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# KIRKWALL CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

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**Orkney Islands Council**

**Development & Marine Planning**

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**Version 1**

**November 2013**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

This Conservation Area Appraisal has been produced to inform the Urban Conservation Areas Management Plan as it relates to Kirkwall, and to act as an ongoing research project which monitors and evaluates the state of Kirkwall's Conservation Area. It is anticipated that this should provide a valuable resource to aid the management of Kirkwall's built heritage.

This first version contains a general overview of the Conservation Area and its importance, supplemented by in-depth studies of each of its constituent parts (known as 'character areas'). These studies look at:

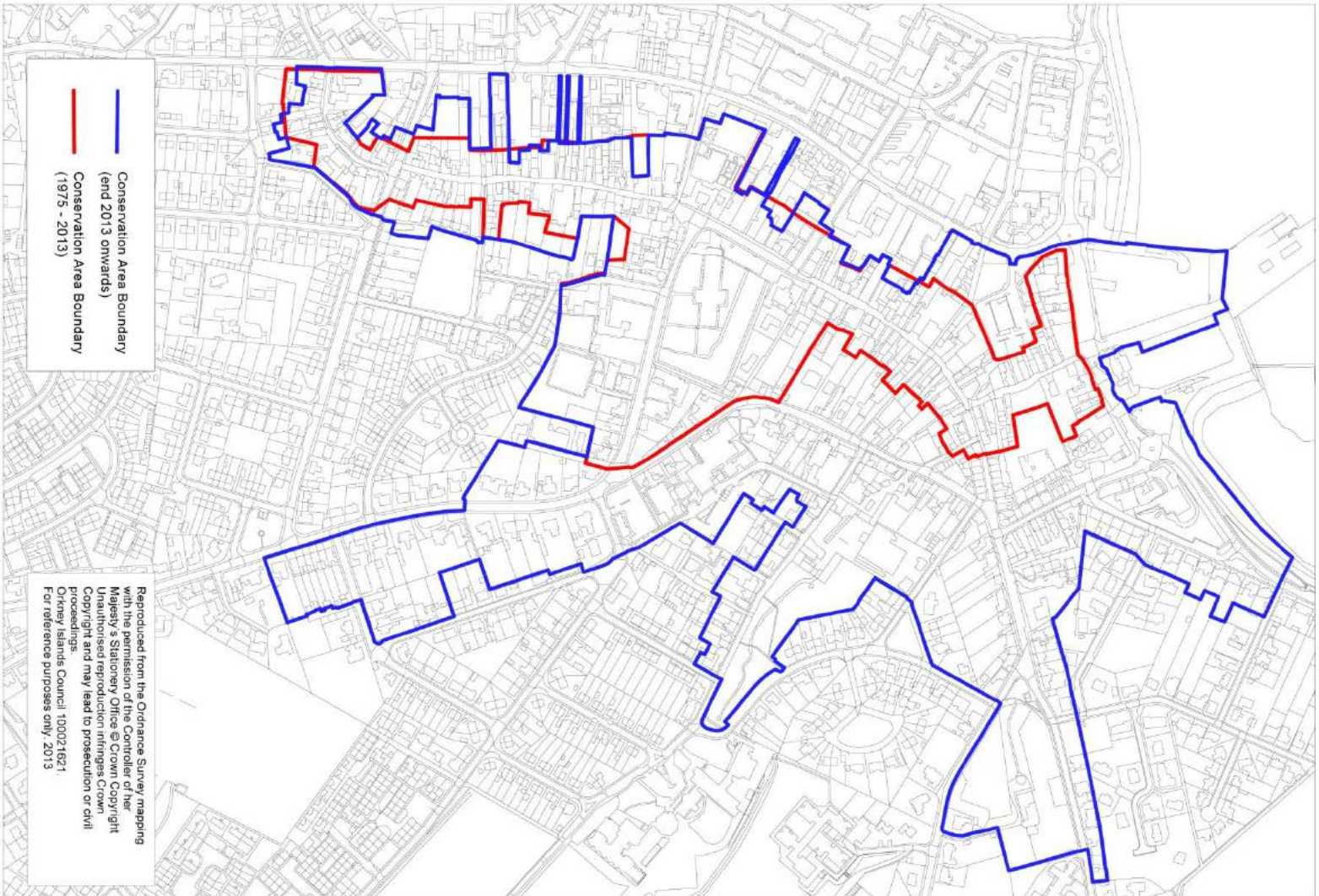
- the 'streetscape' of each area (its streets, signs, pavements etc.);
- how it is used by pedestrians and vehicles; and
- at the buildings it contains.

Orkney Islands Council has a statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas)(Scotland) Act 1997 to formulate and publish, from time to time, proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Orkney's Conservation Areas. In order to support this, it is intended to continue this Appraisal programme to update and expand it over time, with all future versions reported to relevant Committees. In the future it is intended to expand this Appraisal by undertaking a number of research exercises:

- A detailed survey of all the individual buildings in Kirkwall, from which a gazetteer of buildings can be produced
- A more detailed survey of the streetscape and public realm
- Traffic studies to provide more detail on the movement and activity within the Conservation Area
- Further studies, into focused topics such as archaeology and shopfront design, may be undertaken in future.

Kirkwall's Conservation Area was created in 1975, in an area extending from Main Street to the Cathedral and on to Bridge Street. In 2011-12 the Scottish Centre for Conservation Studies at the University of Edinburgh undertook a study to examine whether the boundary of the Conservation Area should be revised to better reflect its special architectural and historic interest. Following this, a revised boundary was prepared and agreed by the Council in October 2012. This revised boundary was not implemented immediately, to allow for a Conservation Area Management Plan to be drafted and consulted on beforehand.

This Appraisal has been created to support this Management Plan by surveying and analysing the Conservation Area. It is also intended to have a wider role in the management of Kirkwall's built heritage, for example in the Stage 2 bid for a Townscape Heritage Initiative from the Heritage Lottery Fund.



Map of Conservation Area boundary expansion

## Character Areas:

This Appraisal understands Kirkwall's Conservation Area as being made up of five areas, known as 'character areas', each with a distinct character. This variety and complexity is key to Kirkwall's character, and is a strength and an asset. The five areas have been selected on the basis of their layout and spatial character, the types of buildings they contain, and the uses and development pressures they face.

These areas are described in detail in the various chapters of this Appraisal, and are summarised below:

### The Harbour

This area includes the original harbour and the buildings facing the sea along Harbour Street and Shore Street, as far as the ambulance depot. It is characterised by the defined harbour front, which includes a number of grand buildings, the wide open streets of Harbour Street and Shore Street, and the working harbour itself.

### The Burgh and Midtown

This area includes the properties and lanes around Bridge Street and Albert Street, extending as far as Junction Road to the west, and to the Wynds, and St Catherine's Place and Cromwell Road to the east. It is characterised by the dense urban core, centred around the principal shopping streets of Bridge Street and Albert Street, as well as the eighteenth and nineteenth century terraces and closes immediately to the east.

### St. Magnus (Cathedral and Precincts)

This area includes the cathedral and its surroundings, including Broad Street and part of Palace Road. It is characterised by the concentration of public and civic buildings around the Cathedral, and the well-defined street frontage of Broad Street.

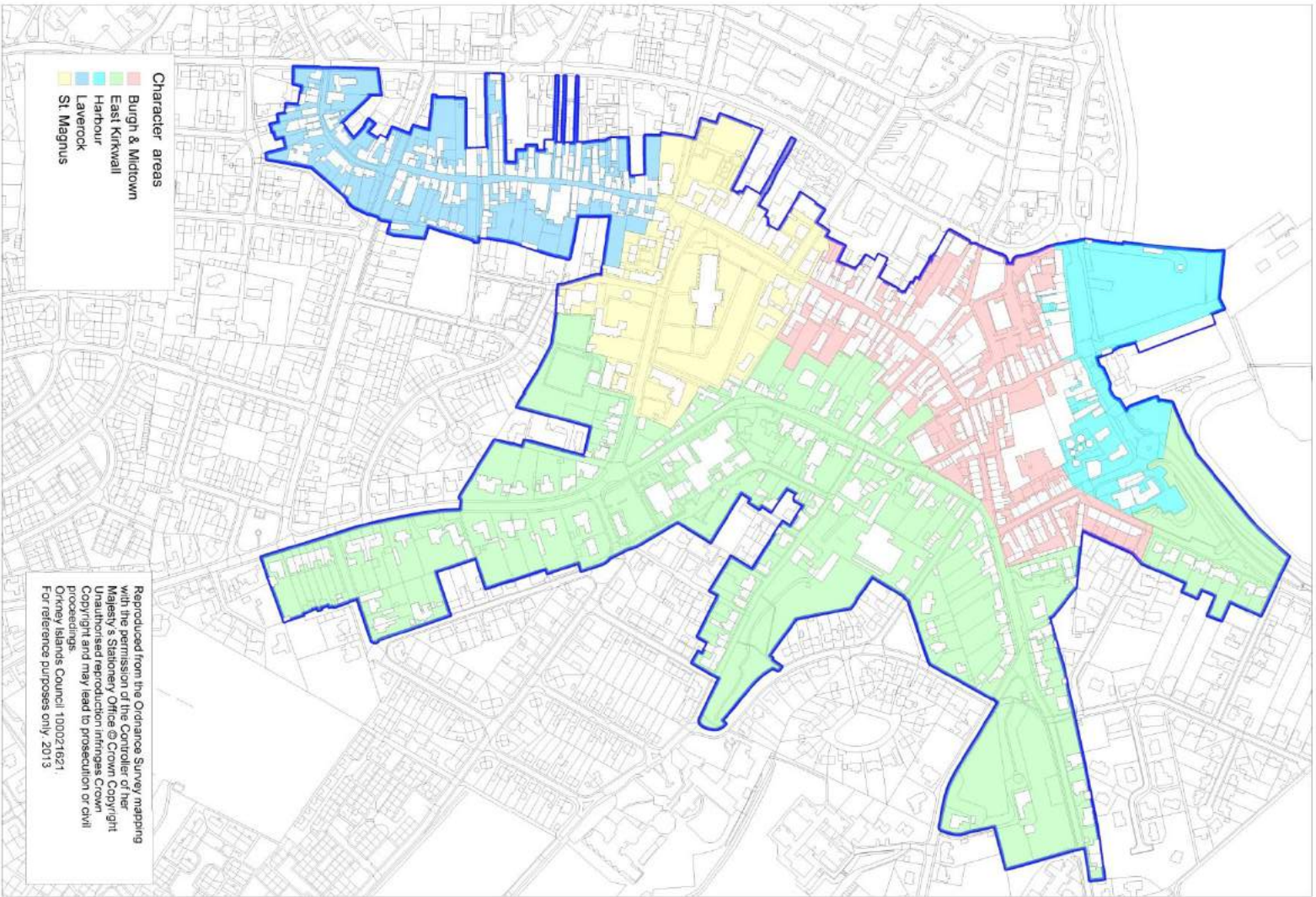
### Laverock

This area includes the properties off Victoria Street and Main Street, and the associated lanes and closes. It is characterised by the narrow streets and dense development along Victoria Street and Main Street, and the courtyards and passages which lead off from them, as well as by the concentration of architectural detailing and fine design, both historic and modern.

### East Kirkwall

This area includes those parts of the Conservation Area where development mainly occurred in the mid-nineteenth century or later. This includes parts of Dundas Crescent, Palace Road, School Place, King Street, Queen Street, Mill Street, East Road and part of Cromwell Road. It is characterised by the low density of much of the development, often set in gardens and displaying a particular concern for aesthetic design.





**Character areas**

- Burgh & Midtown
- East Kirkwall
- Harbour
- Laverock
- St Magnus

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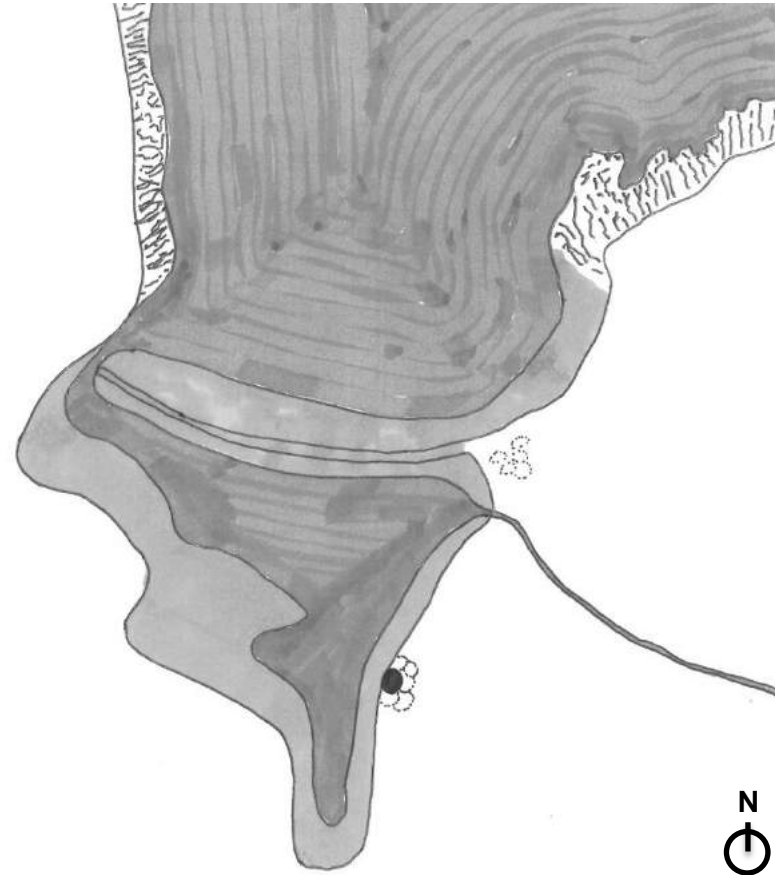
*Character areas within Kirkwall's Conservation Area*

## 2. HISTORY OF KIRKWALL'S DEVELOPMENT

### Prehistory of area (before c. 1000 AD)

The story of Kirkwall in the thousand years or so since its foundation is one of continual adaptation of the landscape to respond to the needs and beliefs of the town's inhabitants. It is impossible to understand the buildings and streets we have today without understanding how they shaped, and were shaped by, the shores and hills when they were built, and how these were perceived by people at the time.

The original landscape where Kirkwall is now situated was very different prior to the town's foundation. The Peedie Sea, which until recently was known as the Oyce, was much larger than it is today, and the waterfront ran along where Bridge Street, Albert Street, Broad Street, Victoria Street and Main Street are now. It was navigable via an open channel to the sea, and formed a sheltered harbour. The Papdale Burn flowed into this where the corner between Bridge Street and Albert Street is now.



*Map showing the landscape prior to Norse settlement, showing location of broch and possible Pictish settlements*

The earliest archaeological evidence for human inhabitation of the area is the remains of a broch, which have been discovered under Broad Street by Tankerness House<sup>1</sup>. It is believed that this formed a natural promontory on the coast when it was built, which would have made it an excellent defensive position. From the remains of the broch we can infer that the surrounding land was a focus for settlement during the Iron Age, and probably remained so during the Pictish period (as many brochs have been found with later villages built around them). The place-name Papdale, which describes the valley leading up the hill from the centre of Kirkwall, is strongly suspected to imply that a significant ecclesiastical centre existed here prior to Norse settlement, although this has not been confirmed by archaeological finds.

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<sup>1</sup> (Lamb and Robertson 2005, 175)



## Foundation and early settlement (c.1050 AD to 1137)



*Map showing the landscape at the time of the foundation of Kirkjuvágr, showing approximate location of St. Olaf's Church and settlement*

The earliest mention of the settlement we now know as Kirkwall comes in the Orkneyinga Saga, where it is described as the location of Earl Rognvald Brusason's drinking hall in 1046, during a turbulent period of Orkney's history. The capital of Orkney at this time was Birsay, which was an easily-defensible position on the main trade route from Norse-controlled territory in Scotland, the Irish Sea and Hebrides to Norway, and was the seat of the bishop (Orkney had recently re-converted to Christianity) and Earl Thorfinn Sigurdarson, with whom Rognvald shared the Earldom. It is not known exactly how the earldom lands (with their associated overseas territories) were divided between the two men, but it is believed that from Thorfinn's base in Birsay he held power over the south of Orkney and Caithness (which was his personal possession separate to the Orkney Earldom<sup>2</sup>), whilst Rognvald's ruled over the North Isles and Shetland<sup>3</sup>. If this is the case, it would explain his choice of Kirkwall as a base, as it is the best harbour on the north coast of Mainland, and provides excellent access to the North Isles thanks to its central location.

Even though he only ruled over part of the Orkney earldom, Rognvald Brusason would still have had a large number of warriors with him at all times. The infrastructure required to feed and house all these men, collect rents from Rognvald's share of the earldom, and accommodate passing merchants selling their wares to the court meant that, on the standards of the day, Kirkjuvágr, as it was known, must have been a substantial settlement<sup>4</sup>. The name, which means "church bay", probably refers to the church of St. Olaf, which was founded by Rognvald Brusason in honour of his foster-father. This church may

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<sup>2</sup> (Thomson 2008, 73)

<sup>3</sup> His father Brusi is described as owning "the northernmost part of the isles"; Rognvald was killed on Papa Stronsay and buried on Papa Westray, and was known as the "Lord of the Shetlanders" (Thomson 2008, 70-72)

<sup>4</sup> (Lamb and Robertson 2005, 166)



*Hogback tombstone from the graveyard of St. Olaf's Kirk, modern-day Bridge Street*

have replaced an early Pictish one, but this is not known<sup>5</sup>.

Following Rognvald Brusason's death the settlement would have suffered an abrupt decline, yet the value of the port as a trading centre seems to have been recognised, as when Kirkwall is next mentioned in the Orkneyinga Saga, it is described as having a market stance (but few houses).

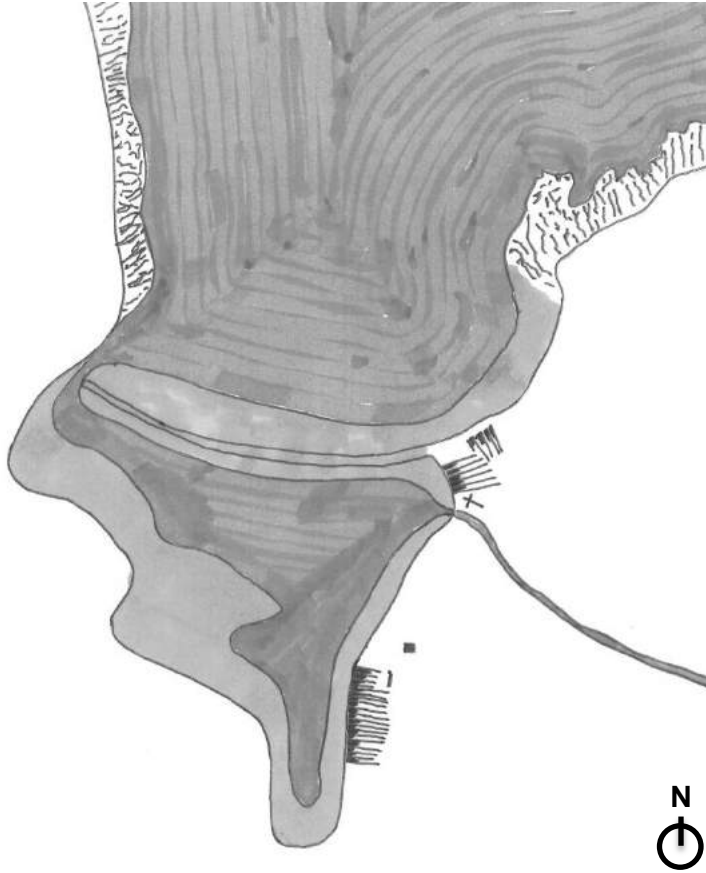
The town at this period was located in the area bounded by modern-day Bridge Street, Shore Street and the Papdale Burn (now culverted). St. Olaf's church is known to have been in the south of this area, as a carved 'hogback' tombstone has been found here<sup>6</sup>. Beyond this, very little archaeological research has been undertaken to definitively locate the remains of early Norse structures; it is hoped that further research will be able to shed more light on this period.

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<sup>5</sup> (Christophersen 1973, I.1) & (Mooney 1947, 94)

<sup>6</sup> (Lamb and Robertson 2005, 172)

## The Norse Middle Ages (1137 to 1468)



*Map of Kirkjuvágr after the Cathedral's foundation, showing the emerging burgage plot systems in the Burgh and Laverock.*

The most significant single event to occur in the development of Kirkjuvágr/Kirkwall was the foundation of St. Magnus' Cathedral by Earl 'Rognvald' Kali Kolsson. He built the Cathedral, aided by his father Kol, to fulfil a promise he had made to God after defeating Earl Paul Hakonsson and taking control of the earldom. His decision to build it in Kirkwall, rather than Birsay where the existing Cathedral was located, was probably motivated by a number of factors:

- The nature of Norse settlement in Orkney had changed by this period, as the population were increasingly concerned with farming and developing a settled European lifestyle, rather than raiding other parts of the British Isles as previous generations had done. Birsay's position on passing trade routes was therefore less important than Kirkjuvágr's central position within the archipelago, which made it an excellent location for collecting rents and administering Orkney's affairs.
- Whilst Rognvald Kolsson was not descended from Rognvald Brusason, he had the same power base in the North Isles and Shetland, which he used to facilitate his conquest of the earldom. Kirkjuvágr's north-facing harbour was therefore more useful to him for accessing his ancestral lands than Birsay's west-facing bay.
- Rognvald Brusason's memory was still strong amongst the population at this point, and Rognvald Kolsson took every effort to model himself in Brusason's image: although his first name was actually Kali, he called himself Rognvald to invite comparisons with his illustrious ancestor. Rognvald Brusason, like Kali Kolsson, had been royally appointed, and held the



*St Magnus Cathedral as it appears today*

loyalty of Shetland<sup>7</sup>. Relocating the Cathedral to Kirkjubúgar allowed him to re-establish Brusason's capital, and to distance himself from Birsay's associations with his rival Paul Hakonsson's family.

- By establishing a Cathedral, and therefore a centre of learning and education, Rognvald Kolsson hoped to develop Orkney as a cultured nation in its own right, rather than just an outpost of Norway. The fact that Kirkjubúgar had a church dedicated to St. Olaf gave him a good opportunity to display this ambition, as the Cathedral dedicated to his uncle St. Magnus (an Earl of Orkney) would tower over the small church dedicated to Rognvald Brusason's foster-father St. Olaf (a King of Norway). This would make an architectural statement of how much the colony's self-confidence and status had grown.

The site chosen was a short distance from the existing settlement, on a small hill on the shore of the Oyce. Archaeological excavation under Broad Street has uncovered a rock-cut wharf which appears to have been used to transport building materials quarried elsewhere in Orkney directly to the site<sup>8</sup>. Establishing the Cathedral outwith the existing settlement gave Rognvald Kolsson an opportunity to establish his own separate town for the large numbers of clergy and administration associated with the Cathedral, and to lay it out according to the Norman-inspired principles of a formal burgh, which were at that time being established in Scotland by King David I<sup>9</sup>. These burgage plots can still be seen on the east side of Victoria Street, which is known as the Laverock, a name which refers to its origins as a separate settlement. The lower stonework in the Bishops' Palace is also believed to date from this period. The secular population also seems to have grown, as in 1156 a pub is recorded in

<sup>7</sup> (Christophersen 1973, II.2-5) & (Thomson 2008, 103)

<sup>8</sup> (Lamb and Robertson 2005, 175)

<sup>9</sup> (Lamb and Robertson 2005, 174)

Kirkjuvágr<sup>10</sup>. Thanks to its ecclesiastical and mercantile prominence, the town at this period became one of the foremost settlements in the Norse Atlantic, unrivalled in the British Isles or North Atlantic islands.

Kirkjuvágr's urban structure was now firmly established: the two settlements along the shore of the Oyce (Rognvald Brusason's burgh on modern-day Bridge Street and Rognvald Kolsson's Laverock on modern-day Victoria Street) gradually expanded both along the shore (in time closing the gap between them with an area known as Midtown, modern-day Albert Street) and into the Oyce via ad-hoc land reclamation, which formed the western sides of the streets. These processes would continue throughout the Middle Ages into the nineteenth century, gradually forming the medieval plot layout and street pattern which is the core of modern Kirkwall<sup>11</sup>.

An important development slightly later than the Cathedral was the construction of a castle in 1383 by Earl Henry St. Clair, which was situated where Castle Street is today. This was probably the first building on the west side of the street, and is described in later accounts as being of "exceptional strength". Lord Caithness, who took the castle in 1614, called it "one of the strongest houses in Britane ... I protest to God the House has never been biggit by [without] the consent of the Divil"<sup>12</sup>.

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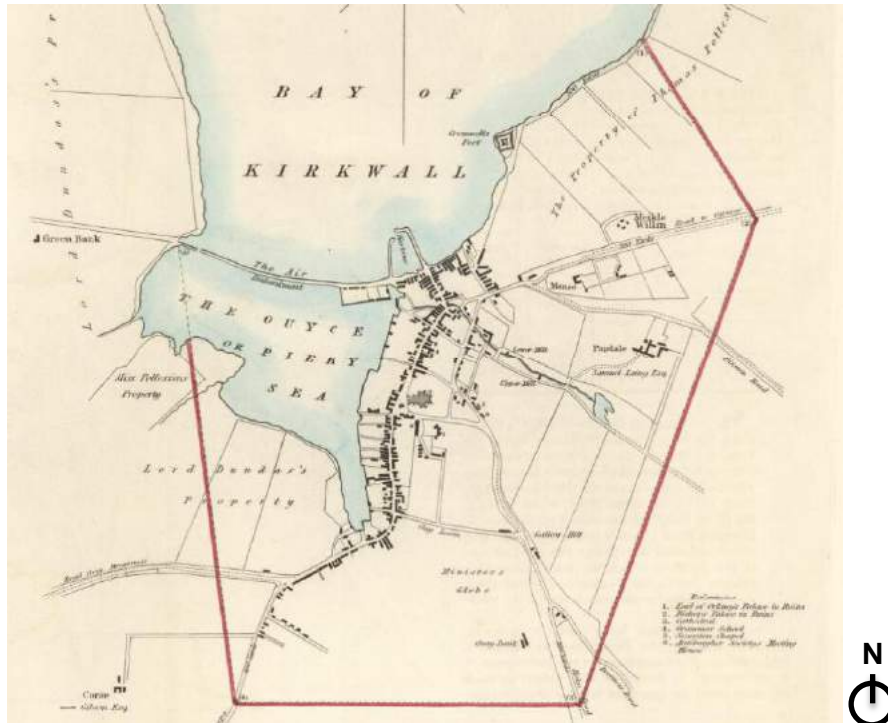
<sup>10</sup> (Christophersen 1973, II.9)

<sup>11</sup> See (Lamb and Robertson 2005, 180)

<sup>12</sup> From "A History of Orkney" by J. Storer Clouston, quoted in (Mooney 1947, 97)



## Scottish Royal Burgh (1468 to 1811)



*Map of Kirkwall from the 1832 Great Reform Act Survey of Parliamentary Burghs – Apart from the construction of the harbour, this shows Kirkwall as it would have been at the beginning of the nineteenth century*

*Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland*

<sup>13</sup> Christophersen (1973, III.3) notes that from 1241 Orkney's earls were Scots, and by 1468 so was the majority of major landowners.

<sup>14</sup> (Mooney 1947, 108)

<sup>15</sup> (Lamb and Robertson 2005, 185-6)

Orkney's transfer to the Scottish crown in 1468 proved a decisive moment for Kirkwall, although not all of the changes came immediately.

As the existing earls and legal system continued unchanged, and Scottish immigration had been underway for centuries<sup>13</sup>, much of Orkney would have felt little change as an immediate consequence of the handover from Norwegian to Scottish sovereignty. The most immediate changes were felt in Kirkwall (as Kirkjuvágr became known). It was designated a Royal Burgh in 1486, at which point its name was Scotticised, and the Cathedral and churches, transferred from the Archbishopric of Nidaros (Trondheim) to that of St. Andrew's, were made the property of the local civic authorities<sup>14</sup>.

Despite these changes, however, in the following centuries the pattern of urban development continued as before: the Midtown gradually began to be laid out in burgage plots, and land reclamation along the west side of the streets continued. It is believed that the west side of Broad Street began to be developed in this period, with Tankerness House probably being the first building on that side of the street<sup>15</sup>.



*Tankerness House, Broad Street*



*14 Main Street, now the West End Hotel*

Significant building work took place during the sixteenth century, as St. Olaf's Church and the Bishops' Palace were rebuilt by Bishop Reid, and the Earl's Palace was erected by Earl Patrick Stewart. The influence of Scottish building styles on domestic architecture can be clearly observed in the crow-steps, skewputts and pends of surviving houses from this period. The distinctive gaps between sixteenth- and seventeenth-century houses in Kirkwall can be attributed to the Norse legal system, which remained in force until 1611<sup>16</sup>.

The Cromwellian occupation left its mark on Kirkwall through the construction of two new forts on the shores of Kirkwall Bay for the English forces (both now demolished, and commemorated in the name of Cromwell Road), and socially by bringing in English settlers to the town<sup>17</sup>.

Following the Act of Union merchants in Kirkwall took advantage of the new possibilities for international trade. Although facing local competition for the first time from Stromness, they were eventually able to generate enough wealth to build substantial townhouses in and around Kirkwall<sup>18</sup>. The expansion of the Royal Navy and the establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company allowed working-class Orcadian men to travel overseas and build up significant personal incomes for the first time. Women found employment in cottage industries such as linen manufacture, which was well-established in Kirkwall by the mid-1700s<sup>19</sup>. A whaling station was even set up on

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<sup>16</sup> (Thomson 2008, 293)

<sup>17</sup> As many as fifteen of Cromwell's soldiers are believed to have settled in Kirkwall after the occupation (Christophersen 1973, V.7)

<sup>18</sup> (Thomson 2008, 358-9; 374)

<sup>19</sup> (Thomson 2008, 364)

Shore Street to process blubber from the Davis Straits in the Arctic<sup>20</sup>. This growth in industry facilitated a general improvement in the fabric of the town: houses were built, the street was re-paved, a new school was constructed and a Post Office was opened<sup>21</sup>. This trading activity peaked during the kelp boom, which gave estate owners a huge windfall from the sale of processed seaweed (kelp) from their shores for use as raw materials in industry in cities like Newcastle. A good example of these townhouses is 14 Main Street, now the West End Hotel, built by Captain William Richan.



*Daisybank, East Road*

On the outskirts of the town larger villas began to be constructed at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, such as Daisybank and Papdale House. Although few in number, the design and situation of these villas marked a fundamental change in Orcadians' attitude towards the landscape, one which would eventually become universal. Architecture shifted from being primarily traditional, and based around pragmatic concerns, such as shelter or the ready availability of certain materials, to being driven by conceptual attitudes of architectural styles and Picturesque landscapes. This was the counterpart to the agricultural Improvement which was starting to occur in the surrounding countryside, which was based around the premise of reshaping the landscape according to human ideas and desires. In the outskirts of Kirkwall this meant that prominent exposed locations were chosen for siting classically-inspired country houses, as the desire to enjoy, and become part of, scenic views became greater than the need for shelter. As the nineteenth century progressed, these Rationalist attitudes to the landscape were to find material expression within the town itself, driven by the consequences of agricultural Improvement.

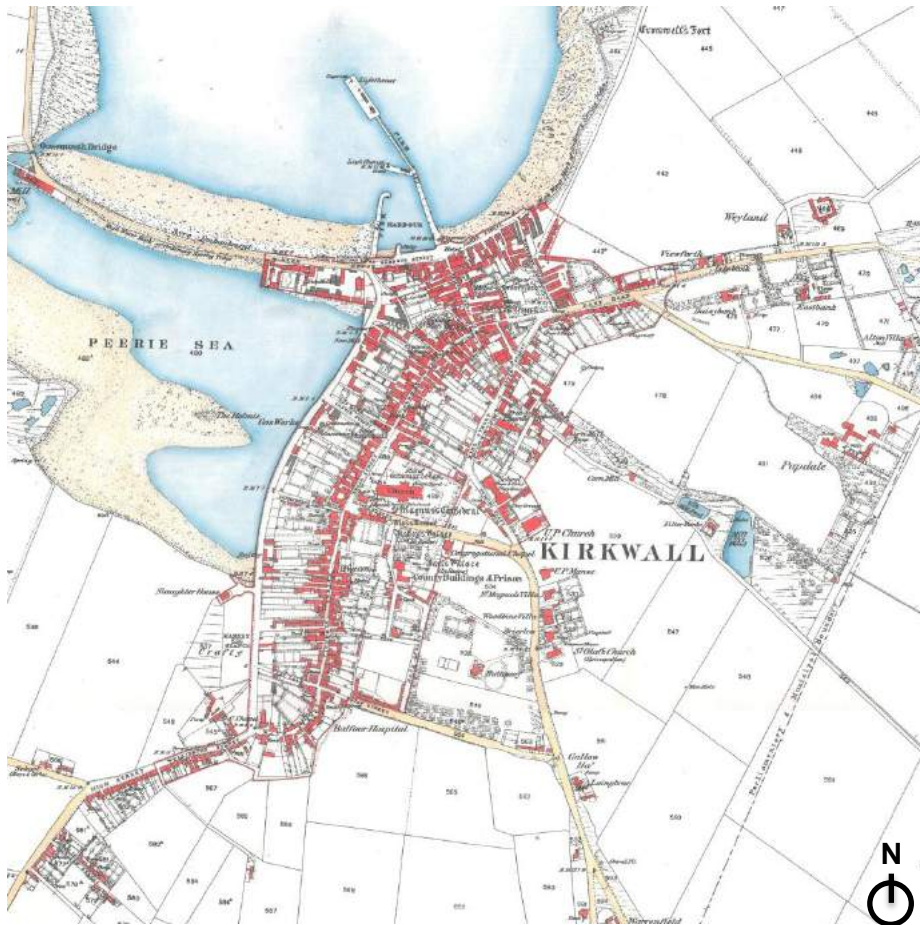
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<sup>20</sup> (Thomson 2008, 373)

<sup>21</sup> (Thomson 2008, 360-1; 411)



## Improvement and Expansion (1811 – present)



1882 Ordnance Survey 1:25 inch (1<sup>st</sup> Ed.) map of Kirkwall

At the beginning of the nineteenth century Kirkwall looked in many ways as it had done for centuries: a single street lined on either side by thin plots of dense development, punctuated by the Cathedral, the ruins of the Castle, and the walled precincts of the long-abandoned Palaces.

The following century was to bring rapid and radical change to the town, beginning with the construction of the first pier in 1811. This was initially designed to serve the kelp boom, which for the first time gave local landowners the means and motive to invest in major infrastructure projects.

Although the harbour was constructed to support the kelp trade, it was only when this trade died out that Kirkwall began to really develop as a major port, as the collapse of the kelp trade in Orkney in the 1820s, brought about by peace in Europe after the Napoleonic wars, forced estate owners to implement the agricultural Improvements they had been able to put off for so long.

This caused a dramatic increase in the export of relatively cheap, bulky goods such as grain, and, after the advent of a regular steamship service in 1836, the beginning of the live cattle export trade<sup>22</sup>. Soon the town's narrow street was full of cattle and goods carts heading to the harbour from the surrounding countryside, forcing the burgh authorities to take action. Eventually, in 1865, Junction Road was created to bypass the town altogether on newly-reclaimed land along the western boundary of the town<sup>23</sup>. This was combined with the construction of New Scapa Road, which for the first time provided wide and direct access to piers on the north and south

<sup>22</sup> (Christophersen 1973, VI.15)

<sup>23</sup> (Lamb 2003, 183-4)



*Castle Street today, where the fourteenth-century castle stood until 1865.*

coasts of Mainland.

Other significant new roads were enabled by the clearance of medieval ruins. In 1865 Castle Street was formed by removing the last remains of the fourteenth-century castle (which had been ruined by the Earl of Caithness in 1614 whilst putting down Earl Patrick Stewart's rebellion<sup>24</sup>), and Palace Street was lengthened to form Palace Road, using the Mass Tower from the Bishops' Palace for hardcore. In addition, in 1858 the Ayre was bridged to give direct access to the coastal road along the north Mainland coast. The Papdale Burn was culverted to open up the north of the town<sup>25</sup>.

The later nineteenth century saw a flowering in the population, wealth and confidence of the town. Suburban development along main roads to the east and south started to take place, mainly in the form of ornate villas and cottages on plots feued from the Papdale estate.

This was accompanied by a proliferation of new civic buildings, including banks, hospitals, a new tolbooth (rapidly replaced by a larger, more ornate town hall and Sherriff's Court), a Masonic Lodge, and a large number of churches for various denominations.

The twentieth century saw the pace of urban change accelerate, particularly of land reclamation. Unlike the previous century, however, this was mainly driven by local government, rather than private enterprise and philanthropy. This reflected the restructuring of Orcadian society following the break-up of estates after the Great War, and the development of strong local government in the last quarter of the century.

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<sup>24</sup> (Lamb and Robertson 2005, 175-7)

<sup>25</sup> (Lamb 2003, 179)



*Modern housing development behind the Watergate, close to the Earl's and Bishops' Palaces and Cathedral*



*Modern supermarket on the edge of the Peedie Sea*

Over a number of decades the Peedie Sea (as it was now known) was reclaimed further to accommodate large new commercial areas of the town. Great Western Road was built, and then expanded further to house a Power Station and large car park. Land along the south of the Peedie Sea was reclaimed to accommodate supermarkets and eventually the Pickaquoy leisure centre. Recent land reclamation in the 1990s has extended Shore Street to meet Cromwell Road<sup>26</sup>.

The growth of housing developments, predominantly by the local authorities and the housing association, drove the expansion of the town in all directions, and was the single greatest change to the form and character of the town during this period. These developments peaked during the 1960s and 1970s, and typically took the form of a suburban street or cul-de-sac of cement rendered bungalows, semi-detached or detached houses. Notable exceptions to this general type can be found along Cromwell Road, where small individual cottages were constructed to take advantage of close proximity to the town centre and good views over the bay.

This growth on the edges of the town had an effect on the historic core, as the dense residential closes and lanes became undesirable in the age of the car. As inhabitants moved out to the suburbs, large areas of the medieval core were demolished and replaced with car parks and a fuel terminal. This re-organisation of the town has left the centre at risk of decline, particularly given the adverse effects of the economic downturn and increased commercial competition from the Internet and large supermarkets. It is hoped that by describing and analysing Kirkwall's Conservation Area this Appraisal can inform and support future initiatives to preserve and enhance its special character, and reaffirm its role within the town.

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<sup>26</sup> (Lamb 2003, 179)



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## Areas of archaeological sensitivity

### **Broad Street Broch:**

The remains of a broch have been discovered under the south end of Broad Street, near Tankerness House, at a shallow depth below the road surface. Any developments in the vicinity should make provision for the possibility of finding Iron Age or later remains.

### **Main Street ruin:**

In the grounds of 40 Main Street there are the remains of what appears to be a medieval townhouse, some walls of which are still standing to a height of several storeys. This is shown intact on the Ordnance Survey 1:25 inch 2<sup>nd</sup> edition map of Kirkwall published in 1902, suggesting that it has only recently fallen into ruin.

### **Possible ruin next to Victoria Hall:**

The walled garden adjacent to Victoria Hall has a very high ground level, which may contain buried archaeology. Based on map evidence, this plot has not been occupied in recent history, so there is a higher chance of Norse or early medieval remains surviving here.

### **Castle:**

The formation of Castle Street in 1865 cleared the standing remains of the thirteenth century castle, but covered over buried remains, including a well. Any works in or around Castle Street should be aware of the potential for disturbing buried remains.



*Ruin at the west end of Main Street*

### **Around the Cathedral and Palaces:**

The Cathedral precincts and areas around the Bishops' and Earl's Palaces are extremely archaeologically sensitive, due to the length of time they have been inhabited. Particular areas to note are the scheduled areas around the Palaces, within which works will require Scheduled Monument Consent from Historic Scotland, and the Cathedral graveyard. The rock-cut wharf beneath Broad Street and possible associated remains should also be taken into consideration when planning works in this area.

### **Former (natural) shoreline:**

The medieval streets running from Shore Street via Bridge Street through to Main Street are built over the original shoreline of the town. This was an area of great historical activity, and there is therefore a good chance that medieval or Norse remains may lie preserved in the sandy soil.

### **Medieval burgage plots:**

The thin burgage plots in the medieval core of Kirkwall are presumed to have been laid out from the twelfth century onwards, meaning that there is a distinct possibility that medieval remains may lie undisturbed within them. The east side of Victoria Street is particularly archaeologically sensitive, as these plots may be the oldest in the town, and have not been subject to extensive redevelopment.

### **Ruin in Parliament Close:**

The remains of a medieval townhouse stand to head height in Parliament Close, off Albert Street. This is shown intact on the Ordnance Survey 1:25 inch 2<sup>nd</sup> edition map of Kirkwall published in 1902, suggesting that it has only recently fallen into ruin.



*Ruin in Parliament Close*

### The original settlement:

The area bounded by Shore Street, Bridge Street, Bridge Street Wynd & Garden Street and St. Catherine's Place is known to have been the original location of Rognvald Brusason's Kirkjuvágr. Very little archaeological investigation has been done to build a detailed understanding of the layout of this early burgh, so the whole area should be treated as being archaeologically sensitive.

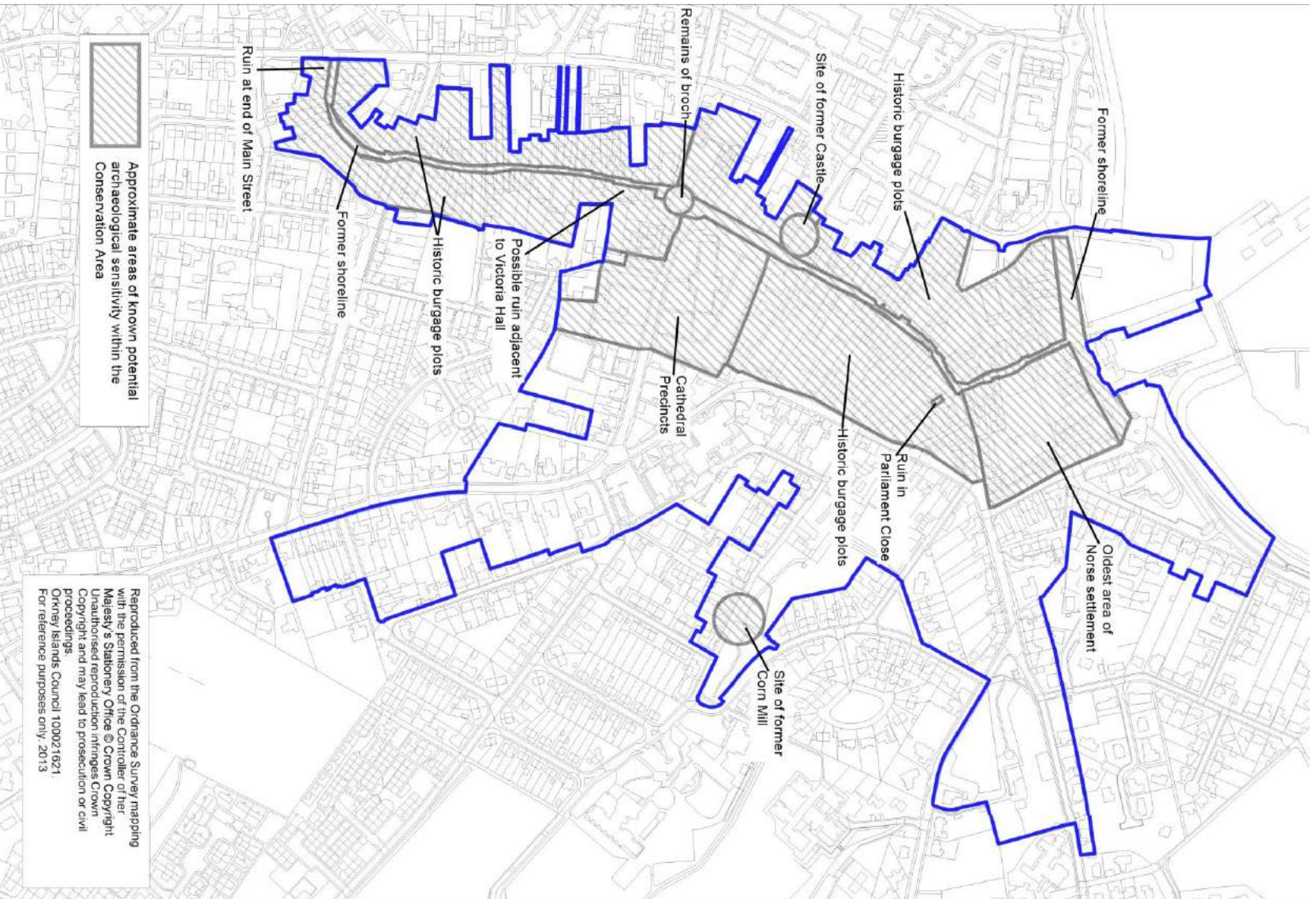
### The Upper Papdale Mill:

The Ordnance Survey 1:25 inch 1<sup>st</sup> edition map of Kirkwall (1882) shows a Corn Mill in what is now the Willows, opposite where Rendall's bakery now stands. This is marked as ruined on the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (1902) map. It is not clear to what extent this was later cleared, so caution should be exercised when carrying out works in this area.



Extract from 1902 Ordnance Survey 1:25 inch (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) map showing the ruins of the Upper Papdale Mill (circled)





*Map of areas within Kirkwall's Conservation Area which are of particular archaeological sensitivity*

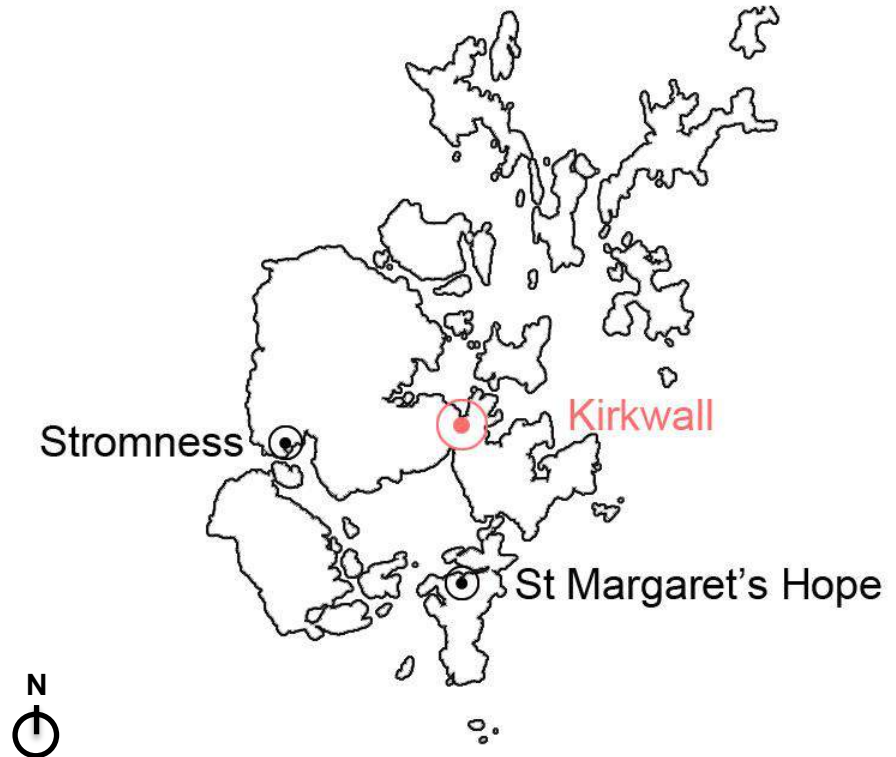


### 3. THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

#### Layout and organisation

Kirkwall is a linear medieval burgh which has expanded significantly through extensive land reclamation and suburban and industrial development in the surrounding countryside. The centre of the town is structured around three essentially parallel roads:

- Junction Road: This is the main area for commercial and light industrial development within the central part of the town.
- Bridge Street/Albert Street/Broad Street/Victoria Street/Main Street: This is the dense medieval core, which includes the main shopping streets, houses and flats, offices and the civic core of the town.
- East Road/Queen Street/King Street/School Place/Dundas Crescent: This area is primarily suburban and residential.



*Diagram showing Kirkwall's location within Orkney in relation to other major settlements*

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Beyond these are a number of more recently developed areas:

- There have been extensive suburban residential developments around Kirkwall, primarily to the east and south.
- Around the Peedie Sea there have been several large-scale developments, including three supermarkets and the Pickaquoy leisure centre.
- A large port and industrial estate has been developed at Hatston, to the west of the town centre.

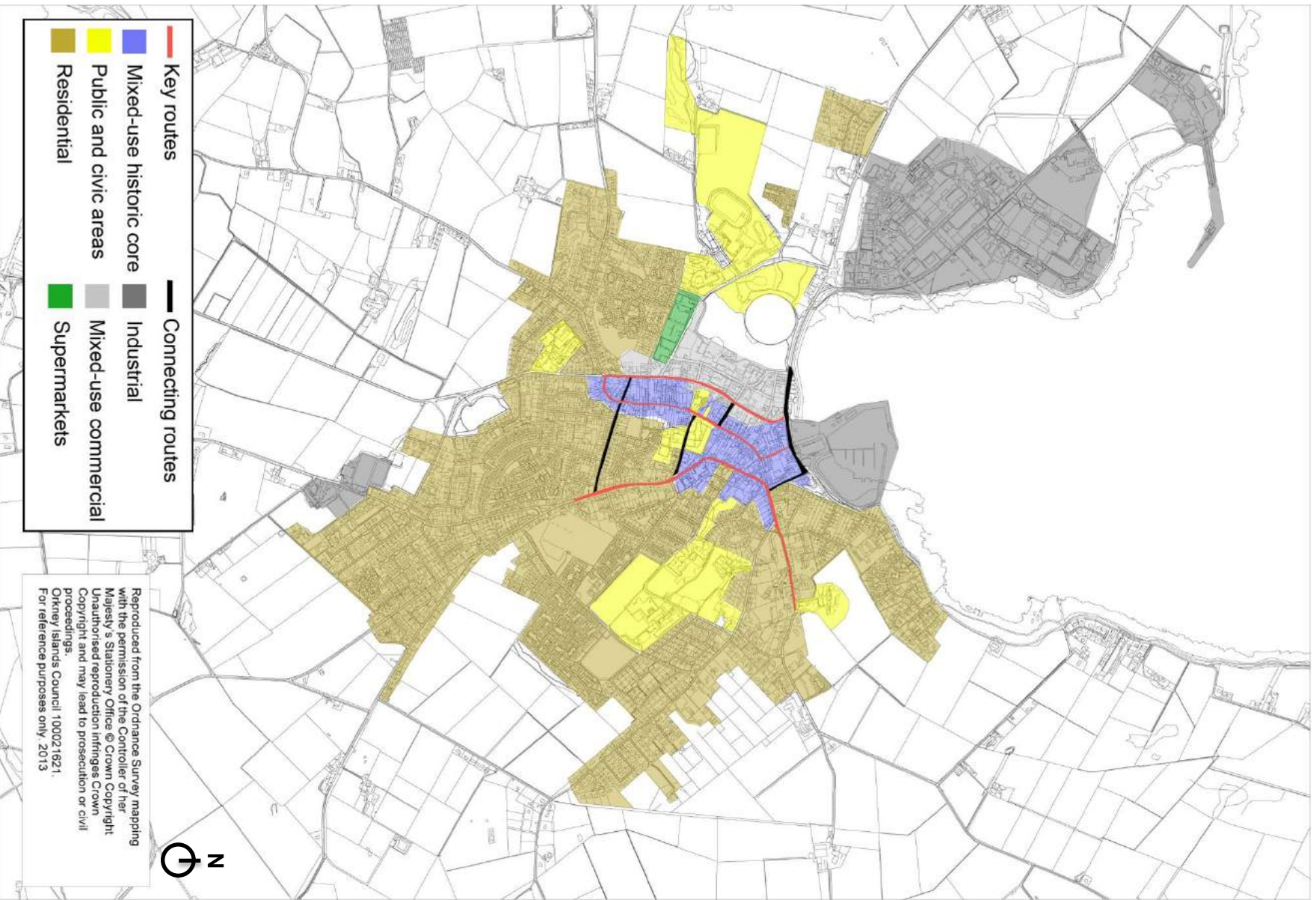


Diagram showing the main functions of various areas in Kirkwall, and key routes in the town centre

The Conservation Area covers most of the medieval core and large areas of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century development to the east. Within this area there are several different parts of the town, which each have different roles with respect to each other:

- The harbour (part of which is in the Conservation Area) acts as a transport link to the North Isles, a freight terminal, a marina for leisure craft and a berth for smaller cruise ships and defence vessels.
- Harbour Street and Shore Street together form a defined waterfront, and are the main centre for hotels and pubs in the town. They also include the oil depot associated with the harbour.
- Bridge Street, Albert Street, Broad Street and Victoria Street are the main shopping streets in Kirkwall.
- Garden Street, St Catherine's Place and Cromwell Road have a variety of small-scale houses and cottages.
- The area around the Cathedral is the main civic centre in Kirkwall.
- Victoria Street and Main Street are predominantly residential, but also contain a number of shops, restaurants and hotels, concentrated in the northern half of Victoria Street.
- The area from East Road in the north to Dundas Crescent in the south is predominantly residential in the form of villas and cottages.

Key connections between these areas are:

- The north-south route along the historic shoreline of the Peedie Sea
- Palace Road and the Strynd: These connect the area around the Cathedral with the main north/south route in the east of the town.
- St Catherine's Place connects the harbour front and Cromwell Road with East Road.
- Bridge Street Wynd and St Olaf's Wynd connect Bridge Street with East Road and Queen Street.

The medieval core still retains much of its burgage-plot layout: plots are typically long, thin strips of land extending from the historic streets. Buildings tend to be concentrated on or near the streets, with development deeper in the plot accessed via closes or courtyards. Outwith this area plots tend to be much wider, with development at a low density and set back from the streets and plot boundaries.





Diagram showing typical types of plot in Kirkwall

## Building designs and features

Buildings throughout the Conservation Area are typically rectangular in plan, with steeply pitched roofs and regular fenestration levels. Façades tend to be parallel to principal streets although, apart from planned developments such as Garden Street, façades tend not to form regular building lines.

It is rare for buildings to exceed four storeys in height, with two or three storeys being typical. Many buildings in the medieval core are oriented with their gable towards the street to allow for easier development along the burgage plot. This is rare in more recently developed areas, where land is more readily available.

The majority of historic buildings in Kirkwall are constructed from locally sourced sandstone split along beds to form thin courses. Very few façades incorporate ashlar blocks, which are usually reserved for relatively high status buildings, and tend to be used only for details. Very early buildings such as the Cathedral were constructed using locally-sourced red or cream sandstone ashlar, but this practice had died out by the end of the eighteenth century. Buildings constructed before the mid-nineteenth century were typically harled (rendered) with lime, which acted as a protective coating for the stonework. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards it became fashionable instead to construct buildings with exposed stonework. These buildings typically take advantage of the natural colour variations in local stone for aesthetic effect.

Cement-based renders have been in use since the nineteenth century, and have been applied to a large number of properties in Orkney. When used with the common grey/orange local sandstone, which is highly durable, this does not usually lead to severe stone decay, but it does exacerbate dampness in the wet climate, and causes unsightly cracking and render decay.



*Above:  
Albert Street*

*Left:  
Exposed stone on Victoria  
Road*



Original roofing materials varied according to the age and status of the building. Before a regular steamer service from the Scottish mainland was introduced in the 1830s most roofs were made of the same local sandstone used for walls and pavements, cut either into tiles or large flagstones. A few high-status buildings in classically-inspired styles, such as Daisybank, were roofed using slate, but this was rare given the cost of transport at the time. Once a steamer service was established in 1836 it enabled slate to be transported to Orkney, usually from Wales, at an affordable cost for the majority of urban developments. Welsh slate remained the dominant roofing material until the late twentieth century, when it was overtaken by synthetic alternatives.



Key features integrated into buildings in Kirkwall include:

- Carved skewputts and roof details: These are particularly prevalent on Victoria Street.
- Date and marriage stones: These commemorate important events such as the building of a house or a wedding. Marriage stones typically feature the initials of the bride and groom, and are often salvaged and re-used when a building is replaced.
- Decorative roof details: In the Victorian period ornamentation became an important consideration in middle-class domestic architecture, typically expressed in the detailing of the roof. Gable finials, especially for dormer windows, are especially widespread.



*Above:  
The Girnel on Harbour  
Street, which is roofed  
with a combination of  
Welsh slate and  
sandstone tiles*

*Left:  
A carved skewputt on  
Spence's Square*



- Ba' holes: These allow protective boards to be fixed over windows and doors to prevent damage during the Ba' games played at Christmas and New Year (see below). They can be found in buildings along the main routes of the Ba' (Bridge Street to Main Street, and Junction Road). They have great cultural significance as a building feature unique to Kirkwall.



*Protective boards for the Ba' over windows on St. Magnus Lane*

### Relationship to surrounding area

Kirkwall is the main settlement of Orkney, a status derived from a number of factors:

- It is by far the largest settlement in Orkney by area and population, with over 40% of the county's population residing in the town.
- It is the administrative capital, and seat of local government.
- It is the main ecclesiastical centre in Orkney, with St. Magnus' Cathedral (the largest church in Orkney) and churches and religious institutions from a wider range of denominations than any other settlement in Orkney.
- Thanks to its central position in the archipelago, it is a major

transport hub: the North Isles ferry terminal is at Kirkwall harbour; ferries to Aberdeen and Shetland depart from Hatston pier to the west of the town; Grimsetter airport immediately to the east of the town is served by a shuttle-bus service from the Travel Centre; the Travel Centre on Junction Road is the main bus terminal in Orkney.

Kirkwall is well-linked by road to other settlements in Orkney:

- Via the A965 to Finstown, Dounby and Stromness;
- Via the A960 to the airport, Tankerness, Toab and Deerness; and
- Via the A961 to St. Mary's, Burray and St. Margaret's Hope.

Kirkwall is situated on the north side of a thin isthmus between West Mainland and East Mainland, on the south side of which is the tiny settlement of Scapa. This isthmus is bounded by Wideford Hill and Chinglebraes to the west, and East Hill, Tower Hill and Tradespark to the east. Significant urban development has occurred only on the north side of this valley, meaning that the south end of the isthmus, at Crantit and Scapa, largely retains its rural character.

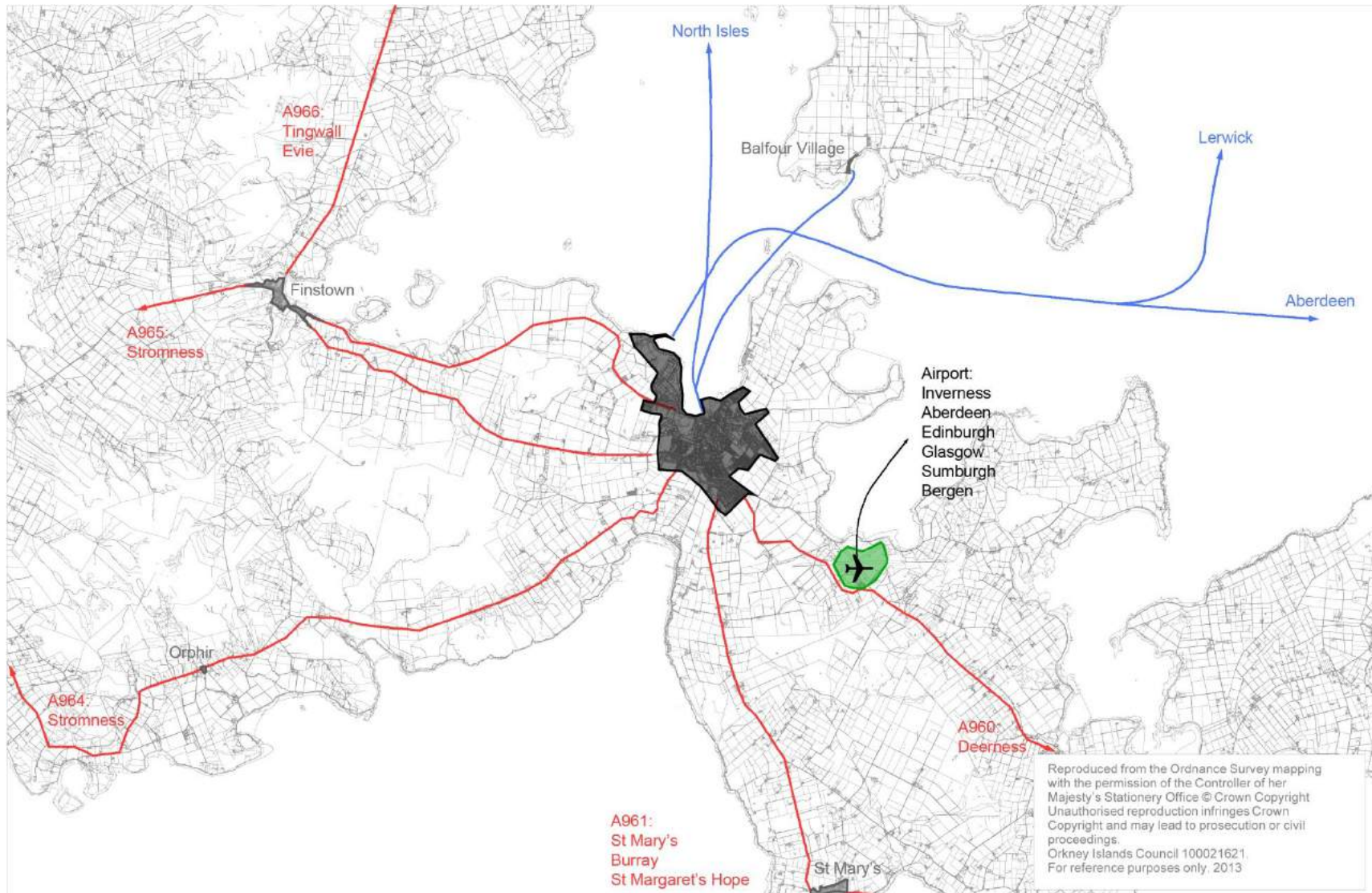


Diagram showing Kirkwall in its wider context, including key transport links

## Key views in, out and within

From the historic entrances to Kirkwall, arriving by ship at Kirkwall Bay or Scapa, the Cathedral dominates the views of the valley, although this visual dominance is beginning to be eroded by wind turbine development in the surrounding landscape.



*The view from Scapa Pier towards Kirkwall*

Arriving by road from the west or east provides an elevated view over the town, in which the Peedie Sea and harbour are dominant visual elements. The importance of trees in these elevated views should be noted, as should the prominence of large-scale development on the hills towards the edge of the town, such as the new Papdale Hostel.



*The view from the main road from Finstown*

The view of the town across the Peedie Sea, seen when approaching on the main road from Stromness, is an important first impression of the town, and is currently dominated by the Cathedral and the Power Station.



*The view towards the town centre from the Ayre*



Looking out from the centre of Kirkwall the most prominent features are:

- Wideford Hill, particularly the communications equipment which is lit at night; and
- The panoramic views of the North Isles.

Within the Conservation Area key views are along arterial routes (e.g. down Victoria Street, Albert Street, King Street), intercut with glimpses down lanes, closes and wynds. These are discussed in more detail within the chapters for individual character areas.



*The view from Brandyquoy Park over the Earl's Palace to Wideford Hill*



## The Ba'

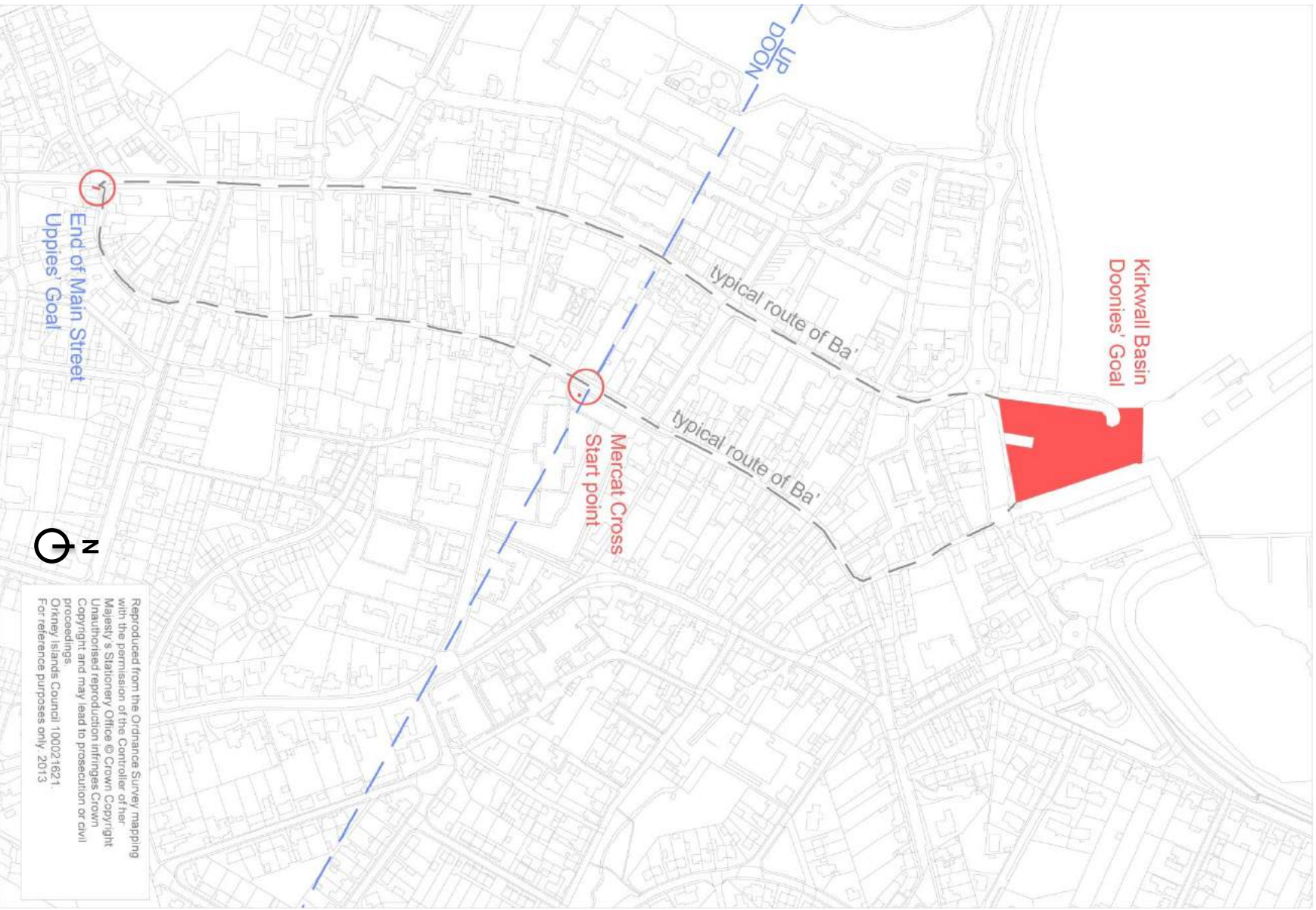
One of Kirkwall's most distinctive traditions is the Ba', a game of medieval football played on Christmas Day and New Year's Day through the streets of the town. Men and boys divide into two teams, depending on which side of the town they are from, and attempt to carry a specially-made football to their respective goals. There are no rules and no limits to the area of play, although action tends to be concentrated in the medieval streets.

Key locations in the town with relevance for the Ba' are:

- The Mercat cross outside the Cathedral: This is where the Ba' is thrown up to start the game.
- St Magnus' Lane: This lane is used as the division between the "Uppies" and the "Doonies" – the two teams, which would traditionally have been the Bishop's men (from the Laverock) and the King's men (from the Burgh).
- The end of Main Street and the harbour: These are the two goals.



*The Mercat Cross on the Kirk Green, where the Ba' is thrown up to start the game*



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Map showing key locations in the town for the Ba' and the division between Up and Doon the town

## The special architectural and historical character of Kirkwall:

As the capital of Orkney for almost a thousand years, Kirkwall has accumulated a wealth and breadth of architecture which is outstanding for a settlement of its size, and represents all the varied cultural and socio-economic influences on its development. This architecture ranges from the Norse St. Magnus' Cathedral to twentieth century seaside bungalows, and continues to develop.

As well as Kirkwall's buildings themselves, the structure of the town, in particular its street pattern, is evidence of the changing relationship between the town and the landscape over the millennium of its existence. The pattern of land reclamation from the Peedie Sea, the development of the harbour, and the later residential development on the hills to the east, all remain visible as testaments to different uses and perceptions of the land and sea over many centuries.

The special character of Kirkwall's Conservation Area therefore lies in the authenticity and integrity of its historic buildings (as well-preserved evidence of the town's development), in the high quality and sympathetic design of its contemporary architecture (which continues the long-standing traditions of development in Kirkwall whilst adding to its architectural legacy on behalf of our generation), and in the street pattern and layout of the town, which shows its changing relationship with the land and sea throughout its history.

## **4. CHARACTER AREA APPRAISALS**

4.1 Harbour

4.2 Burgh and Midtown

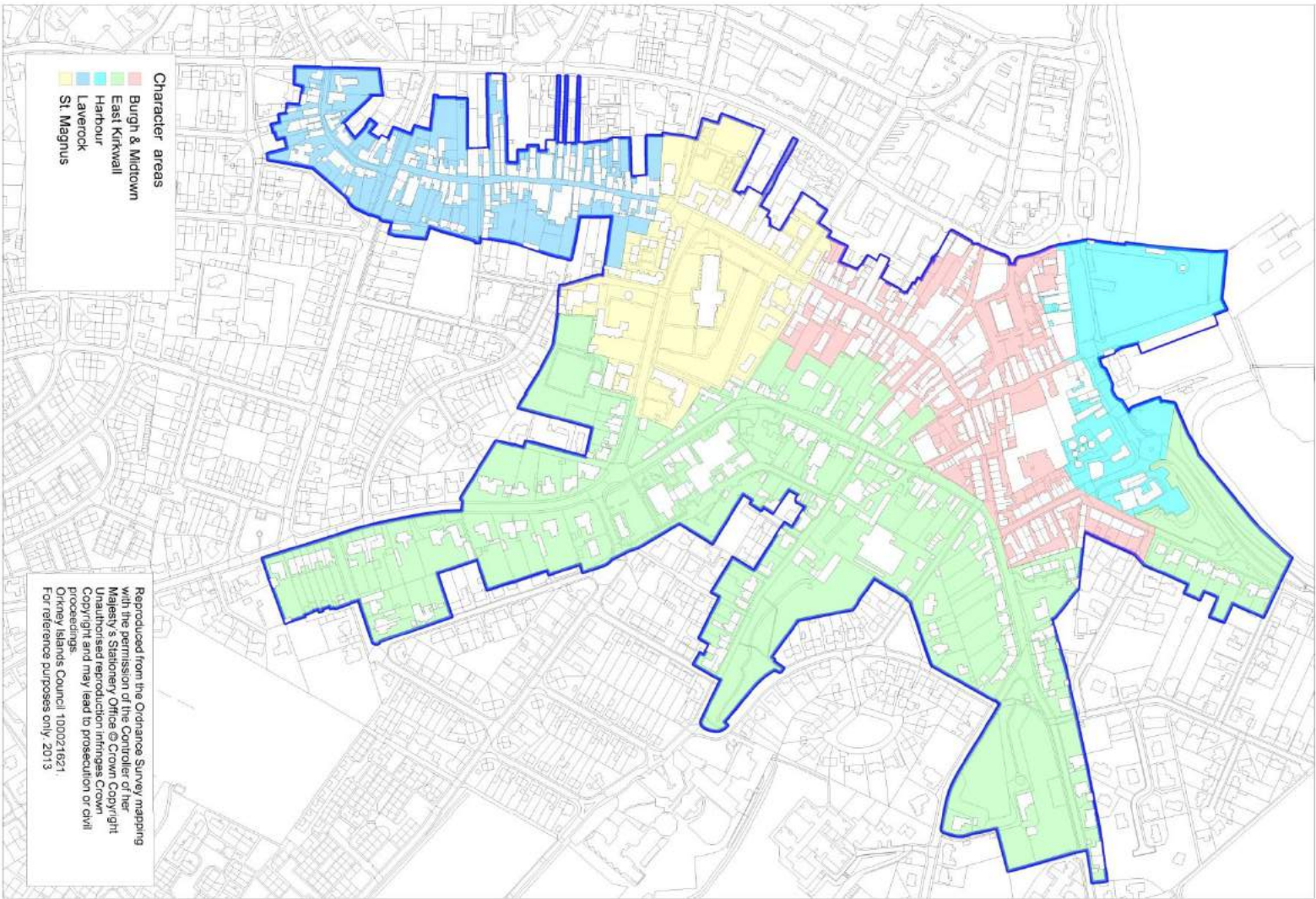
4.3. St Magnus

4.4 Laverock

4.5 East Kirkwall



Map of character areas in Kirkwall's Conservation Area



## 4.1 HARBOUR

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### Introduction:

Kirkwall's harbour area (comprising part of the harbour, Harbour Street and Shore Street, and the buildings forming the harbour front) is one of the key focal areas of the town, both as the main concentration of Orkney's night life and as a working harbour servicing the North Isles ferries, freight vessels, small cruise ships, and other commercial and leisure craft.

Before the construction of the harbour goods were transferred into small rowing boats which were beached on the shore. The Corn Slip allowed for the landing of rents owed to the Earldom estate, and was the only harbour infrastructure accessible directly from Kirkwall Bay, rather than via the Oyce (now known as the Peedie Sea). The East Pier, which runs north from Bridge Street, was designed by George Burn and completed in 1811, to be followed by the West Pier, designed by James Allan, in 1813. Since then the pier system has been frequently rebuilt and expanded; the Conservation Area boundary follows the extent of those original piers only. The land which makes up Harbour Street was originally part of the Ayre (a sand bank), and was bounded to the south by the Oyce. During the medieval period development expanded through gradual land reclamation west of Bridge Street to create the present urban form, with Junction Road and later western expansions being added in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.



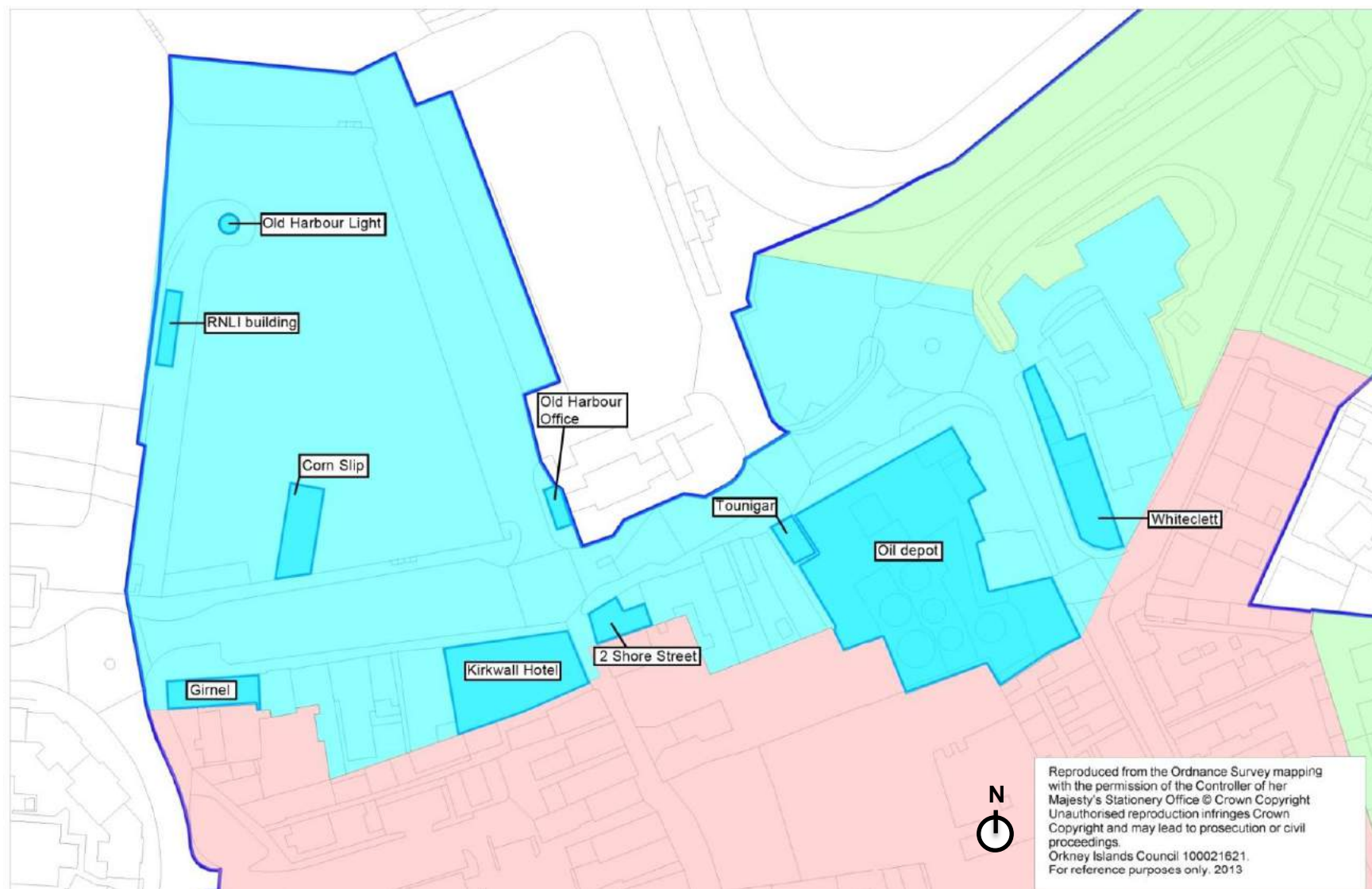
*The West Pier of Kirkwall Harbour*



This area therefore has a strong relationship to the landscape, in its layout and also in its visual connections to other areas: the harbour and harbour front are prominent when seen from approaching vessels, around the Bay of Kirkwall and from the surrounding hills.

The special character of the Harbour area:

The character of this area chiefly comes from: the fact that the harbour remains operational, and very much a centre of maritime activity of all kinds; the strong harbour front formed by the densely packed buildings along Harbour Street, which contains some of Kirkwall's most important and attractive buildings; and the wide street which separates them, which is one of only two large public spaces in the town.



Map of the Harbour character area

Streetscape:

Public space:

There are two main public spaces in this area: the wide streets of Harbour Street and Shore Street, and the piers in the harbour.

All of this area is physically accessible to the public, although access to the harbour is restricted to those “on business”, and pedestrian routes marked out, due to its nature as a working facility. The West Pier is more accessible, as it only houses the RNLi lifeboat, and some effort has previously been made here to encourage visitor access through the provision of benches, artwork, and interpretive signage.



*The West Pier*



*Harbour Street*

## Enclosure and Connections:

The land in this area is generally level, with the sea at a varying height below this. The space is enclosed to the south by the buildings of the harbour front, and to the west and east by the buildings around the harbour and the boundary wall on the West Pier. The northern edge of the original harbour (which forms the Conservation Area boundary) is no longer visible due to subsequent harbour expansion, but the large floodlights and other infrastructure along this edge provide some reference points. At sea level the piers enclose a well-defined area, within which boats at their moorings increase the sense of enclosure.

The main junctions in the area are:

- the junction of Bridge Street, Harbour Street, Shore Street and the East Pier;
- the area connecting Harbour Street, Junction Road, Ayre Road and the West Pier;
- the roundabout connecting Shore Street to St Catherine's Place and the harbour car park.



*The junction of Harbour Street and the East Pier*



*The junction of Shore Street and St. Catherine's Place*



*The junction of Harbour Street and the West Pier*





*Diagram of distribution of buildings and open space, and paths and key junctions in the Harbour character area*



Key views:

The main views through the area are:

- the view of Harbour Street from the harbour and approaching vessels;
- the view north across the harbour from Harbour Street and Shore Street; and
- the views east and west along Harbour Street and Shore Street, which terminate in the frontage along Ayre Road and the ambulance depot respectively.



*The West Pier*



*The view along Shore Street*



*The harbour*

### Street surfaces:

Harbour Street and Shore Street are surfaced with asphalt, accompanied by sandstone flagstone pavements, probably of local origin. The piers themselves are surfaced with a combination of asphalt and concrete. The Corn Slip retains its original sandstone setts, and is the largest area of surviving historic surfacing in the character area.



*The Corn Slip*

Street furniture:

The most prominent types of street furniture around the harbour are:

- the zebra crossings by the junctions with Bridge Street and Junction Road, which are prominent all along Harbour Street;
- the black railings which line the harbour along Harbour Street; and
- the large floodlights which surround the harbour.

Other key features are:

- the decorative plaques on the West Pier, which can often be obscured by parked vehicles; and
- the disused sea mine on Harbour Street, now used for charitable donations, which is a prominent feature at the entrance to the harbour.



*The zebra crossing on Shore Street*



*The floodlights around the harbour*



*The plaques on the West Pier*



*The black railings alongside the harbour*



*The disused mine on Harbour Street used for donations*

Green spaces:

The only green spaces within this area are found around the Shore Street / St. Catherine's Place Roundabout, namely:

- the grass verges around the streets and car park; and
- the walled garden at Whiteclett, on St Catherine's Place.



*The garden at Whiteclett, St. Catherine's Place*



*The grass verge opposite Whiteclett on Shore Street*



## Boundary walls and railings:

There are relatively few boundary walls within this area, as buildings tend to be built right up to the edges of their plots. Within the harbour only the West Pier still retains its stone boundary wall, which now separates the accessible area of the pier from the moorings for the Shapinsay ferry. There are a number of examples around the Shore St/St Catherine's Place roundabout, including:

- the high boundary wall for the fuel depot;
- low stone walls around the car park and harbour; and
- the walled garden at Whiteclett.

Boundary railings are not found in this area, except those surrounding the harbour.

There is one example on the harbour front of 'almost-adjointing' buildings, a boundary type common elsewhere in Orkney, between 18 and 20 Harbour Street.



*The railings around the Harbour on Harbour Street*



*The boundary wall around the fuel depot on Shore Street*



*The historic stone wall on the West Pier*



## Parking:

Parking plays a significant part in the streetscape of the harbour area. There are a number of areas used for parking, including:

- the extensive stretch of designated parking bays on either side of Harbour Street;
- the car park off the Shore Street Roundabout;
- parking on the piers, both in designated bays and more informally (including on the West Pier).



*Parking in designated bays on Harbour Street*



*Parking in designated bays on the East Pier*



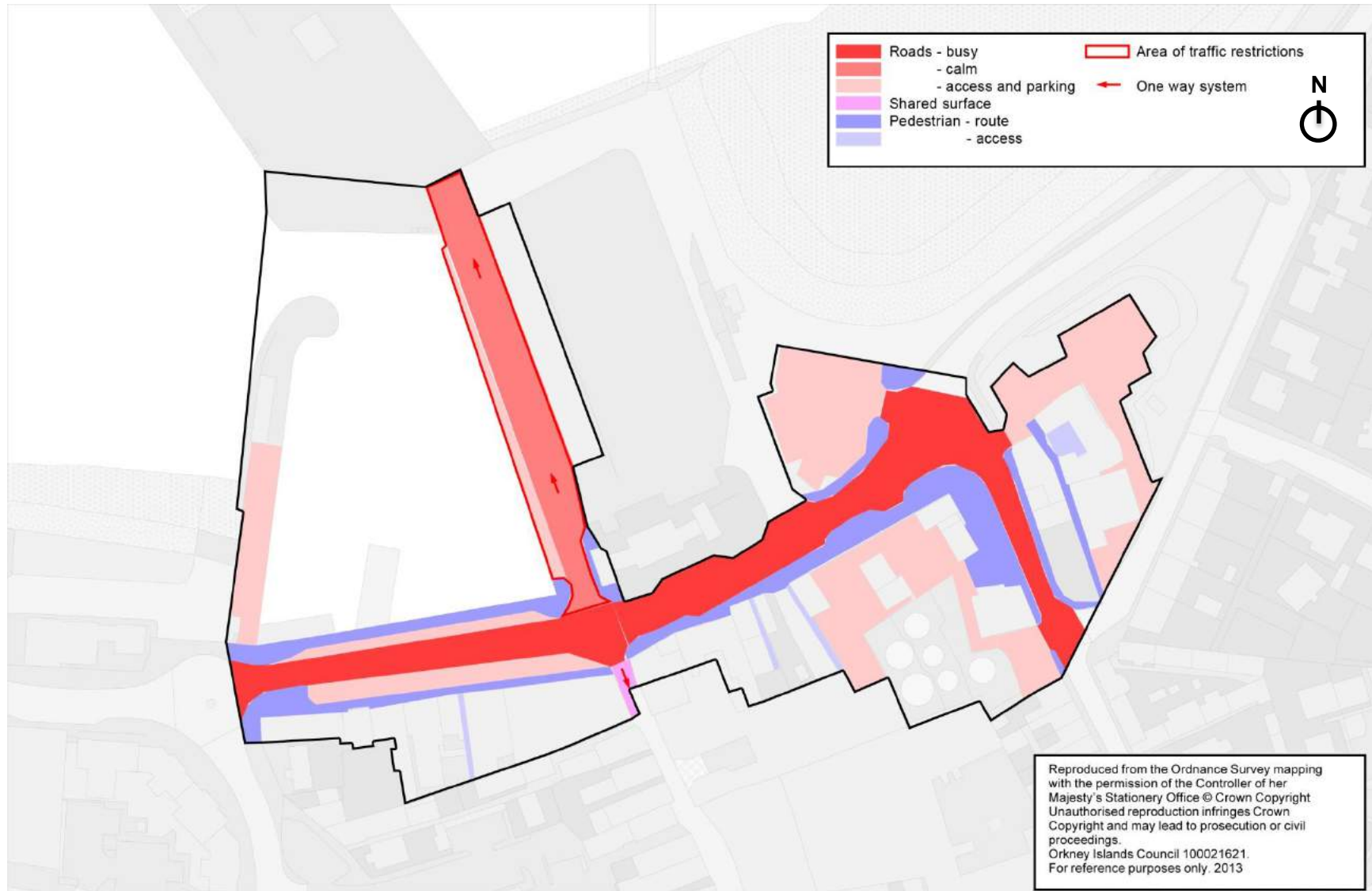
*The Shore Street car park*

## Activity and Movement:

The area is busy at various times throughout the day and night, predominantly in the following ways:

- The south sides of Shore Street and Harbour Street host a concentration of pubs, bars and food outlets which act as the focal point for Orkney's nightlife. They are therefore busy with pedestrians at night, particularly at the weekends.
- Harbour Street and Shore Street form part of the main vehicular route along the coast for traffic heading along the Ayre, out of town to the east, or along Bridge Street and Albert Street. This tends to be much busier during the day than at night.
- Harbour Street and Shore Street provide access to the harbour, which requires a significant volume of vehicular traffic for its operation, including HGVs, and also provides vehicle and passenger access to the North Isles ferries. This is much busier during the day than at night, and whilst ferries are operating.
- The harbour complex as a whole attracts a large amount of marine traffic, including freight container ships and cruise ships: the old harbour within the Conservation Area serves the RNLI Lifeboat, which has a purpose-built dock on the West Pier, and a number of small pleasure craft and working boats. The west side of the West Pier is used for mooring the Shapinsay ferry, which comes in and out several times a day. The harbour is also used for landing boats from very large cruise ships anchored in the bay, for which a temporary reception facility is formed on the East Pier.

Vehicles and marine vessels are therefore predominant during the day and early evening along the roads and around the harbour, followed in the late evening by busy pedestrian activity along the south pavements of Harbour Street and Shore Street, which is considerable at the weekends. Traffic overall increases in the summer months, including sightseeing pedestrians around the harbour.



Map showing general levels of pedestrian and vehicular traffic in the Harbour character area

## Buildings:

There are a significant number of historic buildings in and around the harbour, which reflect its role as a key area in the town over the last three centuries. The oldest buildings in this area are found along Shore Street, dating from the seventeenth century. Most other buildings on Harbour Street and Shore Street date from the nineteenth century or earlier. Twentieth century additions have tended to be functional in nature and design, including the fuel storage facility and most of the current harbour buildings.

### Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments:

There are a number of listed buildings within this area:

- Category B:
  - the original harbour itself, comprising the West and East Piers as included in the Conservation Area, the Harbour offices, and the harbour light which sits on the West Pier;
  - 20 and 22 Harbour Street (the Girnol-keeper's House and the Girnol itself, respectively);
  - the Kirkwall Hotel;
  - 16 and 18 Shore Street;
  - and 22 Shore Street, also known as Tounigar.
- Category C: 2 Bridge Street/Shore Street.

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments.



*The Harbour offices on the East Pier*





**Legend**

Conservation Area Boundary

**Listing Category**

A

B

C

**Character Areas**

Burgh & Midtown

East Kirkwall

Harbour

Laverock

St. Magnus

Scheduled Monument

NB Listed buildings are indicated for reference only. This map does not show the extent of any curtilage which may be listed.  
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*Map of listed buildings in the Harbour character area*

## Key Buildings & Townscape:

These listed buildings also make up most of the key buildings within this area in terms of impact on the streetscape and acting as local landmarks:

- Around the harbour itself the old harbour light, now disused, the Corn Slip, and the old harbour office are key points of reference.
- Key elements of the harbour frontage (along Harbour Street) are at either end: the Kirkwall Hotel, which is the largest and most prominent building visible from the harbour, and the Girnol (now Orkney Sailing Club).
- Tounigar (22 Shore Street) occupies a prominent position on the approach from the east as the beginning of the dense urban fabric after the fuel depot.



*The approach to the town centre along Shore Street, with Tounigar prominent on the left*



*The old Harbour light on the West Pier*



*The harbour front, seen across the harbour*

In addition to these prominent buildings, there are many other buildings which play a valuable role in defining the character of the townscape. These include:

- nos. 16 and 18 Shore Street: these act as a companion to Tounigar, and are as good examples of a gable-ended type of traditional townhouse accessed from a close.

*Right: No. 16 Shore Street and outbuildings*

*Below: Notes on how No. 16-18 Shore Street and outbuildings contribute to the special character of the area*





- nos. 16 and 18 Harbour Street (The Orkney Club and Sylva Bay): these are good examples of a nineteenth-century additions to the streetscape which, whilst not large in scale, are elegant in proportion and well considered in detailing.

*Right: 16-18 Harbour Street*

*Below: Notes on how 16-18 Harbour Street contributes to the special character of the area*



- the St Ola Hotel: this is an example of a relatively large building which blends well into the townscape whilst still maintaining its character as a large hotel.

*Left: The St. Ola Hotel, Harbour Street*

*Below: Notes on how The St. Ola Hotel contributes to the special character of the area*





## Plot Layouts:

There are a number of different plot layouts and building heights within this area:

- within the harbour area buildings are laid out along piers parallel to their length, usually in long thin single storey rectangular buildings.
- Along Harbour Street and Shore Street buildings usually occupy all or most of their plots, and are generally packed tight against the street frontage and against each other. Buildings are generally two or three storeys high, with the exception of the Kirkwall Hotel at four storeys.
- In the area enclosed between Shore Street, St Catherine's Place and Cromwell Road there are two types of plot layout evident:
  - along St Catherine's Place there is a dense two storey urban terraced layout at Whiteclett which is comparable to that further south along St Catherine's Place, and includes a walled garden;
  - the rest of the development is grouped into a single large modern complex set centrally within a car park and green space, enclosed by a low stone wall.

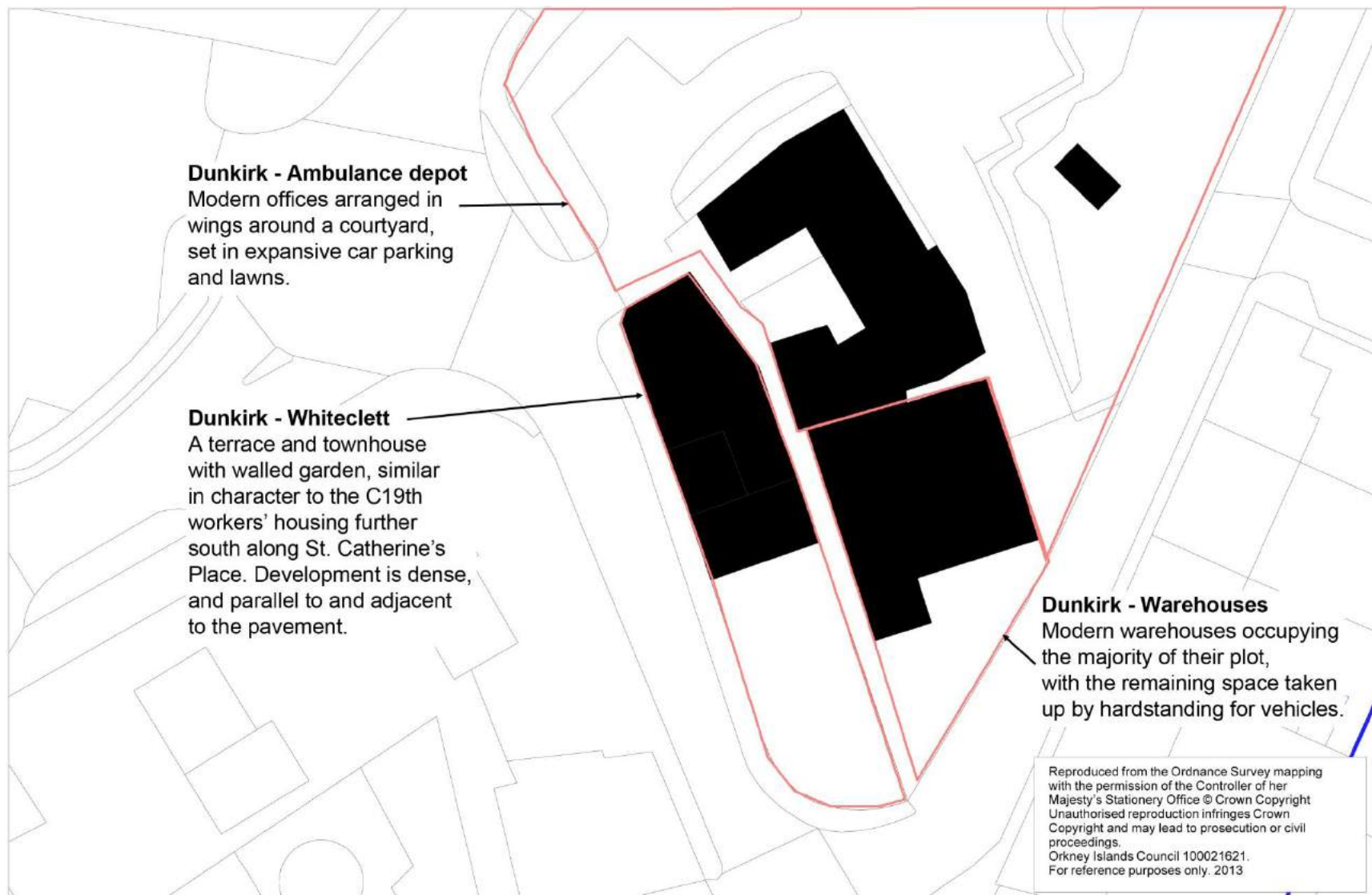
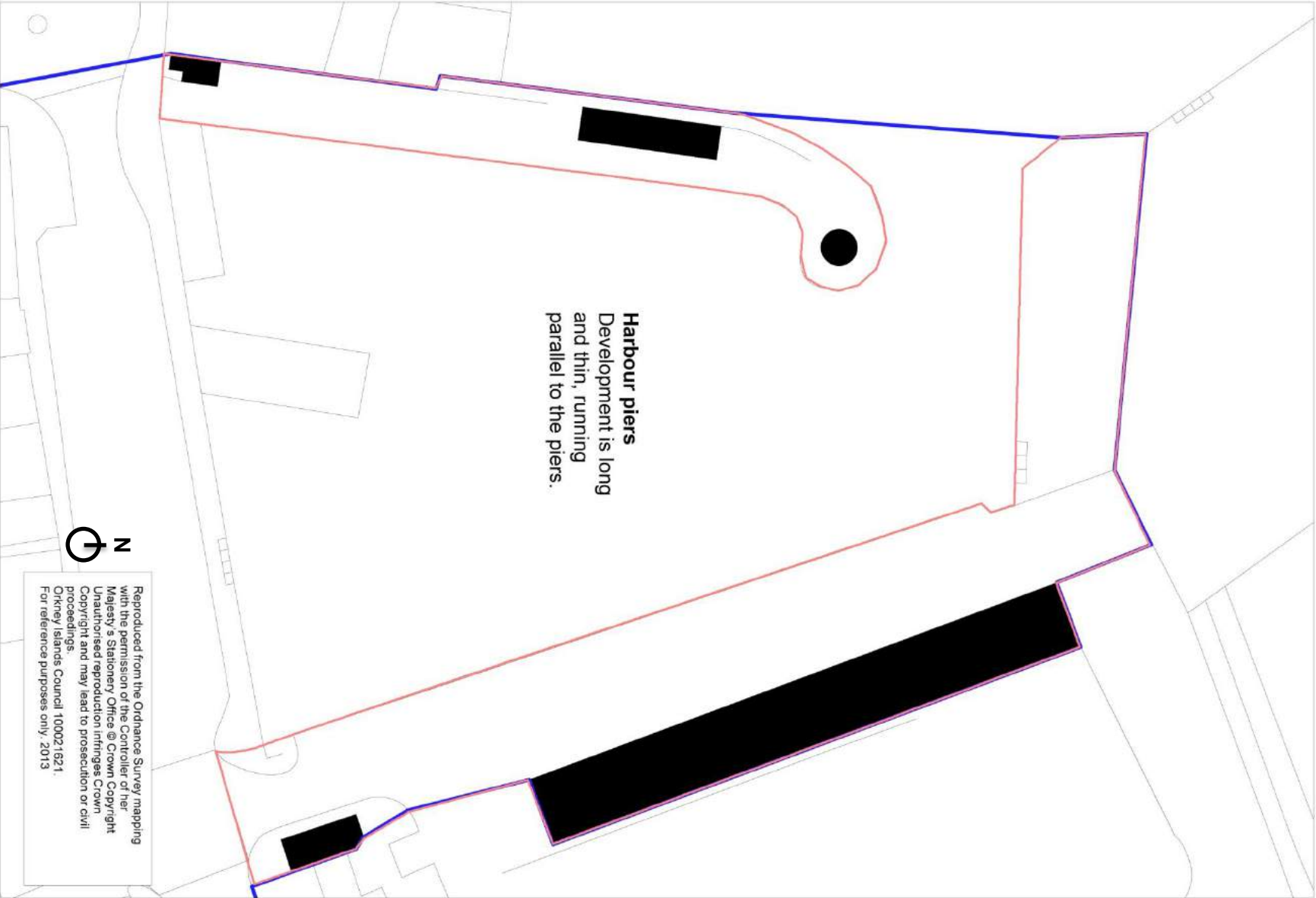


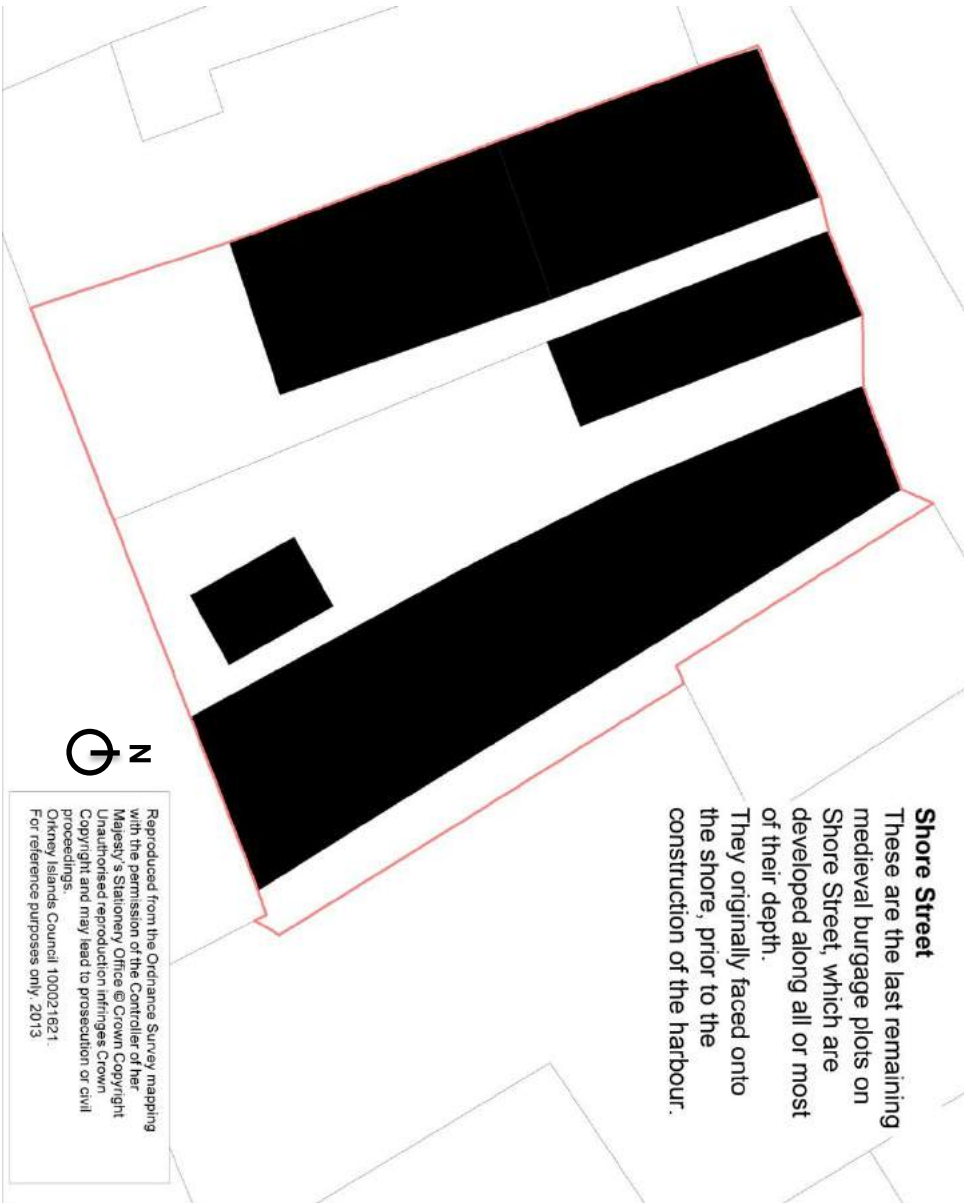
Diagram of plot layouts at Dunkirk



*Diagram of plot layouts on Harbour Street*



*Diagram of plot layouts on the harbour piers*



*Diagram of plot layouts on Shore Street*



## Uses:

Buildings within the harbour itself are used exclusively for purposes connected with the harbour's operation, whilst on the harbour front hotels and hospitality feature prominently. There are also a number of residential and club buildings along Harbour Street and Shore Street. At the eastern end of Shore Street there is a large fuel storage facility. The buildings at Dunkirk (bounded by Shore Street, St Catherine's Place and Cromwell Road) include warehouses, residential properties and an ambulance depot.

## Building Components:

### Roofs:

Roofs of historic buildings in this area generally have a steep pitch ( $>45^\circ$ ) and are covered with slates and tiles of various types. In most cases this slate appears to be Welsh, but in a few cases Orkney sandstone tiles remain, either over the whole roof (Tounigar) or just the lower reaches near the eaves (the Girnel).



*The Kirkwall Hotel, Harbour Street*

Roofs are generally plain, except for the addition of roof-lights and vents on a few properties. Roof-lights appear to all be modern, only a few of which are of sympathetic design, and tend to be used where the gables of traditional buildings face to the street. The St Ola and Kirkwall Hotels have more developed roofscapes, with dormer windows and decorative slate pyramids protruding above the main roof level.



*The Girnel, Harbour Street*

Traditional roofs often include crow-stepped gables, which occasionally incorporate carved stones recording dates or initials, presumably relating to the building's construction. These crow-steps are built in the Scottish manner, using squared blocks. Where skews are used as edge details they are built from stone in a traditional manner, rather than formed of cement.

Chimneys in this area are generally plain in design.



*Chimney on Shore Street*



*The Girdel-keeper's house on Harbour Street*

Walls:

Walls of historic buildings in this area are generally formed of exposed stone rather than rendered, with a few exceptions, such as the façade of 14 Harbour Street (Helgi's) and 2 Bridge Street/Shore Street.

On older properties, such as the Girnel, this stonework is made up from traditional split local sandstone, with larger blocks reinforcing the openings in an irregular manner.

On Victorian properties such as the St. Ola Hotel this contrast between stone types is used decoratively, with improvements in stonemasonry and transport allowing the use of ashlar blocks for details and more regularly shaped local stone for the main wall construction.

The Kirkwall Hotel is the best example of decorative stonework, particularly due to its use of rusticated quoins and integrated carved panels.



*Stonework at the Girnel, Harbour Street*



*Cement render on the extension to the Kirkwall Hotel*



*Carved stonework on the Kirkwall Hotel*



*Left:  
Timber  
boarding at  
Dunkirk*

*Right:  
Cement  
rendered  
concrete at the  
West Pier*



*A partly rendered façade on Shore Street*



*The façade of the St. Ola Hotel, Harbour Street*





Windows:

Very few historic windows remain in this area, as most have been replaced with modern synthetic frames and double glazing.

The Girnel is the best remaining example of traditional windows, and has a combination of nine panel fixed windows and twelve pane sash-and-case windows.

Next door at the Girnel-keeper's house there is a combination of four pane sash-and-case windows and twelve pane sash-and-case windows.



*Windows at the Girnel*



*Windows at the Girnel-keeper's house, Harbour Street*



Doors:

Doors in this area are generally solid wooden panels, often brightly coloured. Commercial buildings such as hotels usually incorporate some glazing into the door, in a variety of patterns.

Glazing panels above the door are relatively rare in this area.

Thresholds are generally formed by recessing the main door slightly from the street. The manner of achieving this varies from a simple orthogonal recess to the ornamented surround of the main door at the Kirkwall Hotel.



*16-18 Harbour Street*



*The entrance to the Kirkwall Hotel*

*The door to the Girmel, Harbour Street*

### Rainwater Goods:

Gutters and downpipes are generally traditional in character, made from cast iron and painted black. An ornamental example is at 16-18 Harbour Street, which is interlaced with the stonework. Next door at the Girdel-keeper's house the downpipes are painted orange, although bright colours such as this are the exception.



*Ornamental downpipes at 16-18 Harbour Street*

### Designed Shopfronts:

The only designed shopfront in this area is at 14 Harbour Street (Helgi's). This is traditional and plain in style, containing only a cornice and fascia, although this is supplemented by modern signage affixed to the wall.



*The shopfront at Helgi's*

## Conclusions

### Streetscape issues:

The streetscape along Harbour Street and Shore Street is generally of a sufficient quality to fit in with the character of the area, but around the harbour there are some issues:

- The black railings around the harbour need regular maintenance, as their condition is starting to deteriorate. Given their importance to Harbour Street and the harbour, this has an effect on the wider character of the area.
- Some improvements have previously been made to the West Pier to encourage pedestrian access (including providing a bench and erecting decorative plaques), but these are not obvious from Harbour Street. In keeping with the principles of the Council's developing place-making strategy, the type of surfacing and prevalence of parking should be reconsidered if this aim is to be achieved.
- The issue of how to integrate functional harbour infrastructure into a high quality pedestrian environment should be considered in any future regeneration of the harbour area. Key points to consider would be:
  - ensuring that the harbour floodlights and other infrastructure contribute positively to the character of



*Chipped paintwork on the harbour railings*

the area;

- ensuring that regular maintenance of the harbour and associated walkways occurs, and opportunities for upgrading or enhancing infrastructure in a manner which contributes positively to the area's character are taken;
  - ensuring that the harbour is free of litter and pollution;
  - ensuring that signage regarding access is clear, and does not discourage legitimate access (including leisure access where attempts are being made to encourage this);
  - ensuring that harbour infrastructure which is no longer required and does not contribute positively to the character of the area is removed to avoid clutter; and
  - ensuring that development or activity in the wider harbour area (outwith the Conservation Area) does not have an adverse impact on the setting of those parts of the harbour within the Conservation Area.
- The busy traffic along Harbour Street acts as a barrier to pedestrians crossing to visit the harbour, and inhibits an appreciation of the connection between the buildings on the harbour front and the harbour itself. Pedestrian access is restricted to zebra crossings at either end of Harbour Street, which do not in themselves make a positive contribution to the character of the area. The streetscape would benefit from proposals which improve pedestrian access across Harbour Street, whilst reducing the visual impact of pedestrian crossings and other signage. This should be in accordance with the Council's Placemaking Strategy.



Buildings:

Condition:

There are a number of properties whose poor condition affects the character of the area as a whole:

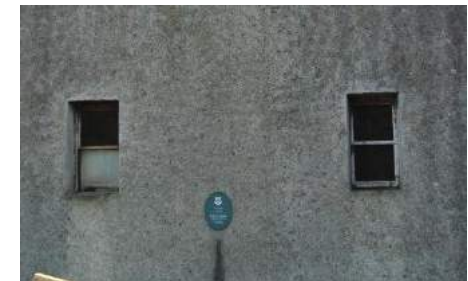
- The historic part of the Kirkwall Hotel is suffering badly from erosion, due to its exposed location and soft sandstone carvings. This is the most prominent building in this area, and its current condition detracts from the character of the wider area.
- 16, 18 and 20 Shore Street are in a poor state of repair, and need repair work and renovation. Tounigar is one of the oldest buildings in Kirkwall, dating back to at least the eighteenth century, and together with its neighbours at nos. 16 and 18 forms the last fragment of the medieval town on the harbour front. The key issues on the site are the buildings' conditions and the poor conditions of the sheds in between them. The current prominence of Tounigar when viewed next to the oil depot makes its appearance from the street a priority; in the long term the improvement of this site would be an important first step towards re-establishing the urban fabric in this area through the potential re-development of the fuel depot site.
- The appearance of some of the older harbour buildings (the small modernist building at the head of the West Pier and the old harbour office) detracts from an appreciation of the harbour as a whole, due more to their prominent position rather than the severity of their condition. Minor works to improve their external appearance would improve the character of the area to a degree disproportionate to the scale of those works. There is also a real opportunity for high quality modern design in any new development in the harbour area, given its prominence.



*Building at the head of the West Pier*



*Eroding sandstone on the Kirkwall Hotel*



*Broken windows at Tounigar, Shore Street*



### Inappropriate Repairs:

The most common type of inappropriate repair in this area is the replacement of historic windows with modern white PVC glazing units, which generally detract from the character of the buildings on which they have been installed by distorting the carefully designed proportions of the façade and distracting from carved stonework and ornamental detailing. The Kirkwall and St Ola Hotels are the most prominent examples of this, although it is widespread throughout the area. Inappropriate roof and wall treatments (such as the application of cement render to stonework) are not nearly so widespread in this area, although they do occur on some buildings.



*Unsympathetic window replacement at the Kirkwall Hotel*

## Redevelopment Opportunities:

A number of buildings detract from the character of the area through their original design, and should be considered opportunities for redevelopment:

- The fuel depot on Shore Street is by far the largest such area, which replaced a large section of the historic heart of Kirkwall. The current arrangement of industrial buildings and oil tanks has no relation to the layout or design of the buildings which surround it, and detracts significantly from the character of Shore Street. The potential redevelopment of this site at some point in the future would be a unique opportunity for high-quality modern design in the centre of Kirkwall, which could greatly enhance the special character of the whole harbour front.
- Whilst one of the workshop-style outbuildings between nos. 16/18 and 20 Shore Street is historic, with an intact stone gable facing the street, some of the others distract from the historic character of the adjacent buildings. The shed adjacent to Tounigar has a large surround made from corrugated metal sheeting, and appears to lead through to a much larger modern building finished with cement render. The replacement of these sheds with more appropriate designs should be considered, taking the remaining historic outbuilding as a precedent.
- Whilst the extension to the Kirkwall Hotel was in some aspects designed to be sympathetic to the historic structure (through aligning the storey heights and continuing some of the building lines), there is an opportunity to improve its relationship to the surrounding buildings through a well-designed renovation. Following the principles of the current Supplementary Guidance (*Listed Buildings and the Orkney Local List*), a



*The fuel depot on Shore Street*

contrasting approach which aims to build on the extension's character as an obviously modern structure could be considered. Key aspects to be considered include the colours and materials of the external walls, the design and colours of the windows, the rainwater goods and the external balcony railings on the second floor. If successful, this would enhance the appearance of the harbour front, and thereby contribute positively to the character of the area.



*The Kirkwall Hotel and its modernist extension*



*Outbuildings on Shore Street*

## Summary of key points:

### Strengths:

Unlike many historic harbours, Kirkwall harbour remains highly active. This is an essential part of the character of the harbour area, which has the potential to be renovated as a thriving public space.

The buildings along the harbour front, from the Girnol to the Kirkwall Hotel, create a strong sense of enclosure, which gives the dense urban core of the town a clear boundary.

The area contains many structures which are of great historical and architectural merit. These include town landmarks, such as the Kirkwall Hotel, and locally rare structures such as the old harbour light on the West Pier.

### Weaknesses:

Several prominent buildings are in poor repair or of unsympathetic design, which detract from the character of the area.

Traffic along Harbour Street, combined with an inadequate provision of pedestrian crossings, creates a barrier to pedestrians which discourages access to the harbour.

### Opportunities:

There are several potential opportunities for high quality modern development within this area, notably at the oil depot and around the harbour.

Harbour Street and the harbour itself have the potential to become an important recreational and working public space for residents and visitors alike.

### Threats:

Continued neglect of the historic buildings in poor condition could lead to serious structural damage and loss of buildings in the long term, and an erosion of the special character of the area in the short term. Inappropriate development, particularly around the harbour, could adversely impact on the setting of the Conservation Area.



## 4.2 BURGH & MIDTOWN

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### Introduction:

The Burgh, being the original settlement between the Papdale Burn and what is now Shore Street, and the Midtown between the Burgh and the Cathedral, form the commercial heart of Kirkwall. Originally the site of St. Olaf's church and Rognvald Brusason's drinking hall when Kirkwall was founded, the area is now the principal shopping district in Orkney. Development is mainly arranged around Bridge Street and Albert Street, which are laid out along the original (natural) shorelines of Kirkwall. Originally built between these shorelines and the rising slopes to the east, the area was expanded through land reclamation to the west of Bridge Street and Albert Street from the medieval period onwards, culminating in the mid-nineteenth-century creation of Junction Road, which provided a bypass for harbour traffic. The Papdale Burn, which originally met the Peedie Sea at the junction of Bridge Street and Albert Street, is now culverted throughout this area.

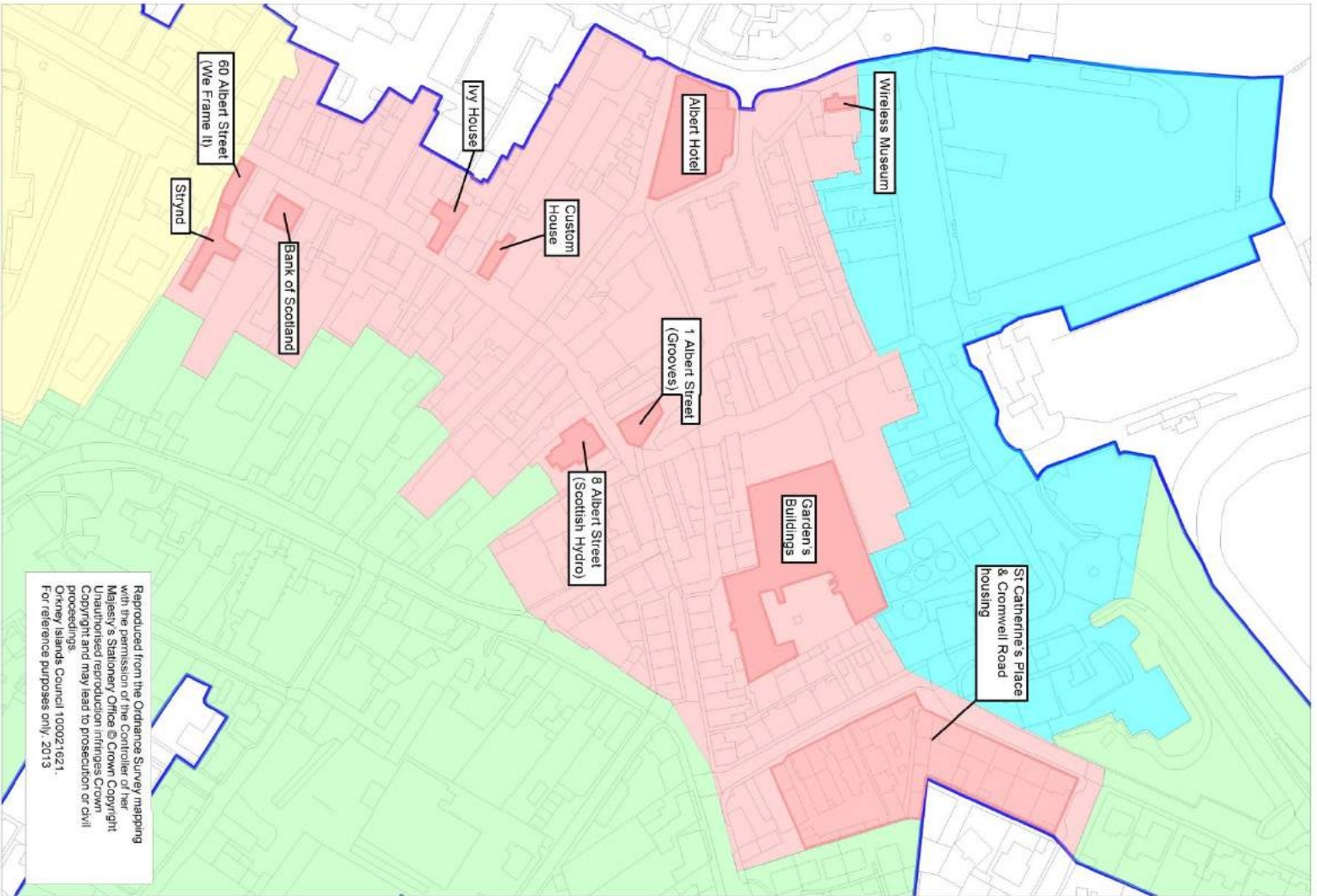


*The Burgh and Midtown on the 1832 Great Reform Act Plan of Kirkwall.  
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The special character of the Burgh and Midtown:

The special character of the Burgh and Midtown lies in the preservation and evolution of its medieval arrangement (as represented both in the density of the burgage-plot layout and the continued use of the historic shoreline for the street network) and in the consistent character and high-quality detailing of its architecture. The tightly-packed herringbone arrangement of the plots and closes off Bridge Street and Albert Street, which was continued in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century terraces, closes and wynds to the east, ensures that the historic spatial character of the area remains tangible to this day. The prevalence of prominent, well-detailed buildings, predominantly from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, adds great interest and distinctiveness to the character of the area as a whole.



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Map of the Burgh and Midtown character area

## Streetscape:

### Public space:

There are very few open public spaces within this area, and many of the lanes and courtyards have a semi-private character, delimited by thresholds with main streets. The only large open space is the area in front of Garden's buildings off Bridge Street, although this is not in public ownership.



*The open area in front of Garden's buildings, Bridge Street*

## Enclosure and Connections:

Most of the area is formed of narrow streets and tightly-packed plots, which give a strong sense of enclosure in the streets and lanes. The main exceptions to this are the car parks on and behind Bridge Street.

The area is well connected to the rest of Kirkwall, lying at the historic centre of the town. The main junctions in the area are:

- The junction of Bridge Street, Harbour Street and Shore Street;
- The junctions at either end of St. Catherine's Place and Cromwell Road;
- The connection to Junction Road via the large car park to the west of Bridge Street;
- The numerous connections provided to neighbouring areas via the lanes and closes leading off Albert Street, including Laing Street and the Strynd;
- The end of Albert Street, leading into Broad Street.



*The junction of Albert Street and Laing Street*





*Diagram of distribution of buildings and open space, and paths and key junctions in the Burgh and Midtown character area*



Key views:

Most of the key views within the area are along the main streets, and at the key entrances to the area. These include:

- The view from Broad Street into Albert Street;
- The views to/from St. Catherine's Place;
- The view from East Road down into Garden Street/Bridge Street Wynd;
- The views to/from Bridge Street and the harbour area.



*The view down Bridge Street from Harbour Street*

- The views into each of the courtyards, closes and lanes from the principal streets.



*View from Albert Street down close to 41 Albert Street*

## Street surfaces:

Along Bridge Street and Albert Street, and many of the associated wynds, lanes and closes, flagstones are used for paving. These are generally of sandstone, but along Bridge Street and Albert Street the central strip of flagstones, one carriageway wide, is made up of concrete flagstones to allow for the increased wear caused by vehicular traffic. Streets in other parts of the area are generally surfaced with standard road materials, notably asphalt.



*The shared surface of concrete and sandstone flagstones at the junction of Bridge Street and Albert Street*



Street furniture:

Due to the narrow streets there is little room for street furniture, which is mainly confined to traditional hand-painted street signage, red telephone boxes and litter bins. The hand-painted signs in particular have a significant contribution to the character of the area disproportionate to their size.



*A traditional hand-painted sign leading off Albert Street*



*Street furniture on Albert Street*

## Green spaces:

In this dense urban area green spaces are to be found in private gardens only, which, where visible from the public realm, make an important contribution to the character of the area. Many gardens formed part of the historic burgage-plot layout, such as behind the properties on the east side of Albert Street. Another notable example is the shared garden behind St. Catherine's Place, which exemplifies the communal living arrangements implicit in early nineteenth-century workers' housing. Although generally not visible from surrounding streets, trees are common in many gardens and courtyards in this area, due both to the shelter afforded by the dense urban fabric and the length of time the area has been inhabited. The Big Tree on Albert Street, which is reputed to have been planted by the notable eighteenth-century Orcadian Robert Laing, has considerable cultural significance as the most prominently-placed tree of its size in Kirkwall, and dominates the section of Albert Street between the Ivy House and Broad Street.



*The Big Tree on Albert Street*



*The lawn within the St Catherine's Place housing*



*A tree in a burgage plot west of Albert Street*



### Boundary walls and railings:

Stone boundary walls are generally used to enclose gardens and car parks, with the walls around the Strynd being most prominent in the streetscape. Some low boundary walls are constructed of concrete blockwork, but these are often rendered, as outside the Ivy House at 43 Albert Street. Wrought iron gates and railings are sometimes used to demarcate private courtyards or access lanes, with the railings around the Custom House at 33 Albert Street a particularly good example. There are a number of boundaries with 'almost adjoining' buildings in this area, principally along Albert Street.



*The wall and gate around the Ivy House on Albert Street*

### Parking:

The main car park in this area is the large car park west of Bridge Street, although there is provision for temporary parking on Albert Street, and there are private car parks off both Bridge Street (in front of Garden's buildings) and Albert Street (in front of the Bank of Scotland). There is also a car park amongst the Wynds to the east of Bridge Street.

## Activity and Movement:

As the main shopping streets in Kirkwall, Bridge Street and Albert Street are busy with pedestrians during shop opening hours (typically from 9 o'clock until around 5.30, Monday to Saturday). Outwith these times they are generally quiet, except in the summer when the area is a focal point for tourists. Access to many properties off Albert Street and Bridge Street is generally only possible on foot. Pedestrian traffic around the Wynds and St. Catherine's Place is generally for access only.

Vehicular traffic is heavily restricted along Bridge Street and Albert Street, which discourages through traffic. Albert Street has additional restrictions between Laing Street and Broad Street. Bridge Street and Albert Street are occasionally closed to vehicles to allow parades, fairs or large numbers of cruise-ship tourists to use the streets. St. Catherine's Place is generally used as a bypass for through traffic, connecting Shore Street with East Road and Queen Street.



*Signage of traffic restrictions on Albert Street*





## Buildings:

The oldest structure in the area is the archway in St. Olaf's Wynd which was relocated from the original Norse church which stood nearby, and dates from the sixteenth century. There is a concentration of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century buildings along Bridge Street and Albert Street, with the remaining buildings dating mainly from the nineteenth century. The workers' housing along St. Catherine's Place and Cromwell Road dates from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.



*The archway in St. Olaf's Wynd*

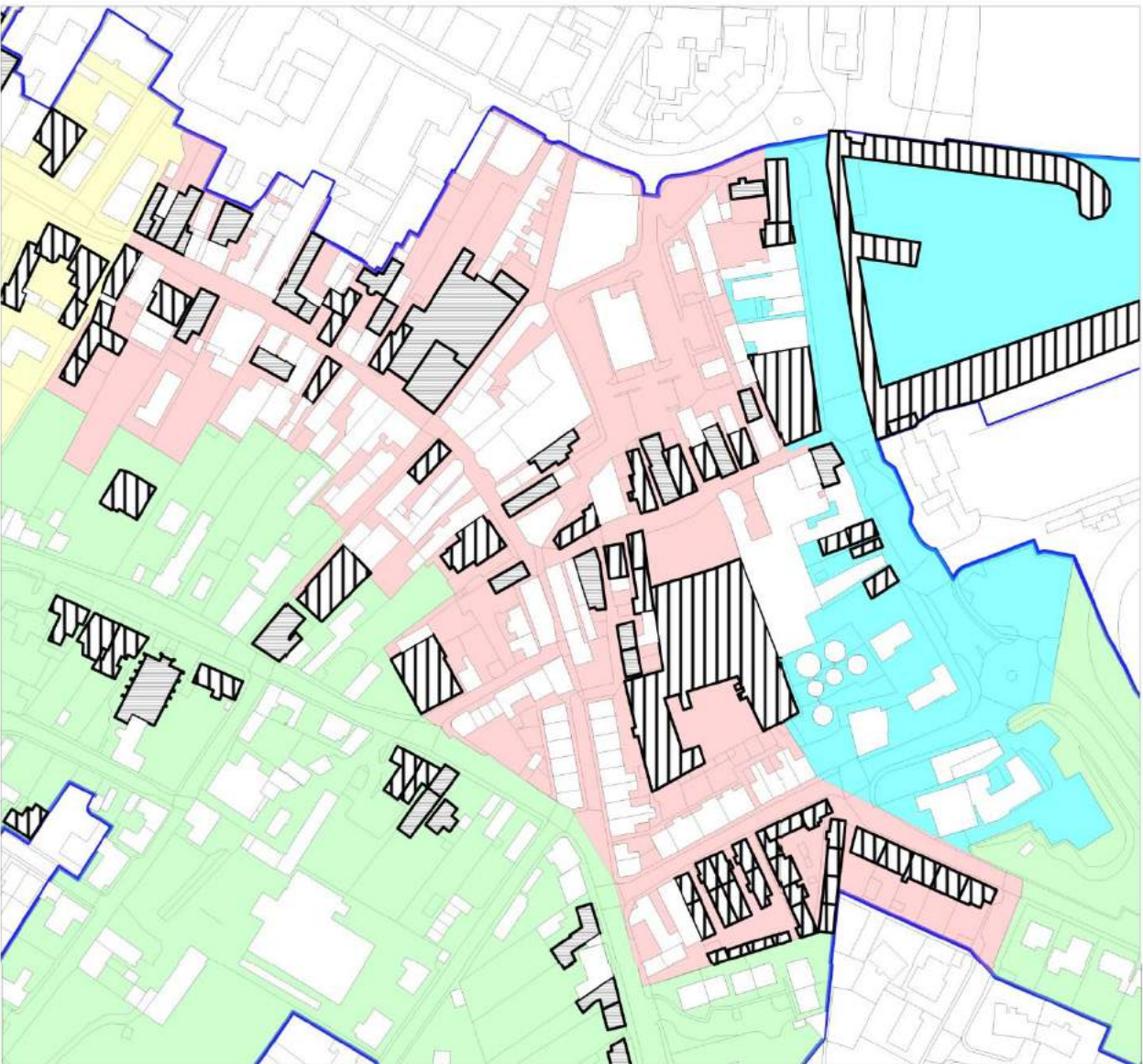
## Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments:

Most of the buildings in this area are listed, either individually or in a group:

- Category B:
  - Bridge Street: 7, 13, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 31, 33.
  - Albert Street: 8, 20, 33, 34, 43, 56.
  - Bridge Street Wynd: Former Storehouse.
  - Strynd: 1-6 (also B listed as a group)
  - 60 Albert St/2 Broad Street
  - Laing Street: Old Library
  - St Catherine's Place: 9-14, 15-18, 19-26
  - Cromwell Road: 1-9
  
- Category C:
  - Junction Road: 1.
  - Bridge Street: 1, 11, 19, 26.
  - St Olaf's Wynd: 8, 10.
  - Albert Street: 6, 9, 11, 27, 29, 31, 35, 41, 42, 45, 47, 52, 54, 59, 63, 65, 67, 69.
  - Albert Square (Mounthoolie Place): 9.

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments in this area.





**Legend**

Conservation Area Boundary

Character Areas

- Burgh & Midtown
- East Kirkwall Harbour
- Laverock
- St. Magnus

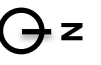
Scheduled Monument

Listing Category

- A
- B
- C

NB Listed buildings are indicated for reference only. This map does not show the extent of any curtilage which may be listed.

To confirm what is covered by a listing contact Development Management at Orkney Islands Council.



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Map of listed buildings in the Burgh and Midtown character area

## Key Buildings & Townscape:

Buildings which occupy key positions in the streetscape in this area tend to be located around junctions, and include:

- Buildings around the junction of Bridge Street and Albert Street, including Grooves and the Scottish Hydro building;
- Buildings at the junction of Albert Street and Broad Street, including We Frame It (60 Albert Street) and the Strynd;
- The store house at the end of Bridge Street Wynd;
- 11 Garden Street (on the corner of Queen Street);
- Key buildings along Albert Street, including the Custom House, Bank of Scotland and Ivy House;
- The Tower Building on Junction Road;
- The Gardens buildings on Bridge Street;
- The Albert Hotel on Mounthoolie Place.



*1 Albert Street (Grooves Records)*

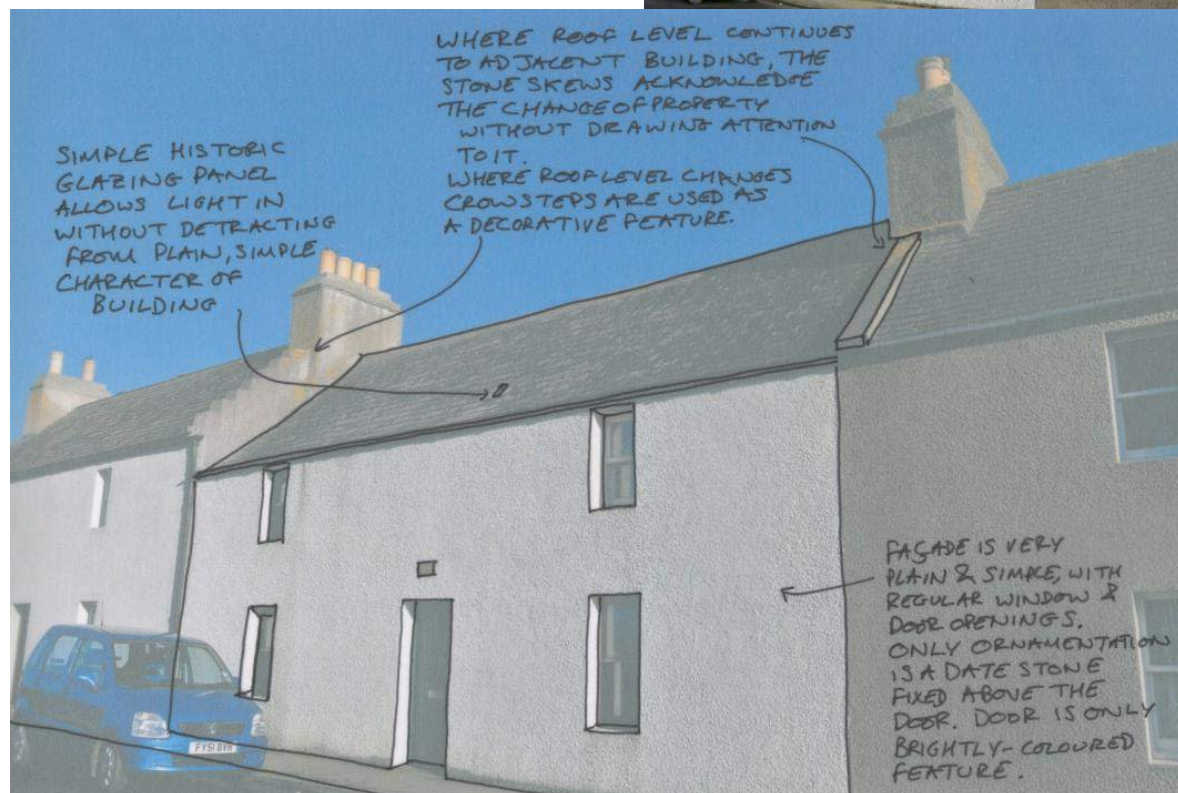


In addition to these prominent buildings, there are many other buildings which play a valuable role in defining the character of the townscape. These include:

- 7 Cromwell Road: This has a very simple symmetrical design, with plain rendered walls and a simple roof design and chimneys. It forms part of a terrace with neighbouring buildings. Key features include a date stone marked 1743.

*Right: 7 Cromwell Road*

*Below: Notes on how 7 Cromwell Road contributes to the special character of the area*



- 15-18 St. Catherine's Place: These buildings form a simple terrace aligned perpendicular to street, accessed via a wide lane rather than a close. They are plain and simple in design and materials.

*Right: 15-18 St. Catherine's Place*

*Below: Notes on how 15-18 St. Catherine's Place contribute to the special character of the area*



- 9 Mounthoolie Place: This is a rather grand townhouse, with an attractive courtyard garden and a symmetrical design. The colour scheme is simple and sympathetic to the context.

*Right: 9 Mounthoolie Place*

*Below: Notes on how 9 Mounthoolie Place contributes to the special character of the area*

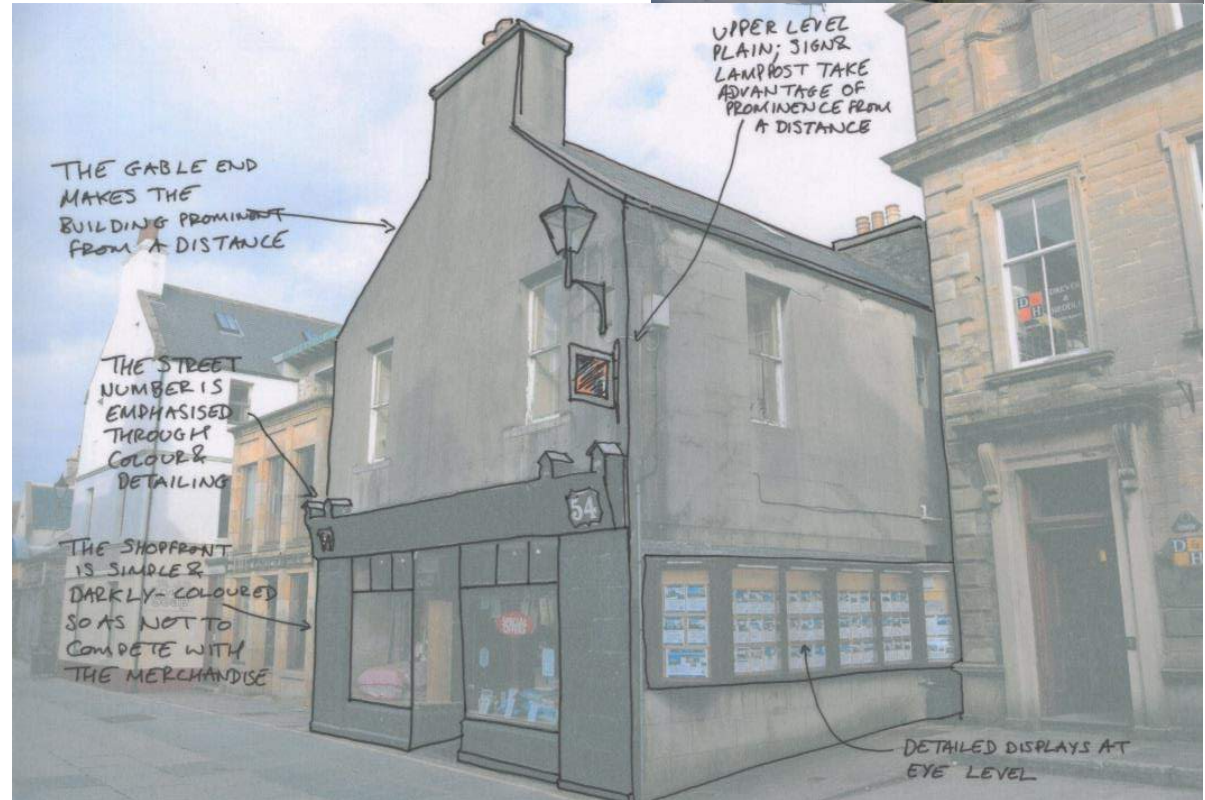




- 54 Albert Street: This is a good example of a traditional shopfront, mounted on a gable-fronted building which leads back from a principal street.

Right: 54 Albert Street

Below: Notes on how 54 Albert Street contributes to the special character of the area



## Plot Layouts:

Plot layouts across this area have similar characteristics, but vary depending on the age and circumstances of their creation. The density is generally high across the area, with small gardens and many plots completely built up to their boundaries. The only large open spaces in this dense urban fabric are the car parks.

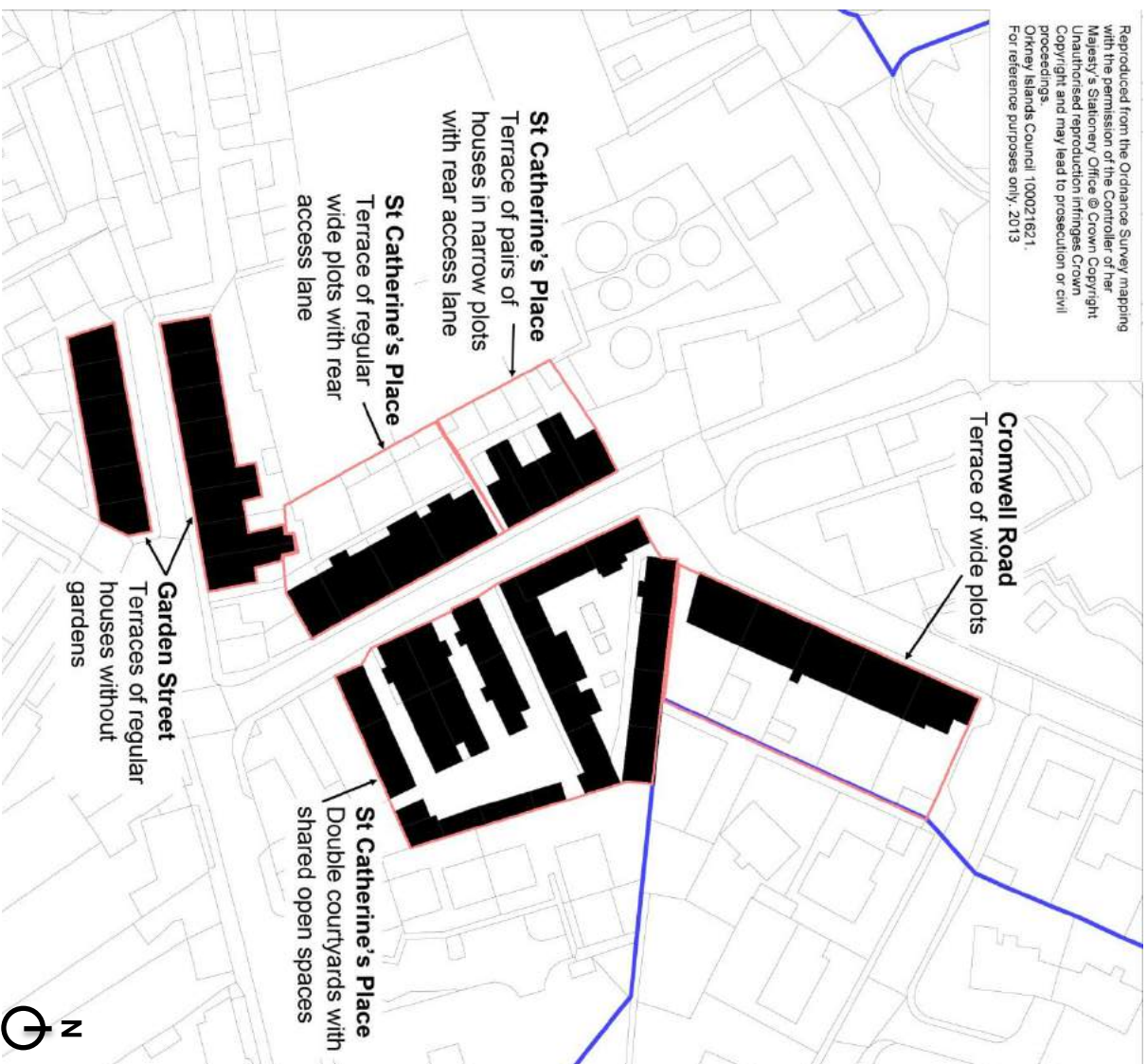
Those plots which were laid out as burgage plots follow a herring-bone pattern: they are generally long, thin strips of roughly consistent width leading back from Bridge Street and Albert Street. Bridge Street and Albert Street are lined with buildings built right up to the edge of the street to form a fairly consistent ad-hoc frontage. These have often been subdivided to form courtyards with closes providing access to properties at the rear of the plot. Buildings are generally two or three storeys tall. One storey shops and grander four storey buildings are present but relatively rare.

In the east of the area, on Garden Street, St. Catherine's Place, and Cromwell Road, development is made up of linear terraces, either along or perpendicular to the street. Lanes, closes and courtyards are created to provide access to properties at the rear of the plots. The main difference between these plots and the traditional plots along Bridge Street and Albert Street is the regularity of their layout, which stems from their conception as parts of a unified development rather than as individual plots. Buildings are generally two storeys tall, with regular building lines.



*Diagram of plot boundaries on Albert Street*

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*Diagram of plot boundaries around St. Catherine's Place*



Uses:

Buildings along Bridge Street and Albert Street are mostly commercial (shops, offices or residential), with residential properties either above or behind the street frontage. The areas to the west (around the Bridge Street car park, Junction Road and Mounthoolie Lane/Place) have a mixture of commercial and residential properties. The rest of the area, including around St. Catherine's Place, is either exclusively or mainly residential.

## Building Components:

### Roofs:

Roofs in this area are generally pitched, at an angle of over 45 degrees. There are a few hipped roofs along Albert Street, but these are the exception.

Many older buildings have retained their traditional sandstone tiles – otherwise slate is commonplace, both retained from original designs and used as a replacement material. There are some examples of modern roofing materials, including pantiles and concrete fishscale tiles, although these are the exception and are out of character with the area.

Rooflights are highly prevalent in this area, and are generally modern rather than historic, although there are some examples of Carron lights. Roof vents are rare, although can be seen on some roofs. Dormer windows are rare in this area, although an example can be seen at Grooves (1 Albert Street). There are a few examples of modern eaves rooflights, which are highly out of character with the area.

The roof edges of vernacular buildings are generally either left unfinished or are capped with Scottish-style crowsteps. Later buildings from the mid-nineteenth century onwards usually use stone skews, only a few of which have been replaced by concrete skews. Some skews and gable finials are used decoratively, such as at Hourston's Jewellers, but these are rare in this area.



*The roof of the Ivy House (43 Albert Street)*

*NB Crowstepped gable and historic glazing panels*

## Walls:

There are large numbers of both rendered and unrendered buildings in this area: later nineteenth-century buildings generally have exposed stonework, whilst earlier buildings tend to be rendered. Buildings with exposed stonework range from fairly plain examples such as on Garden Street to decorative examples such as the Tower Building on Junction Road and Hourston's Jewellers on Albert Street. Although the Bank of Scotland on Albert Street has a façade fully composed of ashlar sandstone, ashlar is generally only used for detailing, usually as part of design shopfronts. Renders are either lime or cement, and are often coloured. Some commercial properties are painted in very bright, vibrant colours which detract from the character of the area, although this is rare.

Many older properties incorporate carvings and date or marriage stones into the walls on principal façades, which contribute greatly to the distinctiveness and character of the area.



*Hourston's Jewellers on Albert Street*



*Left:  
Date stone at 1  
Albert Street*

*Right:  
Regular stonework  
on Garden Street*

*Far right:  
Rendered garages  
on Bridge Street  
Wynd*





## Windows:

The survival of historic window frames in this area has been relatively good, although they often survive in poor repair. Replacement frames are often inappropriate in material and design, such as top-opening mock sash windows which are out of character with the area. Sash windows are typical in historic properties, in a variety of sizes, and are usually painted off-white, grey or brown.

Shop windows tend to be large single panes set within a designed shopfront. The Tower Building on Junction Road has long thin glazing panels as part of its vertical design, but such bespoke glazing is rare in this area.



*Above:  
Sash-and-case window on  
Cromwell Road*

*Left:  
Multi-coloured windows at the Ivy  
House (43 Albert Street)*

*Right:  
Vertical glazing on the Tower  
Building, Junction Road*





## Doors:

Doors to domestic properties are typically unglazed and formed of painted wooden panels, whereas doors to shops and businesses are usually glazed to some extent (sometimes fully). Exceptions to this are the houses along Garden Street which have glazing panels above the doors. Doors have a variety of colours, some of them bright.

Thresholds are typically formed with a slight recess of the door from the façade, without ornamental surrounds or glazing within the frame. Some properties have deep recesses or storm doors, with simple steps as required. High-status buildings such as the old Library on Laing Street have highly ornamental surrounds around the main entrance, but these are not prevalent.

*Left:  
The Custom House (33 Albert Street)*

*Below:  
The former bakery at 46 Albert Street*

*Below right:  
The former Library on Laing Street*



## Rainwater Goods:

Survivals of cast iron rainwater goods are rare, and synthetic replacements are commonplace across much of the area. Where they survive they are usually coloured black or off-white. Good examples of decorative rainwater goods can be found at the old Library on Laing Street and Hourston's Jewellers on Albert Street.

*Right:  
Hourston's Jewellers on Albert Street*

*Far right:  
Former Library on Laing Street*



## Designed Shopfronts:

As the main shopping streets in Kirkwall, Bridge Street and Albert Street contain a large number of designed shopfronts. These vary widely from elaborate nineteenth-century examples to postmodern twentieth-century display windows, and include displays formed by altering existing buildings as well as purpose-designed examples. A significant number date from the post-war period, as well as more traditional nineteenth-century shopfronts. These form a key part of the character of the streets, and must be treated sensitively if the special character of the area is to be preserved or enhanced.

*Right:  
Postmodern shopfront at the  
Orcadian bookshop on Albert  
Street*

*Below:  
Traditional shopfront at 58 Albert  
Street*

*Below left:  
Post-war shopfront at the Anchor  
buildings, Bridge Street*





## Conclusions

### Streetscape issues:

- The road markings, bollards and traffic signs which deal with the traffic restrictions on Albert Street cause a large amount of visual clutter at certain points, which has an adverse effect on the historic character of the area. The speed and noise of traffic along Bridge Street and Albert Street can also detract from an enjoyment of the area. There is an opportunity to enhance the character of the area by reviewing the traffic management system to reduce traffic speed and the quantity of signage.
- The current waste collection arrangements along these streets involve black plastic wheelie bins and brightly-coloured plastic bags of rubbish being left in the entrances to closes, which detracts from the character of the area. Whilst only for several hours at a time, it would be worth reviewing these arrangements to identify ways in which this situation could be improved.
- The current arrangement of concrete flagstones along the centre of Bridge Street and Albert Street is functional as a traffic management system, but as concrete flagstones are unsympathetic to the sandstone equivalents a more appropriate contrasting material could perhaps be found.
- The condition of street surfaces in closes, wynds and lanes leading off Bridge Street and Albert Street can be very poor, and detracts from the character of those areas.



*Traffic signage and bollards on Albert Street*



- The open space in front of the Garden's buildings on Bridge Street has the character of a gap site, which detracts from the character of Bridge Street as narrow and enclosed. This could be improved either by redeveloping the street frontage, so that the open space behind takes on the character of a courtyard, or by redesigning the open space so that it takes on the character of a planned urban square which feels like a coherent part of the town. This is the single greatest issue around Bridge Street, and should be examined closely.



*Gap site on Bridge Street*

Buildings:

Condition:

There are a number of properties whose poor condition affects the character of the area as a whole, which should be considered for priority repair:

- 8 Bridge Street Wynd
- Storehouse on Bridge Street Wynd and shed opposite
- 3 Bridge Street



*Left:  
Storehouse on Bridge Street  
Wynd*

- 3 Bridge Street Wynd
- 46 Albert Street (the old bakery)
- 60 Albert Street / 2 Broad Street
- Old Library, Laing Street
- Shopfront at VAO, Bridge Street
- 18 Bridge Street



*Former library on Laing Street*

#### Inappropriate Alterations & Additions:

Despite the generally good level of preservation, there are a number of issues prevalent across the area which detract from its character.

- The large number of modern rooflights, often of unsympathetic scale and design, is a much more significant problem in this area than in others.
- The replacements of many windows are not of an appropriate design or material to the area.
- CCTV cameras and other infrastructure have been added to a number of shopfronts in an inappropriate manner or location.
- The colours and designs of shopfronts are occasionally inappropriate.

## Redevelopment Opportunities:

A number of buildings detract from the character of the area through their original design, and should be considered opportunities for redevelopment:

- The bungalows at 5 Junction Road and 5 Bridge Street Wynd are examples of suburban design in a highly specific urban context, and are completely out of character with the area.
- The designs of the garages along Bridge Street Wynd and Mounthoolie Place do not take account of their prominence on the public realm. The character of the area would be enhanced by their removal or well-designed replacement.
- Infrastructure such as substations can detract from the character of the surrounding area when sited prominently and built to standard designs.
- The design of Robertson's buildings on Laing Street, which is suburban and monolithic in nature, does not take the urban character of the area into account.



*5 Bridge Street Wynd*

Other General Considerations:

Throughout the area there is a general opportunity to redevelop behind the main streets, where former gardens are now filled with low-density, low-grade development. Those lanes and courtyards beyond the principal streets are often neglected, and are areas worthy of more focused attention to enhance the character of the whole area.



*House between Bridge Street Wynd & Parliament Close, set in a large informal car park*



## Summary of key points:

### Strengths:

The Burgh and Midtown has a very distinct, defined urban form and architectural characteristics, which are generally well-preserved both in the medieval core and in the planned developments to the east.

### Weaknesses:

Former gardens behind the historic streets often act as a “hinterland” between the medieval centre and Victorian streets beyond.  
Signage (traffic and advertising) is not always appropriate, and contributes to visual clutter at points.

### Opportunities:

Development opportunities exist along the closes, lanes and wynds, and around the car park to the west of Bridge Street

### Threats:

Given the area’s status as the centre of Kirkwall, there is a development pressure to maximise the use of space, particularly through loft conversions, which can incentivise inappropriate alterations to historic buildings.

## 4.3 ST MAGNUS (CATHEDRAL PRECINCTS)

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### Introduction:

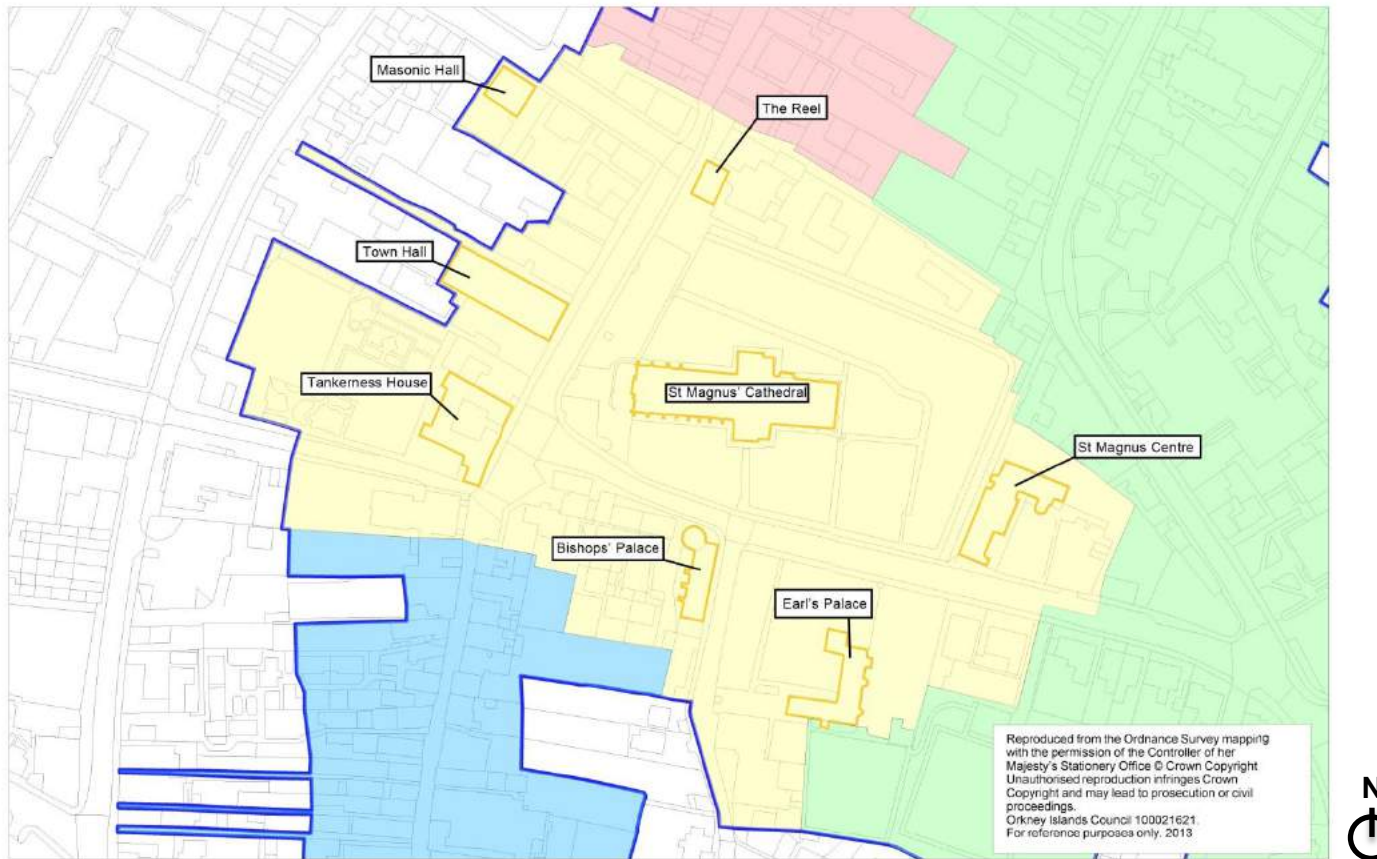
St. Magnus' Cathedral, founded in the twelfth century by Earl (later Saint) Rognvald Kali Kolsson, is by far the largest, oldest and most architecturally impressive building in Kirkwall. Surrounded by a large graveyard, and sited on the former shore at Broad Street, it dominates the surrounding part of the town, which subsequently developed as the civic centre of Kirkwall. Palaces, a castle, town halls, tolbooths, and banks have all been sited in the immediate vicinity over several centuries.



*St Magnus Cathedral*

The special character of the St Magnus area:

The special character of the St. Magnus area lies primarily in the high architectural quality of its key buildings, the historic importance of those buildings and the area over time, and the well-defined spatial arrangement of buildings around the cathedral. The accumulation of public and governmental buildings, in combination with the defined street frontage of Broad Street and the Bishops' and Earl's Palaces, creates a highly distinctive setting for St. Magnus' Cathedral, which in turn forms the principal public space in Kirkwall.



Map of the St Magnus character area



## Streetscape:

### Public space:

Broad Street acts as Kirkwall's main public space, and is the location of key events such as the throwing up of the Ba', weddings and the Lammass Fair. The area also contains several key areas of publicly accessible green space, including the Cathedral graveyard, the grounds of the Earl's Palace and Tankerness House Gardens.

*Left:  
Pipe Band on Broad Street at the Lammass Fair  
Image courtesy of Anthea Hume/Kirkwall BID*



## Enclosure and Connections:

The openness of this area contrasts greatly with the narrow streets to the north (Albert Street) and south (Victoria Street). The tall, consistent street frontage of Broad Street defines one edge of the cathedral's setting, whilst the trees, walls and buildings along Palace Road define another. There are some points of enclosure, however, including the entrance to Tankerness Lane, Tankerness House courtyard, the Strynd and St Magnus' Lane. The slope of Palace Road also acts as a form of semi-enclosure for Broad Street.

The area is well connected to the rest of Kirkwall, lying at the heart of the town's road network. The main connections in the area are:

- The junction at the north end of Broad Street, which connects to Castle Street, Gas Wynd, Albert Street and the Strynd;
- The junction at the south end of Broad Street, which connects to Tankerness Lane, Palace Road and Victoria Street;
- St. Magnus' Lane, which connects Broad Street with Junction Road to the west;
- Palace Road, which is a main thoroughfare connecting the centre of the town with the main roads running along the east.



*Diagram of distribution of buildings and open space, and paths and key junctions in the St Magnus character area*

### Key views:

The cathedral was placed on a natural rise so as to be highly visible from all approaches to the town, particularly from the sea. It remains the prominent landmark in Kirkwall, and its visibility within and beyond Kirkwall is a key component of its setting. Within the St. Magnus area itself the open views of the Cathedral, particularly down St. Magnus' Lane and at either end of Broad Street, contribute greatly to the character of the area.



*St Magnus Cathedral visible from Copland's Lane*

### Street surfaces:

Most of the road surfaces in this area are asphalt, but there are a few exceptions in lanes and courtyard spaces. Part of St. Magnus' Lane is paved with flagstones, as is the Strynd, and the courtyard in front of the Cathedral. Modern pavers are used in St. Magnus' car park, and gravel is used for the car park outside the Masonic Lodge.



## Street furniture:

The main roads in this area are relatively open and free of street furniture. The effect of the street furniture which is in place on the character of the area is mixed. Hand-painted street signs are common in this area, and contribute greatly to its character. Some of the more modern additions like the pedestrian 'finger' posts and some of the streetlights work well, but others such as the plastic refuse bins and anonymous infrastructure on Tankerness House are standardised designs inappropriate to the character of the area.



*Traditional street names*

Green spaces:

There are a number of green spaces in this area, including the Cathedral graveyard and Kirk Green, Tankerness House Gardens, and the open lawns around the Earl's Palace, URC Church and St. Magnus Centre. There are a large number of well-developed trees in front of the Earl's Palace, and also surrounding the Strynd.



*Tankerness House Gardens*

### Boundary walls and railings:

Some of the most significant boundary walls and railings in Kirkwall are located in this area, including the B-listed south wall of the Strynd, the railings surrounding the cathedral graveyard and the large wall on the south side of Palace Road by the Earl's Palace. Other prominent examples include Tankerness Lane, the railings around the entrance steps of RBS, and some apparently ancient masonry around the back of the Masonic Lodge, on the site of the old Castle grounds.



*The Strynd*

### Parking:

There are designated parking bays on Broad Street, at the entrance to Victoria Street outside Spence's, and on Palace Road. The main public car park in the area is on the east side of Broad Street, and there are private car parks off Castle Street at the Masonic Lodge and behind TSB.



## Activity and Movement:

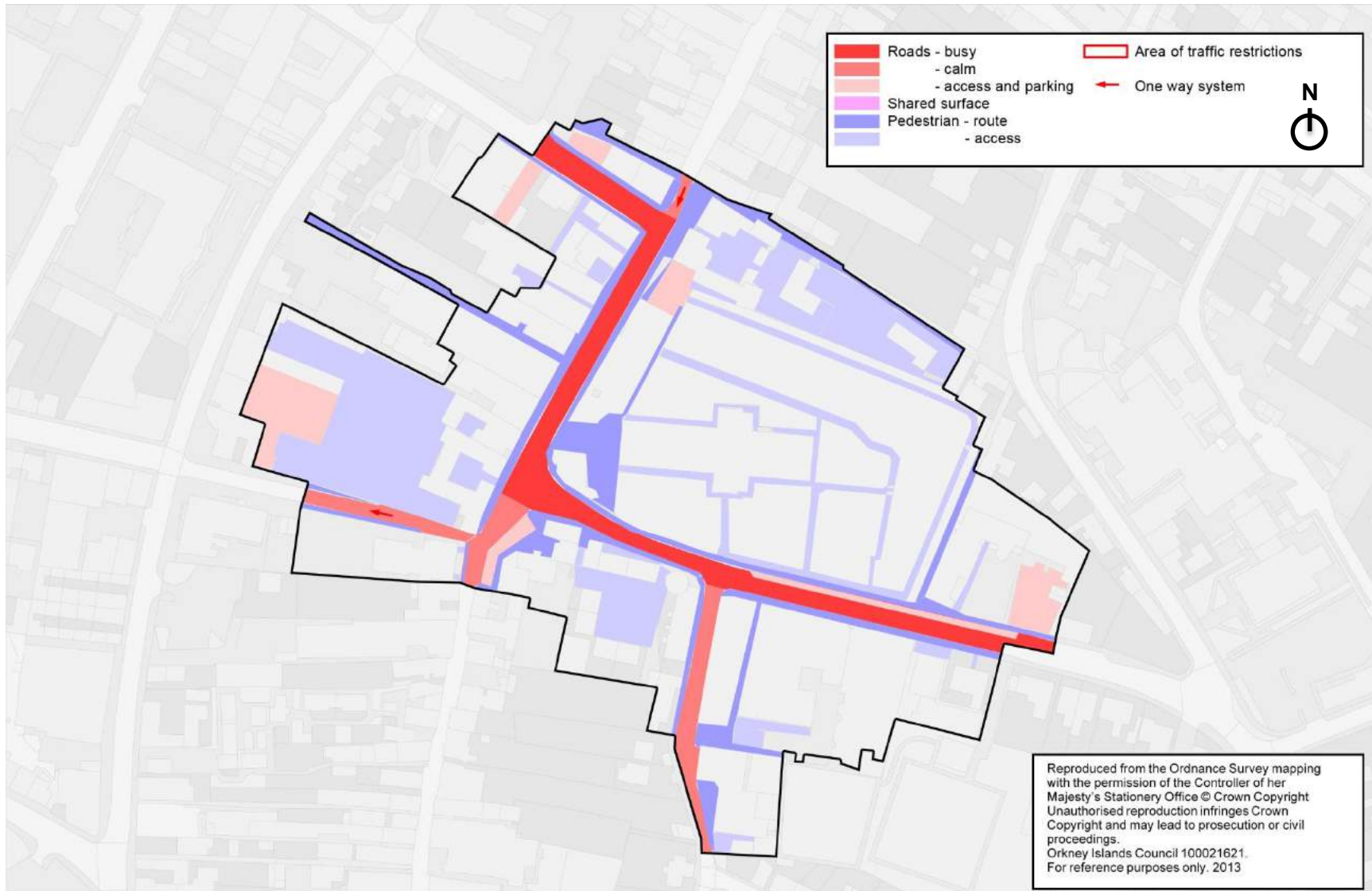
Broad Street and the Cathedral are major centres of pedestrian activity. During the summer large numbers of tourists head to the Cathedral and Palaces, and the area is busy year-round with local residents attending services in the Cathedral, events on Broad Street and the Kirk Green (such as the Ba' or Lammas Fair) and visiting shops and businesses on Broad Street, Victoria Street and Albert Street. The Strynd is a well-used connection from Broad Street to east Kirkwall and the Council Offices. A key route for tourists is from the Travel Centre on Junction Road down Castle Street to the Cathedral and Palaces.

Vehicular traffic is busy along Castle Street, Broad Street and Palace Road, as these form a main route from the west to the east of Kirkwall. Traffic is restricted down Tankerness Lane and Victoria Street, and when entering from Albert Street. Palace Road, Broad Street and Castle Street form a key vehicular through route between the west and east of Kirkwall. Traffic here is relatively busy, and noise is a concern at times. Tankerness Lane and Victoria Street have numerous traffic restrictions, including one-way systems and speed limits.



*Traffic sign on Tankerness Lane*





Map showing general levels of pedestrian and vehicular traffic in the St Magnus character area

## Buildings:

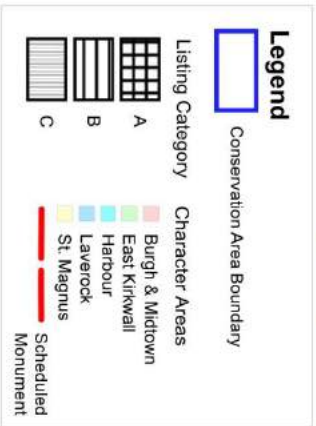
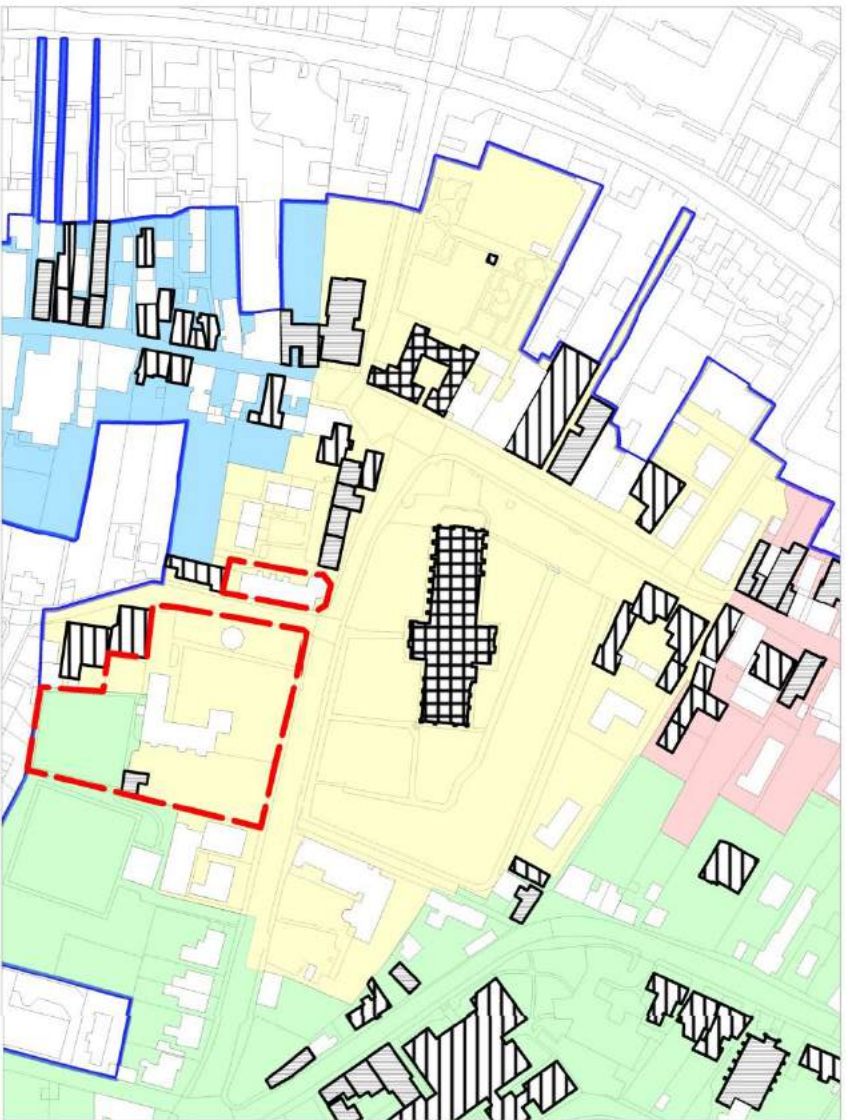
The oldest buildings in this area are the Cathedral, which dates from the twelfth century, the Bishop's and Earl's Palaces and Tankerness House.

### Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments:

The age and status of the buildings in this area are reflected in the generally high level of their legal protection. There is a large number of listed buildings within this area, as well as two Scheduled Ancient Monuments:

- Category A:
  - St. Magnus' Cathedral (including war memorial and graveyard)
  - Tankerness House
  
- Category B:
  - Sherriff's Court
  - 6 Watergate (old manse)
  - 1 Palace Road / 32 Broad Street
  - 36 Broad Street (former Grammar School)
  - Town Hall
  - 4, 5, 6 and 8 Broad Street
  - The south wall of the Strynd and 7 Strynd
  - Summerhouse (Groatie House), Tankerness House Gardens

- Category C:
  - 3, 5, 7, 9 Palace Road
  - 1 Victoria Street
  - Cathedral Green Drinking Fountain
  - 17-21 Broad Street
  
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments:
  - Bishop's Palace
  - Earl's Palace



NB Listed buildings are indicated for reference only. This map does not show the extent of any curtilage which may be listed.  
To confirm what is covered by a listing contact Development Management at Orkney Islands Council.



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Map of listed buildings in the St Magnus character area



## Key Buildings & Townscape:

The cathedral is by far the dominant building in this area. Other prominent buildings include:

- The Town Hall
- The Cathedral Green Drinking Fountain
- David Spence Stationers
- Tankerness House
- The Bishop's Palace
- The Reel
- The Mercat Cross



*The Drinking Fountain on Broad Street*

In addition to these prominent buildings, there are many other buildings which play a valuable role in defining the character of the townscape. These include:

- 7-15 Broad Street (Ola Gorie/Longship): The scale and orientation add to the definition of the street frontage on Broad Street. The ground floor shopfront is well defined in ashlar stonework adding architectural interest to the street.

*Right: 7-15 Broad Street*

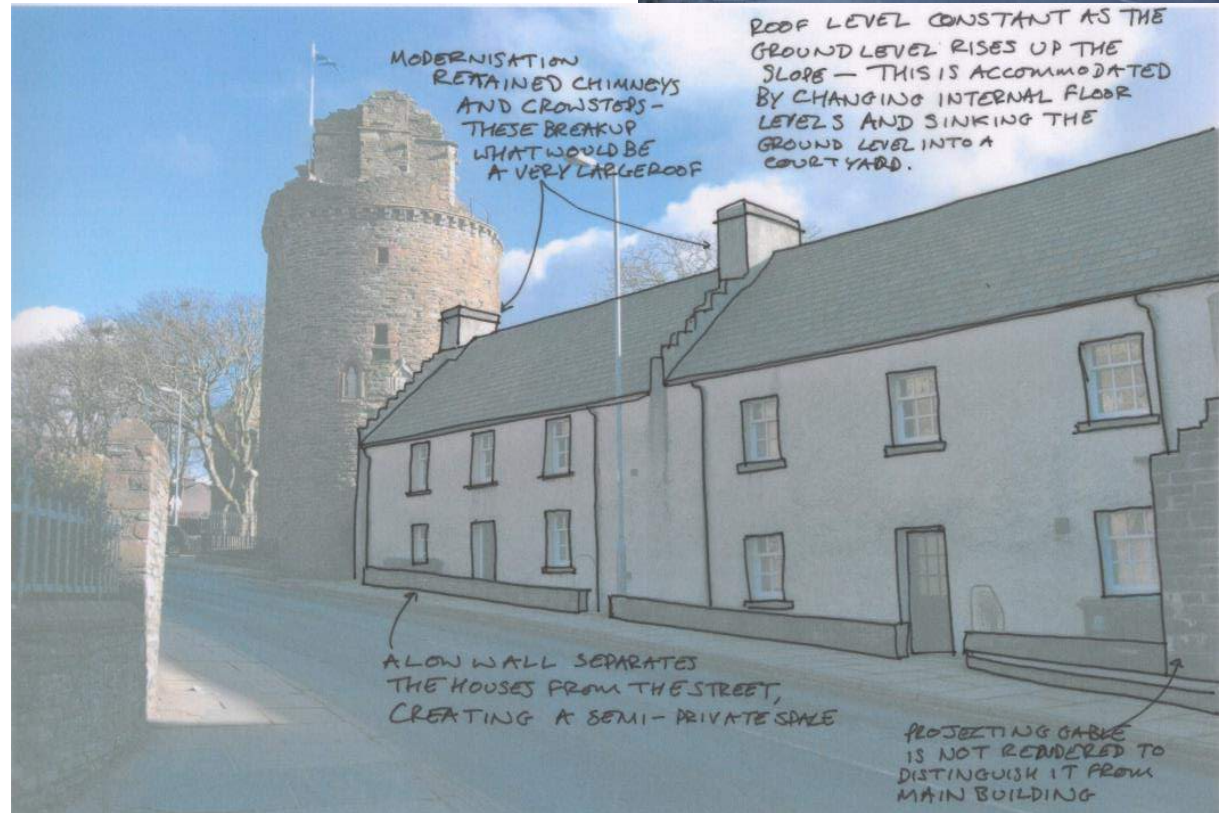
*Below: Notes on how 7-15 Broad Street contributes to the special character of the area*



- 3, 5, 7, 9 Palace Road: These follow the road whilst being set back from it, as they pre-date the creation of Palace Road. The larger buildings address Broad Street, whilst the smaller buildings along Palace Road respect the setting of the Bishop's Palace and the open nature of the road.

Right: 3-9 Palace Road

Below: Notes on how 3-9 Palace Road contributes to the special character of the area



### Plot Layouts:

Along the west side of Broad Street plots are generally based on wide burgage-style plots, and buildings form a street frontage packed tight to the pavement, with lanes and courtyards providing access to the rear of plots. Prominent buildings such as the Town Hall are four storeys tall, with other development generally two or three storeys. Along the east side of Broad Street buildings and structures are generally free-standing, or else in small groups around the entrance to Albert Street or Victoria Street. Along Palace Road properties generally follow the road, set back slightly, and do not form a defined street frontage.



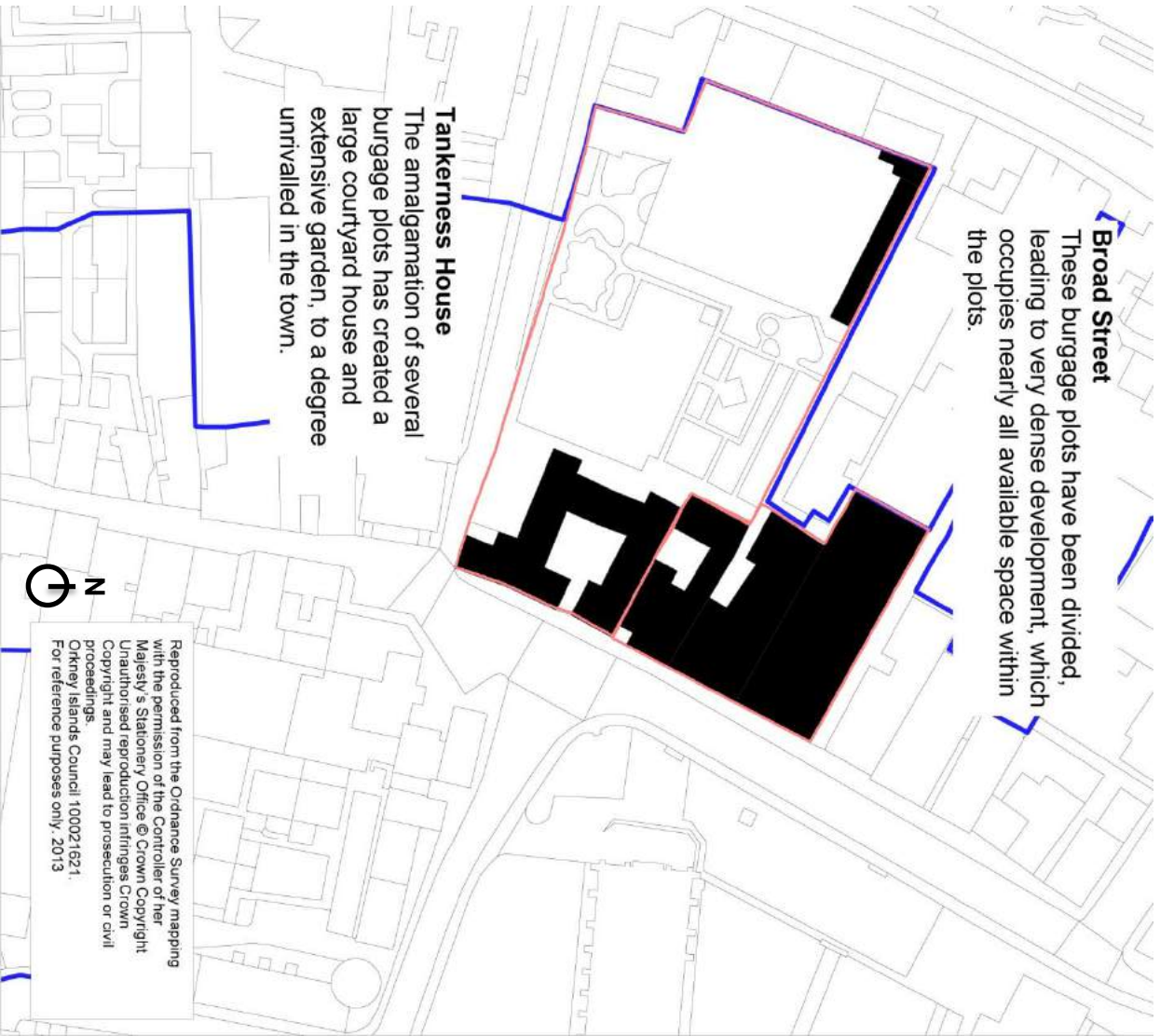


Diagram of plot layouts on Broad Street



Diagram of plot layout at the Cathedral

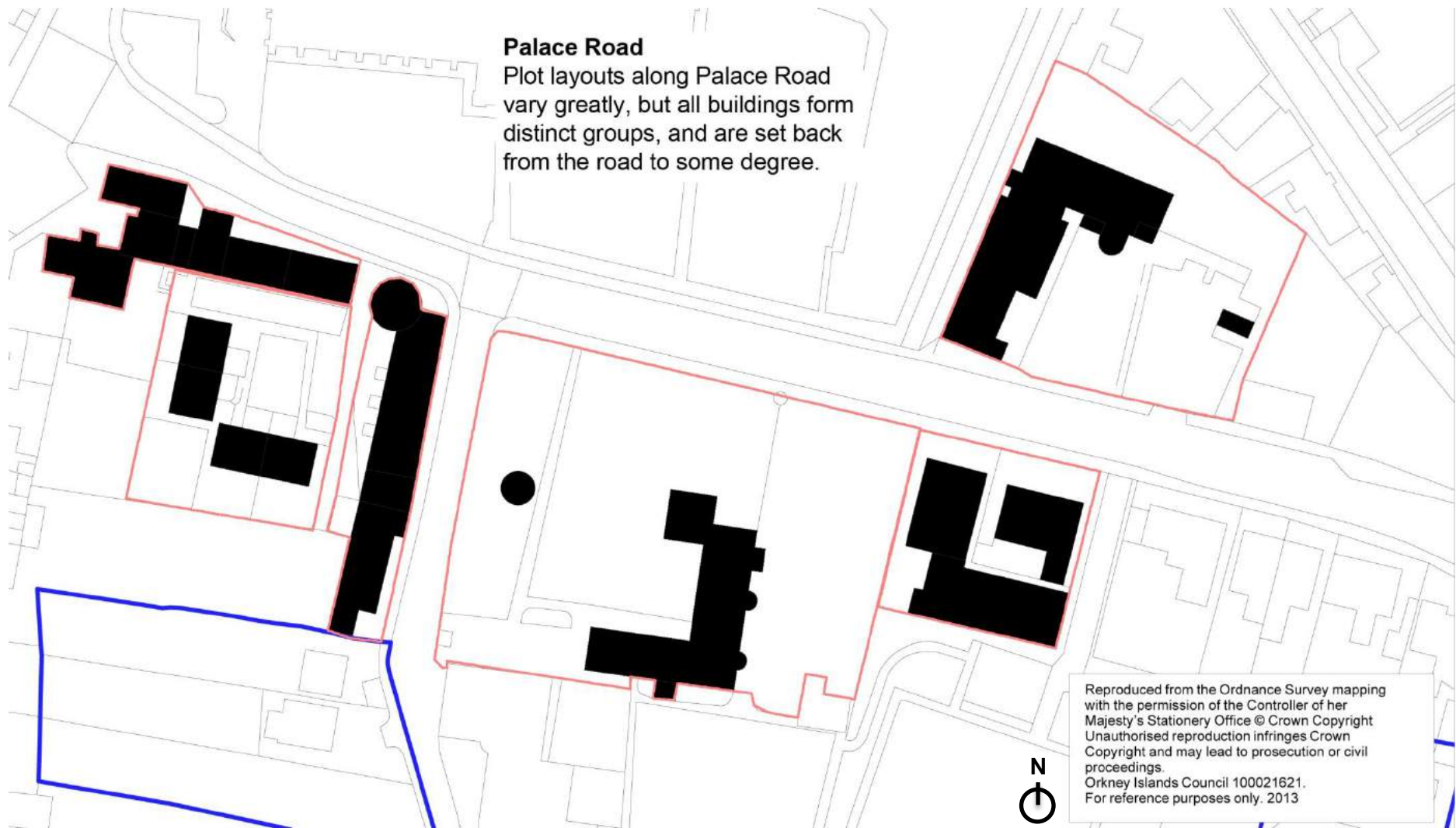


Diagram of plot layouts along Palace Road

Uses:

There is a concentration of high-status public and civic buildings in this area, past and present, and banks. Broad Street is predominantly a shopping street, with mixed use commercial/residential buildings. At the foot of Palace Road is a group of new and restored housing developments.



## Building Components:

### Roofs:

A number of the older buildings in this area have sandstone tile roofs, but the majority of roofs are slate. Very few buildings have modern synthetic materials. Roofs generally have a steep pitch ( $>45^\circ$ ). Dormer windows are found on several properties, as are rooflights, both historic and modern. Crowsteps can be found on several buildings, including the Sherriff's Court, although most nineteenth-century buildings use stone skews instead. Chimneys and gables are generally plain or lightly decorated. The most elaborate roof is found on the Town Hall, which includes turrets in the Scotch Baronial style.



*Above:  
Old Manse, Watergate*

*Far left:  
Roofs on Castle Street*

*Left:  
The Town Hall*

## Walls:

Stone walls are often exposed, with high-quality ashlar stonework and carving at the Sherriff's Court, Town Hall and Masonic Hall. Other examples often have ashlar surrounds for windows and doors, and squared rubble for the majority of the walls. The carved panel and archway at Tankerness House are key parts of its character, and of the character of the south end of Broad Street. Rendered walls are a variety of colours, from cream and beige to grey and brown. CCTV cameras have been added to Tankerness House, Judith Glue's, and Low's on Broad Street.



*Above right:  
The Masonic Hall, Castle Street*

*Far right:  
Tankerness House, Broad Street*

*Right:  
Sherriff Court, Watergate*





## Windows:

Original windows survive in good numbers, and are usually off-white sash windows in a variety of shapes and sizes. Decorative glazing panels are used on the Town Hall. The RBS building and the Sherriff's Court both use horns on the window frames, which is highly unusual in Orkney.



*Above right:  
Clydesdale Bank, Broad Street*

*Far right:  
7-15 Broad Street*

*Right:  
St Magnus Centre*



## Doors:

Doors are usually unglazed and made of timber panels. Glazing elements are generally restricted to shop fronts, except at the bottom of Palace Road. The St Magnus Centre has a good example of a high-quality modern unglazed timber door.

Thresholds are treated in a wide variety of ways, from the archway into the courtyard of Tankerness House to the Art Deco carvings surrounding the entrance to BBC Orkney. Other examples include the St Magnus Centre's overhanging porch, and the Town Hall's grand entrance guarded by carved figures.



*Above:  
Tankerness House*

*Right:  
Sherriff Court, Watergate*





### Rainwater Goods:

Rainwater goods are generally black or white cast iron, and occasionally both (as at the Longship). There is a notable decorative example at Judith Glue's on Broad Street.



*Prominent rainwater goods on Broad Street*

### Designed Shopfronts:

There are a few designed shopfronts in this area, all on Broad Street. The most notable of these are at the Longship and at Judith Glue's, both built from stone.



*Stone shopfront at 7-15 Broad Street*

## Conclusions

### Streetscape issues:

- The current traffic arrangement at Broad Street, whilst providing a valuable connection across the town, is having an adverse impact on the character of the Conservation Area, because it disrupts the legibility of the continuous road along the historic shoreline (from Broad Street to Victoria Street), and the speed and volume of traffic at peak times isolates the Cathedral for pedestrians from the west side of Broad Street and the Palaces. A review of traffic management on Broad Street is therefore needed to better reconcile its role as a key traffic route through the town and its position as the primary public space in Kirkwall.
- There are a number of unsympathetic additions to building façades, road signage and road markings creates a degree of visual clutter in the streetscape. There is therefore an opportunity to enhance the character of the area by removing unnecessary additions and simplifying signage.
- The area at the south end of Broad Street, at the entrance to Victoria Street, has potential to develop its role as a public open space, which could be realised through a combination of architectural and streetscape improvements. Exploring these options could be done as part of reviewing the traffic management of Broad Street.
- Some street lights are standard suburban designs which detract from the distinctiveness of the area.



*The south end of Broad Street*

Buildings:

Condition:

There are a number of properties whose poor condition affects the character of the area as a whole, which should be considered for priority repair:

- The façade of the Town Hall is badly eroded and much of the ornamental carving has been damaged. Given its prominence in the streetscape this greatly detracts from the character of the area, and should be addressed.
- The south wall of the Strynd has lost almost all its mortar, and should be repointed to avoid structural failure.
- The cathedral graveyard has many tombs and graves in need of repair and restoration.



*Graves in the Cathedral Graveyard*

Inappropriate additions and alterations:

There are a number of inappropriate alterations which affect the character of the area, particularly the façade of Broad Street, and which need to be addressed where possible:

- CCTV cameras are often added to prominent buildings inappropriately
- Signage is sometimes inappropriate and distracting
- The addition of alarms and other infrastructure to the walls of historic buildings is a problem on a number of historic buildings in the area.

### Redevelopment Opportunities:

A number of buildings detract from the character of the area through their original design, and should be considered opportunities for redevelopment:

- David Spence Stationers – a functional single-storey shop unit whose design is not in keeping with the character of the surrounding buildings.
- The extension to the rear of the Masonic Hall does not reflect the high quality of the design of the main building.
- The collection of single-storey modern buildings at the back of the Longship contributes little to the character of the area.



*David Spence at the end of Broad Street*



## Summary of key points:

### Strengths:

The area has a strong spatial character and identity at the centre of town. It has a high concentration of buildings of great architectural merit, including the cathedral, and acts as the main public space in Kirkwall.

### Weaknesses:

The integrity of the streetscape is impaired by visual clutter caused by inappropriately designed infrastructure.

The traffic management in Broad Street impairs its use as a public space.

### Opportunities:

There is a great opportunity to improve the streetscape of Broad Street particularly the areas around each end.

### Threats:

The continued proliferation of signage and infrastructure could further reduce the open quality of the streets and the architectural integrity of the buildings.

## 4.4 LAVEROCK

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### Introduction:

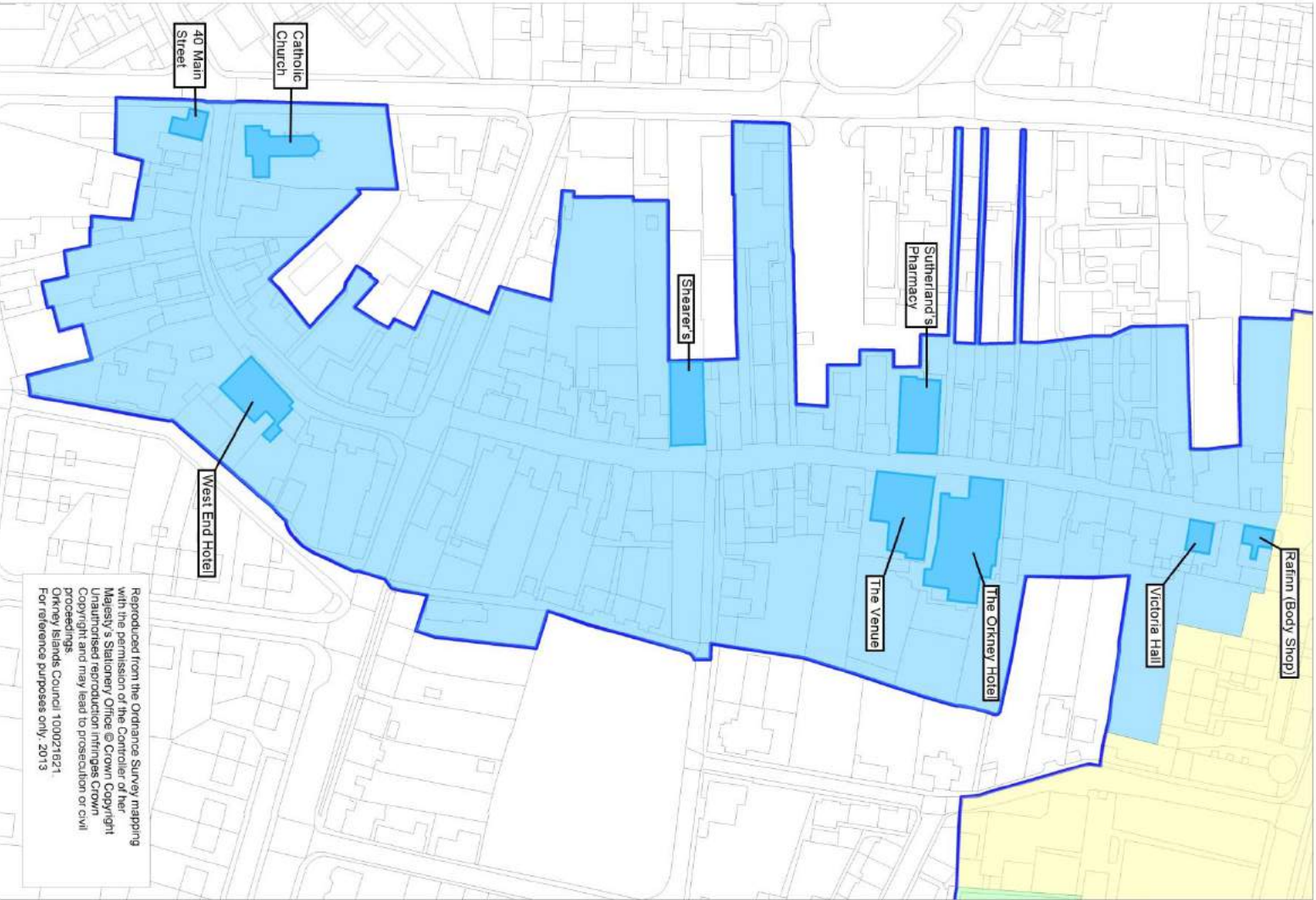
The Laverock, comprising Victoria Street, Main Street, and the associated closes and lanes, originally housed the accommodation for the priests and other workers associated with the cathedral. Victoria Street and Main Street follow the original shoreline of the Peedie Sea, from which the burgage plots are arranged perpendicularly. Today it retains its medieval layout and narrow streets, and has some of the oldest houses in Kirkwall.



*Victoria Street*

The special character of the Laverock:

The special character of the Laverock lies primarily in the preservation of its medieval plots and architecture, its connection to the historic shoreline of the Peedie Sea, and its spatial character, which combines very dense enclosed street frontages with extensive gardens. The area has a particular concentration of architectural details and high quality modern design, which distinguish it from the Burgh and Midtown to the north.



Map of the Laverock character area



Streetscape:

Public space:

There are no large public open spaces along Victoria Street or Main Street, as the narrow streets are densely developed along their length. Courtyards and closes provide pockets of semi-private space along Victoria Street and Main Street. Most of the open space is in private gardens, with the garden of the Catholic Church being the most prominent publicly accessible space.



*The garden of the Catholic Church*

## Enclosure and Connections:

The area is highly enclosed, both along Victoria Street and Main Street and also along the lanes and closes. Small openings, such as the courtyard of the Orkney Hotel or Shearer's car park, act as important events in the perception of the streets. The intersection of the area by the Clay Loan and Union Street, with the long views these open up, provides the only full break from this enclosure.

The area has relatively few connections to other areas, being made up mainly of narrow linear settlement. The main junctions in the area are:

- The connections to Junction Road via Main Street, Union Street and the numerous closes leading from Victoria Street;
- The continuation of Main Street to High Street, with onward connections to Orphir, Finstown and Scapa;
- The junction of Clay Loan with Main Street and Victoria Street, which provides access to the East;
- The entrance to Victoria Street from Broad Street.



Diagram of distribution of buildings and open space, and paths and key junctions in the Laverock character area

Key views:

The most important views into the area are those along Main Street and Victoria Street. The views down Victoria Road to Victoria Street, and down Main Street to the West End Hotel, also make an important contribution to the character of the area.



*The West End Hotel, Main Street*

Street surfaces:

The majority of this area is paved with sandstone flagstones, including Victoria Street, the various courtyards and closes, and part of Main Street. Clay Loan, Union Street and Victoria Road are paved with asphalt.



### Street furniture:

Due to the narrowness of the streets in the Laverock there is little room for street furniture at ground level, so the walls of buildings fronting the street play an important role in hosting infrastructure. Hand-painted street names play an important role in the streetscape, including on the boundary wall of the Catholic Church at the foot of Main Street. Street lights are generally mounted to buildings, and there are a few refuse bins. Waste collection arrangements along Victoria Street and Main Street can lead to unsightly bags of waste being left in the street.



*The carved street name on the boundary wall of the Catholic Church*

### Green spaces:

Most of the green spaces in this area, with the exception of the grass verge on Clay Loan, are within private gardens or church graveyards. The most significant garden visible from the street is at 20 Main Street, which is open and prominently visible at the bend of the street.



*Garden at 20 Main Street*

### Boundary walls and railings:

Decorative cast-iron railings are used in a number of places to separate private courtyards or access lanes from the main public streets, most notably at the West End Hotel and in the arch at Spence's Square. Grates are also used to block off the 'almost adjoining' gaps between vernacular buildings which are common in this area. Stone boundary walls are typically used to separate gardens, and are used as retaining walls behind Main Street. Some stone boundary walls are the ruins of former buildings, such as the ruined townhouse at the end of Main Street.



*An 'almost adjoining' gap on Victoria Street, blocked by wooden fencing*

### Parking:

Temporary parking is available down Victoria Street and Main Street, with the main car park being on Clay Loan. Shearer's also provide customer parking on Victoria Street. The area is also served by parking off Junction Road outwith the Conservation Area.

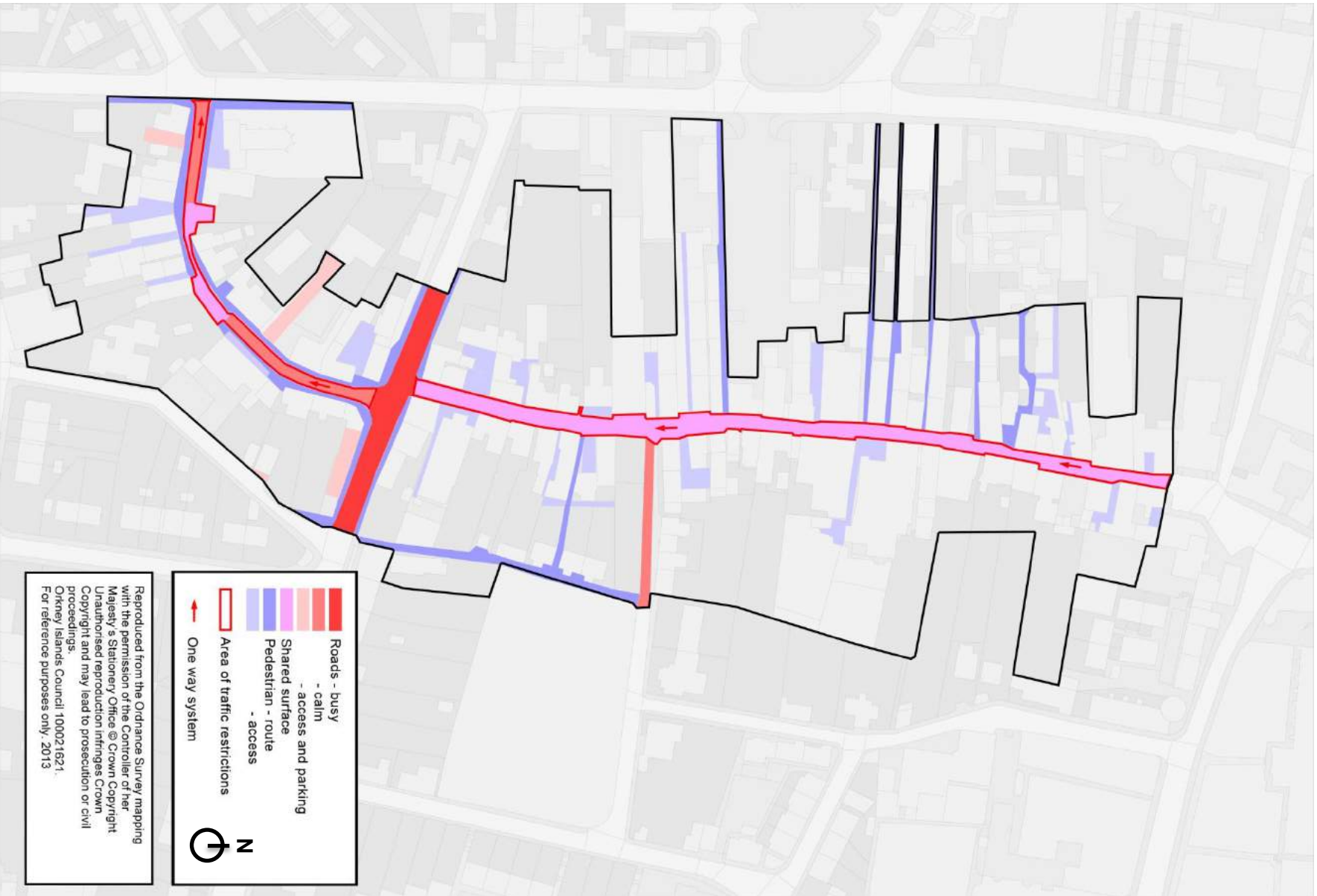
## Activity and Movement:

Victoria Street is a busy pedestrian thoroughfare during the day, primarily due to the shops, offices and restaurants along its length. This continues to an extent in the evening in the northern half of the street due to the restaurants located there. Main Street, being mainly residential, has low levels of pedestrian traffic throughout the day.

Due to the restrictions on vehicular traffic along both Victoria Street and Main Street, the only significant traffic flow through the area is through Union Street and the Clay Loan.



*Traffic signs at the entrance to Victoria Street*



Map showing general levels of pedestrian and vehicular traffic in the Laverock character area



## Buildings:

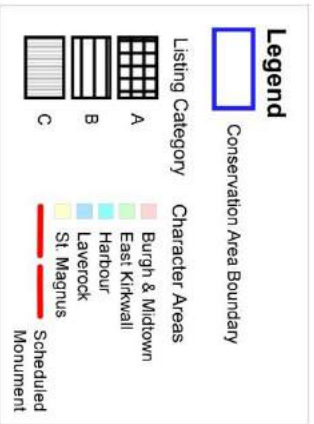
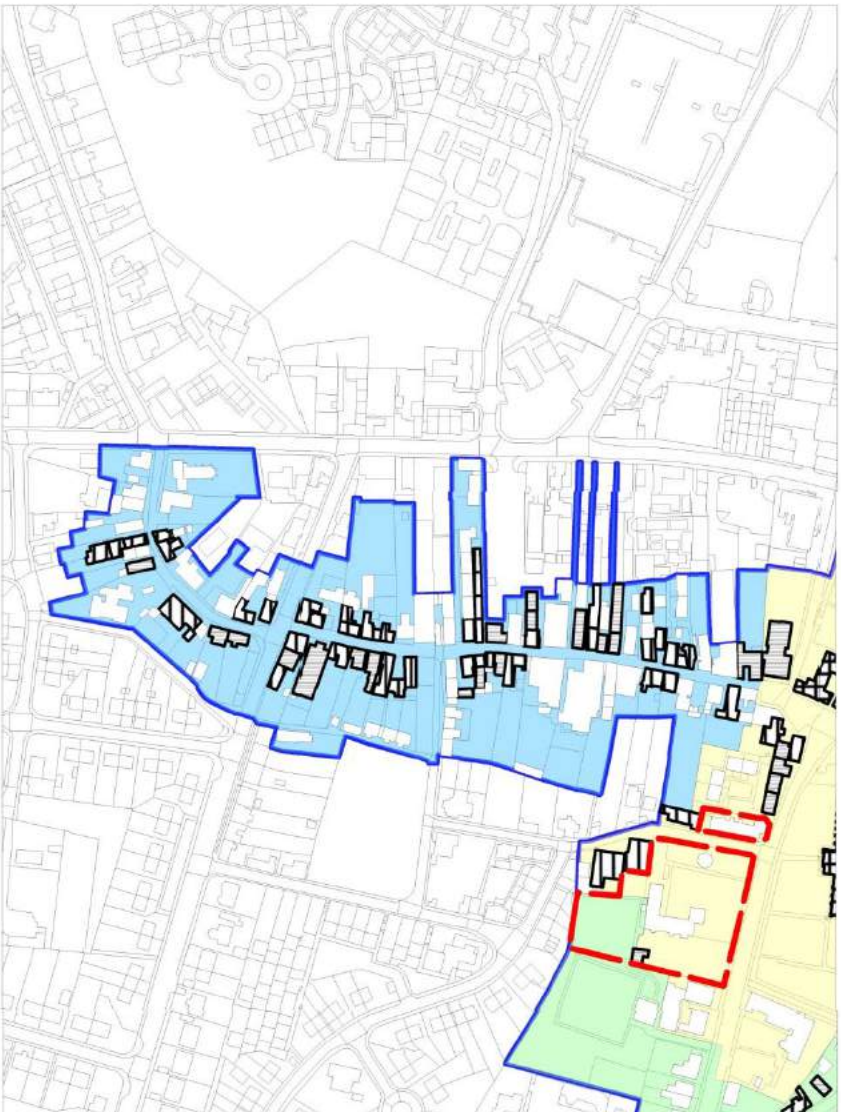
The oldest buildings in this area are the seventeenth century houses on the corner of Victoria Street and Clay Loan. The majority of the other buildings are from the eighteenth century, with some later buildings from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A large number of these are listed.

### Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments:

There is a large number of listed buildings within this area:

- Category B:
  - Victoria Street: 14, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 37, 39, 51, 54-56, 60, 61, 62, 64, 79, 81, 83, 86, 87, 91.
  - Main Street: 3, 5, 14, 23, 25, 28, 28A, 28B.
  - Gunn's Close: 2, 4, 6, 8.
  - Union Street: 6
  - Clay Loan: 8, 12
  - Spence's Square: 1-7
  
- Category C:
  - Victoria Street: 7, 33, 35, 39, 41, 47, 49, 58, 59, 66, 66A, 66B, Baptist Church, 76, 78, 80
  - Main Street: 8, 10, 22, 24.
  - Walls Close: 5
  - Clay Loan: 10

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments in this area.



NB Listed buildings are indicated for reference only. This map does not show the extent of any curtilage which may be listed.

To confirm what is covered by a listing contact Development Management at Orkney Islands Council.



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*Map of listed buildings in the Laverock character area*

### Key Buildings & Townscape:

Victoria Street is punctuated by key buildings, which play a vital role in the identification and navigation of the otherwise relatively undifferentiated street. These include:

- Shearer's
- Rafinn (12 Victoria Street)
- Sutherland's
- The Venue, Victoria Street

Main Street is centred on the key landmarks of the West End Hotel, the Catholic Church, and the house opposite the Catholic Church.



*William Shearer's on Victoria Street*

In addition to these prominent buildings, there are many other buildings which play a valuable role in defining the character of the townscape. These include:

- Spence's Square: This uses a traditional courtyard arrangement of gables facing the street, with a boundary wall partly enclosing the space. Key architectural details include a carved skewputt, crowsteps, and an iron archway. The irregular fenestration provides interest on otherwise plain façades.

*Right: Spence's Square*

*Below: Notes on how Spence's Square contributes to the special character of the area*

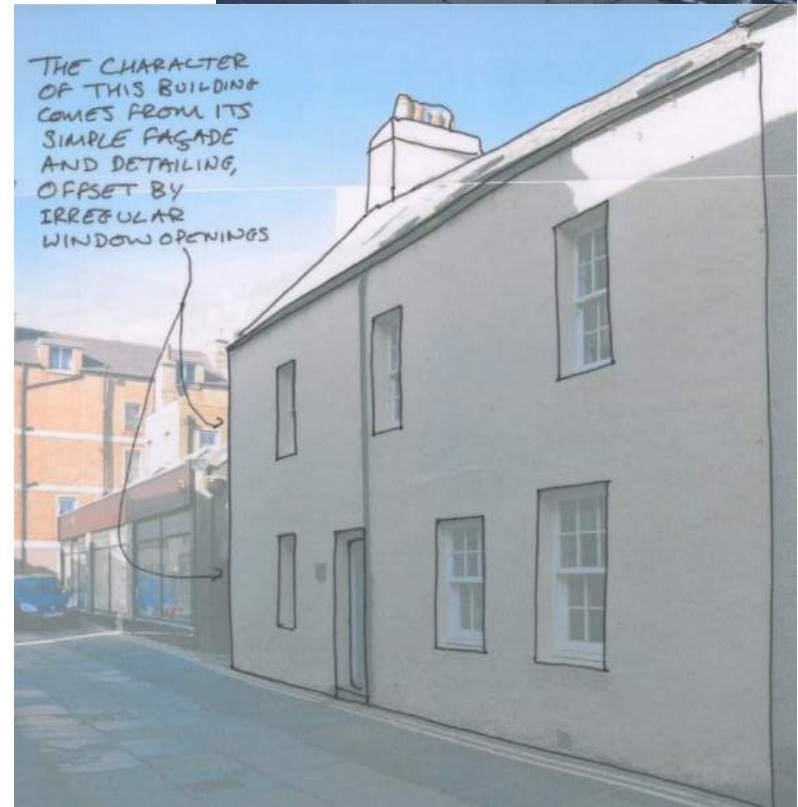




- 54-56 Victoria Street: This is simply designed, with lightly coloured harling on the exterior. The fenestration is generally regular, with some windows slightly larger or out of line.

*Right: 54-56 Victoria Street*

*Below: Notes on how 54-56 Victoria Street contributes to the special character of the area*



### Plot Layouts:

This area has a very well preserved burgage plot layout consisting of thin strips of land extending perpendicular to the streets. Buildings are placed directly on the street, with the rear of the plots accessed via closes and courtyards. This plays a key role in the character of the area. Buildings are mostly two or three storeys tall, with the Orkney Hotel the tallest at 4 storeys. There are also a few twentieth-century one-storey shop units, such as Shearer's and The Venue.

**Warren's Walk/Gunn's Close**  
Narrow terraces of nineteenth-century workers' housing occupy the old burgage plot. Access is provided via narrow paths and lanes running along the facades.

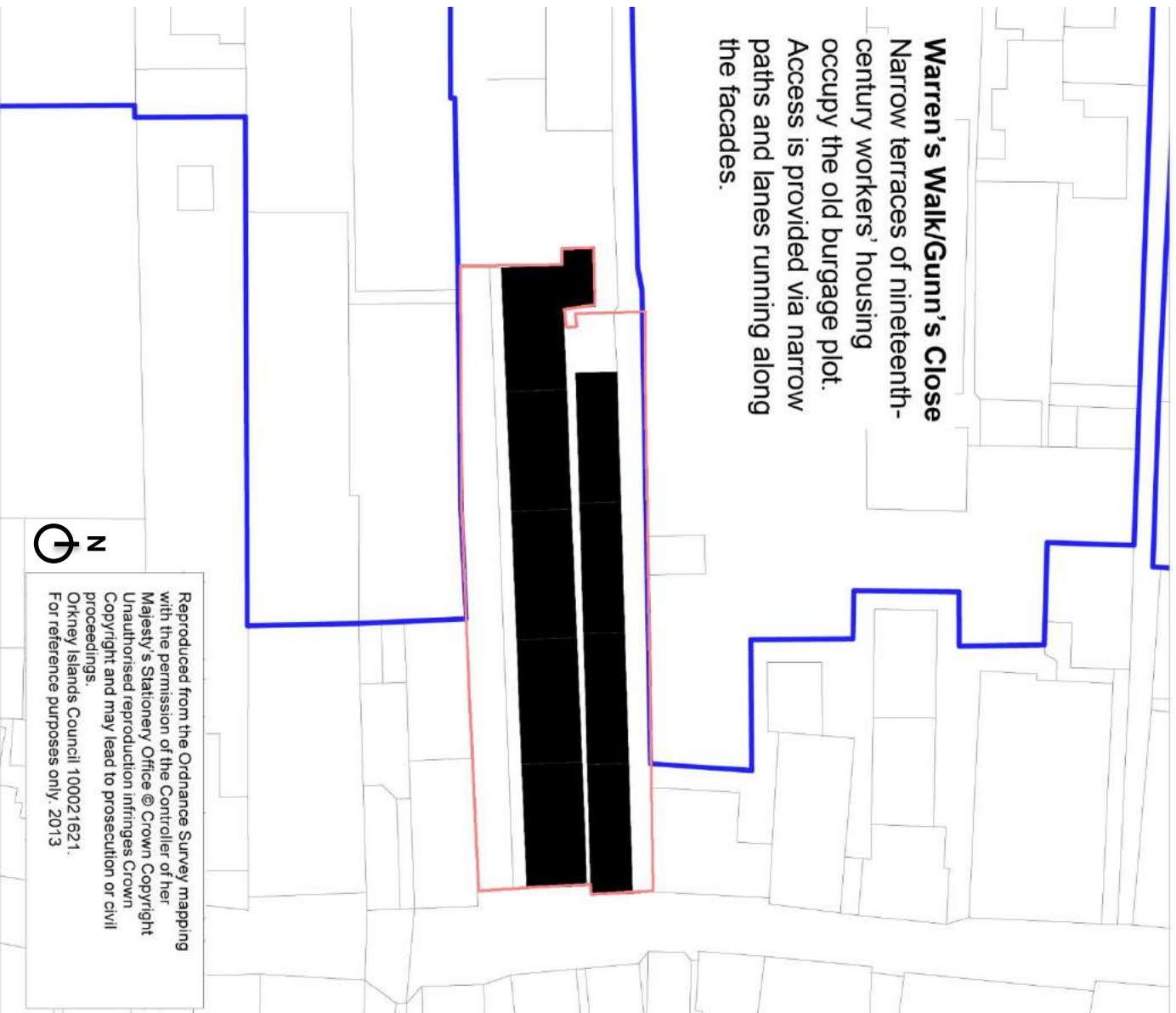


Diagram of plot layouts at Warren's Walk/Gunn's Close



Diagram of plot layouts at Main Street



Uses:

The north end of Victoria Street (north of Shearer's) has a number of shops and restaurants along the street, as well as the Orkney Hotel. Otherwise the area is predominantly residential, with only a few shops along Main Street, and the West End Hotel. There are also two churches, one each on Victoria Street and Main Street.

## Building Components:

### Roofs:

Roofs in this area usually have a steep pitch (over 45 degrees). Many of the older properties retain their sandstone tiles, and one outbuilding off Main Street still has its flagstone roof. Otherwise roofs are typically covered with slates, with some modern replacements (such as concrete fishscale tiles) also visible. The old billiards hall on Main Street (now Home Start) has a corrugated metal sheet roof. Rooflights are prevalent, and are usually modern in design, although some historic Carron lights can be seen. Roof vents are generally not visible, or are unobtrusive. Dormer windows are very rare, with only a lantern-style dormer on Main Street visible from the main streets. Scottish-style crowsteps are very common on traditional buildings, and on Victoria Street these are often combined with decorative skewputts. Chimneys are usually plain and simple in design.



*Above right:  
Corrugated metal roof  
on Main Street*

*Far right:  
Flagstone roof in  
courtyard off Main  
Street*

*Right:  
Slate roof on Victoria  
Hall, Victoria Street*



## Walls:

The majority of buildings are rendered in a variety of bright colours alongside white, such as light grey and yellow. Carved stones, particularly marriage stones, are numerous along Victoria Street. Stonework tends to be exposed only on nineteenth-century properties, and is not used decoratively to any great effect.



*Above right:  
Carved skewputt on Victoria Street*

*Right:  
An exposed stone building on Victoria Road*





## Windows:

The survival of historic windows is poor, with many replaced by top-opening or casement mock sash replacements in synthetic materials. Historic windows are generally sash windows, in a number of different sizes. Frames are usually coloured off-white, with some brown or black. Decorative glazing panels can be seen at Victoria Hall and at Home Start on Main Street (old billiards hall).



*Above right:  
West End  
Hotel, Main  
Street*

*Far right:  
Victoria Street*

*Right:  
Old billiards  
hall, Main  
Street*





## Doors:

Doors in this area usually incorporate some element of glazing, which is usually less for properties facing directly onto Victoria Street. Colours vary widely, and are not usually co-ordinated with other architectural details.

Thresholds are usually formed by a slight recess in the wall. A number of traditional properties on Victoria Street have doors set on chamfered corners, a feature which is highly distinctive and which contributes greatly to the character of the area. Sutherland's Pharmacy has a deep modern recess into the shopfront. The Orkney Hotel has a large modern porch, whilst the West End Hotel has a historic porch with cast-iron detailing.



*The Orkney Hotel, Victoria Street*

### Rainwater Goods:

The survival of historic rainwater goods in this area has been poor. Almost all the buildings have synthetic modern replacements, which are generally out of character with the design of the buildings or the character of the area. Where they do remain they are typically of a simple design, in black cast iron, and often in poor repair. On Main Street there is an example of a green down-pipe co-ordinated with the overall colour scheme of the house.



*Coloured downpipes on Main Street*

### Designed Shopfronts:

Given Victoria Street's importance as a shopping street, there are a number of designed shopfronts along it. These vary in age from nineteenth-century to post-war, and are in a variety of styles and materials. Notable modernist examples are Shearer's and Sutherland's Pharmacy.



*Sutherland's Pharmacy, Victoria Street*

## Conclusions

### Streetscape issues:

- In common with the Burgh and Midtown, the narrow streets and lanes in this area can pose difficulties for waste collection. Reviewing the details of the waste collection arrangements could potentially enhance the character of the area.
- The streetlights mounted to buildings are in keeping with the character of the area, but their bulky associated infrastructure can undermine this.
- Given the narrow streets and scarcity of public open spaces, open areas such as Shearer's car park and the front courtyard of the Orkney Hotel should be considered priorities for placemaking and especially sensitive to adverse impacts on the character of the area.
- The ad-hoc combination of asphalt and flagstone surfacing on Main Street detracts from the coherence of the street, and creates a set of divisions in the street which prevent an understanding of its historic character as part of the main road into Kirkwall. Any opportunities to restore a single shared surface should therefore be examined closely.



*Wheelie bins on Main Street*

Buildings:

Condition:

There are a number of properties whose poor condition affects the character of the area as a whole, which should be considered a priority for repair:

- 10 Victoria Street
- Victoria Hall



*Victoria Hall, Victoria Street*

Inappropriate Repairs:

- The replacement of traditional roofing materials with modern synthetic materials detracts from the character of the area
- Historic windows and rainwater goods have poor survival, and have been replaced with unsympathetic sympathetic modern versions.
- Doors have often been replaced with standard suburban designs which are not in keeping with the character of the area.



## Redevelopment Opportunities:

A number of buildings detract from the character of the area through their original design, and should be considered opportunities for redevelopment:

- 9-11 Victoria Street: The lack of fenestration on the upper floor is totally out of character with the area.
- 21 Main Street: This is a bungalow of suburban character whose materials and design bear no relation to its historic urban location or the character of the street.
- The Venue: This is a simple modern shop unit, whose sympathetic renovation would greatly enhance the contribution it makes to the character of the area.



*The Venue, Victoria Street*

## Summary of key points:

### Strengths:

The Laverock has an exceptionally well preserved plot layout from the medieval period, and many distinctive architectural features. There are a number of examples of high-quality sympathetic modern design.

### Weaknesses:

The narrow streets cause logistical problems for services such as street lighting and refuse collection, the effective management of which is vital to avoid impacting on the character of the area.

### Opportunities:

This area would benefit from a series of small improvements covering the area, including replacing downpipes and windows, and addressing minor issues with street lighting and traffic management. This would enhance the character of the area as a whole.

### Threats:

Continued inappropriate replacement of historic features would erode the special character of the area, which is highly sensitive to change.

## 4.5 EAST KIRKWALL

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### Introduction:

The East Kirkwall character area covers parts of the Conservation Area primarily developed from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. The character of this area is markedly different from the medieval core of Kirkwall, yet it also expresses the special character of the Conservation Area as a whole through the large number of buildings of architectural merit within it and its intimate connection with the landscape. Whereas medieval development in the centre of Kirkwall was located around the coastline for transport and trade, during the latter half of the nineteenth century the hills to the immediate east of the town became the site of villas and cottages aiming to take advantage of scenic views, large gardens and fresh open air. This incorporation of picturesque attitudes to landscape into domestic development is evidence of the improved social links between Orkney and mainland Britain, and accompanied the conceptualisation of landscape driven by in the Agricultural Improvement then occurring in Orkney. In their own right these villas and cottages are often highly decorative, thoughtfully designed and built from high quality materials. Stylistically they incorporate elements from traditional Orcadian architecture as well as the latest styles from elsewhere in the UK.

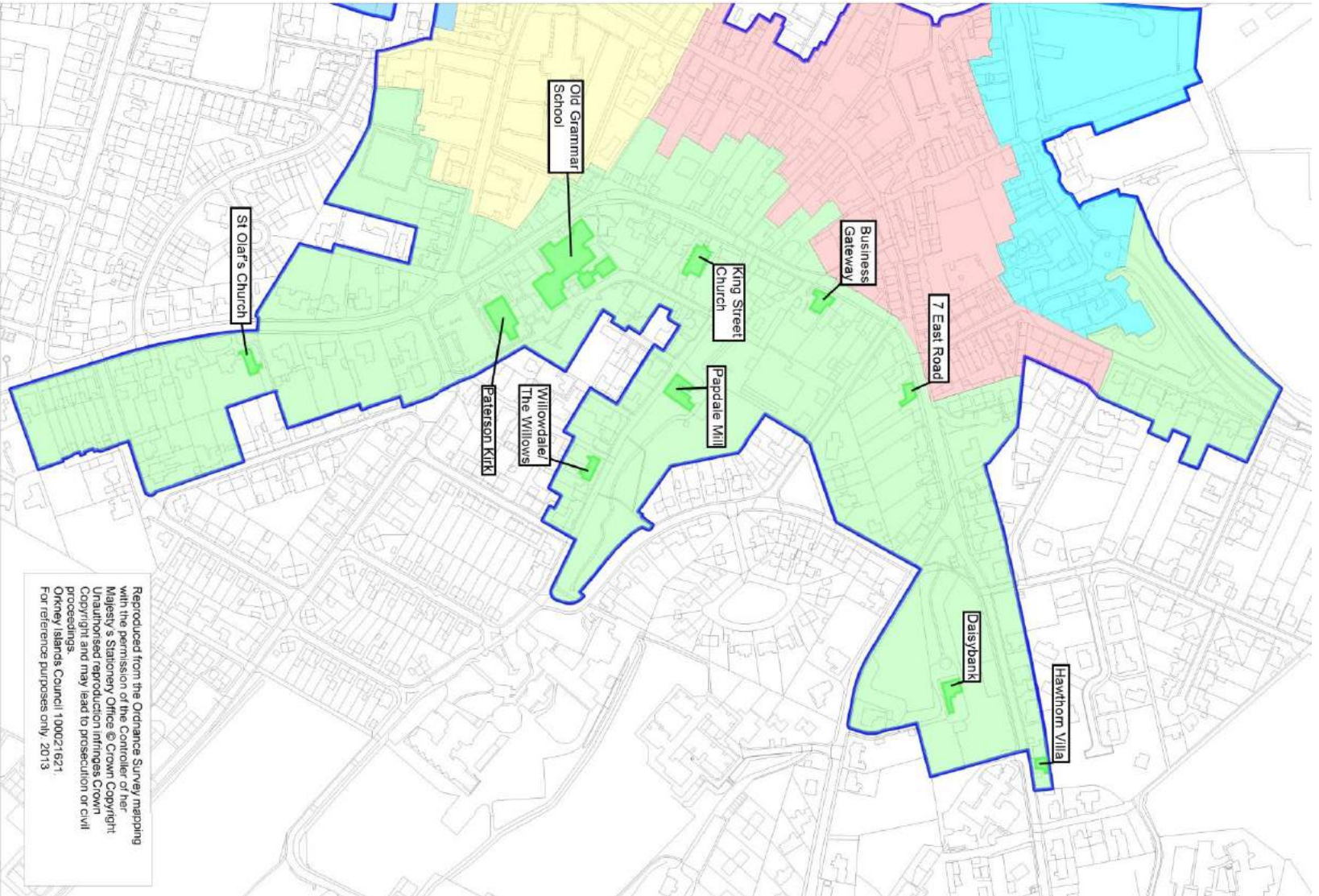


*Dundas Crescent*

The special character of East Kirkwall:

The special character of the East Kirkwall character area lies in the architectural quality of the buildings, particularly in their aesthetic detail, as well as in their scenic connection to the landscape. The area includes locally rare examples of designed gardens, and has a very open spatial character which is highly distinctive in an Orkney context, with many houses set free standing in large gardens.





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Map of the East Kirkwall character area

## Streetscape:

### Public space:

The open nature of this area means that there are several large public open spaces, in addition to the wide streets:

- Brandyquoy Park and Bowling Green;
- The Willows, which is the most significant public space in the area in terms of size and urban prominence;
- The paved area at the junction of Strynd and School Place;
- The promenade along Shore Street;
- The grass verge below Daisybank House.



*The Willows*

### Enclosure and Connections:

The streetscape and urban pattern is very open, with wide streets, public parks and a coastal promenade, and houses are typically set in large gardens. Only a few places, like the Strynd, offer a strong degree of enclosure.

The area covers a large part of east Kirkwall, and includes the main north-south roads on this side of the town, along with the connecting roads beyond. It is therefore well connected to all the other character areas, and to the rest of Kirkwall. The main connections in the area are:

- To the Harbour via Shore Street, and along the Bay of Weyland via Cromwell Road;
- To St. Catherine's Place via Cromwell Road or East Road;
- To Bridge Street via Garden Street and Bridge Street Wynd;
- To Albert Street via Laing Street and the Strynd;
- To Broad Street and the Cathedral via Palace Road;
- To Victoria Street, Main Street and Junction Road via Clay Loan;
- To Papdale via Willow Road;
- Along Dundas Crescent to Holm and Deerness.



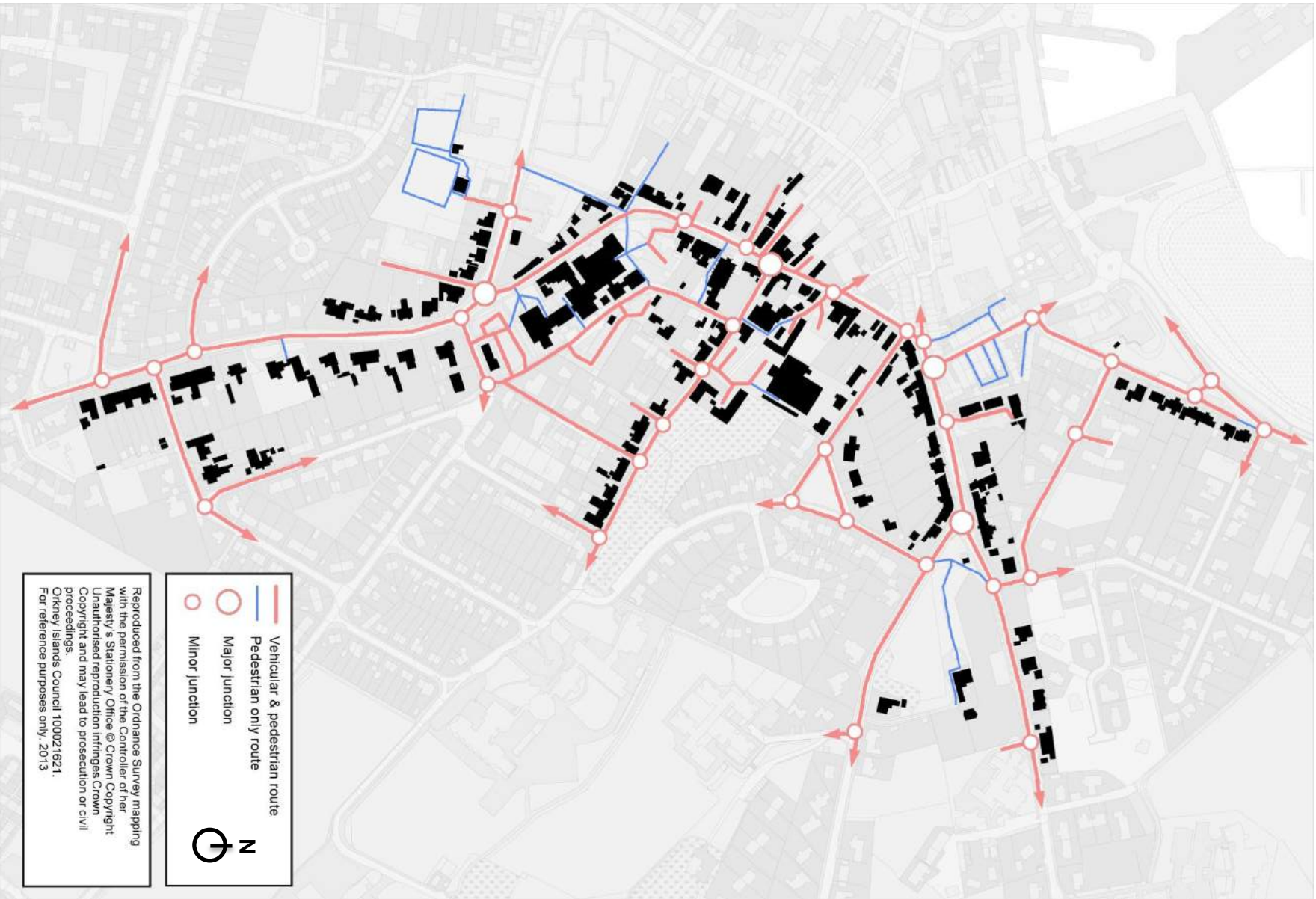


Diagram of distribution of buildings and open space, and paths and key junctions in the East Kirkwall character area



### Key views:

Views were key considerations in the development of this area, and, whilst subsequent development has changed many views, they remain an important part of the character of the area. The main views through the area are:

- Views from Cromwell Road over the sea;
- The view down Palace Road to the Cathedral;
- The view from King Street to the Cathedral and Bishop's Palace;
- The view up King Street to the junction with School Place;
- The views through the Willows;
- The view up the footpath to Daisybank.



*The view from Cromwell Road over Kirkwall Bay*

### Street surfaces:

Whilst roads in this area are all surfaced with asphalt, there is in places a very good survival of sandstone pavements and kerbs. Where they exist these add a great deal of distinctiveness and character to the street, and are an undervalued resource.

### Street furniture:

Much of the street furniture in this area relates to traffic management, such as road signs and pedestrian barriers, and is generally of a standard modern design. Noteworthy historical features which make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area include the hand-painted street names and various features integrated into the boundary walls of villas, such as carved house names and post boxes.



*Post box on Dundas Crescent*

### Green spaces:

Most properties in this area have gardens, including front gardens partially open to the street. There are many mature trees, particularly in the Willows and in the grounds of the larger villas, and there are several other key green spaces, such as the large lawn on Shore Street, the bowling greens and Daisybank's fields. These are a key part of the character of the area.



*The lower bowling green*

### Boundary walls and railings:

Boundary walls, particularly in front of properties, are particularly important to the character of this area, as they are typically well-designed and highly decorative extensions of the aesthetic scheme of the house. They often integrate wrought- or cast-iron railings and features such as carved house-names. Garden boundary walls are also important, especially where they also define public space as at the Strynd.



*Snowberry Villa, East Road*

### Parking:

There are a number of large car parks in this area, primarily around the Council headquarters on School Place. At the Garden Centre on Mill Street there is customer parking, and along Willow Road and Cromwell Road there are designated bays. Many properties have their own on-site parking bays or garages.

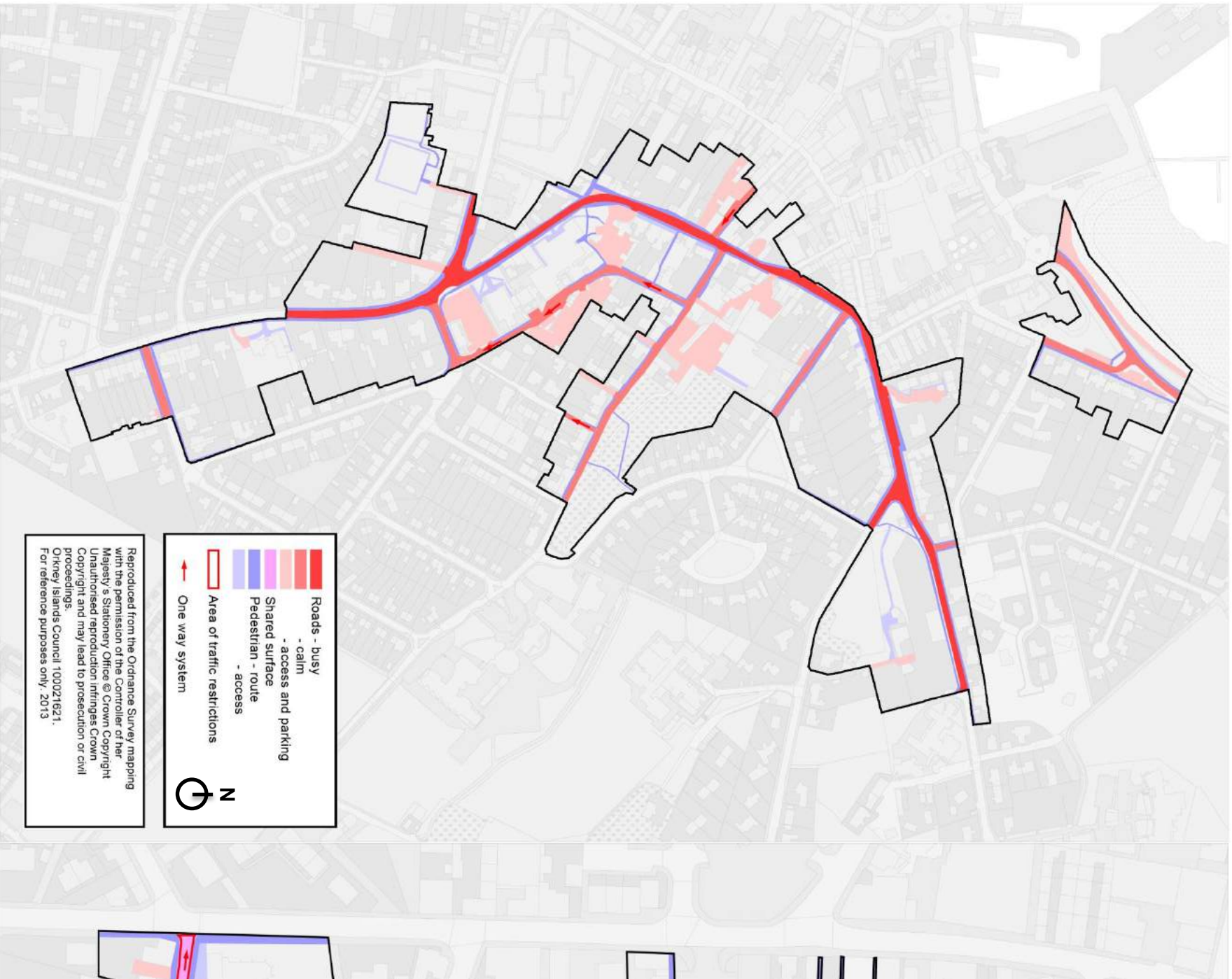
## Activity and Movement:

Pedestrian traffic in this area is busiest at the beginning and end of the working day, when large numbers of people walk into the centre of town and to the Council Offices. The roads passing through the area are the main roads on this side of Kirkwall, and accordingly carry a large amount of vehicular traffic. This also peaks at the beginning and end of the day, as large numbers of vehicles travel through the area to the centre of town, and also park around the Council Offices. Both pedestrian and vehicular traffic is much busier during the day.



*Dundas Crescent, part of the main road from Kirkwall to the airport*





Map showing general levels of pedestrian and vehicular traffic in the East Kirkwall character area

## Buildings:

The oldest buildings in this area date from the eighteenth century, such as Daisybank, but most were built in the mid- to late nineteenth century, such as the Papdale Mill and the Paterson Kirk. Villas such as those on Dundas Crescent were constructed towards the end of the nineteenth century.

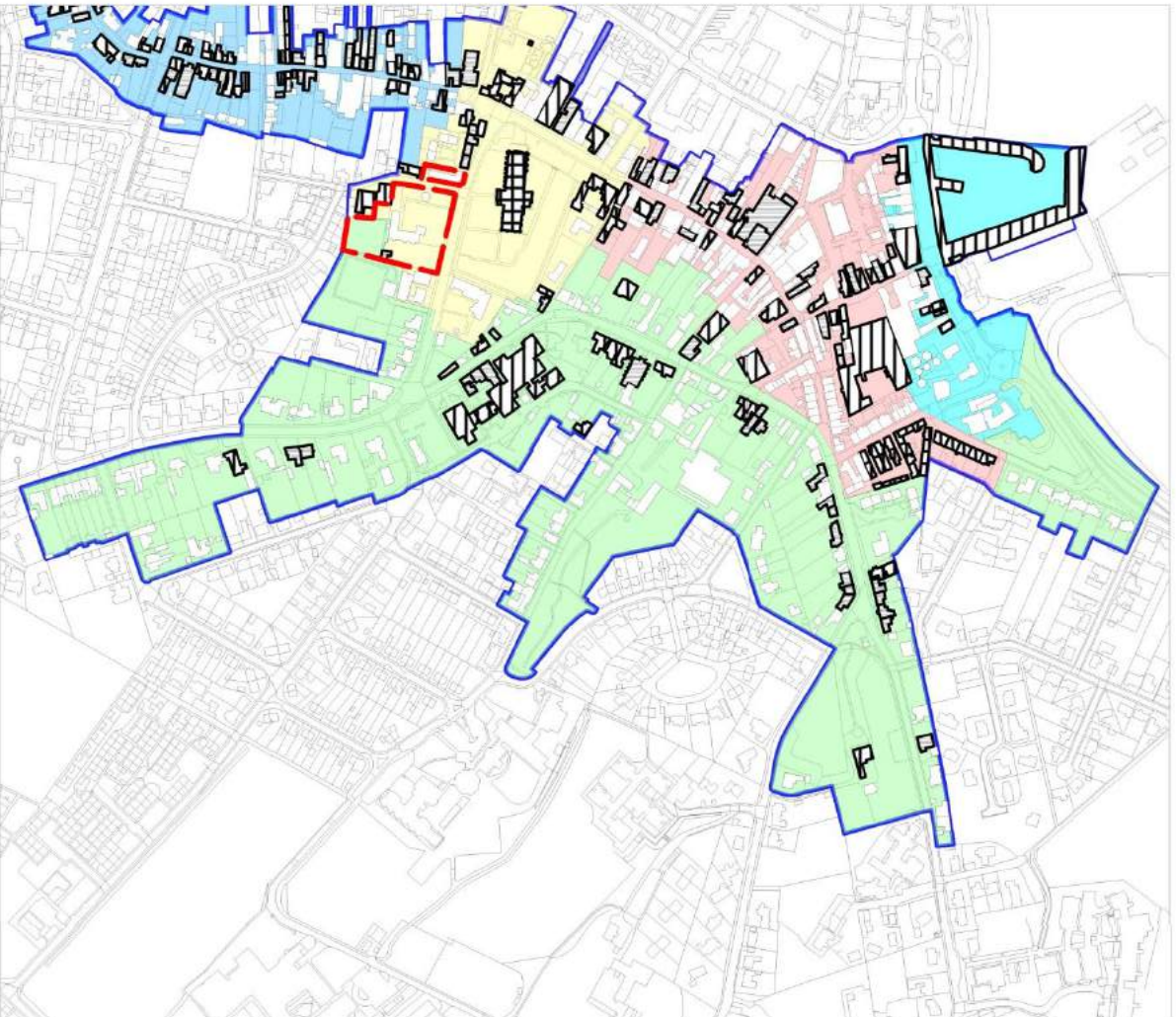
## Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments:

Due to the number of grand public buildings and villas there are a number of listed buildings within this area:

- Category B:
  - Daisybank House, East Road
  - 18 East Road
  - 12, 14 Queen Street
  - 2, 6, 8, 9, 10 King Street
  - Garmisgarth, Mill Street
  - The Strynd Storehouse
  - Old Grammar School (Council Offices), School Place
  - 5 School Place
  - Paterson Church, School Place
  - St Olaf's Church, Dundas Crescent
  
- Category C:
  - Old Bowling Green Pavilion, Brandyquoy Park
  - 6, 8 Dundas Crescent
  - 1, 3, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12 School Place
  - King Street Church
  - 10 Laing Street
  - 10 Queen Street

- 5, 9, 11, 13, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26 East Road
- Lilybank, East Road

The bowling green immediately south of the Earl's Palace is part of its scheduled area (excluding the structure of the listed pavilion).



**Legend**

Conservation Area Boundary

Listing Category

- A
- B
- C

Character Areas

- Burgh & Midtown
- East Kirkwall
- Harbour
- Laverock
- St Magnus

Scheduled Monument

NB Listed buildings are indicated for reference only. This map does not show the extent of any curtilage which may be listed.  
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Map of listed buildings in the East Kirkwall character area



## Key Buildings & Townscape:

The key buildings in the streetscape of the area are mainly those situated around key junctions, or large buildings clearly visible from the road:

- Papdale Mill, Mill Street
- The buildings around the junction of East Road and Queen Street
- The Council Offices on School Place (old Grammar School and Paterson Kirk)
- St Olaf's Church, Dundas Crescent
- The properties around the corners of School Place and King Street, and Thom Street and Dundas Crescent.



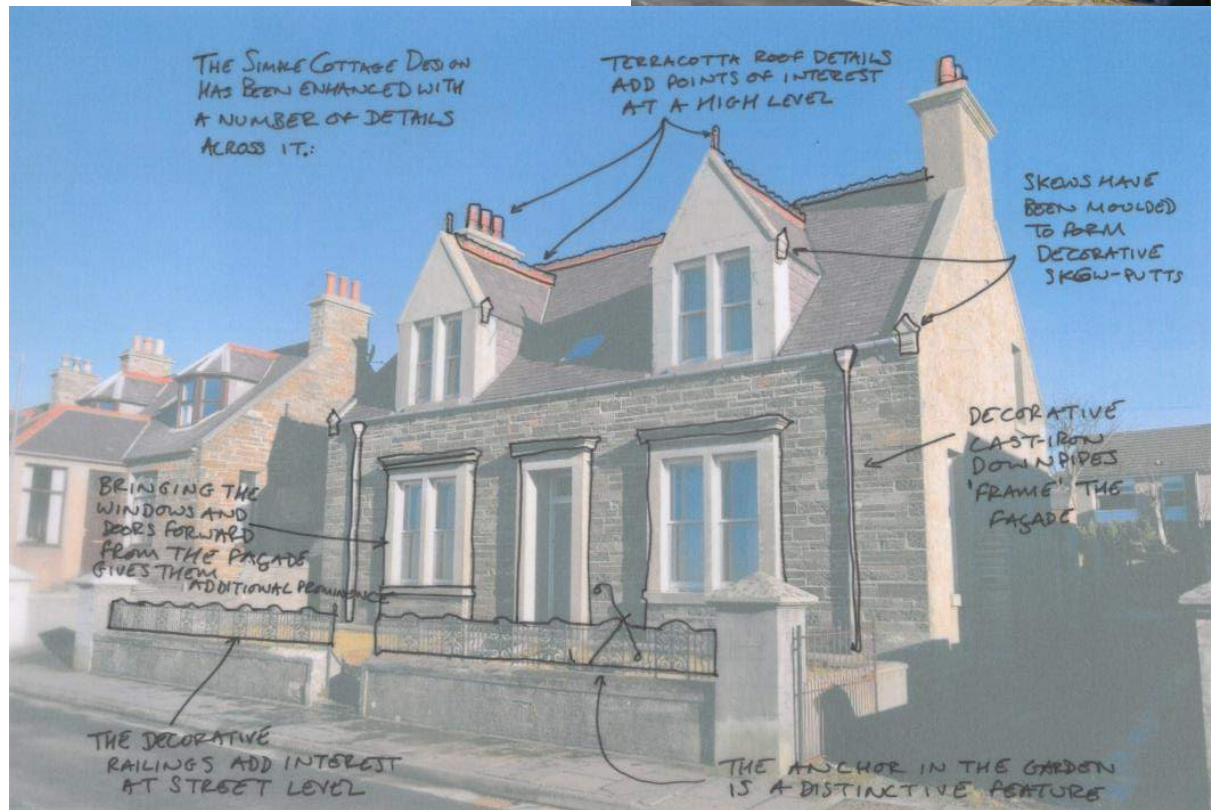
*The former Grammar School on School Place, now part of the Council Offices*

In addition to these prominent buildings, there are many other buildings which play a valuable role in defining the character of the townscape. These include:

- The Anchorage, Cromwell Road: This is a well-preserved example of the seaside cottages which extend along Cromwell Road.

*Right: The Anchorage, Cromwell Road*

*Below: Notes on how The Anchorage contributes to the special character of the area*



- Hawthorn Villa, East Road: This is a highly detailed and fairly well preserved example of a semi-detached villa.

*Right: Hawthorn Villa*

*Below: Notes on how Hawthorn Villa contributes to the special character of the area*





- 7 East Road: This is a good example of an eighteenth to early mid-nineteenth century townhouse.

*Right: 7 East Road*

*Below: Notes on how 7 East Road contributes to the special character of the area*





- Business Gateway, 12-14 Queen Street: This shows how a traditional townhouse can be converted to offices whilst retaining the essential character and appearance of the building.

*Right: 12-14 Queen Street*

*Below: Notes on how 12-14 Queen Street contributes to the special character of the area*



- Willowdale/The Willows, Willow Road: These are good examples of semi-detached villas which, although relatively limited in ornamentation, have a well co-ordinated aesthetic design.

*Right: Willowdale/The Willows*

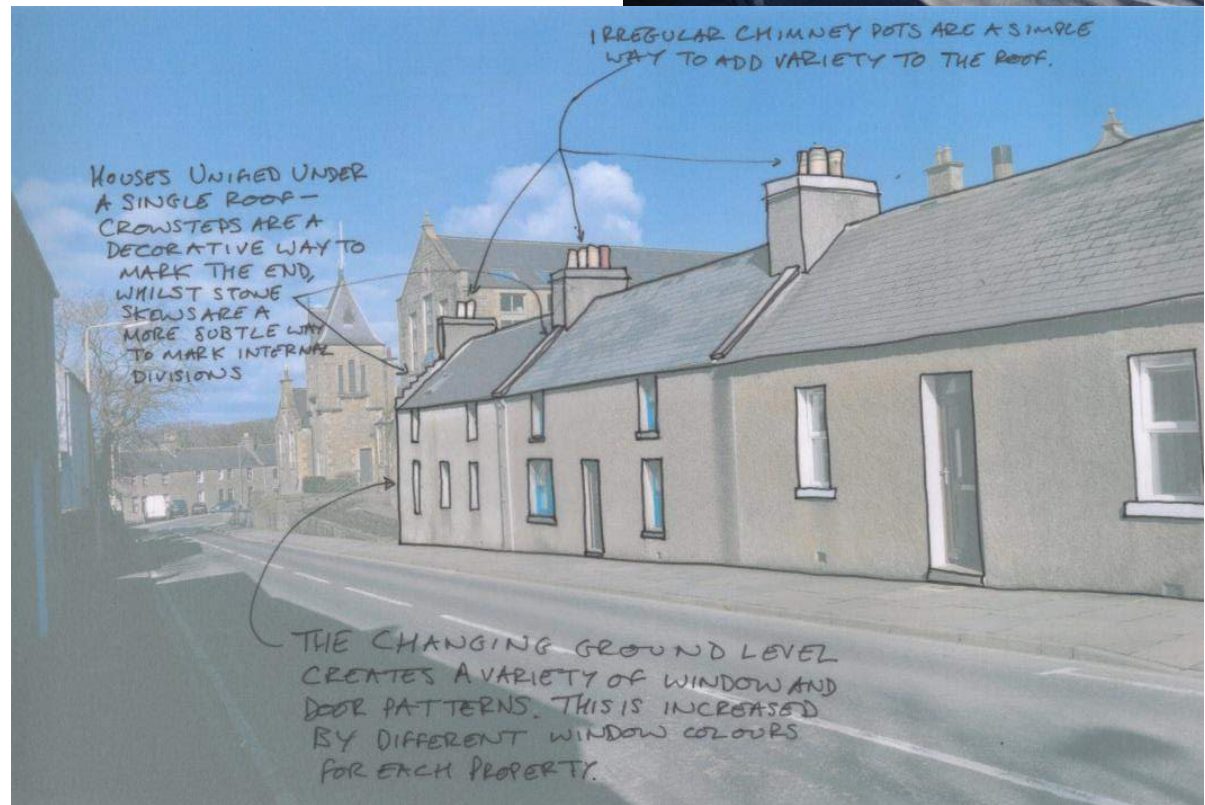
*Below: Notes on how Willowdale/The Willows contribute to the special character of the area*



- 6, 8, 10 School Place: This terrace of cottages, which range from single-storey to two-storey as the gradient changes, show how the use of the slope can create a group of distinctly individual houses with a coherent façade and character.

*Right: 6-10 School Place*

*Below: Notes on how 6-10 School Place contribute to the special character of the area*





- o Ivybank, Dundas Crescent: This is a good example of the villas which define the character of Dundas Crescent.

Right: Ivybank

Below: Notes on how Ivybank contributes to the special character of the area





## Plot Layouts:

There are numerous different plot layouts across this area, each with their own characteristics. Most have a low plot density, with buildings typically set back from at least two edges of the plot within gardens. Buildings are usually two storeys tall, with larger villas around three storeys tall. Some areas have a defined building line running parallel to the street. The main types of plot layout can be found at:

- Cromwell Road (the seafront cottages)
- East Road (the upper villas, the lower townhouses, and Daisybank)
- Carter's Park Road (twentieth century suburbs)
- Willows Road (cottages and small villas)
- King Street/Queen Street/School Place (townhouses and cottages)
- Palace Road/Dundas Crescent (large villas)



Diagram showing plot layouts on Carters Park Road



**Cromwell Road**  
 Small cottages in a fairly regular building line, albeit with a variety of porches and front garden layouts. Plot widths are regular, but lengths vary.

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Diagram of plot layouts on Cromwell Road



Diagram of plot layouts on Dundas Crescent



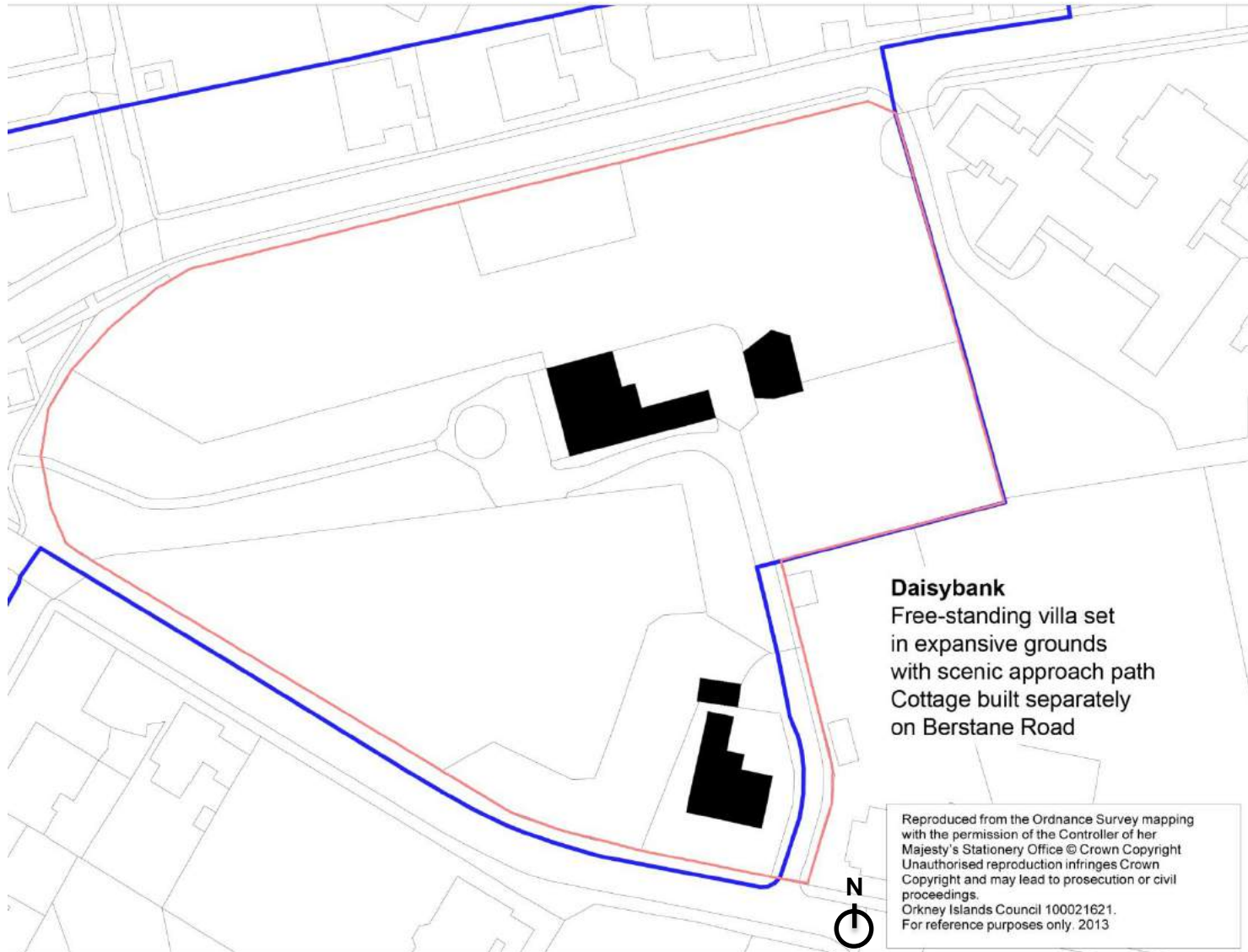


Diagram of plot layout at Daisybank



Diagram of plot layouts at the lower end of East Road

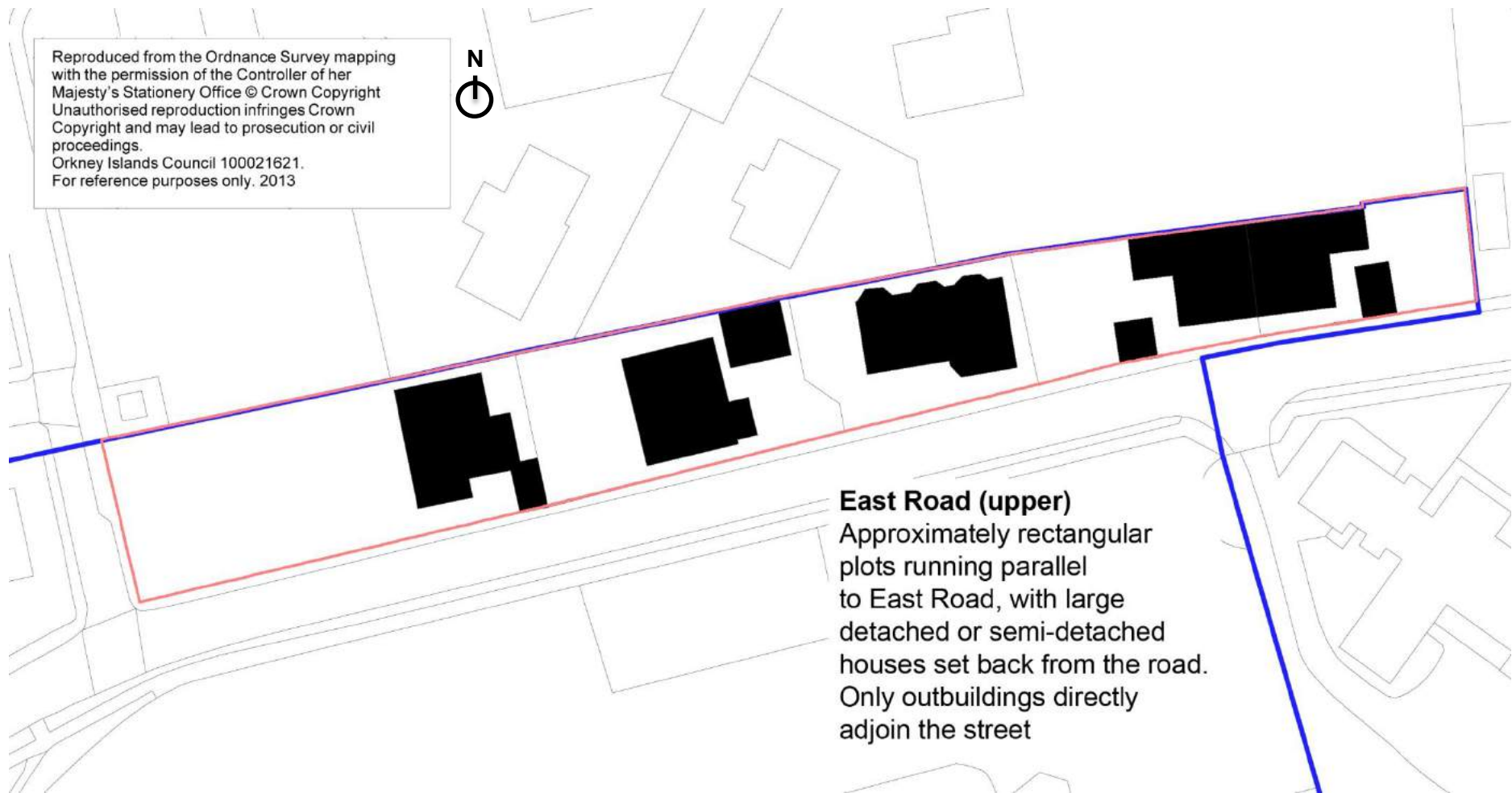


Diagram of plot layouts at the upper end of East Road

**Willows Road**  
Varied plot widths  
Most plots set back from road  
to create front garden



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Diagram of plot layouts on Willows Road



Uses:

The area is generally residential, with the exception of a few commercial properties (such as Rendall's bakery on Willow Street), religious institutions (such as St Olaf's), and offices such as the Council headquarters.

## Building Components:

### Roofs:

Roof pitches in this area are generally steep ( $>45^\circ$ ), with some flat-roofed modern buildings. The majority of buildings have slate roofs, with sandstone tiles rare due to the period of this area's development. There are many modern roofing products used as replacements for slate, including pantiles and concrete tiles. Rooflights are common, and are generally of modern design, although some Carron lights and historic glazing panels can be found. Roof vents are generally rare, and of modern design. Dormer windows are especially prevalent on Cromwell Road, where they provide sea views. Crowsteps are overall rare, but include an Orkney-style example on the Strynd and a number of Scottish-style examples along School Place. Skews are often cast from cement, although stone skews survive on grander buildings, sometimes with decorative skewputts. Chimneys are often decorated, with a wide range of styles prevalent across the area. Decorative details such as ridge tiles and gable finials are common, particularly on dormer windows, and are a key part of the character of the area.

### Noteworthy examples of roofs include:

- Papdale Mill
- Kingdom Hall, Mill Street
- Garden Centre, Mill Street
- Old Grammar School, School Place
- 9 King Street



*Papdale Mill, Mill Street*

## Walls:

Walls are generally exposed stone, as is typical for Victorian architecture, with decorative features such as ashlar openings common. Many buildings combine an exposed stone façade with rendered gables and rear elevations. Many properties have had inappropriate cement mortar applied, to the detriment of the fabric and character of the building.



*Above right:  
Detailed stone carving on East Road*

*Right:  
Historic garage from 1935, rendered carefully with cement to form  
ornamental details*



## Windows:

The survival of historic windows in this area is poor, with many replaced by inappropriate synthetic frames in standard designs. Historic windows are generally sash-and-case, in a variety of designs. There are also some fixed-pane windows, although these are rare. There are some examples of stone mullions being used decoratively within glazing schemes. Windows are generally off white or brown, and are often co-ordinated with the colour of the door and other features.



*Above right:  
High Toft, Berstane Road*

*Right:  
Co-ordinated colour scheme on Willows Road*



## Doors:

Doors in this area often incorporate some elements of glazing, either within or around the door. It is not unusual for house names to be painted onto the glazing panel above the front door to the house. Doors can be found in a wide range of colours, including brighter colours such as red or light blue.

Thresholds are generally either created with a porch or simple slight recess, with some degree of ornament not unusual. Steps are rare.



*Doorways on East Road*

## Rainwater Goods:

Where they survive, historic rainwater goods are cast-iron, and come in a wide variety of colours, often co-ordinated with the colours of other building elements such as windows.



*Painted rainwater goods as part of a co-ordinated colour scheme at 9 King Street*

## Conclusions

### Streetscape issues:

- The historic sandstone kerbs do survive in some parts of this area, especially on Dundas Crescent. If these were preserved and the historic pavement surfaces were restored this would have a disproportionately positive impact on the character of the area.
- The pedestrian barriers around School Place are standard in design, and are out of character with the area. The character of the immediate area could be enhanced by redesigning or replacing these.
- There is an opportunity for open space improvements around the entrance to the Strynd at School Place, which is currently a small car park surrounded by pedestrian barriers.
- There is an opportunity for open space improvements at the Daisybank corner of East Road, possibly through improving the appearance of the substation.
- There is an opportunity to enhance the coastal promenade along Shore Street: whilst this is a recent creation, it is a good place from which to appreciate the character of the area.
- The maintenance of prominent boundary walls is a widespread issue throughout the area, and has a disproportionate effect on the character of the area due to their particular prominence in the streetscape.



*Historic and modern pavement surfaces and kerbs on Dundas Crescent*

- Refuse bins are often built to standard designs, from synthetic materials, which detract from the character of the area when left in prominent locations.
- There is an opportunity to redesign the streetlamps in this area to use designs more appropriate to the character of the area, as has been achieved in the centre of the town.
- The condition of hand-painted signs is often poor – these are a great part of the distinctiveness of the area, and should be maintained.



*Historic street signs at the junction of School Place, Strynd and King Street*

Buildings:

Condition:

There are a few properties whose poor condition affects the character of the area as a whole, which should be considered a priority for repair:

- 1 King Street, including corrugated metal outbuilding
- 15 George Street



*15 George Street*



### Inappropriate Alterations and Additions:

There are a large number of inappropriate alterations and additions across the area, including:

- window replacements
- roofing materials
- cement render
- inappropriate extensions
- satellite dishes
- modern rooflights

Addressing these issues would be central to preserving and enhancing the character of this area.

### Redevelopment Opportunities:

A number of buildings detract from the character of the area through their original design, and should be considered opportunities for redevelopment.

Being a predominantly suburban area, East Kirkwall does have a number of buildings whose design would be more appropriate to modern suburban developments, and do not contribute to the special character of the area. These include:

- Sanaigmhor, Cromwell Road
- Jarlshof, 28 East Road
- Eastbury, East Road



*Sanaigmhor, Cromwell Road*



- The Sycamore, 23 East Road
- Miller's Park, Willowburn Road
- 18 Willowburn Road
- The Haven, King Street
- Rendall's, Willow Road

## Summary of key points:

### Strengths:

The area is still largely in its original use, as residential suburbs, which is likely to be sustainable into the future. There are many fine examples of nineteenth and twentieth-century domestic architecture, closely related to gardens, parks and the wider landscape.

### Weaknesses:

Many buildings have been inappropriately altered to some extent, although these are mostly reversible. Several buildings have been built to standard suburban designs, which undermine the distinctiveness of the area.

### Opportunities:

There is an opportunity to improve connections with the medieval core which would, amongst other things, encourage greater use of the parks in this area.

### Threats:

Traffic management is an issue, as is the continued unsympathetic alteration of historic buildings, which undermines the integrity of the area.

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