




TOMINTOUL & GLENLIVET MASTER PLAN

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Prepared by  **Urban Animation** for Cairngorms National Park Authority and the Crown Estate



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Appendix 1 : Tomintoul's Outbuildings

This A3 graphics version of the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Master Plan is part of the Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan produced by Urban Animation and Dhu Rural for the Cairngorms National Park Authority and the Crown Estate. The adopted A4 version is available at :

www.cairngorms.co.uk



MASTER PLAN SUMMARY

The Tomintoul and Glenlivet Regeneration Strategy and Master Plan aim to create the conditions for a flourishing relationship between people and the land, with the community able to meet more of its daily living and working needs locally :

- **Natural resources** can provide new employment opportunities in distilling, forestry, agriculture, sustainable land management, renewable energy, carbon capture and storage;
- The **landscape** has enormous tourism and visitor potential through wildlife, walking, sight seeing, fishing, mountain biking, photography and other outdoor pursuits;
- Tomintoul's rich **urban heritage** offers the prospect of a reinvigorated rural hub providing key services for residents and visitors.

The Master Plan provides the physical and spatial framework to enable the local community, businesses and public agencies to deliver change. Above all, it highlights the need to improve the quality of Tomintoul's built environment - attracting residents and visitors will be far easier if the village looks its best.

The main Master Plan proposals for Tomintoul are :

1. Improving the quality of the arrival points and routes around the village;
2. Enhancing the relationship between Tomintoul and its landscape setting;
3. Improving the public realm - the Square, open spaces, paths, seating, signage etc;
4. Promoting Tomintoul's built heritage by designating a Conservation Area and producing design guidance;
5. Increasing use of the Highland Games field and enhancing its facilities;
6. A caravan park at the east of the village and a camp site at the south.
7. An Outdoor Activity Hub, located at the Glenlivet Estate Office at the south of Tomintoul;
8. Infill development to provide housing and compatible uses on gap sites and rear plot areas;
9. Long term Expansion Areas for housing, business, leisure and visitor uses at the east of the village.

The main Master Plan proposals for Glenlivet and the rural area are :

1. Support for rural business development which does not compromise landscape quality;
2. Support for new family housing to help increase the Glenlivet Primary School roll;
3. Expansion of the caravan site at the Glenlivet Community Hall;
4. Creation of a mountain biking centre by the Crown Estate and supporting partners;
5. A range of opportunities for enhanced Sustainable Land Management;
6. Numerous options for smaller scale renewable energy schemes and energy efficiency measures;
7. Extension of the Speyside Way Spur to create a loop with a new connection to the west.

The long term Master Plan Vision reflects the ambitions of the Regeneration Strategy :

To promote Tomintoul and Glenlivet as a vibrant and distinctive place within the Cairngorms National Park



1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Master Plan supports the Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan for Tomintoul and Glenlivet, prepared by Urban Animation and Dhu Rural in January 2012. It provides a framework for delivery of the Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan proposals as they relate to land, buildings, planning policy and the environmental quality of the area. The findings of all these documents have been informed by the earlier Baseline Assessment study and an Opportunities Paper, also prepared by Urban Animation and Dhu Rural.

Best practice places master planning at the heart of regeneration and place making. The master planning process informs aspects of the Regeneration Strategy, as well as being shaped by it. Throughout the process, consultation has been undertaken with a wide range of agencies, stakeholders and individuals. Community engagement has been an important consideration and the Master Plan proposals take account of the following :

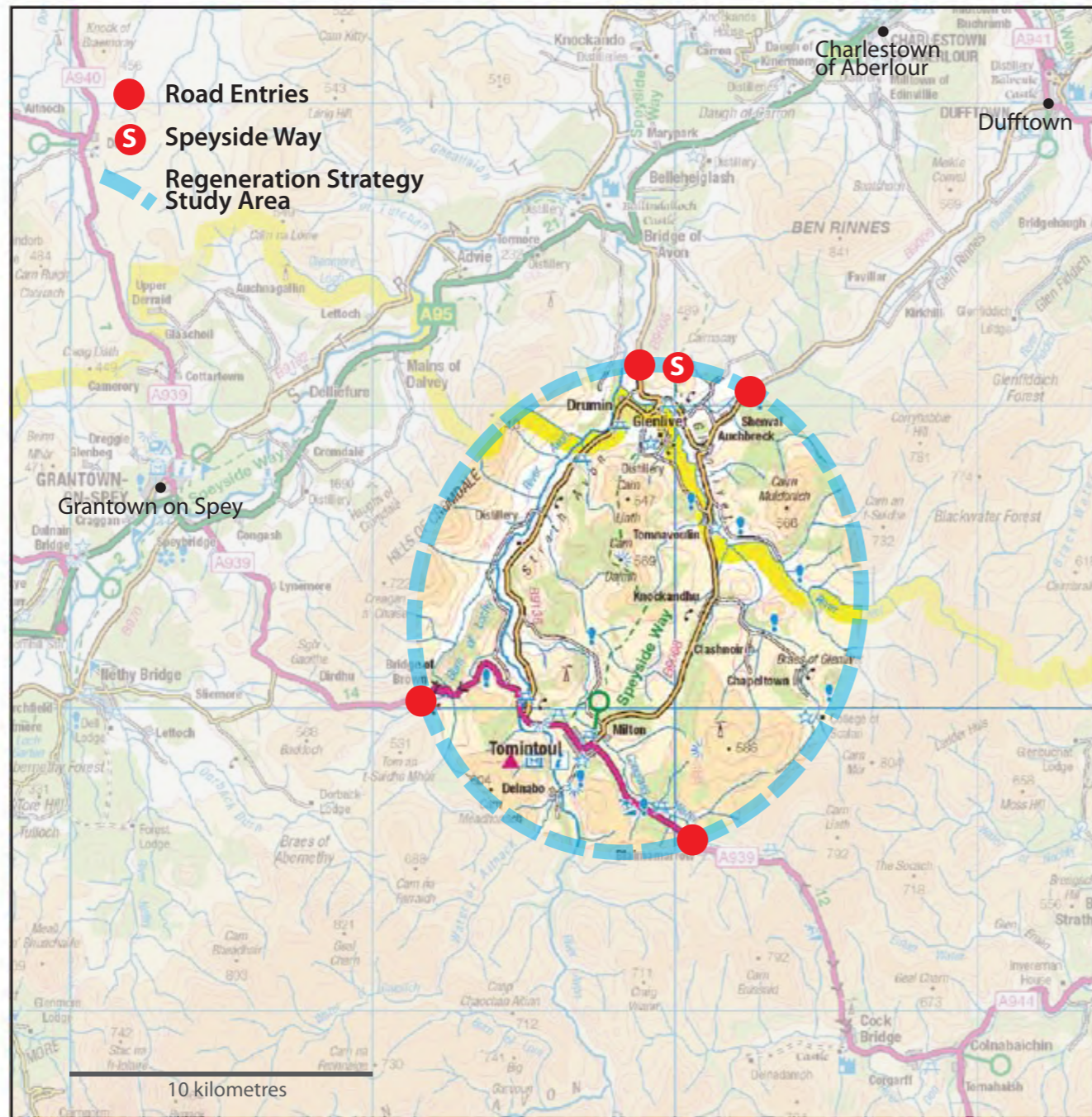
- The Cairngorms Local Plan 2010 Environmental Report;
- The Moray Area (Tomintoul and Glenlivet) community report, produced in Autumn 2010, as part of the preliminary consultation on the Cairngorms National Park Plan 2012-2017;
- A well-attended community engagement event held in Tomintoul on 7th November 2011;
- Responses to the Cairngorms National Park Authority's (CNPA) Main Issues Report consultation in late 2011;
- Community Association and elected member representation on the Regeneration Strategy Steering Group;
- A community consultation event in February 2012 where the draft Master Plan was discussed.

The Master Plan focuses on Tomintoul and its setting, since most of its proposals and recommendations will be urban, or development centred. However, there are also area-based and site specific proposals relating to the Glenlivet settlement and wider rural area. Other aspects of rural regeneration and development are addressed in greater detail in the Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan.

CNPA will consider how the forthcoming Local Development Plan (LDP) can accommodate the Master Plan proposals. The LDP will replace the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan in due course. The local community will also have further opportunities to consider the Master Plan proposals through CNPA consultations and the work of the proposed Community Development Trust and 'Transform Team' which are expected to take on delivery of the Regeneration Strategy

All planning applications within the National Park are assessed against the policies set out in the Local Plan/LDP, the Cairngorms National Park Plan and Supplementary Guidance. Planning applications within the Study Area are submitted to Moray Council. Those applications which raise a planning issue of general significance to the aims of the Park are called-in by CNPA which then determines the application. In this context, close working relationship between Moray Council and CNPA will greatly assist in the successful implementation of the proposals contained in this Master Plan.

The Master Plan proposals have been prepared and assessed against the objectives within the current Local Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report. As a result of this assessment and wider consultation, a number of changes have been made to the Master Plan to minimise and mitigate against potential impacts from the proposed Expansion Areas. The assessment identifies that overall the Master Plan will have positive impacts on the area. The assessment can be found in Appendix 2.



The Study Area

2.0 THE REGENERATION STRATEGY STUDY AREA

The Study Area is shown on the adjacent diagram. The edge is not clearly defined and is not directly related to the National Park, Local Authority, Community Association or Crown Estate boundaries. The higher ground surrounding Tomintoul and Glenlivet forms a natural enclosure for the cultivated and inhabited parts of the area, the river valleys and the more elevated central ground. The area is just four road access points and a single strategic path (Speyside Way spur) leading into and out of the area.

In this sense, Tomintoul and Glenlivet can be seen as a distinct entity within the wider landscape of the Cairngorms National Park - itself a distinct entity in its own larger scale surroundings. The Regeneration Strategy has noted the opportunity to promote Tomintoul and Glenlivet as a distinctive location and reinstate Tomintoul as a rural hub.

It is important to note that this schematic representation of the study area in no way suggests that this is a self-contained environment which meets its own needs. Equally, many of its residents will not necessarily define their locality in this way. In practical terms, there is much movement in and out of the area for employment, shopping and services. Many people visit the area or pass through it for walking, fishing, skiing and other tourist related pursuits.

During the preparation of the Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan, these relationships have been considered in detail. Many of the Master Plan proposals relating to Tomintoul are intended to meet the needs of the Study Area as a whole, just as those for Glenlivet and the wider rural area will also serve the needs of the residents of Tomintoul and visitors to the area.



1813 sketch map of Tomintoul, showing the planned grid pattern and tenements or lotted lands on either side. This geometrically defined urban structure is still clearly evident at Tomintoul.

Sourced from the National Records of Scotland (ref, RHP 1818) and reproduced with permission from the Crown Estate Commissioners.

3.0 TOMINTOUL & GLENLIVET : CONTEXT

Glenlivet is probably best known as the source of the eponymous malt whisky, although there are three other distilleries within the Study Area. Dating to 1824, the Glenlivet Distillery is the main focus of activity and habitation in the rural part of the Study Area, with the Glenlivet settlement taking a dispersed form - the primary school, health centre and village hall are all detached from any significant gathering of residential properties. Other small settlements in the rural area include Braes of Glenlivet, Tomnavoulin, Chapelton of Glenlivet and other isolated hamlets.

The area has a history of illegal distilling and cattle-lifting, with the routes through the river valleys acting as runs for the movement of 'goods'. The abundant churches and former religious buildings reflect a turbulent history which is marked by the Battle of Glenlivet in 1594 - a confrontation between Protestant and Roman Catholic forces.

Most of the rural area has been held by the Crown Estate since 1937. The rural economy is focused on agriculture, forestry, fishing, field sports, whisky distilling and tourism.

The village of Tomintoul was founded by Alexander, fourth Duke of Gordon in the late 1770s. It is a distinctive example of over 200 planned villages constructed in Scotland over the late 18th and 19th Centuries, including others in the area such as Grantown on Spey (1764), Rothes (1763) and Fochabers (1774). Located at a height of approximately 1150 feet / 350 metres above sea level, Tomintoul is the highest village in the Highlands.

The original planned village is constructed on a grid pattern, with a single street running down a north-south ridge and a central square built on a flatter area. However, the formality and symmetry of the grid is generally not evident on approaching the village, or viewing it from the surrounding landscape, due to the undulating ground, mature trees and later developments at the settlement edge. The River Avon valley lies to the west, and the Conglass Water to the east.

The first building in the village was an inn, constructed in 1777 on the site of Richmond Arms Hotel (built later, around 1858). By 1846, the population was 530. In 1860, Tomintoul was described by Queen Victoria as,

"the most tumble-down, poor-looking place I ever saw - a long street with three inns, miserable dirty-looking houses and people, and a sad look of wretchedness about it". (1885 Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland)

A century later, the Third Statistical Account of Scotland, 1961, highlighted improved conditions and the attractive features of a flourishing village in the early post-war period -

"Today, Tomintoul, with its finely planned square and handsome hotels, presents a most pleasing picture of well-pointed stone houses, neat windows and trim side-walks. From the first, stone and lime were insisted on for the village and it is only now (1950) that the first brick building is being erected in the square. Apart from a few condemned buildings awaiting demolition, there is scarcely a shabby building to be seen."

Over the late 20th Century and particularly over the last decade, the vitality and character of Tomintoul have again come under threat. New development has not always achieved sufficiently high standards of design, layout and materials and the expansion of the settlement has taken a suburban form, although the original grid has largely been retained.

The diminishing role of the village as a service and commercial centre in recent decades has resulted in the closure of key buildings and the loss of important functions, including the High School and the two larger hotels. These factors and the concurrent changes in the rural economy throughout Glenlivet and the Study Area have driven the commissioning of the Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan.

4.0 TOMINTOUL

4.1 TOMINTOUL : LANDSCAPE SETTING, GATEWAYS AND ARRIVAL

There is a perception that Tomintoul is a place to pass through, rather than to specifically visit or to make an unscheduled stop. The Regeneration Strategy responds by suggesting there is an opportunity to develop Tomintoul's role as a gateway to the National Park and reinstate its function as a rural hub. To achieve this ambition, it will be necessary to consolidate Tomintoul's distinctive identity - it's 'sense of place'.

The Scottish Government has championed 'place making' through the Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative, Mainstreaming Charrettes, and the publications 'Designing Streets', 'Designing Places', 'PAN 83 - Master Planning' and 'PAN 68 - Design Statements'. CNPA promotes place making themes through its Local Plan, emerging LDP, National Park Plan and Sustainable Design Guide.

To improve Tomintoul's sense of place, the quality of the arrival and welcome must be enhanced and the unique features of the village consolidated. The following factors can contribute :

- Improving the relationship between Tomintoul and its immediate landscape setting;
- Enhancing the quality of the main gateways and arrival points;
- Improved and co-ordinated signage in and around Tomintoul and the Study Area;
- Increased 'vitality' through commercial, community and visitor activity;
- Public realm improvements such as landscaping, planting, paving and seating;
- Protection of the built heritage and more appropriate forms of new development
- Enhancement and promotion of natural and built assets through a coherent visitor strategy.

Like the Study Area as a whole, the higher ground surrounding Tomintoul forms a natural enclosure for the village and its setting, with just four road access points and one strategic path (Speyside Way spur) accessing the area. Higher wooded slopes anchor the village at Campdalmore to the north and Tom na Bat to the south and the conifer plantations at the east are also significant features.

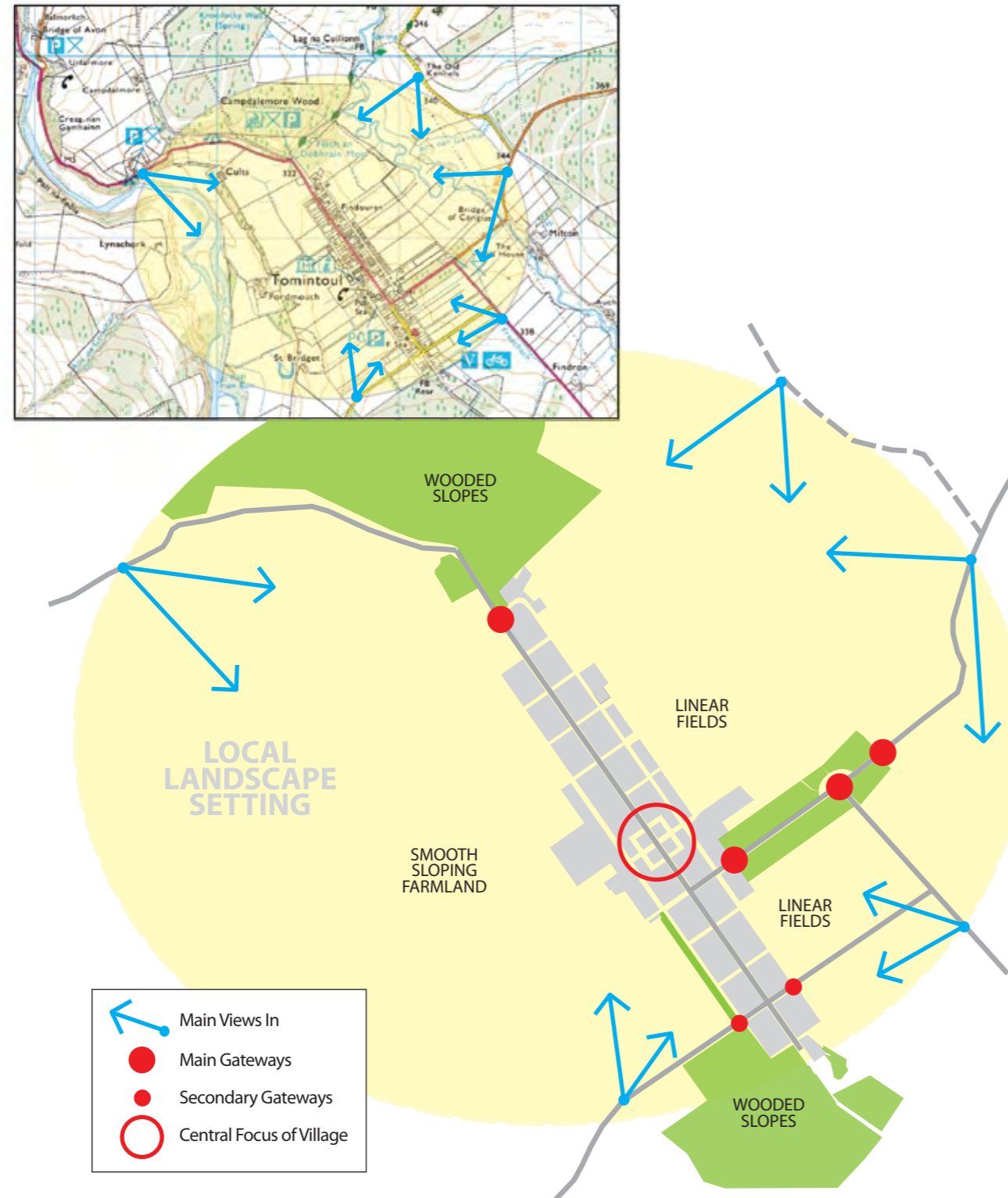
The relationship between Tomintoul and its landscape setting has previously been considered in the 'Cairngorms Landscape Capacity for Housing : Tomintoul' report, produced by CNPA in 2005. This report identifies three different character areas surrounding Tomintoul :

1. Smooth Sloping Farmland, to the west of the village;
2. Linear Fields, to the east of the village;
3. Wooded Slopes, to the north and south.

The western setting of the village is considered more sensitive in terms of landscape quality, as it overlooks the River Avon valley and more distant mountainous ground. Shorter views are available over less attractive landscape to the east. Views towards the village could be improved from all routes, through landscape and woodland management. This could involve removal of small numbers of trees on the north western approach and some new planting to frame views on other routes.

The village edges might also be improved when viewed from these approaches. There are some significant areas of woodland, notably at the cemetery on Conglass Lane (north east edge), behind housing at Lecht Drive (south east edge), the treebelt at Tomnabat Lane (south west edge) and the tennis court / Richmond Memorial Hall / Primary School (central west edge). These wooded areas could be consolidated. Additional woodland planting could be directed to key locations to improve less attractive edges. However, screening the entire village would not be appropriate - it should be visible within its landscape setting.

Where planning permission has been granted in recent years for new houses, any landscaping conditions should be enforced. New planning permissions should retain existing trees where possible and insist upon enhanced boundary treatment and tree planting. Where larger sites are proposed, advance planting should be undertaken to create an established setting for new development.



smooth sloping farmland
from south westlinear fields
from north eastserial gateway at
plantation strips east of villageglenlivet estate arrival point
east of village

The settlement grid does not generally open out views to the landscape from within the village. However, each of the east-west lanes offers distant channelled views to the countryside or shorter views terminated by woodland. Only the Richmond Memorial Hall, business units at Conglass Lane and the former High School break the pattern.

Many residents use the rear lanes for walking and this reinforces the connection with the landscape setting. More development along the rear lanes would dilute this connection. It will be important to consider how pedestrian routes can offer an enhanced relationship with the surrounding landscape, as Tomintoul continues to expand. Core paths and local walking routes should form an easily accessible network for use by residents and visitors.

The main gateways are at the north entrance to the village (A939) and the combined eastern approach (A939 / B9008), which is effectively a serial gateway, with a number of entrance points as the roads arrive at the shelter belts, the Glenlivet Estate entrance feature and the village edge.

There is an opportunity to improve the appearance of these gateways through environmental improvements. In general, the design concept for these gateway improvements should be understated, aiming to reflect the local landscape character and using indigenous species and local materials (stone and timber) to enhance the relationship between the village and the surrounding landscape.

Fully co-ordinated signage would also be beneficial. At present, the Crown Estate's Glenlivet signage and the road network, tourist, temporary (banner) and directional signage throughout Tomintoul and Glenlivet fail to present an integrated solution. A well-defined signage strategy would help to enhance the identity of the Tomintoul and Glenlivet area, meeting the objectives of the Regeneration Strategy.

Within Tomintoul, the Square acts as the main arrival point. Commercial, leisure and visitor activity should be focused here and at the adjacent retail and service areas on Main Street. The opportunity to enhance the Square is discussed in the 'Tomintoul : Urban Character and Public Realm' section later in this report.

The general quality of the urban environment throughout Tomintoul is important in attracting visitors, commercial and tourism activity, as well as in encouraging residents to remain in the village and attracting new households. The quality of recent developments and the response through planning permission decisions and conditions has not always taken sufficient account of the inherent urban quality of built heritage of Tomintoul. This matter is also discussed in the 'Tomintoul : Urban Character and Public Realm' section.

A detailed programme of improvements should be considered by the relevant parties, as set out in the Regeneration Strategy. This should prioritise and identify funding and delivery mechanisms, although some items do not require new expenditure. Opportunities could include the following :

- Selective clearing of trees at the viewpoint north west of Tomintoul to open out views;
- Landscape management and planting to improve views from the other main arrival points;
- Selective tree planting at key positions to improve the urban edge;
- Improvements to gateways at the entry points to the village;
- Co-ordinated signage throughout the Study Area;
- Public realm improvements (see later section);
- Enforcement of any landscaping conditions attached to recent planning permissions;
- Closer attention to boundary treatment and tree planting in new planning permissions;
- A focus on consolidating the urban character and heritage of Tomintoul (see later section);

4.2 TOMINTOUL : URBAN FORM AND EXPANSION

The Regeneration Strategy aims to facilitate new development at Tomintoul and Glenlivet in order to drive investment, new economic activity and an improved visitor offering, as well as reinvigorating Tomintoul as a rural hub. The quality of the built environment at the village is of fundamental importance in achieving this aim.

Few of Scotland's planned villages have an urban structure as distinct or clearly defined as Tomintoul. The recent Historic Scotland publication, 'A Selection of the Cairngorms National Park's Architectural Heritage', notes Tomintoul's exceptionally robust structure :

"Amazingly, the present day map shows an almost identical footprint to the first Ordnance Survey map of 1868."

There is a concentration of planned towns in Strathspey, Moray and Aberdeenshire, most dating from a similar era. Some, such as Grantown on Spey and Archiestown, follow a similar form and pattern to Tomintoul. Others such as Fochabers and Cullen have an extended grid. Dufftown, Charlestown of Aberlour, Ballater, Kingussie, Rothes - all are planned towns. It is surprising that so little is made of this relatively unknown history, with the planned village form and era defining to such a large extent the urban character of Speyside and the wider area.

Although typically understood as a characteristic improvement-era, grid and square layout, Tomintoul's form may well be one of the least understood examples of Burgh-inspired urbanism from this period.

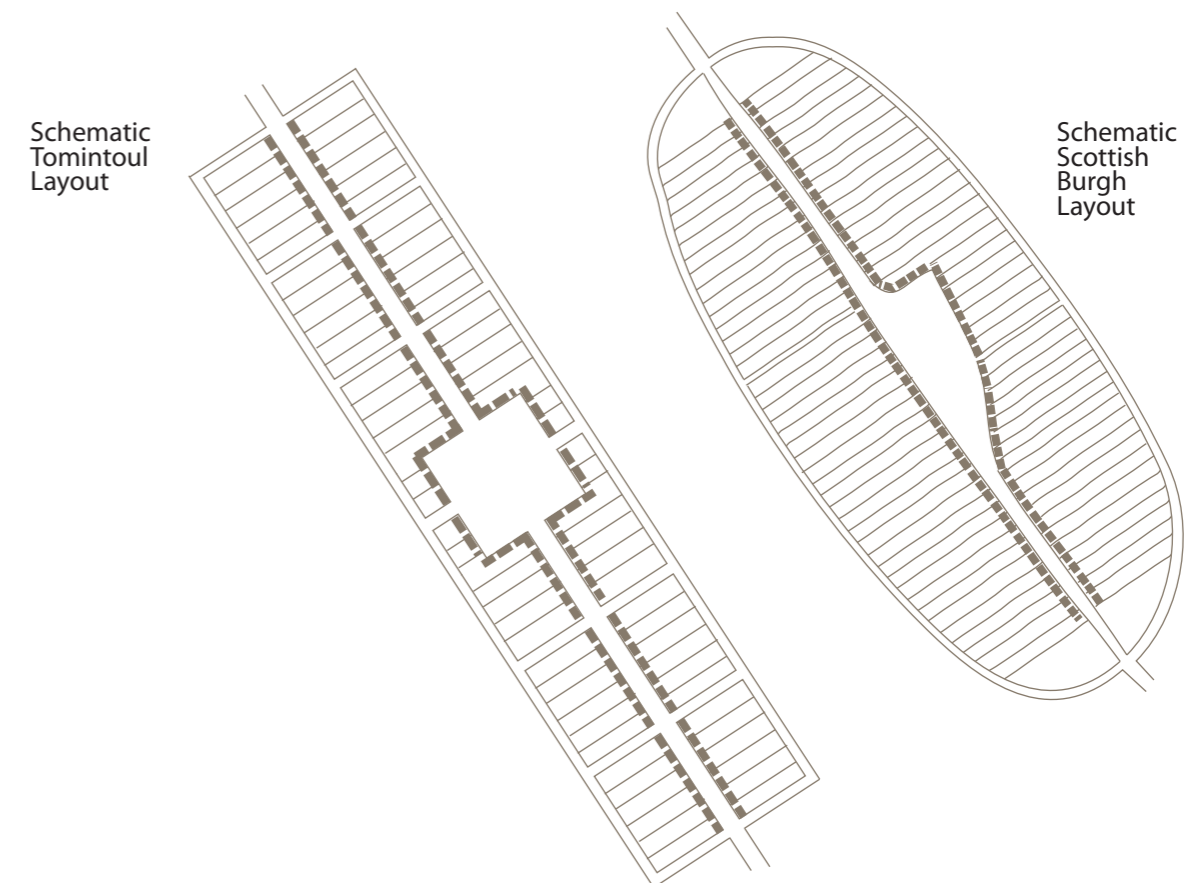
Many of Scotland's late 18th and 19th Century planned villages adopted a grid and square form, which was fashionable during the period. This approach to setting out towns and villages owes more to the Roman and southern European tradition than the Flemish-inspired Scottish Burgh form, which characterises Scotland's Medieval towns and villages.

At first sight, the Tomintoul plan appears to be a neat and compact example of the prevalent grid and square form. However, it has many similarities with the Burgh form. Many of the Burgh towns had the following features :

- Located on a sloping ridge (providing good natural drainage within the settlement);
- Sloping Rear plots (natural drainage for housing livestock, small scale cultivation and workshop areas);
- A central 'spine' street located on an existing route;
- A market space, surrounded by key buildings;
- Long, narrow plots, running perpendicular to the main street;
- Buildings located at the front edge of the plot (although without footpaths);
- Rear 'cowgates' or lanes for the movement of livestock
- Designed around topographical form;
- Located at a strategic position for defense, communication or the availability of resources.

Tomintoul's location and form reflect all of these characteristics. It is sited on a sloping ridge with land falling away on either side. It has a central spine and a market place (square), positioned on the axis (but a little to the east) of an existing military road. It has long perpendicular plots, with houses fronting the street and lanes to the rear. It is designed to fit the topography, with the square located on a flatter central area. Finally, the selection of the site reflected the proximity of stone for building, peat for fuel, land for cultivation and livestock and the availability of local limestone and timber resources.

The lack of significant outward expansion at the village has ensured that the area covered by the settlement has barely been extended since its original planning and construction over 200 years ago. Like the Burgh towns, later development took place in the backland plot areas. At Tomintoul, infill has generally progressed in rear plot areas and new rows of buildings have been constructed beyond the original lanes at the east and west of the village. Only the former High School site and the employment units at the east of the village centre have broken the grid pattern. This approach has broadly perpetuated the grid form but opportunities for incremental growth are now more limited.

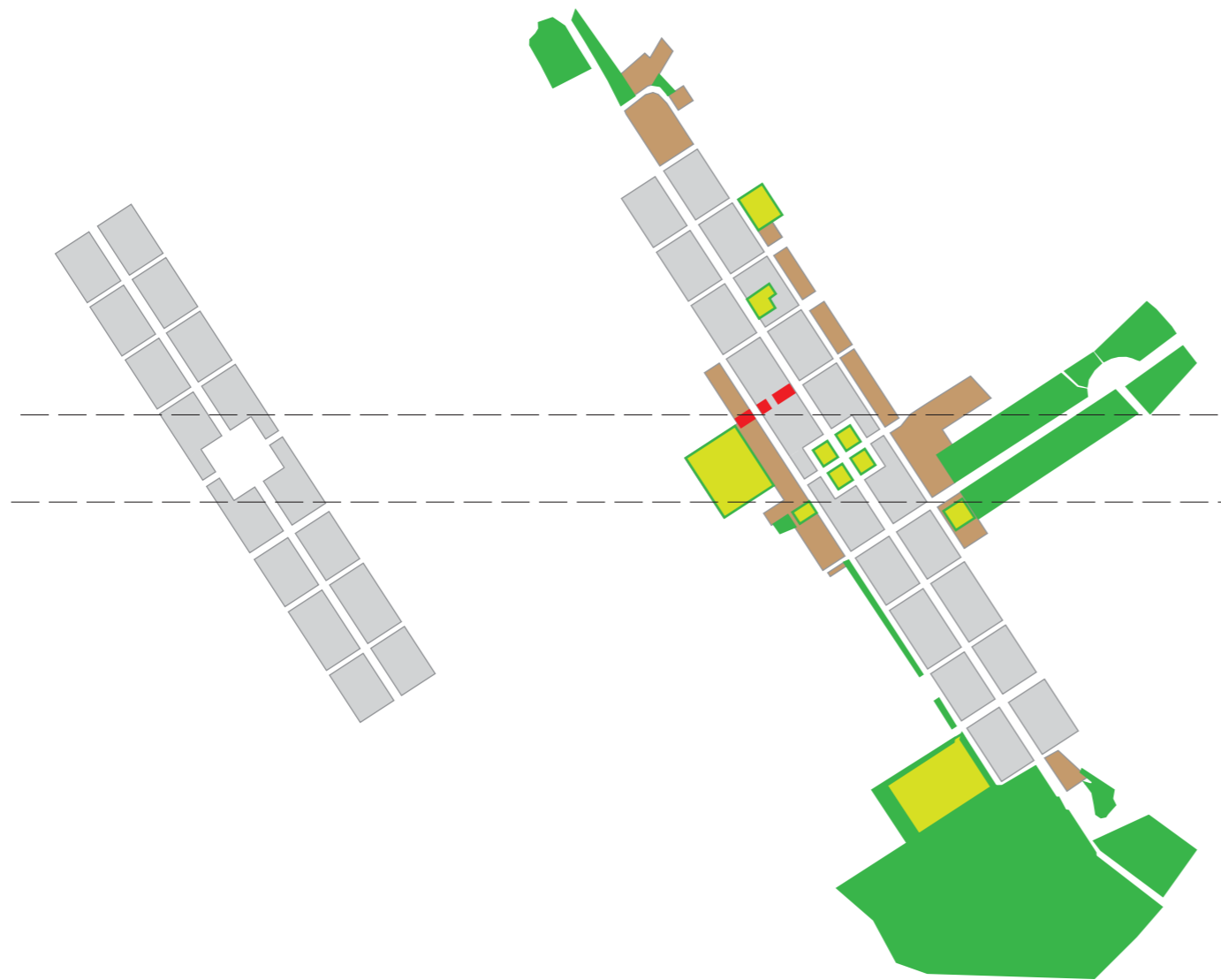


The distinctive elongated grid and central square remain largely intact, although suburbanisation, generic building materials and kit housing have diluted the identity of the village over recent decades. There has been insufficient consideration of how Tomintoul's unique history and identity can be enhanced and consolidated.

The incremental approach adopted in the modern planning of Tomintoul has been evident through a number of previous Local Plans. The rate of development has been slow and whilst this has perhaps reflected a lack of vitality in the village, it has also prevented the original settlement from being swamped by large scale suburban development. Had the plot dimensions and the design and layout of recent buildings respected the established urban form, these incremental developments may have been more successful.

There is remaining capacity at the rear lanes and within the original planned village, but there is a clear need for an assessment of the strategic expansion requirements of Tomintoul, over the long term. This will ensure that the planning of the expanding settlement protects the historic context, whilst meeting modern needs and technical requirements, such as access and drainage. The Master Plan establishes a framework for the growth of Tomintoul and the rejuvenation of its built heritage.

Tomintoul's important urban heritage merits protection, enhancement and further research into historic documents relating to the planned village. The best known record of Tomintoul's planned origin is Thomas Milne's 1775 sketch. However, this shows stepped plots at the Square, which was not the layout which became established. A later 1813 sketch plan, shown on the next page, indicates a layout which is more consistent with the constructed grid in evidence today, with additional blocks at each end of Main Street. There is also an 1825 plan, previously held in the Archive (refs. GB 234, GD/44/23/33 (item 10) and GB 234 : RHP 1819) which may show surveyed development rather than an indicative sketch. This document has been returned to an original collection but further research might enable it to be reviewed.



1. Planned Village Grid

At first sight, the original planned form of the village from the late 1700s appears to impose rigid geometry and symmetry upon the topography and landscape. However, the layout of Tomintoul may well have been equally inspired by the traditional Scottish Burgh pattern, as well as the popular formal grid and square approach which characterises many of the planned villages from this era.

The alignment of the military road in part defined the positioning of the settlement and the layout of the grid and blocks. Main Street follows a ridge, sloping generally up from south to north, with the central Square on flatter ground.

2. The Village Today

Recent development has in part maintained the rigid grid form, although without any coherent building lines or long term expansion pattern.

The High School site and employment site at the east of the village break the grid pattern, although the predecessor of the Richmond Memorial Hall was the first building to do so, built on the axis of the cross route at the Square.

Expansion has primarily clustered around the central part of village. The central eastern limb is the former livestock market, now an employment area. The western central limb is the sports pitch at the Primary School. The plantation woodland strips at the east of the village are prominent features forming gateways and entrances from the east and south east.

Woodland and higher ground at the north and south provide terminating features and enclosure, limiting expansion in these directions.

In general, the fields around the village are unconstrained for future development. Analysis is required to determine the most appropriate long term expansion approach. Meantime, there are abundant infill opportunities within the village.

The opportunity remains to consolidate Tomintoul's unique urban form and enhance its identity, by establish a long term expansion framework.

Expansion Criteria

The orientation of the village and its grid is towards the north-south axis. This results in a predominantly east-west building frontage pattern. This form is a direct result of the decision to construct the planned village on the axis of the military road.

In assessing future expansion options, it is important to consider which criteria should dictate the form of any future growth. The obvious approach is to continue to expand the rigid grid and north-south axis. However, the plantation and employment developments to the east of the village and the school playing field to the west prevent this.

Criteria relevant to contemporary issues should be balanced with the need to respect the historic planned form. For example, there is an opportunity to achieve an improved solar aspect by adjusting the grid pattern and predominant building frontage orientation towards an east-west axis. This would contribute towards energy efficient layout and design, acknowledging the Cairngorms National Park Plan objective of sustainable development.

Solar orientation is only one factor to consider. The following criteria should be assessed in evaluating the potential for sustainable long term expansion of Tomintoul :

- Landscape Setting** : The 'Cairngorms Landscape Capacity for Housing : Tomintoul' report provides useful survey work and recommendations which should be taken into account in assessing expansion potential.
- Quality of Settlement Edge** : Where the settlement edge is well defined and attractive, it may be sensible to restrict further development at this time. Edges which are poorly defined may benefit from new development.
- Historic Form and Grid Pattern** : Regardless of the location of any new development, it should enhance the form and character of the original planned village. At the very least, it should not undermine this valuable urban heritage. Any expansion area should ideally be developed in grid form, extending the existing road pattern, unless specific land use, ground quality or topographical requirements issues dictate otherwise.
- Microclimate** : Expansion areas should offer protection from the prevailing south westerly winds, where possible, and should maximise the potential for solar gain by enabling buildings to be predominantly orientated to towards the south.
- Drainage and Services** : Suitable arrangements for foul and surface water drainage will be necessary. Foul drainage should connect to the existing mains services. Surface water drainage should meet current requirements for SUDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems). Adequate mains water and power supplies will be required.
- Accessibility** : There is somewhat limited capacity within the existing road network to accommodate expansion, without expensive upgrading of rear lanes, some of which are privately owned. Expansion areas will need adequate vehicular access. Development should ideally be focused within a short distance of local services and facilities such as shops, the primary school and doctor's surgery, to encourage residents and visitors to walk or cycle.
- Wildlife and Habitat** : RSPB surveys indicate that protected species of wading birds use land at the east and south west of Tomintoul for feeding and breeding. Habitat management measures are in place on some fields. Further discussion will be required to clarify development potential and opportunities for mitigation or habitat enhancement works to enable development to proceed without undue impact.
- Land Availability, Suitability and Marketability** : Expansion land must be available within the likely time period for development (taking account of tenancy conditions) and should have the support of the landowners for development (this will typically be the Crown Estate, which owns most of the land around Tomintoul). Ground conditions should be suitable for development. Expansion land must be potentially attractive for development, to ensure it can deliver the new housing and other uses required for the growth of Tomintoul.

Expansion Areas

There are five distinct potential expansion areas :

AREA 1 - north west of the primary school playing field : smooth sloping farmland

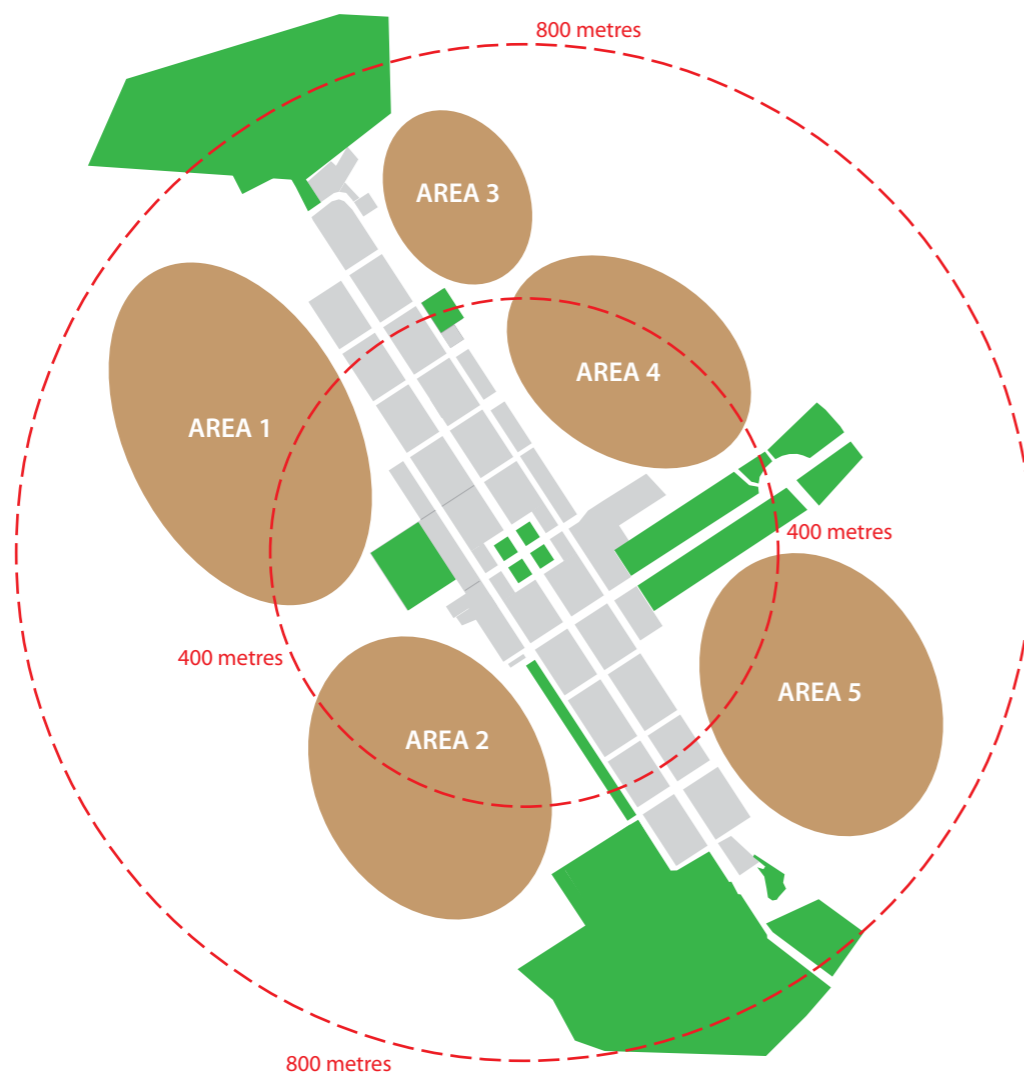
AREA 2 - south west of the primary school playing field : smooth sloping farmland

AREA 3 - north east of the cemetery : linear fields

AREA 4 - central east, between the cemetery and the plantation woodland : linear fields

AREA 5 - south east of the plantation woodland : linear fields

Wooded slopes to the north and south are not considered appropriate for general development at this time, since there would be a greater impact on the landscape, sites would be more remote from the village centre and the woodland areas have an inherent value as visual, recreational and natural features.



Assessment of Expansion Areas :

All areas are believed to be equally deliverable in terms of land ownership and marketability. All areas face similar issues in terms of enhancing the historic context and extending the urban grid. All areas are fully within 800 metres walking distance of Square - pedestrian access is therefore not a critical issue. There is some spare capacity in the drainage and electricity infrastructure but further investment will be required by network owners and site developers in due course.

AREA 1 - The Landscape Capacity study does not favour significant development here, as the quality of the landscape setting is high. The settlement edge is not well defined and could be improved through new planting or implementation of planning conditions controlling landscaping and boundary proposals within new house plot developments. Exposed to prevailing south westerly winds. Drainage and services likely to be available but access is more challenging.

CONCLUSION : NO PLANNED EXPANSION

AREA 2 - The Landscape Capacity study does not favour significant development here, as the quality of the landscape setting is high. The settlement edge is strongly defined by an established treebelt. Exposed to prevailing south westerly winds. Drainage and services likely to be available but may impact upon capacity of southern services. Access is reasonable but remains challenging. Area used intensively by protected species of wading birds.

CONCLUSION : NO PLANNED EXPANSION

AREA 3 - The Landscape Capacity study is more favourable towards development here. The settlement edge is not well defined and could be improved through new planting or implementation of planning conditions controlling landscaping and boundary proposals within new house plot developments. Reasonably well sheltered against prevailing south westerly winds. Services likely to be available, drainage may cause wider network impacts. Access is more challenging. Ground quality to east may be poor due to lack of drainage and lower lying ground may flood. Area could accommodate expanded business uses and housing. Some use by protected species of wading birds is likely.

CONCLUSION : NO PLANNED EXPANSION

AREA 4 - The Landscape Capacity study is more favourable towards development here. The settlement edge is not well defined and could be improved through new planting or implementation of planning conditions controlling landscaping and boundary proposals within new house plot / employment developments. Well sheltered against prevailing south westerly winds. Services likely to be available, drainage may require a pumping station and consideration of wider network impacts. Adequate access should be possible. Ground quality to north east may be poor due to lack of drainage. Lower lying ground may flood. Higher ground may be suitable for development, accommodating expansion of employment zone and caravan park to south and housing / mixed uses to north. Area used by protected species of wading birds.

CONCLUSION : PLANNED EXPANSION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

AREA 5 - The Landscape Capacity study is more favourable towards development here. The settlement edge is reasonably well defined but could be improved through new planting. Well sheltered against prevailing south westerly winds. Services likely to be available, drainage may require a pumping station and consideration of wider network impacts. Good accessibility. Could accommodate general expansion of Tomintoul for housing and other compatible mixed uses. Opportunity to establish a clear development framework for phased expansion over a long period. Area used by protected species of wading birds.

CONCLUSION : PLANNED EXPANSION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

It is proposed that any significant planned expansion of Tomintoul should be located at the east side of the village at Areas 4 and 5. Notes to guide the form of this expansion are provided in the 'Tomintoul : Proposals' section. Further assessment of impacts on protected species of wading birds will be required.

4.3 TOMINTOUL : BLOCK PATTERN AND INFILL

The original village is distinguished by its grid and block pattern. Main Street forms a spine, with parallel rear lanes and perpendicular connecting lanes. Houses were aligned with the front edge of the plot, facing directly on to Main Street. Some original buildings have been removed, often replaced by structures set back from the established building line.

Over time, infill development and subdivision has taken place in many of the rear plot areas, with vehicular access onto the lanes. Unlike Main Street the building line on the rear lanes is not well defined, since not all plots have buildings and those which have been constructed are located in a variety of positions, some set well back into the plot. Some plots also have mature trees at the rear edge. There are very few infill buildings which sit on the rear edge of the plot.

In a few locations, older agricultural or workshop buildings and later houses front on to the perpendicular lanes. Some of the older buildings are positioned at the plot edge but the more recent examples again tend to be set back.

Most buildings constructed and laid out in the last 20-30 years have been suburban in form, often kit houses of a generic style found throughout Scotland. New plots along the outer edges of the rear lanes typically have longer frontages than the original plots and are shallower. External materials have tended to reflect the trend towards readily available mass-produced options, such as reconstituted stone, harling, concrete roof tiles and stained timber.

The grid pattern has largely been respected, although some of the plot boundaries are not directly aligned with the lane axes. In most cases, it should be possible to extend the lanes and therefore the grid, as further development is added over time. However, this should be carefully managed in order to ensure access routes are to an adequate standard and the form of layout is in context with the original planned village.

Over time, the combination of suburban design and layout, generic materials and kit houses, unco-ordinated positioning of infill buildings, loss of original buildings and frontages on Main Street and piecemeal development on the rear lanes has led to a general weakening of the grid and block character. The grid and block footprint broadly remains but the form of development is now relatively random, where once it was rigidly planned.

It may not be appropriate to return to the rigid plot dimensions and building lines of the original planned village within expansion areas. However, it is important that on Main Street in particular, the original character is respected and enhanced. At the rear lanes and where new development is planned, the layout and design of buildings should be guided more effectively to ensure it is more closely in context with the character of the original village. Reconsidering the shape and orientation of new house plots at the lanes may be appropriate, since plots with narrower frontages and greater depth would be more consistent with the historic pattern.

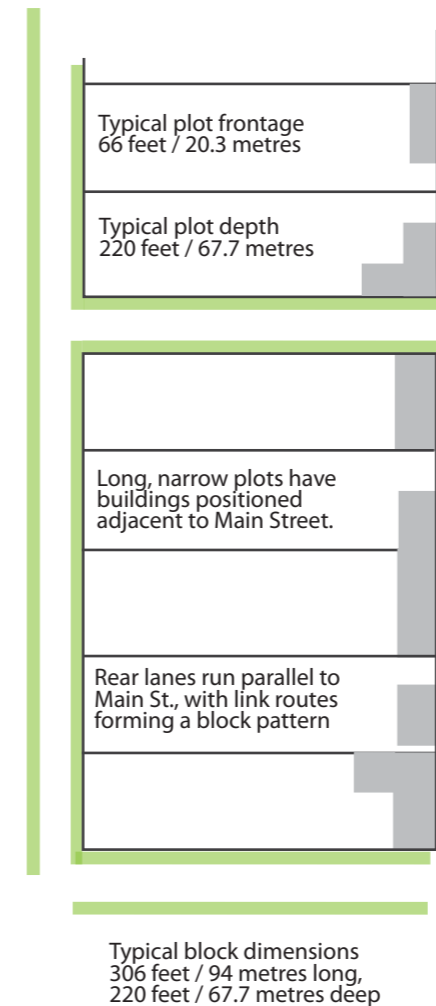
It will first be necessary to assess which aspects of the planning, design and construction of the original village are worthy of retention and enhancement. A Character Appraisal would achieve this (see next section 'Tomintoul : Urban Character and Public Realm'). Design Guidance for new development could spin out from that study, establishing requirements for building lines, materials, house design and form, boundary enclosures, landscaping and access. The aim would be to ensure new development achieves a higher standard of design and layout, enhancing the character and identity of the whole village.

There is significant scope to accommodate more infill development, although some rear plot areas merit protection, for example those around the Thomas Telford designed church at the north east of Main Street, where there is an open aspect. Development might also be restricted where important groups of mature trees, or individual specimen trees would be lost.

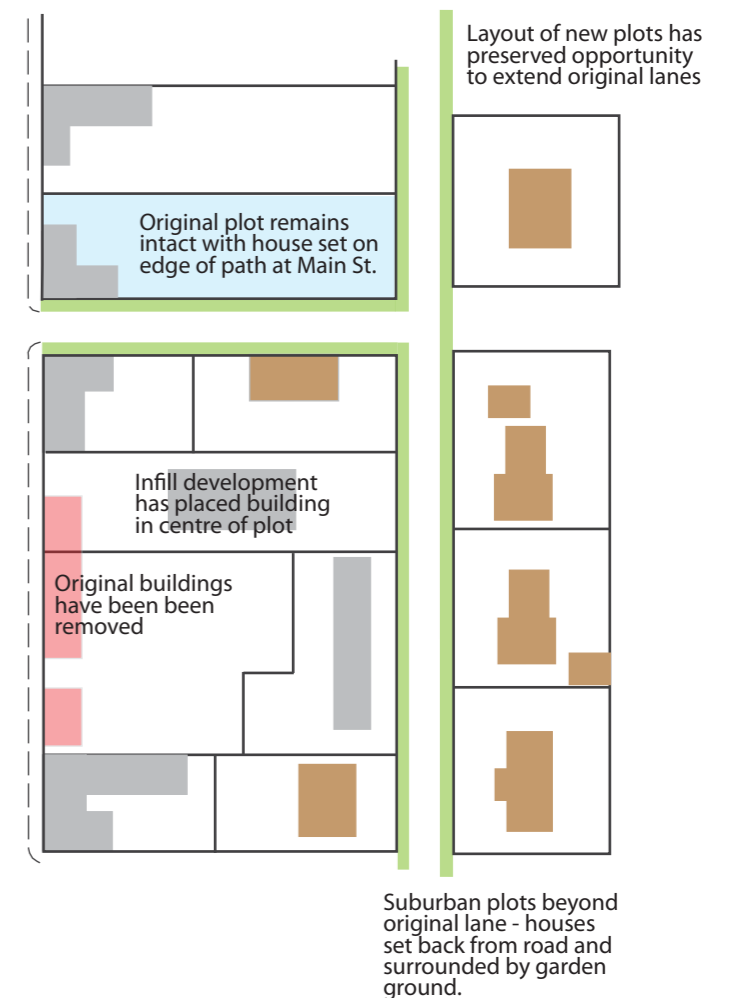
Numerous rear plot areas are overgrown, neglected and unsightly and would benefit from upgrading. Constructing new houses, visitor accommodation or business premises on these sites would benefit the appearance of the village and might help property owners raise funds for improvements to older buildings at the Main Street frontage. There may be an opportunity to explore the use of planning obligations to achieve this outcome in appropriate cases, through an 'enabling development' approach.

Infill opportunities should be considered as 'windfall sites' - additional to development plan housing land allocations meeting identified local need. These opportunities cannot be quantified and their development relies on individuals bringing forward proposals. New housing sites will also be required. Some small sites can be identified within the settlement boundary but others are likely to be on expansion land (see 'Tomintoul : Proposals' section later in this document).

ORIGINAL BLOCK



CURRENT BLOCK



There are many vernacular outbuildings on rear plot areas and where possible, these should be retained and upgraded. 'Appendix 1 : Tomintoul's Outbuildings' addresses this point.

Moray Council has concerns regarding the standard of vehicular access at the rear lanes. Adequate access is essential, but there is also a need to ensure that road infrastructure is designed on a 'low impact' basis, with road geometry and surfacing compatible and in context with the original planned village. This approach is consistent with the Scottish Government's 'Designing Streets' policy. High costs in upgrading access may prevent individuals bringing forward infill proposals, where the site value is marginal. A compromise is essential, resolving design standards and infrastructure investment costs. Otherwise, the Regeneration Strategy's ambition of driving new investment into Tomintoul will be compromised.

In view of the above comments, the following proposals are suggested :

- The original grid pattern should be retained and extended as required;
- Design Guidance should set out requirements for building lines, layout, building form, materials etc;
- At Main Street, new buildings should generally sit at the front edge of the plot;
- Infill buildings should generally retain mature trees, stone walls and outbuildings and respect building lines;
- Infill development should be seen as a 'windfall' : new allocated development sites will also be required;
- The opportunity to use planning obligations to drive investment in building refurbishment should be explored;
- Urgent dialogue should take place between CNPA and Council Planners, the Crown Estate and other parties with a view to the agreement of an access strategy for new and infill development at the rear lanes.

4.4 TOMINTOUL : URBAN CHARACTER AND PUBLIC REALM

This Master Plan has already highlighted the opportunity to protect and enhance Tomintoul's important urban heritage as a means of enriching the visitor experience. The Regeneration Strategy seeks to increase economic activity in the tourism and visitor sector. The arrival experience and the quality of buildings, streets and public spaces is crucial in this respect. A well presented and valued built environment will encourage visitors to spend time in this historic planned village and return at a later date.

Regardless of this question of added value within the terms of the Regeneration Strategy, Tomintoul's urban heritage has its own intrinsic value which merits protection within existing statutory provisions.

1. Designate a Conservation Area

Designation of a Conservation Area would be a clear illustration that further decline of Tomintoul's urban fabric is not acceptable to the community or the public agencies responsible for its management - Moray Council, CNPA and Historic Scotland. It would prove that Tomintoul is valued by the local community, businesses and those who own or rent property in the village. It would be a statement of confidence in the future of Tomintoul.

Of the four planned villages in the Cairngorms National Park, Grantown on Spey and Ballater already have Conservation Areas, Tomintoul and Kingussie do not. There are other National Park Conservation Areas at Braemar and Inverey. CNPA planning officers have suggested that Tomintoul is the one remaining National Park settlement which should have a Conservation Area.

The Scottish Government's policy on Conservation Areas is set out in detail in the 'Scottish Historic Environment Policy, 2009', published by Historic Scotland. 'Criteria for the Designation of a Conservation Area' are set out Annex 3 of the document and these support the case for designation at Tomintoul.

The Scottish Government's publication "PAN 71 : Conservation Area Management" states :

"Designation of a conservation area should not be regarded principally as a means of increasing control but rather as a commitment to take positive action to safeguard and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area."

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

Moray Council currently administers 14 Conservation Areas and is the statutory authority with the responsibility for administering new designations. The Council's Local Plan Policy BE3 'Conservation Areas' refers to these "areas of special architectural or historic interest where it is desirable to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area". Much of the preparatory work and community engagement involved in designating a Conservation Area at Tomintoul could be undertaken in partnership with CNPA or the Community Development Trust which is proposed in the Regeneration Strategy.

CNPA is an advocate of conservation and quality in the built environment. It's 'Sustainable Design Guide, 2010' states :

"We all want to see the distinctive character and the innate special qualities of the Park conserved and enhanced, which is why this guidance is so important."

A Character Appraisal would be required to establish the quality and architectural value of the village, its streets and buildings. This would enable a Conservation Area boundary to be properly considered. Beyond the Character Appraisal, the CNPA could prepare a design guide for general development at Tomintoul and adopt this as Supplementary Guidance (see below).

Conservation Area status could be beneficial in sourcing funding streams for improvements to buildings, public spaces and the fabric of the village. Recent funding schemes include Conservation Area Regeneration Schemes (CARS) and Townscape Heritage Initiatives (THI), administered through Historic Scotland and the Heritage Lottery Fund. These streams are not currently available but may be reinstated in future. Other funding sources would be applicable where building refurbishment or reuse is a core requirement for community or commercial use.

In assessing the need for a Conservation Area, it will be important to consider the reasons behind the failure of the current planning regime to adequately enhance the urban fabric of Tomintoul over a period of several decades. Conservation Areas have helped to secure the quality of Grantown on Spey, Braemar and Ballater as popular visitor destinations within the National Park - their urban heritage and character is an important factor in generating visits. Tomintoul's aspiration to become a gateway to the National Park needs equally firm commitment. Consultation with the local community would be an important part of the designation process.



public realm
the square



historic urban fabric
main street



many buildings retain
traditional materials

2. Public Realm

Tomintoul is a walkable settlement since there are footpaths along Main Street / the Square and few vehicles use the rear lanes, which in many places have a shared surface. However, the quality of the urban realm is relatively poor in places. Main Street was once an attractive tree lined avenue - only one of these trees remains. Moray Council's Roads Dept have agreed to consider which parts of Main Street could be suitable for the reintroduction of trees. This is an initiative which could be led by CNPA through a Landscape Partnership Bid, by Moray Council as an environmental improvement project or by a Community Development Trust, as set out in the Regeneration Strategy. Consultation with residents and businesses should be undertaken to achieve a planting scheme which is supported locally.

Key locations such as the play area at the north east of Main Street could be significantly improved through environmental works and this area would certainly accommodate trees along the Main Street frontage. It is also recommended that this play area should be brought within the Local Plan ENV policy designation, as a valuable public open space.

The Square also needs a facelift and should be the focus of efforts to increase vitality, commercial activity and events. The maintenance regime evident at the Square and play area leave room for improvement - the local community might take on responsibility for this themselves on behalf of the Council.

There are other opportunities to improve the quality of the public realm at the main car park south of the village centre and at the former High School site, in conjunction with the re-use of the building. Equally, the public spaces in front of the Hotel buildings could be improved once the buildings are in use and their operational requirements are clarified. The tennis court/basketball court south of the Police Station requires new fencing. The public toilets have been under threat of closure and may be suitable for management by the community, or for replacement in any expanded or re-used public or community building, such as the Museum or former High School.

The mature conifer plantations at the east of Tomintoul are significant features in the landscape. They could be thinned and underplanted to create a viable mixed woodland with improved path routes, open spaces and other recreational / ecological features. Again, there may be a role for community ownership at some point.

There are also opportunities to extend the network of public paths around the village, to enable residents and visitors convenient access to the surrounding countryside. The Crown Estate is already considering local and strategic improvements focused on the Glenlivet Estate Office at the south of Tomintoul, where an Outdoor Activity Hub is planned. Allowing visitors to easily and fully experience Tomintoul in its attractive National Park setting will contribute to the Regeneration Strategy's ambition of increasing tourist stops and spending at the village. CNPA has produced co-ordinated signage design guidance and a new paths leaflet which will also assist in this respect.

3. Design Guidance

The Designation of a Conservation Area is important in securing the valuable built heritage of Tomintoul. However, the general quality of development must also improve. The scale of the settlement and its distinctive form allow Tomintoul to be experienced easily as a single entity. If its sense of place is to be fully exploited to increase its appeal to visitors and residents alike, then design quality should be a consideration throughout the village - not just within a Conservation Area.

This need not place excessive burdens on developers and architects - in fact, setting out clear principles on design, materials and layout would bring a degree of certainty to the planning process, assisting developers and architects in generating acceptable solutions at the first attempt. A brief review of recent planning applications at Tomintoul suggests this clarity would be helpful in reducing the need for resubmitted applications.

The CNPA already has its 'Sustainable Design Guide' and 'Conversion and Reuse of Existing Traditional and Vernacular Buildings' publications adopted as Supplementary Guidance. Both Moray Council and CNPA use these documents to assess applications. Any new guidance would be equally applicable between both authorities. A close working relationship in the production of any new design-based Supplementary Guidance for Tomintoul would obviously help ensure that Moray Council and the CNPA have a co-ordinated approach to achieving quality development. This should focus on Tomintoul's unique character and sense of place.



4. Highland Games Field / Public Park

The Highland Games field at the south west of Tomintoul is an important but under used asset. The Highland Games have been located here since the early 20th Century and the local community has an attachment to the site for this purpose. However, the Games were originally held in the Square. Historic photographs of Tomintoul show the Square packed with crowds, dancers, pipers and tents (See 'Old Tomintoul', Allan Geddes, published by Stenlake).

There is an opportunity to maximise the benefits of the Highland Games for the community and also to link events at the Games field more closely with the Square. The existing Games site could be used more regularly throughout the year. Moving the Games back to the Square was explored during consultation but discounted due to a variety of issues. The Community Development Trust should explore potential opportunities for enhancing the facilities at the Highland Games field and linking this and other events more closely with the village centre, where local businesses and attractions can benefit from increased trade and visits.

Tomintoul has no public park (the former George V Park at the south west of the village no longer exists as a useful facility). The Highland Games field, or perhaps the primary school playing field, could function as a public park, with formal and civic spaces with new planting, viewpoints, recreation and sports facilities, walking routes and seating areas.

There is a vacant area of land located south of the Library, on the axis of the Square, the Gordon Hotel and the school playing field. This site could be an important component in a number of proposals at Tomintoul, for example the reuse of the Gordon Hotel, expansion of the museum facilities, new commercial or leisure development - or as an entrance point, car park or open space associated with a public park centred at the school playing field. The house plot north of the primary school might also offer benefits in delivering a public park if ownership can be secured, perhaps through an excambion arrangement to provide a suitable alternative house site. The following sections suggest these sites should be protected from development until potential future uses have been fully considered.

It is suggested that the proposed Community Development Trust should have an important role in assessing the feasibility of options for enhancing the Highland Games field or creating a public park either at that site or the school playing field. The views of the local community will be important in this assessment.

Urban Character and Public Realm initiatives for further consideration and delivery should include :

- The designation of a Conservation Area;
- A prioritised programme of public realm improvements, including those mentioned in this section;
- Design Guidance for new developments at Tomintoul;
- Enhancement and more regular use of the Highland Games field, with events linked to the village centre;
- Designation of the play area at Main Street under the ENV Local Plan policy;
- Consideration of enhancements to provide a public park for Tomintoul.

4.5 TOMINTOUL : DEVELOPMENT SITES AND BUILDINGS

The Regeneration Strategy highlights the importance of finding new uses for key buildings in Tomintoul. Development sites are also required, to accommodate new housing, business or visitor related uses, serving Tomintoul's ongoing role as a rural hub. The development sites proposed in the Master Plan are indicated in the 'Tomintoul : Proposals' section.

New Uses for Old Buildings

The Gordon and Richmond Arms Hotels both lay empty for some time and are emblematic of the local community's desire for regeneration. They are located at the heart of the village, on the Square, and are prominent buildings within Tomintoul. As well as the visual impact of large empty buildings on the Square, the loss of visitor accommodation and commercial vitality has affected the village and surrounding area. The Regeneration Strategy considers options for reuse of these buildings, all of which appear appropriate within the terms of established planning policy. Both hotels have now been sold, but end uses remain unknown.

The Regeneration Strategy suggests creating a social enterprise and community hub at the former High School building, through an asset transfer arrangement with Moray Council. This use would be compatible with established planning policy. Proposals for reuse of the school building and site may involve demolition or rebuild, and changes to the use of the grounds. A Development Brief should be prepared to guide proposals. This should consider the positioning and design of any new buildings, street frontages, access and parking, landscaping and tree planting, pedestrian links through the site etc.

Development Sites

The Regeneration Strategy will require a supply of deliverable sites to accommodate the new housing, business, workspace, community and tourism-related developments which are required to revitalise the village. A number of development sites are allocated or proposed in the Cairngorms Local Plan and CNPA's Main Issues Report. The Master Plan proposes retaining some of these sites, removing others and adding some new allocations.

Taking the Local Plan sites first, it is recommended that the H3 housing site should not be taken forward in the LDP, since the south western edge of the village is well defined and there are other options for providing new housing sites. The H4 housing site should be included in a housing-led Expansion Area at the south east of Tomintoul, providing housing and other uses to meet the future needs of the village. This area should be the subject of a detailed Master Plan, guiding the form and phasing of development. The Master Plan proposes retaining the remaining Local Plan allocations.

Moving on to the Main Issues Report (MIR) proposals, the same housing site at the south west of the village - H1 in the MIR / H3 in the Local Plan - should not be taken forward for the reasons set out above. At the central north east of the village, MIR housing site H4 should be included in a larger business-led Expansion Area. A detailed Master Plan should be prepared for this area, to guide long term expansion of business, employment, tourism and visitor related uses, as well as some housing. The Master Plan proposes retaining the remaining MIR proposals, with site H3 included in a housing-led Expansion Area, as above.

A number of new site allocations are proposed in addition to the expansion areas above. It is proposed that the vacant plot on the east of Main Street at the northern entrance to Tomintoul should be allocated as a housing site. Although it is a small site, it is located in a prominent position and development here could improve the northern arrival point at the village. Allocating the site, rather than merely including it within the settlement envelope, will illustrate that development here will be encouraged. A site for housing or compatible uses is also proposed at the junction of Cults Lane and Doodlers Lane.



The vacant site between the school playing field and the Gordon Hotel should be protected, pending review of options for the Gordon Hotel and Museum, or a new public park at the school playing field, should this be a viable and popular option. The house plot north of the primary school could also help to facilitate the public park idea. The possibility of using excambion arrangements to secure these two sites could be explored. A site to the rear of the 'Whisky Castle' has planning permission for a 20 bedspace visitor accommodation development. Finally, land at the Glenlivet Estate Office at the south of Tomintoul should be allocated for the development of a tourism and visitor related Outdoor Activity Hub, with expanded facilities for recreation, leisure and outdoor pursuits, promoted by the Crown Estate.

The proposed land allocations are indicated on the Proposals map in the following section :

- Housing-led, mixed use expansion area at the south east of Tomintoul;
- Business, employment, tourism-led mixed use expansion area at the central north east of the village;
 - Allocate a site at the north eastern end of Main Street for housing;
- Allocate a site at the junction of Cults Lane and Doodlers Lane for housing or compatible uses;
- Protect the vacant site between the school playing field and Gordon Hotel to allow options to be considered;
- Allocate land for an Outdoor Activity Hub at the Glenlivet Estate Office.

4.6 TOMINTOUL : PROPOSALS

The adjacent plan illustrates the main Master Plan Proposals for Tomintoul. The Proposals are intended to enable relevant aspects of the Regeneration Strategy to proceed. They bring together land allocations and proposals from the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan, the CNPA Main Issues Report and the findings of this Master Plan exercise.

The plan shows an extended Settlement Boundary, which includes :

- The Glenlivet Estate Office site;
- Woodland strips around the Highland Games site, at the south west of the village and at the school playing fields;
- The plantation woodlands at the east of the village.

These extensions accommodate the proposed Outdoor Activity Hub and areas of woodland and tree planting which help to define the edges of the village. Further adjustments to the Settlement Boundary should be clarified once detailed master planning work has been completed for the two eastern Expansion Areas.

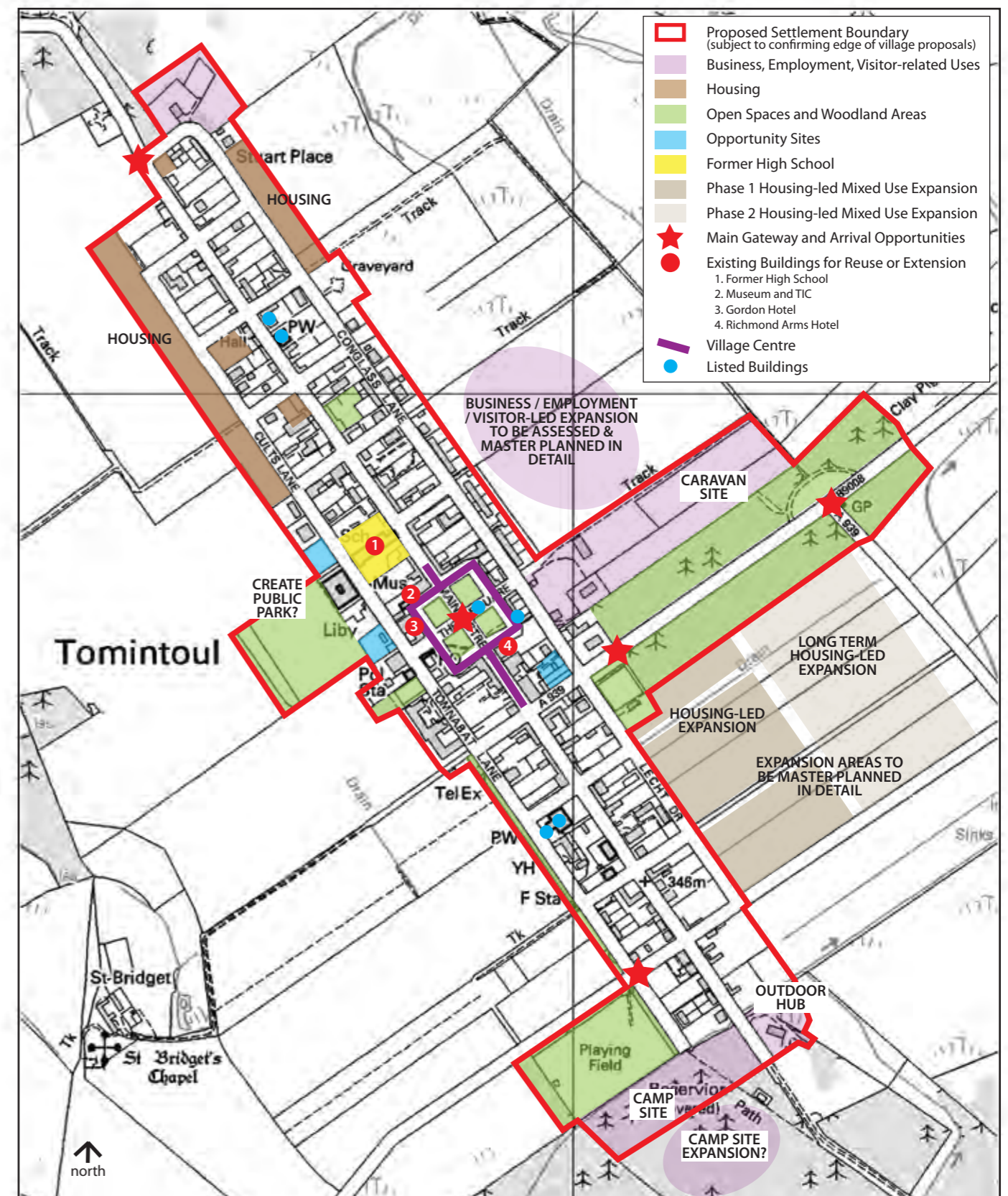
The housing sites shown at the northern end of the village might accommodate approximately 16-20 houses, depending on plot size and type or size of houses constructed. Three house plots have current planning permission within the proposed housing sites at the outer lanes to the north of the village. Where permission lapses, improved design and layout proposals should be insisted upon, where appropriate. Houses constructed on smaller infill sites within the Settlement Boundary should be considered as 'windfall' development.

Master Planning work at the eastern Expansion Areas could proceed in the short term, but the release of land for development should be controlled through phasing. Although the business-led Expansion Area may include some housing, it is recommended that this should be delivered over the long term, once business and employment requirements are more clearly established. Housing and other mixed use development should initially focus on the housing-led Expansion Area. Mitigation against habitat loss for wading birds will be required and the layout should reflect the established settlement grid pattern and historic field boundaries as far as possible.

A first phase of development at the housing-led Expansion Area need not be restricted until the other sites within the Settlement Boundary are completed, since the various sites offer opportunities to meet different demand in the market. This may include affordable housing, smaller market rental and sale options, holiday homes and larger family houses. Other uses which are compatible with housing should also be located here, to create a mixed use development where people can also work and find some of the daily services they require. However, commercial, visitor and retail activity should primarily focus on the Square and Main Street, in particular within the existing Local Plan 'village centre' policy area indicated on the Proposals Plan.

Key criteria for the Master Planning of the Expansion Areas are shown on the following page, along with an indication of capacity for new housing development. Any significant development is likely to have impacts upon water, drainage and power supplies in terms of remaining capacity in existing infrastructure and the ability of current services to accommodate adjusted loadings. A strategic review of infrastructure provision would be sensible and this could be taken forward by the Crown Estate, with assistance from SSE and Scottish Water, in conjunction with Master Planning work for the Expansion Areas. The proposed 'Transform Team' could also have a role.

PROPOSALS PLAN



EXPANSION AREAS - KEY CRITERIA

The housing-led and business-led Expansion Areas should be master planned in detail to ensure that a long term framework is established. This should include :

- Extension of the historic grid pattern with buildings fronting streets;
- Layout to reflect historic field boundary pattern where possible;
- Mitigation measures to manage potential impacts on wading birds and habitat;
- Buildings orientated towards the south to maximise passive solar gain;
- Adequate junction and road access in character with the original village;
- A clearly defined open space, public realm and footpath network;
- Advance planting to create a setting for development;
- Coherent landscape concept enhancing the wider setting of the village;
- Potential for allotments with convenient access and parking;
- Integration of non-housing uses, to create a mixed use development;
- Phasing to ensure efficient site servicing/coordinated village expansion;
- Design guidance to achieve an improved standard of buildings/materials;
- Guidance on plot dimensions, building frontages and building form;

As a broad indication of site capacity, the building frontage lines shown might provide approximately 10 house plots fronting onto each street (with fewer at the northern strip). In this scenario, the area indicated in brown might accommodate approximately 40-50 houses over a long term period.

Moray Council's Housing Land Audit, 2011 indicates an average annual house completion rate of 5 or 6 units over the last three years. Assuming this rate continues, the southern Expansion Area could provide an 8 or 9 year effective land supply in its own right. However, other sites within the village would meet some of the annual demand and windfall sites would also provide new homes. It may be more realistic to assume the Expansion Area might continue to deliver new houses over a period of perhaps 15-20 years. This rate of completions is considered to be generally consistent with the overall approach set out in the CNPA's Main Issues Report, taking account of new sites for 32 houses over a 15 year period to 2023, infill sites within the village settlement boundary and individual rear plot sites.

The housing-led Expansion Area should provide some opportunities for non-housing uses such as business, leisure, visitor or commercial developments. These would need to be compatible with the predominant housing use and should not divert trade away from the main retail, commercial and visitor zone at the centre of the village. The addition of these uses will reduce the capacity of the area to accommodate houses.

At present, insufficient information exists to allow a basic development framework to be set out for the proposed business-led Expansion Area, which might accommodate predominantly employment generating uses, such as business, commercial, leisure, tourism and visitor facilities, along with some housing. As the Regeneration Strategy progresses, it will be possible to assess requirements once the impacts of developments such as the proposed caravan park, hotel refurbishment, reuse of the former high school and proposed Outdoor Activity Hub are clearer.

The drawing indicates some of the basic principles which should guide the detailed master planning of the housing-led Expansion Area. However, further consideration of landscape setting, roads and access, servicing, ground conditions, microclimate, block layout, public realm, paths and routes, protected species etc will be required. In particular, detailed investigation of use of the proposed Expansion Areas by protected species of wading birds is required.

Mitigation of potential impacts on wading bird habitat will be important. There may be potential to respond more positively to this issue by introducing new habitat enhancement measures in the vicinity. There may also be potential for a 'nature reserve' or similar feature on lower, wetter ground to the north east of the village. This could also act as an opportunity to bring wildlife tourists to Tomintoul.

SOUTHERN EXPANSION AREA DIAGRAM



NB : This diagram is indicative and is intended to illustrate a general form of development consistent with the established grid pattern and historic field boundaries. Further detailed master planning work is required. In particular, the mitigation of potential impacts upon wading birds and their habitat requires full consideration. Phasing of development may be particularly important in this respect.

5.0 GLENLIVET AND THE RURAL AREA

The Regeneration Strategy seeks to promote new economic activity in Glenlivet and the rural area, through a number of initiatives. Some of these relate to sustainable land use, others to local production of food, drink and craft products. Some can be promoted by the CNPA through schemes such as a Landscape Partnership Bid. Others rely on significant landowners such as the Crown Estate. Many will need action from the local community and businesses.

Given the dispersed nature of the Glenlivet settlement, the lack of urban areas within the wider Study Area and the difficulty in predicting land use and locational requirements for as yet unknown rural developments, there are only limited site specific proposals in the Master Plan out with Tomintoul.

Gateways and arrival points are as important to the Glenlivet area as Tomintoul. Cairngorms National Park-branded entry features already exist to the north of Glenlivet, at Packhorse Bridge and at Tomnavoulin. All relevant 'touch points' should be designed to a co-ordinated, branded standard.

5.1 GLENLIVET AND THE RURAL AREA : SITE SPECIFIC PROPOSALS

The Crown Estate has recently obtained planning permission for a mountain biking development in the Carn Daimh Forest, a few miles north of Tomintoul. This facility will provide mountain bikers with a small reception centre, including a café, information area, toilets and car parking. The project is supported by the Crown Estate, European Regional Development Fund, CNPA and Moray Council and the investment in the area amounts to £500,000. This project promises high quality facilities and trails and should result in a significant increase in visitors to the area.

The Glenlivet Public Hall is located just outside Bridgend of Glenlivet on the B9008. It provides a small site for camping and caravans, which is formally registered with the Caravan Club. Visitors pay a fee for use of the site and this helps to cover the running costs of the hall. There may be an opportunity to provide additional space for this purpose at the site, subject to drainage availability, or to upgrade the caravan pitches by providing electric 'hook ups'. With the Crown Estate promoting a larger caravan site at Tomintoul and also planning for a separate campsite, the Glenlivet facility may become an increasingly attractive stop for touring caravans, camper vans and campers.

The Tomintoul Spur of the Speyside Way passes through Glenlivet and the rural area. At present, the route is only promoted as a spur, with walkers facing a return trip on the same path. Alternative return routes exist and there is also an established path heading west from Tomintoul, connecting back to the Speyside Way at Nethy Bridge, via Dorback. Promoting these alternative routes as an optional loop diversion from the Speyside Way would attract additional users to the area, some of whom would use local accommodation, shops, restaurants and services. Developing additional facilities at Ballindalloch might also help attract walkers to this route. Some investment may be required to upgrade signage, routes and publicity material. A good working relationship with relevant landowners will also be necessary.

The Glenlivet primary school roll has recently fallen to 17 children, with a consequent reduction in teaching staff. Rural primary schools are important anchors in any remote settlement such as Glenlivet. As well as enabling children to benefit from local education facilities, they often provide multi-use buildings, act as locations for community events, provide local employment opportunities and add to the economic activity of the area.

As the school roll declines, the per head cost of providing education increases. The national average per head cost of primary school education in Scotland is approximately £4100, compared to an average in Moray of £3300. The per head cost at Glenlivet primary school is currently around £10,300. With ongoing pressure on public finances, there is a possibility that the viability of Glenlivet Primary School will be called into question in the future. Increasing the school roll will support its viability.



There is an opportunity for CNPA, Moray Council and the community to promote Glenlivet primary school as the obvious and sustainable choice for schooling local children. Co-operation with Housing Associations and local landowners, such as the Crown Estate and Glenlivet Distillery, could help bolster the local school age population by locating sites for new family housing. These would need to meet the terms of CNPA's planning policies. There may be a case for allocating specific small sites in the CNPA Local Development Plan, where these are suitably located, intended to support the primary school, meet local housing need, satisfy all technical requirements and protect the special qualities of the National Park. Smaller developments of one or two homes may meet the terms of the CNPA's Local Plan policy 21 'Housing Development in Rural Groups' and 22, 'Housing Development Outside Settlements'.

5.2 GLENLIVET AND THE RURAL AREA : WIDER OPPORTUNITIES

The Regeneration Strategy outlines a number of rural-based initiatives which have the potential to boost local economic activity, support local services and attract more visitors to the Study Area. These include :

- A Community of Crafts;
- A Landscape Partnership Bid;
- Rural Youthbuild Project;
- Live/Work and the Tomintoul & Glenlivet Telecommunity;
- Low Carbon Economy / Renewable Energy;
- Tomintoul & Glenlivet Walking Festival;
- Rural Visitor Accommodation, (including B&Bs);
- Local Food and Drink Production

The Regeneration Strategy requires prioritisation of these options by the proposed Community Development Trust, Transform Team, local businesses and others. Some will be primarily agency driven, such as the Landscape Partnership Bid, whilst others will rely on the efforts of a number of individual property or business owners.

The Master Plan is unable to identify specific sites where developments within these categories might take place. In any event, any proposal would be assessed against the CNPA's Local Plan policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance. The siting of any development and its potential impact upon the special qualities of the National Park will always be important considerations. Relevant policies in addressing the suitability of development proposals, in principle, may include :

- Policy 11 : Local and Wider Cultural Heritage of the Park;
- Policy 16 : Design Standards for Development;
- Policy 25 : Business Development;
- Policy 27 : Conversion and Reuse of Existing Traditional and Vernacular Buildings;
- Policy 33 : Tourism-Related Development;
- Policy 34 : Outdoor Access;
- Policy 35 : Sport and Recreation Facilities;

Relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance, expanding on some of these Policies, may include :

- Cairngorms National Park Sustainable Design Guide;
- Conversion and Reuse of Existing Traditional and Vernacular Buildings;
- Developer Contributions.

Proposed development will also need to satisfy a number of other policies and environmental or technical considerations which are typically site specific.

Local businesses, individuals and community groups may benefit from a level of informal or pre-application assistance in assessing planning requirements for proposals. This support might help to encourage the implementation of development ideas and also to achieve a closer working relationship between potential developers and the planning authorities. The Regeneration Strategy suggests that the proposed Community Development Trust and Transform Team should work closely with CNPA to explore how a level of assistance or information might be provided through and officer team.



5.3 GLENLIVET AND THE RURAL AREA : SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT

CNPA and the proposed Community Development Trust and Transform Team should work with the Crown Estate, key landowners, agricultural tenants, rural businesses and the local community to build upon current good practise and explore new opportunities for sustainable land management. There is significant potential for research, pilot projects, symposia and innovative land management practices within the Study Area. The following options could be explored :

Woodland Carbon Sequestration -

Certification through the Woodland Carbon Code / new woodland planting / establish farm woodlands through adjustment to tenancy conditions (as required). Benefits could include verifiable carbon accounting, expanded timber resources, access to grants and offsetting of farm based carbon emissions for farm tenants.

Land Capability for Carbon Capture (LC3) -

Apply ideas developed by CNPA and The James Hutton Institute on assessing the capacity of land for carbon capture / investigate options for peatland restoration and soil carbon management to minimise carbon loss. Benefits could include an exemplar system meeting the ambitions of the Scottish Government's Land Use Strategy, applicable elsewhere. Grant funding may be available from a number of sources.

Farm Carbon Management -

Monitor the emerging concept of farm audits for Greenhouse Gas emissions as a response to UK and Scottish Government legally-binding targets (42% reduction by 2020, 80% by 2050). The Glenlivet Estate was the subject of the 'Cairngorms Low Carbon Estates - Pilot Study' research project but farm-based emissions were excluded due to a lack of farm-based data. This work could be taken forward in co-operation with tenant farmers and the new SAC Carbon Management Centre.

Woodfuel Opportunities -

Explore the potential for forestry operations to supply to local woodfuel suppliers and new businesses / support farms in developing woodchip supply services using existing farm machinery and storage sheds to create a machinery ring for firewood processors, haulage and delivery equipment / encourage planting of farm woodlands for future woodfuel supply markets. There is certainly an opportunity to develop the woodfuel supply chain, bringing employment and economic activity to the area and utilising the natural resources of the Study Area to good effect. The next section 'Renewables and Energy Efficiency' explains how local woodfuel resources could be used in biomass schemes.

Natural Flood Management -

The Scottish Government has set up Natural Flood Management (NFM) Group, to advise on developing a NFM strategy. The Avon and the Livet are part of the upper catchment of the Spey. There may be an opportunity to implement a demonstration NFM project to demonstrate the benefits of this approach in 'buffering' future flood events. Grant funding may be available for research and development work. NFM is compatible with many of the other Sustainable Land Management options identified above.

Farm Support Programme -

A programme of targeted grant and training support to broaden skills and enable farmers to maximise new income streams in activities such as woodfuel, carbon management, NFM etc. This may require review of lease terms between the Crown Estate and tenant farmers.

Community Engagement in Land Management -

Increasingly, major landowners are establishing closer working relationships and management regimes with local businesses and communities. With a well-defined and supported Regeneration Strategy in place, there is an opportunity for the proposed Transform Team and Community Development Trust, key agencies, businesses, landowners and the community to consider closer co-operation. The local community could take on the ownership of some land, perhaps as a pilot project for smaller 'lifestyle' units of productive land. An allotment project at Tomintoul might be an opportunity to test this arrangement on a small scale, with the Community Development Trust taking ownership of a site and managing the facility.

As a major landowner, the Crown Estate could lead innovative land management and community partnership approaches, establishing emerging models as test cases at Tomintoul and Glenlivet.

5.4 GLENLIVET AND THE RURAL AREA : RENEWABLES AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The Study Area has a rich array of natural resources which provide opportunities for renewable energy generation, energy efficiency improvements and environmental management. There are potential economic benefits to individuals, local businesses, landowners and the community, through new sources of income, 'green' tourism, training and employment.

The special qualities of the National Park and the Study Area are likely to rule out particular renewable solutions, especially in areas of sensitive landscape. As a result, it is likely that opportunities for renewable energy developments will be at a domestic or relatively small scale and will need to satisfy the requirements of the Cairngorms Local Plan Policy 15 : Renewable Energy Generation. Some domestic scale 'micro-generation' proposals may fall within permitted development rights, in which case planning permission will not be required.

Schemes might be brought forward by landowners, businesses, the community or individuals. There may be potential for a review of tenancy conditions, to ensure that options to provide small scale solutions as widely available as possible. A renewables capacity audit by a suitably experienced specialist could help to encourage appropriate developments.

Wind Power -

The Local Plan expresses the CNPA view that windfarms are incompatible with the National Park setting. However, smaller scale single turbines associated with rural businesses or properties may be acceptable, subject to their impact upon the landscape and consideration of numerous other factors.

Hydro Power -

Larger scale reservoir schemes are unlikely to be practical or acceptable in landscape and environmental terms. However, the main water courses within the Study Area could have potential for 'run of river' schemes. A number of these schemes are operating in rural areas throughout Scotland. It will be essential to ensure that any potential impacts on habitats, river hydrology and fishing can be managed appropriately. Hydro schemes may have the greatest potential for long term sustainable energy production with minimal environmental impact.

Solar Power (photovoltaic : PV) -

This technology is perhaps the quickest and easiest to install on a domestic level. However, the financial viability of solar PV will be subject to the Feed In Tariff (Government incentive) review effective April 1st 2012.

Solar Heat (thermal) -

Solar thermal panels capture solar energy to heat water, which can be used either directly as hot water or for use within a wet heating system. An alternative heat source will still be required (eg. oil). Solar thermal is both a more established and efficient technology than its PV counterpart.



Biomass Heating -

There may be opportunities for new biomass heating installations, particularly at the smaller scale - The Glenlivet Estate Office is currently heated using biomass. Other buildings or groups of buildings within Tomintoul and Glenlivet might also suit this approach, supporting the development of a local woodchip supply chain. At a larger scale, there has been previous opposition to larger scale biomass locally. However, this might be revisited, taking account of new technology, alternative approaches and the opportunity to custom design a biomass heating solution, for example in conjunction with the proposed long term Expansion Areas at Tomintoul. A full District Heating system may have potential at Tomintoul but there would be significant community concerns and technical issues such as access requirements to overcome, should this solution be financially viable.

Energy Efficiency -

Given the typically harsh winter conditions in the Study Area, fuel and heating cost is a concern for many residents and businesses. Upgrading the energy efficiency of an existing property is often more cost effective than adding renewable technology. There are numerous helpful information sources offering advice on energy efficiency and these could be promoted by a Community Development Trust (see www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/scotland).



APPENDIX 1 : TOMINTOUL'S OUTBUILDINGS

Tomintoul's distinctive urban character is most obviously defined by its grid and block pattern and traditional buildings constructed in stone and slate. However, other vernacular structures such as walls, outbuildings, workshops, wood stores and sheds are also part of the street scene and townscape. Many of these also feature stone walls and slate roofs, although corrugated metal sheeting, timber and a range of improvised materials are also evident.

These buildings tell a story in themselves, through their previous and current uses, the sourcing of materials, their form and design. Many are in very poor condition and would benefit from upgrading, maintenance or in the worst cases, demolition. Others have a good lifespan ahead and can continue to contribute to Tomintoul's urban character.

In assessing and promoting improvements to the townscape and protection of the built environment, CNPA, Moray Council and Historic Scotland should not forget the importance of smaller buildings and structures. Equally, local residents, property owners and businesses should acknowledge their role in ensuring that these structures are adequately maintained.

There may even be an opportunity to establish a business to design and supply a range of modern sheds and outbuildings, constructed from locally cut and worked timber. This would offer an alternative to the moulded plastic and flimsy timber options which are available from large retailers.

Although the outbuildings shown are predominantly located within Tomintoul, they are representative of similar buildings throughout the Study Area.



modern shed and storage buildings



traditional outbuilding