

SECTION 4

CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT

The conservation area appraisal is a tool for the future management of the area. Having set out the special character and appearance of the Character Area, this section addresses the extent of loss, intrusion or damage to the Character Area.

These 'Negative Features' can take a number of forms and range from issues such as gap sites and derelict buildings to inappropriate change and poor street furniture. Any feature which creates vulnerability to the area's special character and/or offers opportunities for change or enhancement is considered.

4.1 Negative Features

Rothesay is undoubtedly a very special place. However there are a number of negative features in the Town Centre Character Area that detract from its special significance. Some negative features arise at least in part from external factors: the extreme maritime climate; decline as a significant holiday destination; resultant low levels of investment; and declining population. Others features arise as a result of direct public and private intervention regarding the management of the town and more specifically the conservation area. Small changes can have a significant negative impact upon the appearance of a historic town; their cumulative effect can threaten the special qualities of an area.

This section deals primarily with the physical issues of the built environment, but function and activity also play a key role in the success of the town and the character and vitality of the conservation area. Improvements in the built environment can have a significant positive impact on these broader issues.

Buildings which have significant threats to their survival are recorded nationally on the Buildings at Risk Register by the Scottish Civic Trust.

In the Town Centre Character Area these are:

- 14 Bishop Street
- Former Co-op Bakery
- Former Royal Hotel, Albert Place

Recent review (PDA, 2009) has also highlighted:

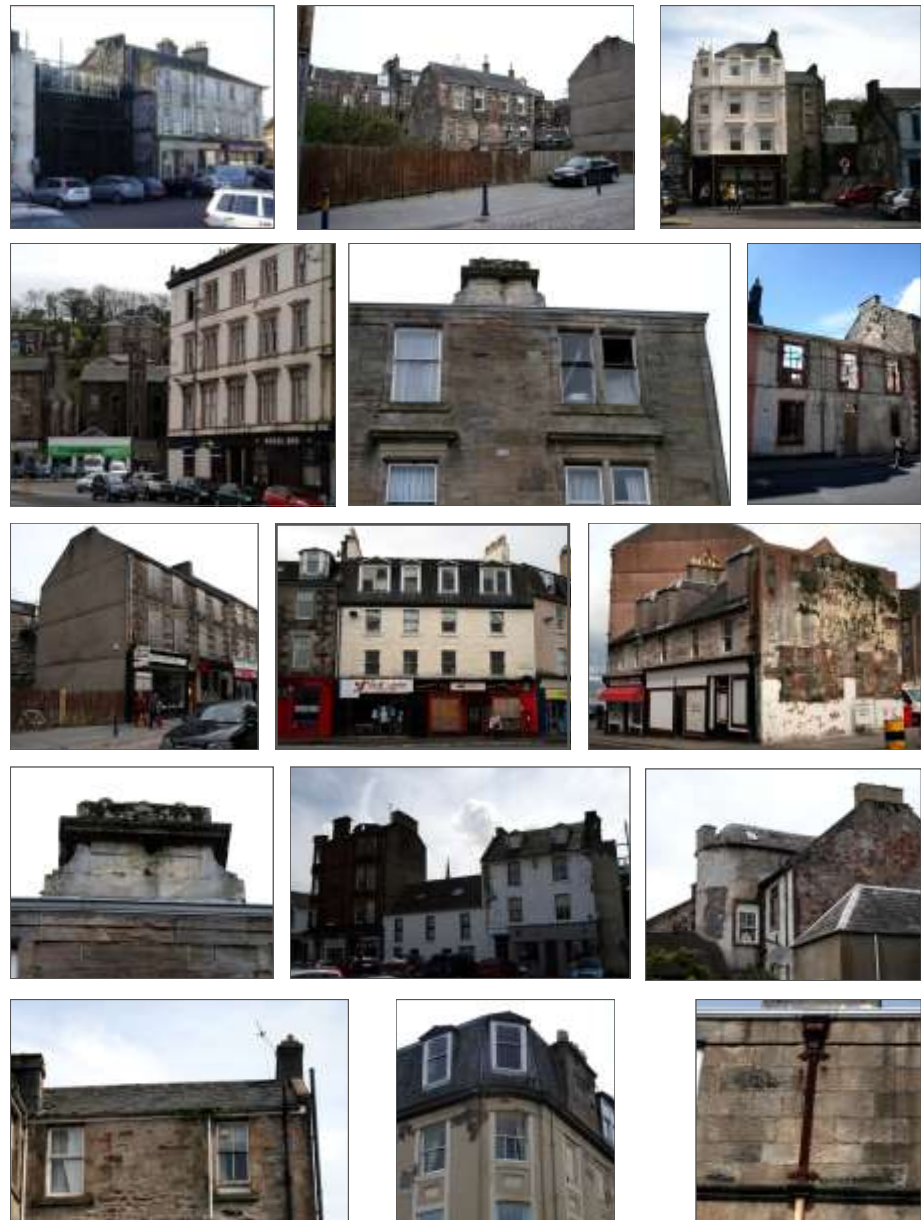
- 11-13 Montague Street

In addition to the Buildings at Risk, the following negative features have been identified:

- **Gap sites:** building loss through demolition; lack of redevelopment
- **Dereliction:** severely neglected buildings incapable of reuse in their current form; threat of demolition
- **Vacancy and Under-use:** capable of reuse but lying empty or untenanted; or partly or poorly used
- **Need for repair:** through poor maintenance; age of components
- **Lack of maintenance:** neglect; multiple occupancy; safe access to repair; lack of skilled craftsmen on the island
- **Inappropriate repair:** modern materials or poorly executed repairs which may lead to further fabric damage and loss of character
- **Small damaging changes:** loss of architectural character through incremental changes to doors, windows, dormers, shop fronts
- **Inappropriate change-scale:** redevelopment which does not respond sympathetically to its townscape context
- **Connectivity:** where the ease of movement though the area is impaired
- **Public Realm:** issues relating to the design and management of public spaces large and small
- **Street Furniture:** issues affecting to the detail of the public realm private and public

These threats to the special qualities of the Town Centre Character Area are described in more detail in the following tables (note images are referenced L: left; C: centre and R: right).

Negative Feature	Area of Character Area affected
Gap sites	All areas. In particular Guildford Square (L); Montague Street (C) including rear of large-scale re-development in Victoria Street; Watergate (R) multiple sites; Bishop Street (to rear of East Princes St).
Dereliction	All areas. The seafront: the former Co-op bakery (L); former Albert Hotel (L); Argyle Street (C); Linking streets: Gallowgate, Bishop Street (R), West Princes Street. <i>(Note: Queen Street, close to the castle in the Industrial Character Area is completely derelict).</i>
Vacancy & Under-use	Castle Area: Former Stuarts' House; Seafront: Former Albert Hotel; Victoria Street shops. Principal shopping street: upper floors (L). Linking streets: Gallowgate (C), Watergate, Bishop Street (R) and West Princes St all have empty shops and flats.
Need for repair	All areas: age of buildings (generally 100years+) original fabric in need of substantial renewal/repair e.g. stonework, and lime mortar pointing; slate roofs, leadwork, chimneys. In particular, Guildford Square (R); Albert Place; West Princes St; Duncan Halls; Guildford Court Hotel.
Lack of maintenance	All areas. In particular, the seafront and linking streets. Problems include all high level repairs (blocked gutters, missing slates, dormer windows); masonry decay, painting of external woodwork, peeling paintwork on facades.



Negative Feature	Area of Character Area affected
Inappropriate repair	All areas. Particularly painting of facades in modern paints leading to failure and masonry decay. Resin & cement based stone repairs typically leading to extended failure of stonework; plastic rainwater goods, poor quality slate.
Damaging small changes: windows	All areas (Castle Area less so) Loss of original timber sash & case windows and inappropriate replacement in a variety of design, operational methods and material (uPVC, aluminium) heavy detailing, trickle vents.
Damaging small changes: shops	All areas. In particular along seafront where impact is most obvious. Over-large and dominate coloured house styles; concealment of good historic details. Unsympathetic modern shopfronts.
Inappropriate change: scale	A number of 20th century developments have not responded well to the scale of neighbouring property or the streetscape requirements. In particular the Co-op, East Princes St; Superdrug (L) and Bank of Scotland in Montague Street, and buildings in Dean Hood Place (C); new ticket office West Pier; Job Centre, King Street (R).



Negative Feature	Area of Character Area affected
Connectivity	<p>Guildford Square: general improvements to connect between Montague Street and Albert Place (L).</p> <p>Seafront: flood defence works present a visual and physical barrier between the shore and the town (C).</p> <p>Foot of High St/Montague St: further opportunity to create more physical permeability and visual connectivity.</p> <p>Foot of Bishop Street: improved pedestrian connectivity required (R).</p>
Public Realm	<p>Seafront: the muster area for the ferry is vast and intrusive.</p> <p>Maintenance: special surfaces (original and new) are not properly maintained, and care has not been taken in the repair of surfaces in correct materials; in particular Albert Quay; Montague Street (L).</p> <p>Some areas have a mix of materials e.g. Albert Place (R).</p> <p>Landscape improvements would benefit key open spaces: Guildford Square; the Market Cross; foot of High Street; Bishop Street junction.</p>
Street Furniture etc	<p>Seafront: improvement required to the welcome sign on Mid Pier; bus shelters require maintenance.</p> <p>All areas: surveillance cameras; satellite dishes, alarm boxes etc; often poorly positioned in particular on listed buildings and prominent corners.</p> <p>Safety measures: barbed wire around the castle, and a nearby pub, is not only a physical and visual barrier but it is also dangerous.</p>



4.2 Management & Review

The Conservation Area Appraisal is a tool to inform and guide the future management of the area. Following on from this appraisal a [Management Plan](#) for the Rothesay Town Centre Character Area has been drafted; this document proposes aims, objectives and activities to protect and enhance the area and tackle the negative features outlined above.

PAN 71: Conservation Area Management (2005) recommends consideration should be given as to how to *“put in place appropriate monitoring indicators and agree a mechanism for review”*. This review and monitoring framework should be agreed in conjunction with the Management Plan review and monitoring process. This is fundamental to assessing the progress of the Management Plan and its impact on the Character Area. Regular review of the Character Area should refresh management priorities and seek to identify new opportunities for enhancement. Justification for designation and validation of boundaries should also be reviewed on a regular basis.

The first review of the Management Plan is suggested to follow shortly after the appointment of the Management Plan Steering Group, thereafter the Management Plan should be reviewed annually at the Management Plan Steering Group AGM. The local community should be consulted during the review process.