

Grantown-on-Spey Town Centre Pilot Project

April 2016



About this Pilot

This Town Centre Pilot Project has been prepared as part of a Scottish Government funded pilot to put into practice some of the principles outlined in the new [Town Centre Toolkit](#) (2015). The Toolkit focuses on collaborative working underpinned by the principle that 'local people and enterprises have the power to take the lead in making their town centre a busier and better place, supported and encouraged by professionals in the public and private sectors'.

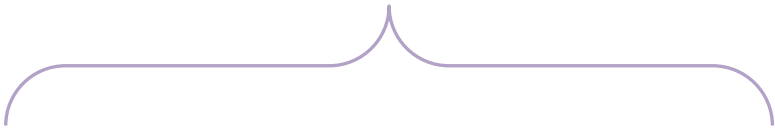
This Pilot Project focuses on the town centre of Grantown-on-Spey, and the involvement of local businesses, community groups and organisations has been central to its preparation. They have helped to identify the issues and improvements needed to support and enhance the town centre's vitality.

The aim of this Pilot Project is to provide a framework for improving the town centre for the benefit of all who use and visit it, with the local community leading the way.

It is anticipated that this Pilot Project will provide a platform for local stakeholders to take projects connected with the town centre forward. It sets out:

- current projects being carried out by local community and business groups;
- what local stakeholders value about Grantown's town centre; and
- a collection of issues and possible actions to help improve the vitality of the town centre.

Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey and Highland Council have supported the preparation of this Guidance along with local stakeholders from Grantown Initiative, Grantown & Vicinity Community Council, Grantown Business Association, YMCA, Grantown Museum and local High Street businesses.



**'People and organisations
can work together to
make town centres better
places through collective
thinking and actions'**

Town Centre Toolkit, 2015



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I. The Process

The Granttown-on-Spey Town Centre Pilot Project has been prepared as part of a Scottish Government funded pilot to put into practice the principles contained in the recently published [Town Centre Toolkit](#) (2015). This Pilot Project focuses on the 'Making it Happen' part of the Toolkit which explores how local communities, businesses and organisations can work together to improve town centres.

Granttown-on-Spey was selected for this pilot because it has strong community and business groups developing their own projects for the town, a traditional (and typical of Badenoch and Strathspey) long High Street with many potential shop fronts and a Conservation Area that recognises the historic character of the town centre. In addition, Granttown celebrated its 250 year anniversary in 2015 which was marked by a week-long festival. The focus on the town and town centre at this time stimulated local community interest in this project.



The focus on collaborative working to 'make things happen' meant community involvement was fundamental to the preparation of this Pilot Project. It is based on the aims, issues and priorities identified by local stakeholders at a workshop held in the Grant Arms Hotel, Granttown-on-Spey on 28 July 2015 (see Appendix I, p. 33).

The workshop attracted representatives from a range of local community groups, businesses and other organisations who came along to give their views on the strengths and weaknesses of the town centre and to help identify where improvements should to be made. Discussions surrounded the appearance of the town centre, tourism, traffic management, planning and amenity amongst others before participants collectively developed a list of top priorities. The workshop also included a visioning exercise to come up with aspirational descriptions and words to characterise Granttown now and in the future.



Map 1: Aerial view of Granttown's Town Centre

2. Background

Granttown-on-Spey lies in the north of the Cairngorms National Park and is one of the main service centres in Badenoch and Strathspey. It was founded in 1765 as an original planned town and has a long traditional high street and central Square which forms the commercial core of the town and a busy thoroughfare. Granttown-on-Spey has a strong historic identity containing a number of historical sites and listed buildings as well as a conservation area comprising the traditional grid pattern centre of the town (see Map 1).

The original layout of the town was based on a regular form of plots (up to 150m in depth) extending outwards from the High Street and Square. Traditionally each feu was occupied by two buildings fronting the high street with a 2-storey Victorian/Edwardian residential property sited at the opposite end of the plot. This has created a tight high street facade which decreases in density towards the edges of the town.

In more recent years, the extensive original plots have come to accommodate new development within the town. New houses have emerged less formally creating a lower density band of residential development extending out from the town centre.

The Local Development Plan (2015) identifies a town centre in Granttown-on-Spey, however it is too narrow for the purposes of this project. Therefore reference to the 'town centre' in this Project is extended to comprise the high street and Square as well as the connections that stem from these.



Map 2: Local Development Plan allocations in Granttown-on-Spey

3. Policy Context: Settlement Statement

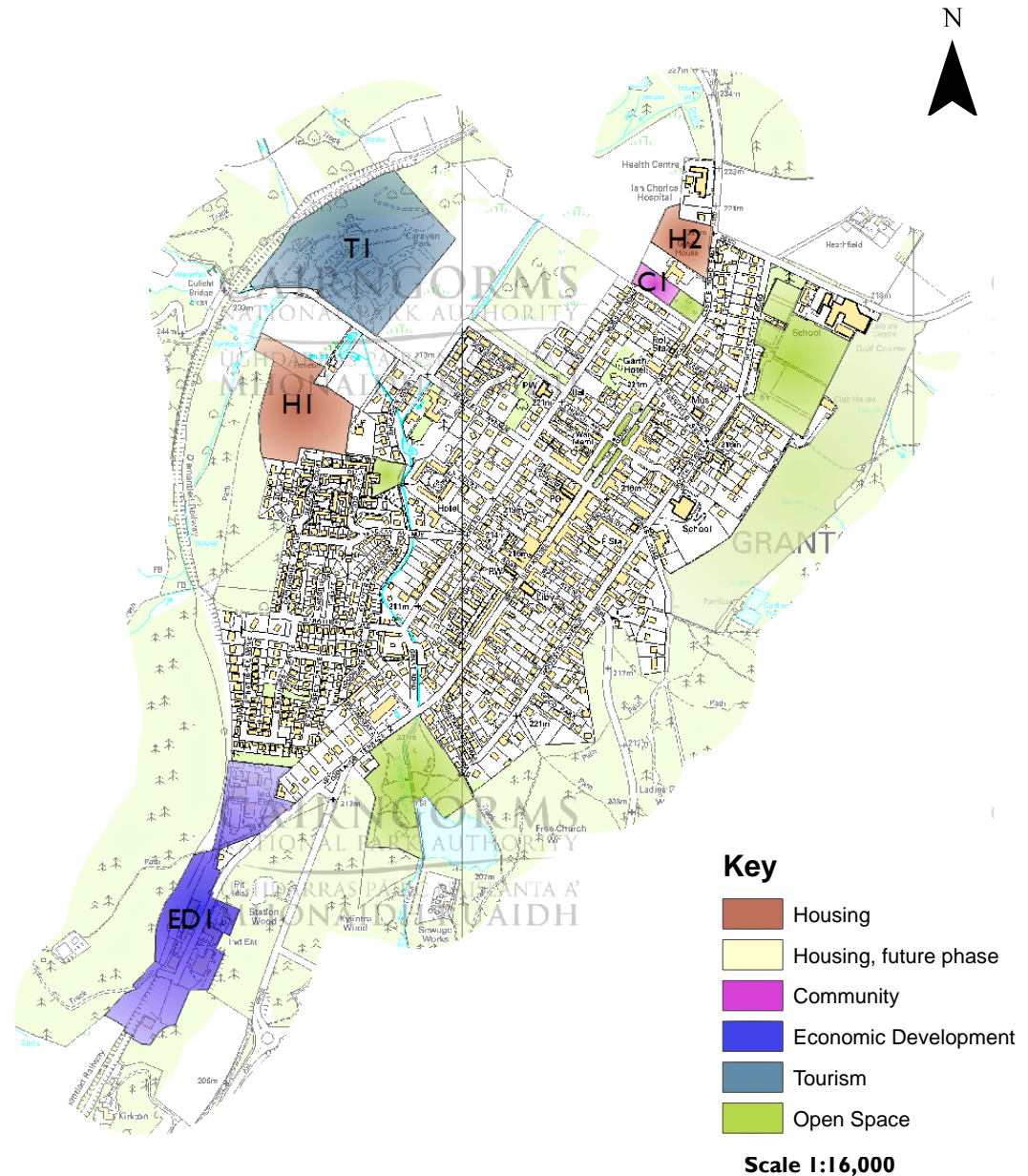
There are a number of policies and strategies relevant to Granttown's town centre (further detail can be found in Appendix 2, p. 38) which include the Local Development Plan 2015 (LDP).

The LDP sets out specific objectives and priorities for each settlement to ensure that new development takes into account the unique character of its surrounding settlement.

The objectives for Granttown include, amongst others:

- consolidating its role as a main settlement
- protecting its role as service provider to the wider region
- ensuring the towns built heritage is preserved and enhanced
- facilitating economic growth to support a thriving community

The LDP allocated two housing sites – H1 and H2 – in Granttown which have capacity for up to 70 units. In addition, ED1: the Industrial Estate is allocated for Economic Development and T1: the Caravan Park is allocated for Tourism. There is also a small site, C1 which is identified for community uses. However, these allocations lie to the edges of the settlement boundary and there are no development allocations within the town centre.





View over Grantown-on-Spey from the Dava Way

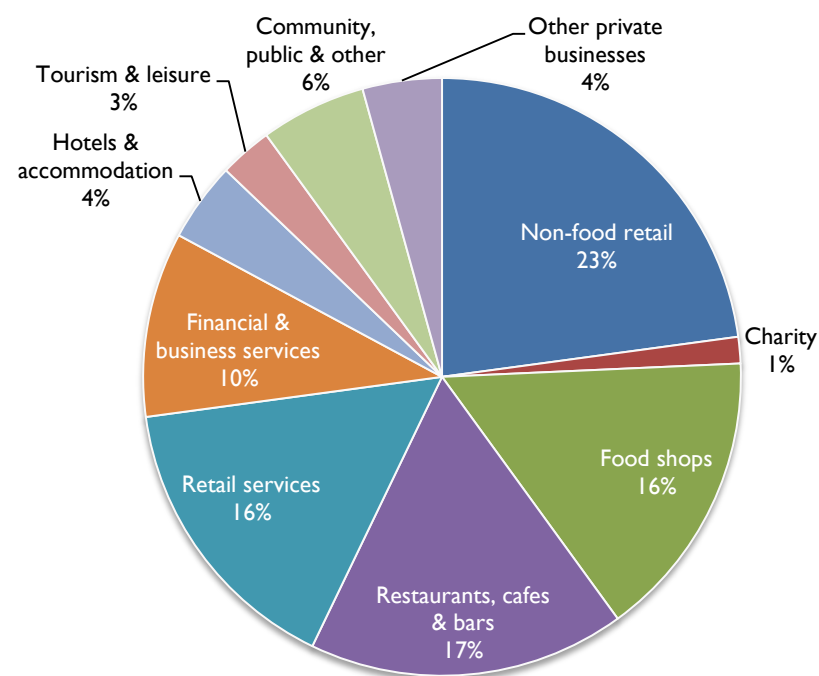
4. Town Centre Activity

There is a good mix of business types in Grantown's town centre. Table 1 and Figure 2 show that non-food retail forms the highest proportion of businesses (23%) with restaurants & cafes (17%), food shops (16%), and retail services (16%) also forming reasonable proportions. The spatial distribution of these businesses is shown in Map 3.

Table 1: Numbers of town Centre businesses (as at June 2015)

Type of business	No. of businesses	No. vacant
Non-food retail	16	4
Charity Shops	1	
Food Shops – e.g. Grocery shop, Butcher, Deli, Bakery.	11	
Restaurants, cafes, bars & hot food takeaways	12	
Retail Services – e.g. Post Office, hair dressers etc	11	
Financial & Business Services – e.g. property services, accountant, solicitor, bank etc	7	1
Hotels & accommodation	3	2
Tourism & leisure	2	
Community, public & other	4	
Other private businesses	3	
Total	70	7

Figure 1: Composition of town centre business types (excluding vacant premises)



Map 3: Spatial distribution of town centre businesses (as at June 2015)



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Scale 1: 3,500

Retail

The focus of retail and business activity within Grantown is along the eastern half of the High Street and into the central Square. The town centre has a strong independent retailer representation making up 84% of retail and service businesses. There is also a high proportion of more specialist retail businesses including a florist, delicatessen, country sporting shop, antique and book shop as well as a number of business services (accountants, solicitor, estate agents). There is one small supermarket (Co-op) serving the town. However it also benefits from home delivery services from a number of national supermarkets (Asda, Tesco and Sainsburys).

Grantown also has a low rate of vacant retail units. There are seven vacant premises in Grantown's town centre (equating to 9% of town centre businesses), however just four of these are retail. More encouragingly, there have been seven new town centre businesses over the last year (2014 to 2015) which have utilised four previously vacant premises (three former shops and a Hotel). This has helped to upgrade a number of premises and subsequently contribute to enhancing the town centre.

In addition to the town centre, there are other businesses centres in Grantown which include the Strathspey Industrial Estate on the south western edge of the town and Achnagonalin Industrial Estate to the south. These business centres are important in their own right however also play a role in supporting the town centre.

Tourism

Grantown's historic environment, position within the Cairngorms National Park, historic environment, scenic surroundings and proximity to the Cairngorm Mountains and outdoor activities make it an attractive destination for tourists and visitors. In addition, there are a number of events that draw large numbers of visitors to the town including the Grantown Show, Highland Games, Motor Mania vintage car event, Thunder in the Glens motorcycle event, Try-tri triathlon, Figgat Fair, Christmas Parade and Christmas lights switch-on and Hogmanay party in the Square.

The town as a whole has approximately 440 catered bed spaces, a 24 bed hostel and 29 self-catering units. In addition, the Caravan Park can accommodate 40 tents and 97 touring caravans providing a range of visitor accommodation. Visitor accommodation is spread throughout the town with two hotels and a guest house located in the town centre.

Hotels and Accommodation form a small proportion of town centre businesses despite being an important business sector in the town. However, hotels and other accommodation are largely dispersed throughout and toward the periphery of the town (such as the Caravan Park).

5. Current community-led projects

There are currently a number of community led projects in Grantown which will play an important part in supporting and delivering the actions set out in this Pilot Project contained in **Table 2: Community-led projects in Grantown-on-Spey**, below.

Project	Aim of the project	Lead organisation
Totally Locally	Grantown-on-Spey is participating in the Totally Locally initiative which is a national 'award-winning social enterprise and shop local movement... support[ing] independent retailers with a free branding and marketing campaign for their town. Teams of volunteers use the campaign to promote the value of local shopping, celebrate the high street, create community events, and ultimately lift the local economy. Totally Locally is more than a shop local campaign, it's about working together to lift a whole town'. www.totallylocally.org/grantown-on-spey/	Totally Locally Team – local (The initiative is run by a collection of stakeholders as rules state it must not be led by any one organisation)
Community Storage Facility	To provide a central storage area for community equipment (tables, chairs, public address system, banners etc) held by different local community groups for regular/annual events.	Grantown Initiative
Local events eg Hogmanay and Motor Mania	To organise Hogmanay celebrations in the Square and the vintage car event in September.	Grantown & Vicinity Community Council
Roundabout Sculpture / Art	To improve the attractiveness of the roundabouts on the approach to Grantown. This will involve community and visitor consultation on what might be appropriate and commissioning a piece/s for installation.	Grantown Initiative
Cemetery Wall	To improve the entrance to Grantown (new) cemetery.	Grantown Initiative

Museum enhancement	To continue the ongoing work to improve what the museum can offer to visitors and also increase local knowledge of heritage.	Grantown Museum
Town Map	To create a tourist map for the town, highlighting the main points of interest. The purpose is to keep visitors in the town for longer.	Grantown Initiative
Mossie Play Park	To upgrade of the local playpark to cater for a variety of ages	Grantown Initiative
Rails to Grantown	To extend the Strathspey railway from its current terminus at Broomhill, to Grantown- on-Spey. http://www.strathspeyrailway.co.uk/	Strathspey Railway
Community website	To build an all-encompassing website for the community – much needed for local businesses, especially with superfast Broadband coming to Grantown this year.	Grantown Initiative
Grantown250 and legacy	No projects as yet	Grantown Society
Community Centre	To improve the structure and fabric of the building so it can be used more effectively as a community venue.	YMCA

6. Actions

The workshop aimed to find out local stakeholders views about Grantown – what they like, what they don't like and where they feel improvements should be made to help enhance it. The session was divided into three sections which correspond with the next three parts of this Pilot Project:

1. **Aspirations for Grantown:** What do the stakeholders want the town to be? What do they want visitors to associate with the town?
2. **What is good about Grantown?:** Exploring what are the towns assets are. These are the aspects that stakeholders want to protect and enhance and the things that future developments should not have a negative impact on.
3. **Issues and Actions:** What do stakeholders want to change? How can it be changed and who might be the group or organisation to help change it?

'**Actions for Planning**' have been identified where planning can play a role in supporting an action either through the Local Development Plan or other planning strategies.

A summary of the **Issues and Actions** are set out in **Table 3** below:

Theme	Issue	Summary of actions	Who's involved	Page
Creating an attractive and inviting town centre	Empty properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using shop fronts as notice boards to help improve the image of the High Street Enforcing the upkeep of empty buildings Exploring opportunities for funding to support the upgrading and maintenance of properties to help bring them back into productive use 	Property and business owners, the community	19
	Condition of shops and upper floor properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforcing the upkeep of properties Exploring opportunities for funding to support the maintenance and conversion of properties to help bring them back into productive use 	Property and business owners, the community	20

Theme	Issue	Summary of actions	Who's involved	Page
	Strathspey Hotel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the re-development of the Strathspey Hotel to bring it back into use 	The Highland Council and property's owner/developer	21
	Site behind Strathspey Hotel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise the site to make it more attractive. 	The Highland Council and property's owner/developer	22
	Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of existing guidance Sign rationalisation project or local initiative to promote consistent use of signage for local businesses, tourism etc 	The Highland Council, CNPA, local community	23
	Roundabouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support project currently in place for installing art or sculptures on the roundabouts to provide a more attractive entrance to Grantown 	Grantown Initiative	23
Supporting and enhancing tourism	Strathspey Railway extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project currently underway and opportunities for funding being explored 	Strathspey Railway	24
	Marketing and Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project currently underway to create a map for the town Improve marketing for Grantown as a tourist destination Bring businesses together to promote each other and improve knowledge of what is available and offered in Grantown Progress existing project to promote the use of town branding 	Grantown Initiative, Grantown Business Association, Grantown Museum and support from CNPA and others.	24
	Enhancing tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure display boards (outside the Co-op) contain up to date tourist information World Host Training for shopkeepers Restrict parking and have outside tables in the Square 	Local businesses, CNPA and Highland Council	25

Theme	Issue	Summary of actions	Who's involved	Page
	Supporting the evening economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding evening events in the Square to encourage people to use the town centre in the evenings; • Use the Square as a focal point for community activities in the evening 	Business and community groups	25
Improving traffic management	Car Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a traffic warden to manage parking; • Marking parking bays for deliveries • Re-painting yellow lines around the Co-op; • Using a one-way system to improve the flow of traffic in the Square and reduce parking congestion • Initiate a project to examine the wider issue of parking in the town centre to consider wider improvements 	The Highland Council and local community.	26
Protecting and enhancing Built Heritage	Conservation Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the conservation area • Explore opportunity to create a management plan for it 	The Highland Council with CNPA.	27
A creative, convenient and connected town centre	Totally Locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote the initiative • Link with marketing and communication issue to promote businesses working together 	Totally Locally Grantown	28
	Concert venue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore suitability of YMCA's mobile stage for events 	Grantown Initiative, Grantown & Vicinity Community Council, YMCA	28
	Wi-fi and 3G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunity for public wi-fi in Grantown to attract more people to the town centre 	Local community	28

6.1 Aspirations: What local people want Grantown to be...



6.2. What is good about Grantown-on-Spey?

Through the workshop, local stakeholders gave feedback on what they feel are Grantown's assets and strengths. Finding out what the local community like and value most about Grantown's town centre helped to identify 'the good things that future improvements can be built around' ([Town Centre Toolkit](#)).

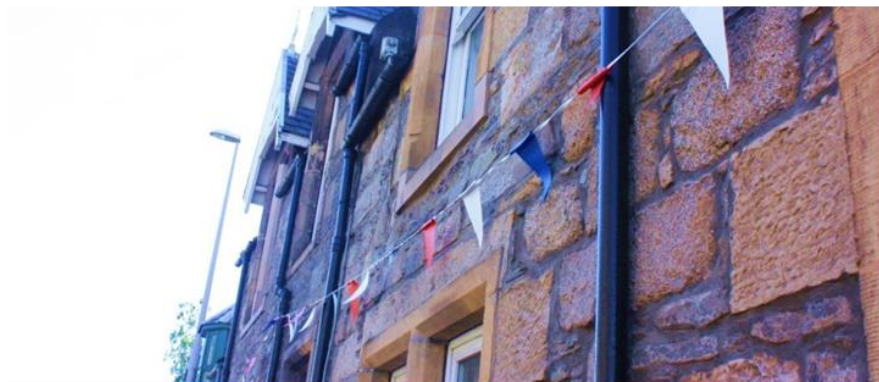
The things that were mentioned most frequently are highlighted in **red**.

Action for Planning: I

The Cairngorms National Park Authority will incorporate the qualities most valued about the town centre in Grantown's Settlement Statement in the next Local Development Plan.

These are the aspects that people feel are most attractive about Grantown and future changes to the town centre should seek to protect and enhance.








6.3 Issues and Actions


This section sets out the issues raised at the workshop, which have been divided into five themes. A brief outline of each issue is provided followed by possible actions including those suggested at the workshop as well as ones identified by Cairngorms National Park Authority and finally, who may be involved.

Theme: Creating an attractive and inviting town centre

Issue Raised	What stakeholders said	Suggested and other possible Action	Who's involved
Empty properties			
	<p>There are still too many empty and boarded up properties which are letting the High Street down.</p> <p>In addition, some empty properties are not being adequately maintained. Although the maintenance of each property is the responsibility of the owner or tenant, due to the age of most properties in the town centre, maintenance can be more expensive.</p>	<p>Empty buildings should be utilised and maintained by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using shop fronts as notice boards to help improve the image of the High Street • enforcing the upkeep of empty buildings • exploring opportunities for funding to support the upgrading and maintenance of properties to help bring them back into productive use - See Funding (Page 30). <div style="border: 2px solid purple; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Action for Planning: 2</p> <p>Empty properties will be monitored through annual Town Centre Health Checks.</p> </div>	Property and business owners, the community and other organisations



Issue Raised	What stakeholders said	Suggested and other possible Action	Who's involved
Condition of shops and upper floor properties			
	<p>Some upstairs properties on the High Street are in poor condition and require maintenance and upgrading. A number of windows are in bad condition and gutters are leaking which creates a poor image.</p> <p>Whilst the maintenance of each property is the responsibility of its owner, shops and properties on the High Street require greater maintenance due to their age and that they often need to be renovated to make them suitable for modern businesses and retail use.</p>	<p>The condition of properties should be improved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enforcing the upkeep of properties • exploring opportunities for funding to support the maintenance and conversion of properties to help bring them back into productive use. <div data-bbox="1321 627 1825 906" style="border: 2px solid purple; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Action for Planning: 3</p> <p>The condition of buildings will be monitored through annual Town Centre Health Checks.</p> </div>	<p>Property and business owners, the community</p>



Issue Raised	What stakeholders said	Suggested and other possible Action	Who's involved
<p>Strathspey Hotel</p> 	<p>The former Strathspey Hotel (Category B listed) has been empty for a number of years and its condition is deteriorating. It occupies a prominent central location in Grantown and bringing it back into use would be beneficial for the town centre.</p>	<p>The re-development of the Strathspey Hotel should be supported to bring it back into use.</p> <p>The current Local Development Plan (2015) supports the conversion of traditional and vernacular buildings where it maintains the style and character of the original building's form, scale and materials. It must contribute positively to the context and setting of the area.</p> <p>A planning application has recently been approved to convert the hotel into residential units (August 2015).</p> <div data-bbox="1301 858 1805 1310"> <p>Action for Planning: 4</p> <p>The redevelopment of the Strathspey Hotel will be included in the Local Development Plan's Action Programme (2015, reviewed annually) to monitor and support the delivery of its conversion.</p> </div>	<p>The Highland Council and property's owner/developer</p>

Issue Raised	What stakeholders said	Suggested and other possible Action	Who's involved
<p data-bbox="192 272 725 304">Empty site behind Strathspey Hotel</p> 	<p data-bbox="808 325 1267 453">The building site behind the Strathspey Hotel has been empty for years and is not attractive. The site needs to be utilised.</p>	<p data-bbox="1299 325 1816 389">The site should be utilised to make it more attractive.</p> <p data-bbox="1299 405 1827 612">The current Local Development Plan (2015) supports the development of housing in existing settlements where it reinforces and enhances the character of the settlement, maximising opportunities for infill and use of derelict or underused land amongst others.</p> <p data-bbox="1299 628 1827 732">Planning permission has recently been approved for residential development on the site (July 2015).</p> <div data-bbox="1299 780 1805 1235" style="border: 2px solid purple; padding: 10px; margin-top: 20px;"> <p data-bbox="1323 804 1648 844">Action for Planning: 5</p> <p data-bbox="1323 876 1760 1171">The redevelopment of the site behind the Strathspey Hotel will be included in the Local Development Plan's Action Programme (2015, reviewed annually) to monitor and support the delivery of its development.</p> </div>	<p data-bbox="1861 325 2074 461">The Highland Council and property's owner/developer</p>



Issue Raised	What stakeholders said	Suggested and other possible Action	Who's involved
Signage			
	<p>Bigger and clearer signage is needed for the car parks, Tourist Information and Caravan Park.</p> <p>Street signage should have more conformity – they are all different.</p>	<p>Design Guidance for Directional Path Signs in the Cairngorms National Park has been prepared by the CNPA to promote the consistent use of path signs in the National Park – including those in the town centre which should be promoted.</p> <p>A project to create consistent threshold welcome signs for Grantown was previously undertaken. However, this was not progressed beyond a couple of signs and there is potential for further work on this with signs still in need of replacement.</p> <p>A sign rationalisation project involving the local authority or a local initiative could encourage the use of consistent signs.</p>	<p>The Highland Council, CNPA and local community</p>
Roundabouts			
	<p>The roundabouts could do with a ‘facelift’, to provide more attractive entrances to the town.</p>	<p>There is currently a project in place exploring the opportunity to install art or sculptures on the roundabouts to provide a more attractive entrance to Grantown.</p> <p>This links with the current Scenic Routes Initiative involving the installation of sculptures along scenic tourist routes. A scenic route is identified along the A939 and A93 from Blairgowrie to Grantown-on-Spey along which three installations are currently proposed and is being supported by CNPA.</p>	<p>Grantown Initiative and CNPA</p>

Theme: Supporting and enhancing tourism

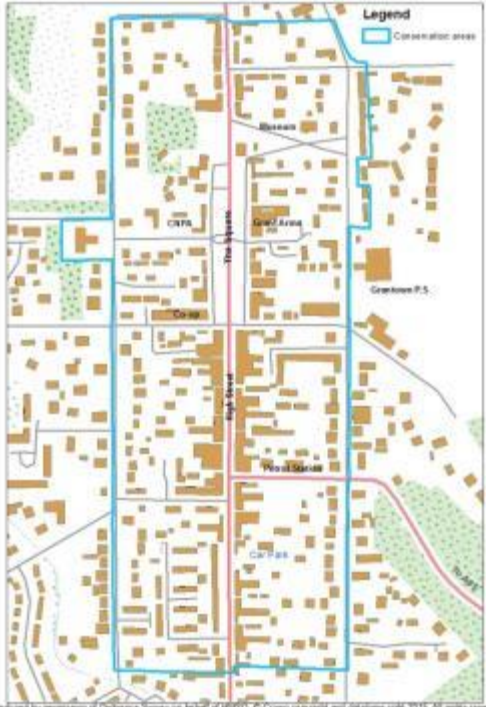
Issue Raised	What stakeholders said	Suggested and other possible Action	Who's involved?
Strathspey Railway Extension			
	The proposed extension of the Strathspey Railway from its current terminus at Broomhill, to Grantown- on-Spey should be supported to bring more tourism and economic activity to the town.	A project for has already been initiated for this. Preliminary work is currently progressing to explore the possibility of re-instating the Strathspey Railway to Grantown. However funding is currently providing a significant challenge.	Strathspey Railway
Marketing and Communication			
	Marketing and communication promoting Grantown as a tourist destination is needed to help attract visitors and improve visitor's experience in the town.	<p>There is a current project underway to create a tourist map for the town, highlighting the main points of interest. The purpose is to keep visitors in the town for longer.</p> <p>A project was previously undertaken to design welcome signs for the town of which elements could be used to market the town on websites, banners, accommodation providers, shops, events and leaflets. This project could be progressed further, using the Grantown branding to help market and promote the town. CNPA would welcome any work to revisit and utilise this.</p> <p>Local businesses and attractions working together to promote each other through awareness raising (hotels, shops, attractions) and direct visitors to local services etc.</p>	Grantown Initiative, Grantown Business Association, local individual businesses with support from the CNPA and others.

Issue Raised	What stakeholders said	Suggested and other possible Action	Who's involved?
Enhance tourism			
	<p>There is no major visitor centre in Grantown and there needs to be more tourist attractions beyond the Museum. More focus on interpretation and activities is needed. There are not enough day trippers.</p>	<p>Suggested actions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure display boards (outside the Co-op) contain up to date tourist information. • World Host Training for shopkeepers. • Restrict parking and have outside tables in the Square. • CNPA providing 'Make it Yours' training about the National Park to groups of local tourism businesses. 	<p>Local businesses, Grantown Initiative, Grantown Business Association, Grantown Museum, CNPA and Highland Council</p>
Support the evening economy			
	<p>The High Street is not vibrant in the evenings and there needs to be more places to eat out at this time. Opening hours should also be extended as some shops shut for half days or at lunchtimes.</p>	<p>Possible actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding evening events in the Square to encourage people to use the town centre in the evenings; and • Using the Square as a focal point for community activities in the evening. 	<p>Business and community groups</p>

Theme: Improving traffic management

Issue Raised	What stakeholders said	Suggested and other possible Action	Who's involved?
Car Parking			
	<p>High Street Parking: The current 1 hour parking restriction is not being enforced. This means that motorists are parking for long periods of time on the High Street, which is blocking access for shop customers and those with mobility problems.</p> <p>In addition, there is a need for more formal parking bays for deliveries.</p>	<p>Suggested actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having a traffic warden to manage parking • marking parking bays for deliveries. <p>The wider issue of parking in the town centre needs to be addressed and work is currently being undertaken by Highland Council in respect of enforcement for parking breaches.</p> <p>In addition, a separate project may need to be initiated to separately consider the options for improving parking.</p>	The Highland Council, the local community.
	<p>Parking in the Square: junction congestion around the Co-op is a significant issue which is chaotic and dangerous.</p>	<p>Suggested actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-painting yellow lines around the Co-op; • using a one-way system to improve the flow of traffic in this area and reduce parking congestion. <p>The wider issue of parking in the town centre needs to be addressed. A separate project may need to be initiated to separately consider the options for improving parking.</p>	

Theme: Protecting and enhancing built heritage

Issue Raised	What Stakeholders said	Suggested and other possible Action	Who's involved?
<p>Conservation Area</p> 	<p>What does being a 'conservation area' mean in practice? There are irregularities within Grantown's Conservation area such as newer houses and motorway style street lights. There should be a management plan in place to ensure areas such as the High Street and Square maintain conformity of appearance. Local stakeholders were keen to ensure shop fronts maintain individuality whilst being consistent and attractive.</p>	<p>Grantown has a large conservation area containing a mix of both more modern and traditional buildings. It previously had an Article 4 direction - which limited certain permitted development rights (now removed) - which was less restrictive than for other conservation areas and resulted in the varying quality of development that can be seen today. However, an important part of Grantown's conservation area is the traditional grid iron street pattern which has been protected.</p> <p>A review of the conservation area was discussed through the workshop as a means of re-evaluating the key areas of architectural significance and ensuring their continued protection whilst removing the designation in the areas where the conservation area is not required.</p> <p>A management plan could help guide development within the Conservation Area which was supported as a means of helping to improve the town centre (without being unnecessarily restrictive for businesses).</p>	<p>The Highland Council with the CNPA.</p>

Theme: A creative, convenient and connected town centre

Issue Raised	Suggested and other possible Action	Who's involved?
Totally Locally		
The 'Totally Locally' initiative is currently being promoted by a group of local businesses encouraging people to shop locally and support town centre businesses. This is considered to be an important initiative that can help stimulate business for local shops and support the vitality of the High Street and should be widely supported.	Continue to promote the initiative in Grantown and encourage more businesses in the town centre to join. It links with the 'Marketing and Communication' priority to get businesses working together to raise awareness of what other businesses so and help direct more people to shop locally and use locally available services.	Totally Locally Grantown
Concert venue		
There is no large venue in the town for concerts and there is a need for a physical stage for town centre events as there is nothing suitable that is currently available.	<p>A suggestion for a permanent bandstand was put forward. This would require considerable resources and a group to lead on its delivery.</p> <p>It was also raised that the YMCA have a stage and the suitability of this could be investigated.</p>	Grantown Initiative, Grantown & Vicinity Community Council, YMCA
Wi-fi and 3G		
There is no public wi-fi or 3G mobile services in Grantown.	<p>Some mobile networks currently have 3G in Grantown and it is expected that its availability through other networks will improve. In term of Wi-fi, 2 new DSLAM (commonly referred to as 'Green') cabinets are due to be installed in Grantown providing superfast broadband to the area by 2016.</p> <p>The provision of public wi-fi – which is not currently available – could provide a significant benefit for Grantown by attracting more people into the town centre and benefiting businesses located here.</p>	BT, local community

7. Potential funding to deliver priorities and other proposals

Collaborative and partnership working will be central to the implementation and delivery of actions to improve the town centre. The availability of funding also plays an important part however many local authorities are experiencing increasing financial pressures. Therefore exploring alternative funding streams is necessary in many cases.

This Pilot Project aims to support Grantown to compete for funding opportunities that arise and can be used as a basis for pursuing funding when it is available. The CNPA in collaboration with other partners aim to provide support for community groups to take these actions forward.

In addition, [Scotland's Towns Partnership](http://www.scotlandstowns.org/) is a collective that promotes towns and places as well as supporting community groups and organisations that have an active interest in them. The Partnership provides regularly updated guidance and information about available funding. More information is available at: <http://www.scotlandstowns.org/>.

The main town focussed opportunities for funding are through the following programmes:

LEADER

LEADER is a Scottish Government run, rural development fund established by the European Commission. The LEADER 2014-2020 Programme is delivered in Scotland by Local Action Groups (LAGs) implementing their Local Development Strategies (LDS), of which the Cairngorms Local Development Strategy has now officially been signed off by Scottish Government. The new programme was launched in September 2015 with an indicative allocation of £2,968,517 for the Cairngorms area.

The programme will allocate funding for projects which support the Cairngorms Local Development Strategy.

Further information and guidance can be found at: www.cairngorms-leader.org/ or contact 01479 870543.

Scotland's Empty Homes Partnership

The Empty Homes Partnership is funded by the Scottish Government and run by Shelter Scotland. The aim of the partnership is to bring empty homes back into use acknowledging that this can achieve positive outcomes in terms of community regeneration and town centre renewal. The partnership provides support for a variety of organisations to bring empty private sector homes back into use.

Shelter also supports the **Empty homes advice service** which provides guidance to empty home owners, neighbours and other

organisations about how to bring properties back into use and empty home grants and loans that are available. Further information can be found at: <http://scotland.shelter.org.uk/>

Foundation Scotland: Foundation Scotland is a charity that aims to strengthen local communities in Scotland through funding community led projects. Funding may be available for suitable community led town centre projects. More information is available at: www.foundationscotland.org.uk/

National Lottery: The Big Lottery Fund provides funding for a wide range of community projects. More information is available at: www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/

8. Support and advice

If you have any queries about this Pilot or would like further guidance in relation to your community project, please get in touch:

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CAIRNGORMS
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

ÙGHDARRAS PÀIRC NÀISEANTA A'
MHONAIDH RUAIDH



Other Useful links

You can find useful information and advice to help with your town centre project from:

- Scotland's Towns Partnership www.scotlandstowns.org/
- The Town Centre Toolkit
www.scotlandstowns.org/town_centre_toolkit
- Scottish Business Gateway www.bgateway.com/

Need planning permission?

If your project or proposal involves development and will require planning permission, you can obtain pre-application advice from your local Council:

Aberdeenshire: www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/

Angus: www.angus.gov.uk/

Highland: www.highland.gov.uk/

Moray: www.moray.gov.uk/

Perth & Kinross: www.pkc.gov.uk/

In addition, the CNPA has produced a set of Advice Notes about the Planning system and to help provide guidance. You can view them here: www.cairngorms.co.uk/authority/publication/341/

APPENDIX I: THE WORKSHOP

A workshop was held on 28 July 2015 at the Grant Arms Hotel in Grantown-on-Spey to find out what local stakeholders felt about the town centre and where improvements need to be made.

There were 32 attendees, including representatives from Grantown Initiative, Grantown & Vicinity Community Council, Grantown Business Association, YMCA, Grantown Museum and local High Street businesses as well as the Highland Council and Cairngorms National Park Authority. The workshop was independently facilitated by Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey.

The workshop was divided into four broad parts:

- What is good about Grantown
- What is not good about Grantown
- What stakeholders want Grantown to be
- What are the Priorities for Action

The workshop recreated the town centre using photographs laid out along the tables (see right) and attendees were asked to use post-it's to say what things they liked (green), didn't like (pink) and where. This was followed by discussions about how improvements could be made.

The next session involved attendees coming up with aspirational words to express what they wanted Grantown's town centre to be. This aimed to create a collective vision.

Finally the stakeholders were asked what they felt the key priorities for action should be. Whilst this exercise sought to identify a focused set of actions, ultimately it's not possible to prioritise

project or actions as they can only be pursued where there is support. Prioritising actions would not affect or speed up delivery. Therefore these have been incorporated into the 'Issues and Actions' section of this Project.



Grantown Town Centre Workshop Notes

Tuesday 28 July 2015

Good things about Grantown Town Centre

- Parking is free - there are 3 car parks
- I like the fact there is no traffic warden
- New quality businesses in the town - great to see one at bottom end of town, confirming location not always important
- Not too many empty shops
- YMCA - great potential - beautiful building
- Wide streets (2)
- Nice stonework
- Quality shops of interest to tourists - colourful and vibrant (2)
- People - always smiley faces
- Centre supported by ring of peripheral Victorian villas
- Each building has an interesting history
- Attractive green space (2)
- Business services still here (accountants, banks, post office etc) - always important as a market centre. Also chemist (2)
- Good hardware store is invaluable
- Quality butchers shop (2)
- Wide selection of good shopping opportunities - specialist shops (5)
- Decent run of good, well-kept shop fronts
- Very traditional looking town with good architecture(5)
- Scottish independent florist of the year - does anyone know this? Fab achievement

- Scottish feel to high street
- Attractive period buildings
- Good wheelchair access
- Clean streets (3)
- Coop and some other businesses support voluntary organisations through raffles etc
- The Square - lovely open space with attractive buildings, floral displays (7)
- Square great for events
- Traditional Highland hotels
- Regality Cross
- Live events eg Farmers Market, Hogmanay, Motormania, Thunder in the Glen, Figgat Fair
- Flat area - no hills
- Ben Mhor re-opening
- Well documented, planned town

Things that let Grantown down for residents and visitors

Appearance

- Ugly building site behind Strathspey Hotel (for years)
- Still too many boarded up properties - what's happening with Strathspey Hotel (3)
- Some shop fronts scruffy
- Some shop displays do not relate to contents
- Leaking gutters above high street (2)
- Need to enforce upkeep of empty buildings - some are letting high street down (4)
- Empty commercial/residential units - in High Street and The Square. Could be utilised

- Empty shop fronts - could be used as public notice boards
- Upstairs properties need some TLC - some windows are in bad condition with things stored against windows - creates tatty impression

Tourism

- No railway station - bring the train back
- Need improved eating places especially in the evenings - need to be open at teatime
- Later closing times / Shops shutting half day Thursday and at lunchtimes?
- No major visitor centre - more interpretation and focus on environmental activities needed
- Not enough day trippers
- Capacity for tables outside by restricting road area eg No 7 Bistro
- Display boards outside Co-op need to be replaced and contain up to date tourist info
- High Street not vibrant in the evening
- More tourist attractions required other than just museum
- World Host training for shopkeepers

Traffic Management

- Parking law (1 hour parking) needs to be enforced. Need traffic management - warden (2)
- Shop owners should park away from high street to allow for customer/disabled parking (2)
- Prevent 'boy racers' cruising in square and high street (2)
- Traffic light confusion on Strathspey Hotel corner for drivers turning left from garage direction (2)
- Need bigger/clearer signage for car parks
- Parking bays designated for deliveries / loading - some shop owners would pay. Needs to be more clearly marked

- Chaotic and dangerous parking needs to be sorted out. Cars parked everywhere
- Junction congestion at the Coop area - yellow lines need repainting, maybe one way system?
- Need 'No Cycling' signs for pavements

Planning

- Conservation Area: Is there a management plan - does it need updating?
- Lamp-post styles not in keeping with conservation area
- Street signage should have more conformity - be in keeping (less brash)
- Signage - better signage to TI point and Caravan Park
- Roundabouts - both could do with a facelift
- Enforcement of planning conditions and regulations

Amenity

- Snow clearance of roads and pavements needs to be managed better & ICICLES on gutters are dangerous
- No large venue in the town for concerts etc
- No public Wi-Fi, no 3G mobile (2)
- Not enough public seating/benches (2)
- Not enough public toilets - not open all the time (seasonal)
- Co-op monopoly - need alternative
- Poor transport connections

Where can we look for improvements

Grantown's USP (Unique Selling Point)

- The Square
- Jewel of the Highlands
- Collection of unique special attributes: trade, tourism, sport, heritage, food, music and environment, literature (G250 themes)

• Destination	• Traditional	• Central hub
• Vibrant, busy, lively	• Wildlife Capital	• Tourist activity
• Clean	• Town for all seasons	• Real community
• Historic	• Friendly / welcoming	• Mixed demographic
• Independent businesses	• Interesting	• Accessible
• Successful	• Unique	• United
• Festival Town	• Memorable	• Attractive

Current Projects

Grantown & Vicinity Community Council (GVCC), Grantown Initiative (GI), Grantown Business Association (GBA), Grantown Museum (GM), Strathspey Railway (SR), Grantown Society (GS), YMCA

- Totally Locally (GBA)
- Community Storage Facility (GI)
- Continuing to stage local events eg Hogmanay, Motormania (GVCC)
- Roundabout Sculpture/Art (GI)
- Cemetery Wall (GI)
- Museum enhancement (GM)
- Town map (GI)
- Mossie play park (GI)
- Rails to Grantown (SR)
- Community website (GI)
- G250 + legacy (GS)
- Cooperative Community Forum ?
- Community Centre (YMCA)
- (Petanque Court)

Priorities (Top 5)

- **Totally Locally**
- **Car parking**
- **Rails to Grantown**
- **Marketing & Communication**
- **Conservation Area review - Management Plan**
- Widen the pavements down the High Street
- Physical stage for events - moveable, undercover (YMCA)
- Shop opening hours & Impact of e-Commerce (online shopping)

Other issues raised but not included within this Pilot Project

Issue or 'Priority'	Possible Action or Action Required	Who's involved?
Winter street maintenance		
Snow clearance of roads and pavements needs to be managed more appropriately and icicles on gutters are dangerous.	Road clearing is a public service issue which is the responsibility of the Highland Council. Further action in respect of this issue must be pursued with the Council. In addition, icicles on gutters are the responsibility of the property owner or occupier.	The Highland Council and individual property owners.
Grocery shops		
There is currently a lack of variety of grocery shops – the Co-op has the monopoly.	It is not possible to specify the type of shops that are required in the town centre – market conditions and demand will be the key determining factors and it is not possible to directly influence this.	
Boy racers		
'Boy racers' should be stopped from driving around the town centre in the evenings.	This is not a matter that can be addressed through this Pilot Project.	
Shop contents		
Shop displays do not relate to contents (empty shop premises being used for community advertising).	This is being done to improve the visual appearance of the High Street however it is not a matter that can be addressed through this Pilot Project.	
'No cycle' signs		
'No cycle' signs are needed for the pavements.	If cycling on pavements is considered to be an issue, signs may be erected. However reference should be made to the issue of signage under the 'Creating an attractive town centre' theme.	
Public toilets		
There are not enough public toilets open all the time.	There are currently 2 public toilets in Grantown, one of which is open 24 hours (free) and the other during daytime hours (paid for). Opportunities to expand opening hours will be for the consideration of the Highland Council.	The Highland Council

APPENDIX 2 – POLICY CONTEXT

The Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017 (NPPP) is the overarching strategic management plan for the Cairngorms National Park. The NPPP sets out the vision and priorities for the National Park and importantly for planning – provides the strategic context for the Local Development Plan.

Under the direction of the NPPP, the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015 (LDP) contains issue specific policies directing how development should be delivered in different circumstances.

Whilst all LDP policies are relevant, the following are of particular importance for guiding proposals within the town centre:

Policy 2: Supporting Economic Growth

The LDP plays an important part in addressing the economic, social and environmental issues facing towns and it acknowledges that action needs to go beyond the allocation of sites. Policy 2 seeks to support existing businesses by creating a flexible framework to enable economic developments to thrive and prosper.

As part of this, Policy 2 sets out a sequential approach for retail development to guide retail proposals to town and village centres in the first instance with the aim of supporting town centre vitality and viability. Other locations will be considered where appropriate; however developments should ensure there is no detrimental impact on the town centre.

Proposals for tourism, leisure and other economic developments will be supported where it is demonstrated that they meet the criteria in the policy.

Policy 3: Sustainable Design

Policy 3 promotes the highest design standards for all developments to contribute to a sense of place and ensure appropriate siting and design and materials as well as minimise the impact of development on the environment and accessibility.

Ensuring appropriate design in the town centre is vital for maintaining local character and a sense of place. New development proposals should be sympathetic to their surroundings and seek to continue to enhance and reflect local identity.

Policy 9: Cultural Heritage

Policy 9 aims to conserve and enhance the cultural heritage of the National Park by ensuring development positively contributes to the protection and enhancement of these assets. The Policy outlines that the layout, design, materials, scale, siting and use of development must be appropriate to the character and appearance of any Nationally Designated Assets and its surroundings (including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, inventory gardens, landscapes and battlefields).

Other relevant policies include the [Cairngorms Economic Strategy](#).

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