolish will only be supported when an acceptable design, layout and materials are being used for the replacement development.

As with NPF4 the policies of the Shetland Local Development Plan (adopted 2014) must be read as a whole the principal policies relating to conservation areas are Policy HE1 – Historic Environment and Policy HE3 – Conservation Areas.

Policy HE1 states that the Council should presume in favour of the protection, conservation and enhancement of all elements of Shetland's historic environment, which includes buildings, monuments, landscapes and areas.

Policy HE3 requires that development within a conservation area or affecting its setting should preserve or enhance its character. The design, materials, scale, siting and use of any development should be appropriate to the character of the conservation area and its setting. Where an existing building contributes positively to the character of the conservation area, proposals for total or substantial demolition should only be supported where it can clearly be demonstrated that every effort has been made to

retain it. The planning authority should preserve the amenity value of trees in conservation areas.

Scalloway Local Place Plan was adopted following extensive public engagement during 2018 and 2019. It sets out several priorities for improvements, most of which are located in or adjacent to the conservation area. The three highest priorities for improvements are located in the centre of the village and relate to the Old Youth Centre demolition, additional parking at Burn Beach and improved waterfront walkways and piers. Five other priorities in the Spatial Vision could be considered alongside these improvements:

- Reconfiguring Main Street to reduce congestion
- Reconfiguring the Scalloway Youth and Community Centre parking arrangements to create a public realm
- Exploring options for boats moorings in the village centre.
- Improving paths and wayfinding across Scalloway
- Improvements to Fraser Park



2 Location and landscape

2.1 Regional context and relationship to surroundings

Scalloway is the largest settlement on the North Atlantic coast of Shetland's Mainland and is an important fishing harbour. The village is shielded from Atlantic gales by the rugged isles of Trondra and Burra to the south. The village lies 5 miles west of Lerwick and to the north lie Tingwall's fertile valley and the headlands of Whiteness and Weisdale.

The population of Scalloway was approximately 800 at the 2001 census. Scalloway, and Shetland in general, have strong cultural ties with Scandinavian countries, particularly Norway.

Inter-island flights operate from Tingwall airport approximately 5km north of Scalloway. Ferries to Shetland dock at the main ferry terminal at Lerwick where there are connections to Scalloway by bus. An occasional ferry service from Scalloway to Foula operates from Blacksness Pier.

The Scalloway Conservation Area encompasses the historic core of the village based around Main Street and New Street, which follow the curve of the waterfront. The conservation area extends from Castle Street in the east to Ladysmith Road at the western end. The main route into the conservation area is the A970 from Lerwick in the east and the B9074 from the north; converging into Mill Brae and New Street on the approach to Scalloway.

2.2 Topography

Situated in a natural harbour, Scalloway's landform is dictated by the coast. The sweeping east to west bay is where the town radiates from and is its central feature. A deep inlet ('voe') stretches back from the eastern point of the bay. There are gentle hills to the east and west of the town that allow good views of the bay and the conservation area.

3 Historical Development



Above: The Islands of Shetland, H. Moll, 1745, *National Library of Scotland*

Scalloway is the second town of Shetland and sometimes described as its largest village. The name possibly comes from the Norse word Skalavagr; Bay of the Skali (hall)¹. Scalloway was the ancient capital of Shetland until the 18th century when the law courts moved to Lerwick and that town's dominance in commerce and transport began. It was the landing place for delegates attending Shetland's annual parliament or 'Ting', originally held on the Lawting Holm in Tingwall Loch, two miles north of the village. From 1602 the 'Ting' was held in Scalloway, which was still only a village². In 1665 Edward Montagu noted that "the principal town is Scola Vo (Scalloway), of about 100 poor houses and one pretty stone house of the King's where the Governor resides". The Norse administration was centred upon Orkney so it is natural that in order to get to Tingwall these rulers landed at Scalloway being the closest sheltered bay, thereby allowing the importance of the town to grow during the Middle Ages.³

¹ Shetland: An Illustrated Architectural Guide', Mike Finnie, 1990,, p.40

² 'The Buildings of Scotland: Highlands and Islands', J Gifford, 1992 , p.506

³ 'Lerwick – the birth and growth of an island town', James W. Irvine, 1985, p.2



Above: Scalloway Castle, 1906, *Shetland Museum and Archives*

The valley of Tingwall was inhabited by many Norse settlers who were attracted to the fertile land. Scalloway became the capital due to its proximity to Tingwall and Orkney. Scalloway lies at the southern end of the Tingwall valley and features an imposing castle now in ruins, built in 1600. It was built by Earl Patrick Stewart who changed the law in Shetland from Norse to Scots and moved the parliament from Tingwall to Scalloway. This resulted in harsh penalties for minor offences and the confiscation of property led to him and his clergy and courtiers amassing wealth and estates that in turn provoked unrest from the citizens⁴.

He was eventually arrested and imprisoned in 1609 for his aggressive behaviour towards his fellow landowners; his son Robert attempted an insurrection and they were both executed in Edinburgh in 1615. After Earl Patrick Stewart's execution the castle was used as a garrison for Cromwell's troops before being abandoned altogether. Beneath the grand banqueting hall are large kitchens and a dungeon where 17th century 'witches', condemned to die on nearby Gallows Hill, awaited their fate.

The Gallow Hill, above Houll and overlooking the village, was Shetland's place of execution during the 17th century. Barbara Tulloch and her daughter Ellen - the last witches to be burned in Shetland - were executed there, perhaps around 1680.⁵

Around 1700 the law courts removed to Lerwick and Scalloway began to decline although some lairds still built houses there, for example Mitchell at Westshore. Today there are few remains within the walled garden of the

⁴ Shetland: An Illustrated Architectural Guide', Mike Finnie, 1990, p.40

⁵ Shetland: An Illustrated Architectural Guide', Mike Finnie, 1990, p.40

mansion at Westshore. By the end of 18th century Scalloway only had 31 inhabited houses.⁶



Above: Main Street, Scalloway, 1930s, *Shetland Museum and Archives*

Blacksness Pier, to the south of the castle, was built in 1832 for the fishcurers and entrepreneurs, Hay & Ogilvy, and this led to the growth of the village. The development of Scalloway followed the development of the harbour during the 19th century and the village saw a revival in its fortunes as merchants replaced the lairds. In 1894 the importance of its docks increased as the system of selling fish was replaced by auction rather than contract.⁷ After 1894 Scalloway became busier with the pier extended in 1896 to accommodate the steamer from Leith. The harbour was extended again in 1959 and 1981.

The Shetland Bus

During the Second World War the port at Scalloway acted as a base for the operation to aid the Norwegian Underground against the occupying Nazis. 'The Shetland Bus' went to

Norway with supplies and returned with refugees.⁸ Norway was invaded by Germany in April 1940 resulting in many attempting to flee to the west; Shetland was the first friendly landfalls the refugees met. Authorities from Norway and Britain realised that this crossing could facilitate support for the Norwegian resistance and enable refugees to be brought to Britain. Fishing vessels were selected for the operation and manned by crewmen who became rightly celebrated after the war. The most famous of these was Leif Andreas

'Shetlands' Larsen, the skipper of one of the fishing boats who was decorated by both the Norwegian and British government for his part in the

⁶ 'The Buildings of Scotland: Highlands and Islands', J Gifford, 1992 , p.506

⁷ 'The Buildings of Scotland: Highlands and Islands', J Gifford, 1992 , p.506

⁸ 'Shetland: An Illustrated Architectural Guide', Mike Finnie, 1990,, p.40

operation. A memorial on the waterfront in Scalloway commemorates those who took part in the Shetland Bus crossings.

Originally operating from Lunna, the crossings were based in Scalloway from August 1942 and made almost 100 crossings. The boats took agents, radio operators and military supplies across to Norway and crossed with returning agents, refugees and recruits for the Free Norwegian Forces back to Scalloway. At Christmas time they even brought Christmas trees for the tree-less Shetlanders.⁹¹⁰ Unfortunately, the harsh sailing conditions and hostile German forces resulted in the loss of 10 boats and 44 crewmen by 1943. It seemed that the operation would have to be stood down unless more suitable vessels could be used to make the crossings safer. The solution was a donation by the US Navy of three submarine chasers which were crewed by Norwegians and these vessels went on to make a further 115 return trips without loss.

Norway House was used as barracks and as the base of the Shetland Bus activities. The Prince Olaf Slipway was built by the Norwegians for the repair of their vessels and was visited by the Crown Prince himself in 1942. Between 1940 and 1945 300 Norwegians were involved in the Shetland Bus operation with 100 usually involved at one time. The psychological effect of the activities was two-fold; it boosted the spirit and resolve of the resistance forces in occupied Norway and it persuaded Hitler's forces that there was the possibility of an Allied invasion of Norway.

There were many German forces garrisoned on the coast of Norway in anticipation of this invasion. The wireless operators brought over on the Shetland Bus managed to disrupt shipping significantly on the coast and hamper German efforts. The resistance fighters who eventually captured surrendering Germans were armed by the Shetland Bus. The importance of the operation far outweighed its scale.¹¹

Operation Commander for the British Navy, David Howarth, remained in Scalloway after the war and wrote an account of the activities of the 'Shetland Bus'. A film was released in 1954 called 'Shetland Gang' with Leif 'Shetlands' Larsen playing himself.

Recent development

While Scalloway did not benefit from the rapid growth of the oil industry in the 1970s, which fuelled expansion in other areas of Shetland; the village

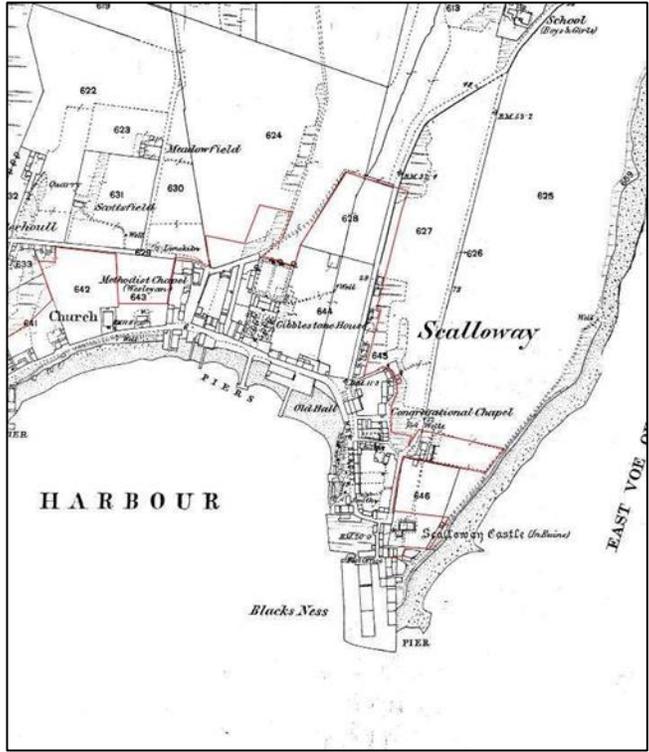
⁹ Interpretative Panel, Scalloway Waterfront

¹⁰ Interpretative Panel, Scalloway Waterfront

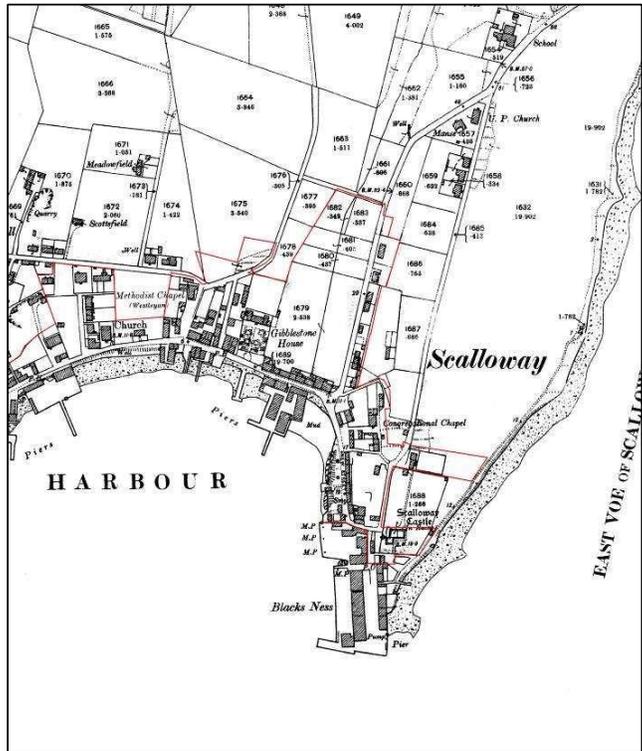
¹¹ Interpretative Panel, Scalloway Waterfront

has seen major public investment in recent years. The Scalloway Waterfront Trust was formed in 1992 to coordinate the regeneration of the waterfront area and significant environmental improvements have taken place in Scalloway's historic waterfront. The waterfront in Scalloway was subject to flooding in the past by the sea. 'Da Waterfront' project replaced a significant area of derelict ground in the centre of the village with a new Youth Centre, some civic space, car parking, a public walkway and sea defences.



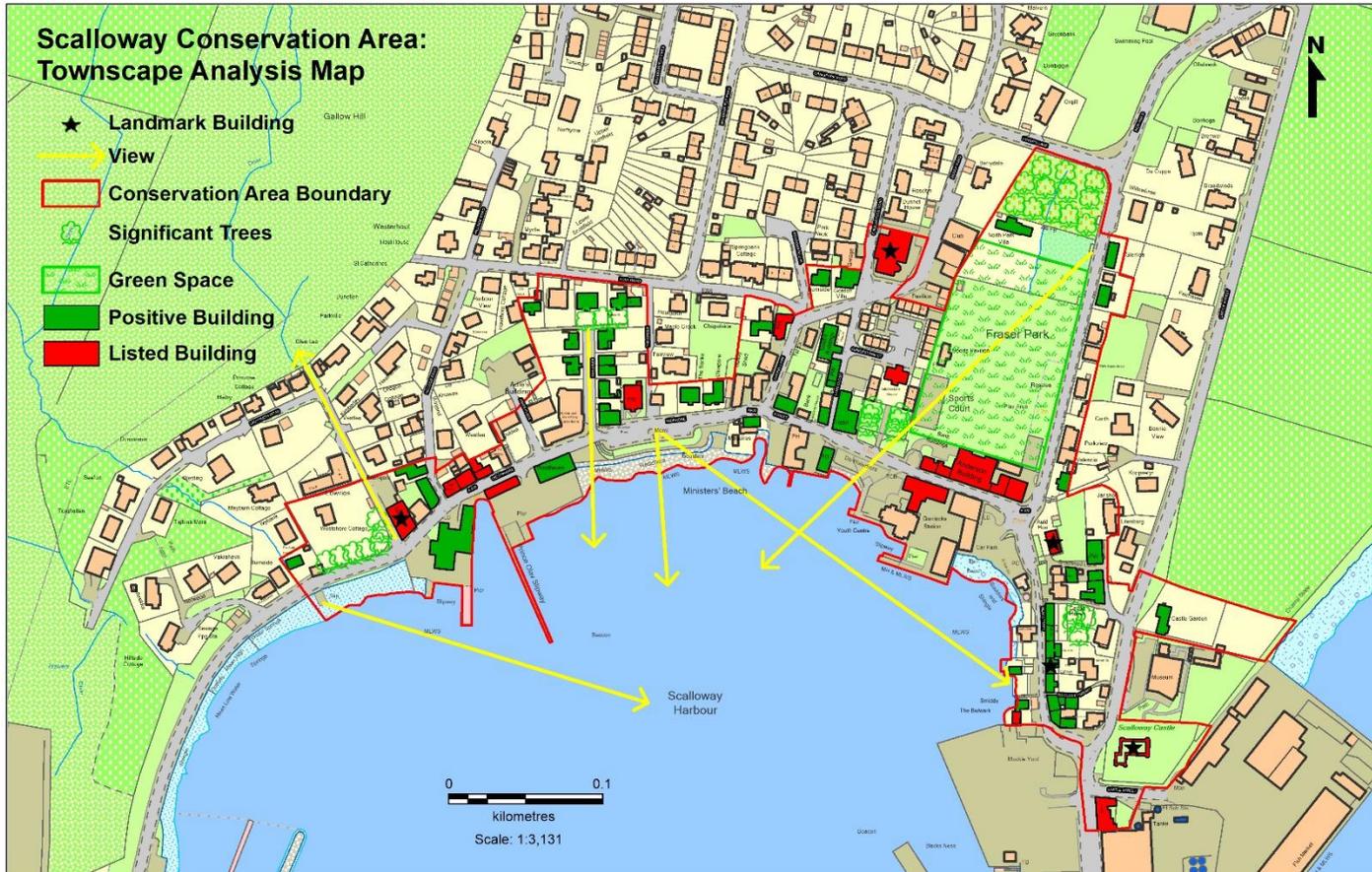


OS Map, Scalloway, 1880



OS Map, Scalloway, 1901

Townscape Analysis Map Note: The mapping of positive buildings is not exhaustive and other buildings, spaces and structures may make a positive contribution



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4 Character and Appearance

4.1 Spatial Analysis

4.1.1 Activities/Uses

Scalloway is well-known as the location of the North Atlantic Fisheries College which offers numerous courses and supports several research programmes in fisheries sciences, aquaculture, marine engineering and coastal management etc. The College is outside the conservation area to the west.

Scalloway's other attractions include Scalloway Castle, an indoor swimming pool, the public hall (used as a concert venue), a youth centre, the Scalloway Museum, a visiting artists' studio, a hotel and guest houses, a cafe, the college's fish restaurant, pubs, shops and playing fields.



Scalloway Castle

Along Main Street, the ground floor of buildings is generally commercial and retail. Upper floors appear to be in residential use although no survey has been conducted of this as part of this appraisal. The streets and lanes to the north of Main Street are predominantly residential. To the south east of the conservation area is Blacksness Pier owned by Shetland Islands Council and managed by the Harbour Board. It is the centre of business and industry in Scalloway. Scalloway remains the main port on the west coast of Shetland. Many of the jobs within the village are based around the fishing industry.

4.1.2 Street pattern



Main Street looking towards Lang Closs

The street pattern in Scalloway is a response to the coastal location and the hilly topography, with Main Street following the curve of the harbour. Further streets run to the north of Main Street, and appear to have begun as narrow, informal lanes between the plots of the buildings fronting Main Street. Houll Road runs approximately parallel to Main Street with the smaller lanes and 'closses' connecting the two.

Scalloway Conservation Area stretches around the harbour, encompassing the historic core of the village. Main Street forms the focus of the conservation area, curving along the waterfront. Most of the development is to the north of Main Street, providing an open aspect in some places from Main Street over the harbour. The rest of the conservation area is formed by the narrower roads and lanes to the north of the main thoroughfare with Houl Road marking the approximate northern boundary.



Da Noost Closs connects Castle Street and New Street

The eastern end of Main Street is essentially the 18th century commercial centre of Scalloway, demonstrated by the late 18th and early 19th century terraced shops with accommodation above. Further east at New Street the ground rises steeply to the east and narrow pedestrian lanes climb the incline to connect New Street to Castle Road and provide access to the dwellings sited on the steeper ground. These lanes are visible on the OS map of 1880.

4.1.3 Plot pattern

The plots within the conservation area vary in size depending on the relative status of the property concerned. Historic maps suggest that in the mid 19th century buildings lined Main Street with large plots behind them

[see OS Map 1880]. These plots have since been subdivided and built on, with narrow lanes running between them. Around New Street and Castle Road plots seem to have been laid out in a more irregular pattern.

Buildings are generally set on, or close to, the roadside and most have some garden ground. Larger plots are associated with the larger properties, such as Giblestone House or are found towards the edges of the conservation area, for example along New Road.

Modern infill has mostly been on the existing pattern either as a result of demolition or plot subdivision.

4.1.4 Circulation and permeability

Main Street is the main vehicular route through the conservation area although in places it is narrow and two-way traffic is difficult. The lanes and closes to the north are even more of a challenge for traffic. Pavements have been provided in some places and ease pedestrian and vehicular conflict to a certain extent. The intricate network of lanes and gaps between buildings creates a high level of permeability and makes pedestrian journeys varied and interesting. In the eastern part of the conservation area where there is a steep incline, narrow lanes climb up the hill between New Street and Castle Street.

4.1.5 Open spaces, trees and landscape

Fraser Park is located north of Main Street behind Anderson's Buildings sandwiched between New Road and Berry road in the heart of Scalloway. It was presented to the people of Scalloway from the Fraser family on 6th August 1942 for 'recreation and the promotion of health and happiness', and has featured as an open space from the earliest maps of Scalloway available. It appears to have had a well in its centre, which is marked on the OS 1872 town plan of Scalloway. The park is used today for football matches and features a children's play area.



Fraser Park

Other areas of public open space are found along the waterfront such as the area around the Shetland Bus Memorial.

Shetland's lack of trees is well known. However, Scalloway has a surprisingly leafy character. The gardens of the properties on Kirkpark, Westshore and Giblestone House all contain mature trees that enliven the street scene. The conservation area also encompasses a small area of trees on Smiddy Closs and a wooded area to the north of Fraser Park. In addition to the statutory protection afforded to trees within the conservation area, there is a Tree Preservation Order in place on Smiddy Closs. Further details can be found at [tree-preservation-orders-shetland](https://www.shetland.gov.uk/tree-preservation-orders-shetland).



Trees in the grounds of Giblestone House, Main Street

4.1.6 Views, landmarks and focal points

Views within the conservation area vary. The harbour setting provides views over the harbour towards Trondra. The harbour also allows views from Main Street towards the picturesque grouping of buildings at New Street. The high points to the east and west of the village provide good views over the conservation area. Views within the lanes area are limited due to the enclosed character here and the denser pattern of development. In general the level changes within the conservation area allow for glimpses between buildings to areas of higher or lower ground.

Views of special note are:

- Views from the waterfront towards New Street;
- Glimpses between buildings and over changes in level in the lanes;
- Views out of the conservation area north up Ladysmith Road;
- Views of Scalloway Castle from within the conservation area;
- The view from the north of the conservation area at New Road towards the harbour.



View across the harbour from New Street

Landmark buildings in the conservation area tend to be the larger non-domestic buildings – notably Scalloway Castle, Scalloway Haa, Norway House and the public hall. The buildings along New Street also form a picturesque group that is highly visible from other areas of the conservation area. Scalloway Castle is a significant landmark and is visible from many points within the conservation area.



Scalloway Haa is a landmark building

4.2 Buildings and Townscape

4.2.1 Building types

The most prevalent building type in the conservation area is residential, either detached, semi-detached or terraced houses, and ranging from 1 to 3 storeys. Some buildings have been subdivided to form flats. The domestic buildings in the conservation area are commonly stone-built with 1½ storeys and wallhead dormers breaking through the eaves line. The terrace of houses at New Street appear as if they may be constructed from mass concrete. It is important that materials and techniques used to construct a building are fully understood before any works are carried out on it to prevent unnecessary or damaging repairs.

Main Street is the focus for most of the retail and commercial activity with shops and cafes. Some of these buildings are housed in earlier structures, such as the Kiln Bar that is said to contain the remains of a 19th century kippering kiln and retains its 'kiln-roof'.



The Cornerstone Café and Harbour Knitwear, Main Street

Shops in the conservation area are often housed in 19th century 1½ or 2 storey terraced rows such as Anderson's Buildings and the Scalloway Meat Company. [See Building Analysis Map]

4.2.2 Scheduled monuments and archaeology

A scheduled monument is a monument of national importance that Scottish Ministers have given legal protection under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Scalloway Castle is designated as a Scheduled Monument. The area scheduled encompasses the castle itself and an area around it, which takes in the curtilage of the castle and an area north of the castle to the east of the former Woollen Mill building.

Once a monument is scheduled, the prior written consent of Scottish Ministers is required for most works, including repairs. This is known as scheduled monument consent (SMC). The presumption of scheduling is that any future works will be the minimum necessary consistent with the preservation of the monument.

4.2.3 Key buildings

The conservation area contains 21 Listed Building entries. Each list entry may consist of more than one building. Listed buildings are identified on the Townscape Appraisal Map.

The listing system in Scotland operates under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. The Act places a duty on Scottish Ministers to compile or approve lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. Once included on the lists the building – both exterior and interior – has statutory protection under the provisions of the 1997 Act. Listing is intended to safeguard the character of Scotland's built heritage and to guard against unnecessary loss or damage. A listing applies to any building within the curtilage of the subject of listing which was erected on or before 1 July 1948. This could include many ancillary structures such as boundary walls, garages or estate buildings.

Any work that affects the character of a listed building or structure will require listed building consent (LBC). Any work carried out to a listed building without consent and that affects its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest, is an offence punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

Significant listed and unlisted buildings include:

The Old Haa of Scalloway was built around 1750 and consists of three storeys of five bays. Haas are the houses of gentry or merchants built from the 17th century onwards. They were built by the Scottish immigrants who were following the tradition of laird's tall houses and reached their peak in c.1735 when large numbers were built. Unusually tall for Shetland, they would have been costly to build due to the use of timber in the construction of windows and roof. The form continued into the 1800s when Georgian styling was incorporated. The Old Haa has featured on the Scottish Civic Trust's Buildings at Risk register since 1990 but some progress has been made to convert the building to flats. The Scalloway Waterfront Trust facilitated the restoration works to the exterior of the building and a private developer has taken ownership of the building and it is hoped that the interior works will be carried out as soon as possible.

Buildings on Main Street were built in the early 19th century as a two storey terraced shop with flats above. The terrace is listed at Category B as a group and individually listed at either Category B or C. The buildings have been significantly extended at the rear to allow conversion to residential use.



Anderson's Buildings, Main Street

Scalloway Hall was built in 1902 in a freestyle design influenced by Art Nouveau and the English Arts and Crafts style. The hall is category C listed and is a popular venue for meetings and concerts. The walls are harl-pointed rubble with yellow sandstone dressings. The principal elevation to the south features a pedimented gable over a large Venetian window at first floor and a 2-storey circular crenellated entrance tower to the east.



Scalloway Hall

Gibblestone House on Main Street was built in the late 18th century as a merchant's haas. The house is one of a series of merchant's haas that were built by immigrant Scots lairds. Like many others Gibblestone was built with a formal relationship to the sea, with the main elevation facing a now demolished pier on the waterfront. The house is symmetrical with 2 storeys and an attic over 3 bays with harled walls and window and corner detailing. A central doorway is flanked by bay windows on the ground floor. The single storey houses set symmetrically in the garden were built when Richard Gibson converted the house to flats in 1989.



Gibblestone Haa

Norway House was built in the early 20th century as a sail loft during the Herring Boom and is a rare survivor of that period. It was then used during World War II to house Norwegian sailors during the operation of the 'Shetland Bus'. Now C listed; the lower storey is harled, while the upper storey is a timber frame clad with red corrugated iron. The building is currently under utilised with a gym on the first floor and storage space on ground level.



Norway House

The conservation area also contains a large number of unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area. These are identified as 'positive buildings' on the Townscape Appraisal Map.

Buildings identified as being positive will vary, but commonly their style, detailing and building materials provide the street or landscape with interest and variety. Most importantly, they make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. National and local policy guidance indicates that there is a presumption for the retention of unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of a conservation area.

Many of the properties within the conservation area are 1½ -2 storey, terraced or detached stone houses. Good examples are found at the terrace of cottages on New Street, which form a picturesque and almost identical group in the middle of the terrace. Each house in this terrace is 1½ storeys over 3 bays with a central doorway. Most are rendered and painted a variety of colours. The terrace has a slated roof with pitched wallhead dormers. Windows are generally timber sashes although there are some replacements.

There is a curious plaque situated on the southern end of the cottages on New Street, which was erected there by William Johnson, described by Finnie as a 'mason, inventor and philosopher'¹². The plaque explains his theories on tides and the moon. The plaque is made of sandstone with an inset piece of marble and is an interesting addition to the street.

¹² 'Shetland: An Illustrated Architectural Guide', Mike Finnie, 1990, page 42.



Houses on New Street with William Johnson's plaque to the left of the picture

Scalloway Hotel is a prominent building on Main Street. It was built in 1886 by John Aitken for Donald McInnes and has 3 storeys over 4 bays with cream coloured painted stone or rendered walling, contrasting quoins and margins, a slate roof and a crowstepped gable to the west. Apart from the extension to the west, the building is little altered externally.



Scalloway Hotel c.1900 and 2024

The former church on the corner of Braehead Lane is dated 1838. The building is 1½ storeys with a rectangular plan with an entrance porch on the south elevation. It features slaister (harl) pointed stonework and a pitched slate roof and has been converted to residential use.



Former church, Braehead Lane

The properties on Kirkpark Road form a distinctive and attractive group. The buildings are generally 1½ storey stone cottages with decorative garden railings and mature trees to the front. Seaton Lodge at the top of the cul-de-sac is the most prominent house on the street and features dormer windows on the pitched slate roof and a central entrance porch to the front.



Houses on Kirkpark Road

4.2.4 Materials and local details

In Scalloway the most commonly used materials are sandstone, harl, slate and corrugated sheet metal. Traditionally, roofs are pitched with skewes and wallhead dormers. The roof pitches are generally steep with prominent chimneys.

For walls a buff or yellow sandstone is most popular, otherwise a traditional harl is often used, sometimes with detailing around windows and doors. Slaister or harl pointing is also common. Some of the more modern buildings use a dry-dash render. Corrugated sheet metal is used as cladding on some buildings, reflecting the functional character of many of the buildings associated with the harbour. Applied colours within the conservation area range from muted pastels or white to brighter colours such as those found on New Street.



House and mature trees on Meadowfield Place

Apart from the roofs and walls, the historic buildings in the conservation area are enlivened by the use of timber windows and doors, the design of which varies according to the status of the building. Windows are generally timber sash and case, painted white, with a variety of glazing patterns. Bay windows are found on the larger houses in the conservation area but wallhead dormers are common. Doors are generally timber and either boarded or panelled, often with glass panes in the upper panels.

The buildings in the conservation area are generally set directly on the roadside. Where boundaries exist they are usually marked by dry-stone or harled walls from ½m - 2m high and often with railings or hedges. Railings are usually simple and elegant and painted a dark colour. Iron gates, often incorporating the house name or number are also common. Higher boundary walls are found to the higher status properties. Stone gate piers are also found on the more prestigious houses.

4.2.5 Public realm

There have been public realm improvements in Scalloway in past years, which have created areas of hard landscaping on the waterfront and along Main Street with benches, interpretation panels and a memorial to the Shetland Bus. Environmental improvement works have been undertaken along New Street, including traffic calming and improved parking, reinstatement of semi-derelict gardens between the road and the sea, coast protection works, and the restoration of a ruined former fishing booth as

an artist's studio. This project received a commendation in the Civic Trust Awards. Also found within the conservation area are items of public art and street furniture that reflect the character and history of the village, such as the propeller next to the Scalloway Museum building. Many of these were part of the Art on the Waterfront project undertaken circa 1998 as part of the regeneration activities in Scalloway.



Landscaping along the waterfront

The simple public realm around the harbour reflects the functional character of this area. Several stone and/or concrete slipways are found to the south of Main Street, allowing boats to be pulled up to the shore. A timber pier extends into the harbour from the listed Prince Olav Slipway. In places metal handrails and concrete steps lead down to the water's edge. Rubble stone walls often mark the boundary with the water.

Several plaques marking significant sites or events can be found in the conservation area. Good examples include the Shetland Bus plaque on the Prince Olav Slipway building and the plaque outside Fraser Park.



Plaques commemorating the Shetland Bus

In other areas the public realm appears neglected however. There are signs of lack of maintenance and repair in a number of areas including along Main Street.



Some areas of public realm require repair

Road surfaces are tarmac, although there are some areas of stone kerbs and granite setts at the edge of the road and marking junctions, which enrich the character of the area. Pavements are generally unobtrusive concrete flags, with some areas of stone flags.



Granite setts at the edge of the pavement

Boundary walls are a key feature of the conservation area and range from around $\frac{1}{2}$ a metre to 2 metres and are dry-stone or harled with stone copes. Some properties have low boundary walls with railings or hedges and gate piers. Shetland was largely spared from the removal of iron railings during World War II and there are some fine examples in Scalloway. Modern decorative railings can be found on New Street. On Main Street, boundary walls tend to be higher around $1\frac{1}{2}$ metres. The high boundary wall to Westshore is a significant feature of the conservation area.



Stone boundary walls and cast iron railings feature throughout the conservation area

4.2.6 Condition

One of the greatest threats to any heritage site is the loss of primary fabric through decay and damage, reducing the authenticity of the site. The vast majority of the buildings within the conservation area are well-maintained. However, some inappropriate and poor quality repairs were noted within the conservation area. It is important that historic buildings are adequately maintained and repaired using traditional materials and techniques. During the review process it was noted that signs of lack of maintenance, particularly vegetation growth in gutters and chimneys, have increased significantly.

The original appraisal identified a number of empty and underused buildings within the conservation area. At the time of review this was less of an issue with some buildings brought back into use and in good repair. However there remain some unused buildings and areas of land.

4.3 Character Areas

Although there are variations in character within the conservation area, the area as a whole is brought together by a similarity of massing and scale, plot sizes and materials. No individual character areas were identified.

5 Key Features and Assessment of Significance

Having carried out an assessment of the buildings and areas it is now possible to identify the key features that define the special architectural and historic character of the area.

- Variety of building types, styles and materials
- Some evidence of mass concrete building types, requiring different techniques and approaches to repair and maintenance;
- Buff- grey sandstone, slate, harl, corrugated metal sheeting, timber cladding;
- Variety of bright applied colours;
- Picturesque waterfront group at New Street;
- Pitched roofs with wallhead dormers are common;
- Public realm improvements on Main Street and New Street have enhanced the waterfront setting;
- Links to Shetland Bus & interpretation at the memorial and the museum.
- Views out towards and across the harbour



View along the waterfront



Distinctive public realm features

6 Negative Factors

A number of negative factors have been identified and are listed below. These form the basis for the Sensitivity Analysis and the Opportunities for Enhancement.

- Use of non-traditional materials and replacement of original features.
- Lack of maintenance and repair in public realm.
- Unused and underused buildings and areas of land.
- Lack of maintenance and repair of buildings.
- Signage and advertisements not in keeping with character and appearance of buildings.

7 Sensitivity Analysis

7.1 Loss of original architectural details and building materials

Although the majority of the buildings in the conservation area are in good physical condition the area as a whole is at risk from small changes, which can cumulatively dilute the special character of the area. Some of the buildings in the conservation area have been adversely affected by the replacement of original timber windows or doors with inappropriate materials such as uPVC or unsympathetic designs or methods of opening; the replacement of natural roof slates or boundary treatments; or the painting of walls in inappropriate colours or where stone work was previously unpainted. In many cases, these changes in detailing and the loss of original features have spoiled the external appearance of a building and the local streetscape.

7.2 Quality of public realm

Scalloway has seen a considerable amount of investment in past years for improvements to the waterfront area. This project has created an attractive and characterful public walkway with landscaping and interpretation. However, in some parts of the conservation area, it remains the case that the public realm could be improved [see 4.2.5]. This has a negative impact on the conservation area and undermines the excellent environmental improvement work which has been undertaken elsewhere.



The public realm strongly influences the character and appearance of the conservation area

7.3 Signage and advertisements

There is little modern infill due to the limited number of gap sites, the constraints of Scalloway's topography and the protection against demolition that conservation area designation gives. However where more recent developments have occurred they are not always sympathetic to the local details that have provided the group value of the conservation area, in terms of their materials, proportions or general character.

Whilst the majority of signs and advertisements are sympathetically designed there are instances of less sympathetic interventions. In particular the obscuring of entire windows with advertisements detracts from the appearance of those buildings, reduces the sense of vitality and creates inactive frontages.

7.4 Loss of town centre vitality

Scalloway benefits from tourist attractions such as Scalloway Castle and Scalloway Museum, which draw significant numbers of tourists. The appraisal identified that at the time of survey tourist facilities were limited and the vacant buildings in the village centre could create a feeling of lifelessness and lack of vitality.

At the time of review there was an improved rate of occupancy of buildings, with the Cornerstone Café and Scalloway Hotel acting as focal points of activity. However there remains a level of vacancy which negatively affects the conservation area. The former bank building which occupies a large plot in a prominent location and the former book shop, both on Main Street, are notable in this regard.

7.5 Buildings at risk

At the time of the appraisal Scalloway Haa was on the Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland. It was subsequently restored and at the time of review was operating as self-catering apartments. Norway House was considered vulnerable due to its underuse at the time of appraisal but is currently in use as a community gym. There are presently no buildings in Scalloway on the Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland.

8 Opportunities for Preservation & Enhancement

8.1 Article 4 Directions

The Town and Country Planning (Permitted Development)(Scotland) Order 1992 (known as the GPDO) sets out certain types of development that do not require planning permission, known as permitted development rights. In line with guidance, it has been common practice among planning authorities to extend control within Conservation Areas by way of an Article 4 Direction. Essentially, this requires planning permission to be sought for certain specified types of development where this would not normally be required.

The existing Article 4 Direction was served in 1975. The types of work that are controlled include alterations to a dwelling, such as new windows and front doors, porches, front boundaries and painting are all controlled because planning permission is needed. These additional controls appear to be working reasonably well but there are examples of poor quality detailing and inappropriate replacement windows.

Recent changes to the GPDO have introduced new permitted development rights in conservation areas, allowing changes of materials and of windows and doors and installation of PhotoVoltaic panels in certain circumstances. In light of the negative impact on the conservation area arising from changes to unlisted buildings set out above, a new Article 4 Direction should be prepared and adopted.



Buildings on Hillside Road (left) and Main Street (right)

8.2 Area of Special Advertisement Control

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (s183) gives power to make different advertising regulations for different areas, and in particular make special provision for conservation areas, areas of special control, rural areas and areas requiring special protection on the grounds of amenity.

As set out above the quality of advertisements and signage within the conservation area is generally good. However there are some examples where signage and advertisements are not in keeping with the character and appearance of the conservation area. Given the small scale of the settlement the impact of signage is amplified. Consideration should therefore be given to introducing an Area of Special Advertisement Control to ensure that the design, materials and appearance of signage and advertisements within the conservation area is in keeping with its character and appearance.

Further detailed guidance on shopfront and advertisement design should be prepared and adopted.

8.3 Demolition of unlisted buildings

In conservation areas, demolition of unlisted buildings is controlled, in recognition of the contribution made by even relatively minor buildings to the overall character or appearance of a conservation area. Conservation Area Consent is required for the demolition of any building of more than 115 cubic metres in size within a conservation area.

Policy 7 of NPF4 states that demolition of buildings in a conservation area which make a positive contribution to its character will only be supported where it has been demonstrated that: i. reasonable efforts have been made to retain, repair and reuse the building; ii. the building is of little townscape value; iii. the structural condition of the building prevents its retention at a reasonable cost; or iv. the form or location of the building makes its reuse extremely difficult. This is in line with Policy HE3 of the SLDP (2014) requires that any application for the demolition of a building which is deemed to make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area will therefore need to be accompanied by a reasoned justification as to why the building cannot be retained, similar to that required for a listed building.

As part of the appraisal process buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area have been identified. However the contribution of a building will also be assessed as part of the planning process when an application is submitted.

8.4 Building maintenance and repair

It is important that historic buildings are adequately maintained and repaired using traditional materials and techniques. Such repairs can be costly due to the additional expense of materials and employing skilled craftsmen. The review process has identified deterioration in maintenance and repair which is having a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Detailed guidance on the repair and maintenance of traditional buildings is widely available however consideration should be given to the preparation of specific guidance documents. Consideration should also be given to the possibility of financial assistance through grant funding and to developing traditional building repair skills.

The Council can also advise on appropriate paint colours and types. Where a number of buildings in the conservation area have been painted in a variety of colours this adds vibrancy and interest to the streetscape. However there is a risk that the impact on the traditional character and appearance of the conservation area may be negatively affected with the introduction of brighter colours.

Stonework that is unpainted should remain so. Traditional limewash and lime mortars are ideal as they allow the wall below to “breathe”, rather than sealing-in any moisture and provide a flexible finish that expands and contracts with changes in temperature and humidity.

Consideration should be given to the preparation of guidance on the choice of colours and paints/limewashes to assist building owners.



Painted facades on New Street

8.5 Buildings at Risk

Several buildings within Scalloway Conservation Area have been identified as being without a viable use or vacant. There is a concern that if left unused these buildings will be at risk from decay due to neglect.

Historic Environment Scotland maintains the Buildings at Risk register, a list of listed buildings and buildings in conservation areas that are in a state of disrepair. This is regularly updated. The Council has powers to protect all listed buildings and also, in certain instances, unlisted buildings in a conservation area, where they make a positive contribution to the area's special character.

Where the condition of an historic building deteriorates to a point where it is considered vulnerable and detrimental to the character of the area then Shetland Islands Council in conjunction with the Scottish Ministers will consider appropriate action to enable its return to a reasonable state of repair. The Council will encourage the reuse of existing vacant buildings over new build construction where possible.

8.6 Public realm enhancement

Works by the Roads Authority, or by any of the statutory undertakers, can have a profound effect on a conservation area. The Council will endeavour to ensure that all such works are coordinated as far as possible to minimise

damage to pavement surfaces and boundaries and are carried out to reflect the sensitive historic environment.

The Council will continue to support projects such as Fishing for Litter to reduce the amount the historic environment of litter washing up on the waterfront.



Public art on Main Street

Consideration should be given as to whether grant funding in partnership with other organisations would be beneficial in achieving improvements within the conservation area in terms of public realm as well as building repair and maintenance. Opportunities for working with the local community and alignment with the local place plan in delivering improvements within the conservation area should also be explored.

8.7 Trees, Landscape and Biodiversity

NPF4 places strong importance on biodiversity protection and enhancement. Whilst the layout of buildings within the conservation area limits opportunities for planting there are still measures that can be taken to enhance the natural environment and these should be encouraged and required where possible. Trees, including those within private gardens, should be maintained and managed as an important townscape asset,

particularly due to their rarity on Shetland. New development should protect important trees, hedges and other established boundaries as well as enhancing biodiversity. The council should consider publishing specific guidance on preserving and enhancing biodiversity within the conservation area.



Trees in private gardens on Da Noost Closs

9 Monitoring and Review

Shetland Islands Council will aim to review this document every 5 years from the date of its formal adoption. It will need to be assessed in the light of the emerging Local Development Plan and government policy generally. Such review will include the following:

- A survey of the conservation area including a photographic survey to aid possible enforcement action;
- An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, and how successful they have been;
- The identification of any new issues that need to be addressed, requiring further actions or enhancements;
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action;
- Publicity and advertising.

The recommendations set out within the appraisal can be summarised as follows:

- A revised Article 4 Direction should be prepared and adopted.
- Consideration should be given to introducing an Area of Special Advertisement Control to ensure that the design, materials and appearance of signage and advertisements within the conservation area is in keeping with its character and appearance.
- Preparation and adoption of further detailed guidance on the impacts of cumulative change and appropriate design solutions including information on colours and paints/limewash finishes to external walls..
- Photographic surveys should be carried out at regular intervals to enable planning enforcement and monitor change.
- Further detailed guidance on shopfront and advertisement design should be prepared and adopted.
- Consideration should also be given to the possibility of financial assistance through grant funding and to developing traditional building repair skills.
- Where the condition of an historic building deteriorates to a point where it is considered vulnerable and detrimental to the character of the area then Shetland Islands Council in conjunction with the Scottish Ministers will consider appropriate action to enable its return to a reasonable state of repair. The Council will encourage

the reuse of existing vacant buildings over new build construction where possible.

- The Council will endeavour to ensure that works carried out by statutory undertakers, including the Roads department, are coordinated as far as possible to minimise damage to the pavement surfaces and carried out to reflect the sensitive historic environment.
- The Council will continue to support projects such as Fishing for Litter to reduce the amount the historic environment of litter washing up on the waterfront.
- Consideration should be given as to whether grant funding in partnership with other organisations would be beneficial in achieving improvements within the conservation area in terms of public realm as well as building repair and maintenance.
- Opportunities for working with the local community and alignment with the local place plan in delivering improvements within the conservation area should also be explored.
- Trees, including those within private gardens, should be maintained and managed as an important townscape asset, particularly due to their rarity in Shetland. New development should protect important trees, hedges and other established boundaries as well as enhancing biodiversity. The council should consider publishing specific guidance on preserving and enhancing biodiversity within the conservation area.

Appendix 1 - Further guidance

The following documents provide further detailed guidance on national and local planning policies and design guidance. All are available online.

National Planning Framework 4

[National Planning Framework 4 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/pages/1-1-introduction.aspx)

Shetland Local Development Plan (Adopted 2014)

[The Local Development Plan – Shetland Islands Council](https://www.shetland.gov.uk/media/1000000/Local-Development-Plan-2014-2020.pdf)

Historic Environment Policy For Scotland

[Historic Environment Policy for Scotland | Historic Environment Scotland](https://www.historicenvironment.scot/policy)

Managing Change in the Historic Environment guidance notes series, Historic Environment Scotland

[Managing Change in the Historic Environment | HistEnvScot](https://www.historicenvironment.scot/guidance)

Advice on maintaining and making changes to traditional buildings, Historic Scotland

[Your Property | Lead Public Body for Scotland's Historic Environment](https://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/your-property)

Appendix 2 - Listed Buildings

Address	Category of listing
Norway House, Main Street	C
Olaf View, Main Street	C
An-Teallach, Main Street	C
St Clair Court, Main Street	C
Prince Olav Slipway, Westshore Harbour	C
Scalloway Church, including boundary walls and gatepiers, Main Street	B
Scalloway Methodist Church, including walls, railings and gatepiers, Chapel Lane	C
Scalloway Hall & library, including railings & gatepiers, Berry Road	C
Gibblestone House, including boundary walls and gatepiers, Main Street	C
Scalloway Meat Company, Main Street	C
Bank Building, Main Street	C
Westmost of group, including Anderson's Buildings (known as the Meeting Room), Main Street	C
Anderson's Buildings: Westmost, Main Street	C
Anderson's Buildings: Inner West, Main Street	B

Anderson's Buildings: Inner Eastmost (Mowat + co), Main Street	C
Scalloway Museum, Main Street	C
Anderson's Buildings: Eastmost (Post Office), Main Street	C
Old Haa of Scalloway, including boundary walls and steps, New Street	A
The Bulwark, New Street	C
Scalloway Castle, including boundary walls, Castle Street	A
Fisherman's Arms, Castle Street	C