



Conservation Plans

A Guide to the Preparation of Conservation Plans

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scotland has a diverse built heritage: ancient monuments and archaeological sites and landscapes, historic buildings, townscapes, parks and designed landscapes. The Scottish Executive is committed to conserving the built heritage and using it in a way that meets the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to understand, appreciate and benefit from it.

1.2 The built heritage needs to be managed and maintained. A conservation plan is a useful tool to assist those with responsibility for individual parts of the built heritage to consider the needs of their site, building, monument or landscape (hereafter referred to as site) and how it can be effectively and efficiently managed. This document offers guidance on the contents and preparation of conservation plans.

2.0 *What is a Conservation Plan?*

- 2.1 Preparation of a conservation plan encourages those with responsibility for the site to think about it in a structured way, to assess how and why it is significant, and how it should be managed in order to conserve that cultural significance. Conservation plans should meet the needs of the site and the requirements of its owner. A conservation plan should be as comprehensive as is appropriate for the size and complexity of the site: the plan required for a category C listed residential property or a simple field monument will be a very different (and much shorter) document than that required for a large or complex building or monument.
- 2.2 A Conservation plan must be a living document, having a clearly defined purpose, and which is used and updated as required. The preparation of a conservation plan must not be an end in itself, but be considered as a necessary management tool. A conservation plan should pay dividends in the long term by providing a firm foundation for management and expenditure decisions.
- 2.3 The objectives of a conservation plan are:
 - a. to identify the cultural and historic significance of the site, and
 - b. to set out a policy and strategy for the management and conservation of those physical attributes of the site that contribute to that significance.
- 2.4 For some conservation plans, specialist reports and detailed research may be required where circumstances dictate. Consultation on the conservation plan and the action it proposes may also be required in some circumstances (see section 4).

3.0 *Structure of the Conservation Plan*

3.1 INTRODUCTION

- State the address and give a brief description of the site to which the plan relates;
- Specify the authorship of the conservation plan, its date of preparation, the stakeholders, and the intended recipients;
- Identify all those who were consulted on, and contributed to, the preparation of the conservation plan, and note any proposed future consultations.

3.2 SUMMARY

Summarise the main conclusions and recommendations made in the plan, whether for physical interventions or management strategies, under the categories of Urgent, Necessary and Desirable, with a programme and timetable for implementation.

3.3 THE SITE

Identify the site by name, address, location, grid reference and current ownership; provide information on any statutory or non-statutory designations, for example, scheduling, category of listing, location within a conservation area, or inclusion in the Inventory of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes. Reference to any natural heritage, landscape or other designations should also be included.

3.4 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Assess and analyse the historical and cultural significance of the site, noting any features of related interest (for example natural heritage). If not already in existence, and where necessary, commission relevant specialist reports from, for example, archaeologists, architects, landscape architects, surveyors, structural engineers, architectural, garden, art and furniture historians, ecologists and others appropriate to the type and scale of the site.

Prepare a resources audit, including: a site survey; a schedule of elements of interest both within the site and the immediate and wider setting; a statement of the recorded history of the site and its contents; its construction, materials and decoration; hard and soft landscaping; previous interventions and repairs, and earlier and current uses. It should also identify any gaps in the knowledge of the site.

For large or complex sites, it is desirable to summarise the assessment of significance.

3.5 ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS OF CONSERVATION NEEDS

Having identified the cultural significance of the site, an assessment of its particular problems and sensitivities is required, along with consideration of the options available for its conservation. Issues to consider will include:

- Identification of the current use of the site and consideration of any need for an appropriate change of use;
- The condition of the site and any need for repair;
- Any constraints imposed by statutory consent requirements;
- Actions needed to conserve or restore the setting of the site;
- Identification of any development issues and opportunities ;
- Any public access requirements or limitations;
- Servicing needs;
- The costs of the various recommended measures;
- The likely resources available for the site, both immediate and in the future.

Having considered the options available, the proposed actions should be identified and justified. An assessment of the effect on the site of any proposed works should be prepared, for example by way of a table, checklist or other form.

3.6 ACTION PLAN

Having identified what needs to be done, a statement should be prepared setting out the actions necessary to preserve the cultural and historic significance of the site. These might include:

- Repairs needed to any structure, finishes and contents, setting out priorities and categorising them as Urgent, Necessary and Desirable, as appropriate;
- Actions required to conserve or restore the setting of the site;
- Identification of appropriate materials and technical skills and their sourcing;
- Compliance with statutory requirements;
- An ongoing maintenance schedule (see section 3.8 below);
- A management plan appropriate to the site (see section 3.8 below);
- Provision or retention of public access, and its promotion;
- Enhancement of the presentation of the site to improve public understanding and enjoyment;
- Creation of a framework for site management and any future interventions;
- Recording of change, and the maintenance of an archival resource;
- Opportunities for development, and design parameters.

The Action Plan should identify clearly who has responsibility for the actions proposed. It should also identify possible sources of funding for the implementation of the action plan, with any time restrictions on expenditure.

3.7 REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS

The conservation plan should set out the arrangements and timescale for a periodic review of the contents of the plan and the implementation of the action it recommends.

3.8 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Depending on the length and nature of the conservation plan, some information may be better put in Appendices, which, if they are lengthy, may best be contained in a volume separate from the conservation plan itself.

The Appendices should include the following, as appropriate:

- A. Bibliography and references
- B. Specialist reports and documentation
- C. Plans, photographs and other site data
- D. Visitor survey data
- E. Gazetteer (systematic site survey, its geography and topography)
- F. Routine building maintenance schedule, to include:
 - clearing leaves, snow, controlling plant growth, removal of bird soiling, inspecting for insect or fungal attack. Removal of graffiti;
 - minor repairs to slate and tile roofs, repair of leadwork and other roof coverings, maintenance of thatch, maintenance of rainwater goods;
 - inspection and clearing of underground drainage;
 - repairs to masonry and external finishes;
 - preventative treatment against insect or fungal attack;
 - repairs to internal finishes;
 - glazing and pointing repairs;
 - internal decoration;
 - maintenance of hard and soft landscaping;
 - maintenance of any interpretative panels and presentation schemes.

G. Management plan, for example, that for field monuments and historic landscapes might include:

management of grazings and stock;

management of vegetation (including bracken control), scrub, trees and forestry;

cultivation;

erosion control and repair;

rabbit control;

drainage, wet sites and peat;

fencing, quarrying, dumping and storage;

vehicles, tracks, services and construction;

natural heritage values;

metal detecting;

reporting of finds;

impact of visitors.

4.0 Consultation on Conservation Plans

4.1 Sometimes, there will be a necessity to consult on the content of a conservation plan. This may happen when the preparation of a plan is a pre-condition of applying for grant, or where those responsible for a site wish to take early, informal views, for example from the local authority, on how they propose to manage and conserve the site. Consultation with the local or wider community may also be desirable in some instances if what is proposed is likely to have an impact beyond the site itself. Consultation may need to take place at the briefing stage, in assessing significance, during drafting and in determining policies. Proper consultation on the plan can lead to greater commitment to any action proposed.

4.2 Consultation with the following may be desirable:

- The local planning authority. (Contact the Conservation Officer or Council or Islands Archaeologist);
- Statutory bodies: Historic Scotland (Contact the Area Historic Buildings Inspector or Area Ancient Monuments Inspector), and, where appropriate, public bodies such as Scottish Natural Heritage, the National Museums Scotland and the Scottish Museums Council;
- Heritage Lottery Fund, or other Lottery distributor, where the plan is being prepared in support of an application for Lottery funds;
- Other funding agencies as appropriate;
- Community groups, community council and/or local civic trust;
- Specialist advisory groups, for example, The Garden History Society, The Association for Industrial Archaeology, Docomomo Scotland, The Architectural Heritage Society for Scotland, The Scottish Civic Trust, The Council for Scottish Archaeology, The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, and The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings in Scotland.

- 4.3 An informal discussion with the planning authority and any statutory bodies may also be advisable once the resources audit has been completed in order to obtain consensus on the assessment of cultural significance, likely areas of vulnerability and a draft action plan. At least three weeks should be allowed for subsequent consultation on a first draft of the plan, and at least two weeks on a second draft, which has incorporated responses to the first, before adoption of the completed plan.

5.0 Implementation of Conservation Plans

The conservation plan should include a section setting out the timescale for its implementation. It should also identify who is responsible for each activity. Timescales should be realistic and take account, where relevant, of the need to apply for grants and obtain any necessary statutory consents.

6.0 *Distribution of Conservation Plans*

- 6.1 Copies of the adopted plan should be lodged with:
 1. The owner/commissioner of the plan;
 2. The local planning authority, generally the Conservation Officer and/or the Council or Islands Archaeologist;
 3. Statutory bodies e.g. Historic Scotland and/or Scottish Natural Heritage where appropriate;
 4. Heritage Lottery Fund, or other Lottery distributor, where a plan is being lodged in support of a grant application;
 5. Community groups, the local community council, the local civic trust etc, where substantive responses to drafts were received;
 6. Specialist advisory groups, where substantive responses to drafts were received;
 7. Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland;
 8. Local sites and Monuments Record/Archives/Local History Study Centre.
- 6.2 Consideration should be given to publishing conservation plans that relate to sites of national importance.
- 6.3 Where conservation plans are to be distributed more widely than the owner, project team, planning authority, statutory bodies and funders, then confidential elements, for example, where there is a risk of theft, may be omitted from the publicly-accessible copies. Copyright rests with the author who will licence stakeholders to make reproductions in order to further the conservation of the site.

7.0 *Presentation*

- 7.1 Conservation plans will be more authoritative, readily understandable and widely accessible if edited and presented in a professional manner. An A4 format is easily read and filed. Text should be supported by illustrations.

ANNEX A

CONSERVATION PLAN: DRAFT CONTENTS PAGE

Introduction:	Address Brief description of the site Authorship Date of preparation Stakeholders Recipients List of those consulted
Summary:	Main conclusions and recommendations
The Site:	Name Address Location Grid reference Current ownership Any statutory or non-statutory designations
Assessment of Significance:	Assessment and analysis of the historical and cultural significance of the site, noting any features of related interest Resources audit, including: a site survey; a schedule of elements of interest, within the site and the immediate and wider setting; a statement of the recorded history of the site and its contents; details of construction, materials and decoration; hard and soft landscaping; information on previous interventions and repairs, and earlier and current uses; identification of any gaps in the knowledge of the site.

Assessment and Analysis of Conservation Needs

Action Plan

Review Arrangements

Supplementary Information/Appendices