

Dumfries and Galloway Council

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2

Palnackie Village Design Statement

Implementing the Management Strategy for the East
Stewartry National Scenic Area

Planning Guidance - November 2019



Introduction



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Palnackie is located in the East Stewartry Coast National Scenic Area (NSA), an area of outstanding coastal character. The village has evolved in a series of small bursts of development over a period of two hundred years and its appearance reflects this. The beginnings of Palnackie were related to its relationship with water power and sea going trade but the village has continued to grow creating an important, historic and visually significant contribution to the landscape of this part of Galloway.

Although the rate of change is unlikely to increase radically in the foreseeable future, development will occur and this is critical to the future sustainability of the settlement. It is important that any change is managed sensitively and carefully in order that it continues to make a positive contribution to this nationally outstanding landscape.

Well considered design should occur everywhere but it is particularly important in an area where the

landscape is valued. The quality of design can be difficult to define but in reality good development in a village like Palnackie involves that extra bit of time and thought being spent on the appearance and location of new buildings and alterations to existing ones to ensure that they are tailored to fit the setting and help retain the existing individuality of the place.

This Village Design Statement for Palnackie has been produced in cooperation with the local community and has included working with the children of Palnackie School and their teachers. It is a document produced by the people of the village through meetings, workshops and visits and is intended as a working guide for use by all who are considering implementing change in the village. The community believes all new development should follow in the traditions of the village, reflecting the characteristics that make Palnackie unique.

The Village Design Statement describes the valued qualities and

characteristics of the settlement and provides guidance that could be used to help ensure new buildings respect local character. It is intended to help people understand and manage the impact that any new buildings will have on the village and the surrounding landscape. This is done by considering the scale, layout and materials associated with new developments, how they relate to adjacent buildings and how they fit against the landscape to ensure that they make a positive contribution to Palnackie as a settlement and its surrounding countryside.

To prosper Palnackie will continue to change and expand but it is important to understand the part the village plays in the scenic value of the area. Businesses need to expand, affordable housing is required for young families and people may want to extend and alter their homes. Mistakes have been made in the past and these can be avoided in the future with some careful thought and appropriate guidance.

Introduction



Who is it for?

All those who might have an influence upon planned change in the village. It should also act as a guide for those intending to undertake any operations that might affect the character of the village. It provides guidance that could be used to help and advise those affected by new developments. A Village Design Statement is for owners, occupiers, developers, builders, architects, local authority officials and the wider community.

How does it work?

The Village Design Statement should be used as a supporting document to the Local Development Plan 2 and provide a basis for the work of the Community Council. The Village

Design Statement will be a reference document for the Community Council, the local planning authority and others to use when commenting on planning applications.

The Village Design Statement respects the principles contained in the Local Development Plan 2 for the area and goes into a greater level of detail and description to highlight the special features which contribute to making Palnackie special. It also considers styles of development which will fit well in the village and which should be promoted in the future. It is expected that the Village Design Statement will be regularly reviewed so as to address changing trends.

Why do we need a Village Design Statement?

Statutory controls such as the Planning Acts exist to govern new developments and of course these apply to the village, including policies with particular control over individual properties which are Listed for their historic and architectural merit. There are 14 Listed buildings including the B listed 2-4 Port Road. In some settlements Conservation Area designation further controls development but at present Palnackie does not have this status. The Village Design Statement will help to augment existing controls and guidance to ensure that the unique features that contribute to the character of the village are respected, while also supporting good modern and innovative design and construction.

Village Context

Geography

The small village of Palnackie lies on rising ground in a flat bottomed river valley where a burn meets the tidal River Urr, four miles North of its mouth into the Solway Estuary. It is three miles down stream of Dalbeattie and about six miles from Castle Douglas the town, for which it formed the principal harbour. Contained by the lower wooded slopes the river is a dominant feature particularly at low tide when the mud in a deep cut channel is revealed snaking across the farmland. The village and quayside lie entirely on the West bank of the meandering river while the East bank remains as pasture.



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On the other side of the burn was the Orchardton Estate which was owned by the Maxwell family. They invested heavily in Ayr Bank and when it failed they lost Orchardton. In 1772 it was held by the Bank of Scotland until they found a buyer, James Douglas, six years later. From humble beginnings in Galloway the three Douglas brothers had made a fortune in the West Indies and North America. This was a time when great fortunes were being made abroad and successful traders returned to make their mark. A gentleman's position in society was measured by his lands, farms, transport and manufacturing ventures and schemes to benefit his tenants. Two of the brothers, James and Samuel, returned to buy up estates in Galloway.

Village origins

The earliest reference to Palnackie as a place was in 1686 when some land on the Barlochan Estate was being let to George Carsane in Palnackie. This was a time when the landscape would have included many small settlements known as fermtouns. They usually contained a number of families living together in subsistence farming in a largely uncultivated and unenclosed countryside where rents to landlords were paid in kind with labour or produce.

It is unlikely that there are any remains of Palnackie the fermtoun but tradition has it that the buildings in the village centre known as 'The Cott's' on Glen Road are the earliest in the village and perhaps include remnants of the original fermtoun.

Barlochan House, immediately North of the present village, appears on a map of 1644 which is based on a survey undertaken by Pont in the late 1500s and we know a little about the people who lived there. John Acannan married Grizzell McMorane and acquired Barlochan in 1598 at the death of his father-in-law Thomas McMorane. In 1796 it passed from the [A]Cannan family to Alexander Young who sold it four years later to Robert McKnight.

The boundary of the Barlochan Estate was the burn running down from a lochan to the River Urr and the original course can still easily be seen in the village centre and remains largely undeveloped. At some time the burn was redirected as a lade to provide power for Barlochan Mill which was in existence by 1740. Unfortunately there is no evidence of the mill on General Roy's map of the 1750s perhaps because the surveyor considered it an unimportant feature.

An early improvement by James Douglas was the gift of land for the school for the tenants. Built in 1803 it became known as the lower school, not because it was inferior to the original parish school based at Buittle Church but because it was at the lower end of the long thin Parish. It may seem strange to us now but the school was built before the village in the hope that children were more likely to attend if there wasn't a long walk involved from the many fermtouns in the surrounding countryside.



John Ainslie's 1745-1828 map of the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright © National Library of Scotland

Village Context

Settlement development

The catalyst for the development of Palnackie appears to be a joint venture by Robert McKnight and James Douglas. McKnight is believed to have been a merchant and ship owner who would be keen to develop trade on his doorstep and Douglas no doubt had a keen interest in improving a port which would serve the rapidly growing town of Castle Douglas developed by his brother Samuel.

Of course the village didn't grow overnight. By 1808 there were seven houses and 29 people in Palnackie and there seems to have been a particular phase of expansion in the 1830's. Newspapers of that time reported shipping intelligence for Barlochan port with imports of lime, coal and timber and exports of cereals, charcoal and timber products. At least one ship bringing timber from Canada made an outward journey with emigrants searching for a new life. By 1836 the port was the hub of the small village of 29 houses and 190 people.

Surprisingly the ships used the banks of the river to moor until 1850s when the quay walls were built. The Ordnance Survey object name book of 1851 describes Palnackie as:



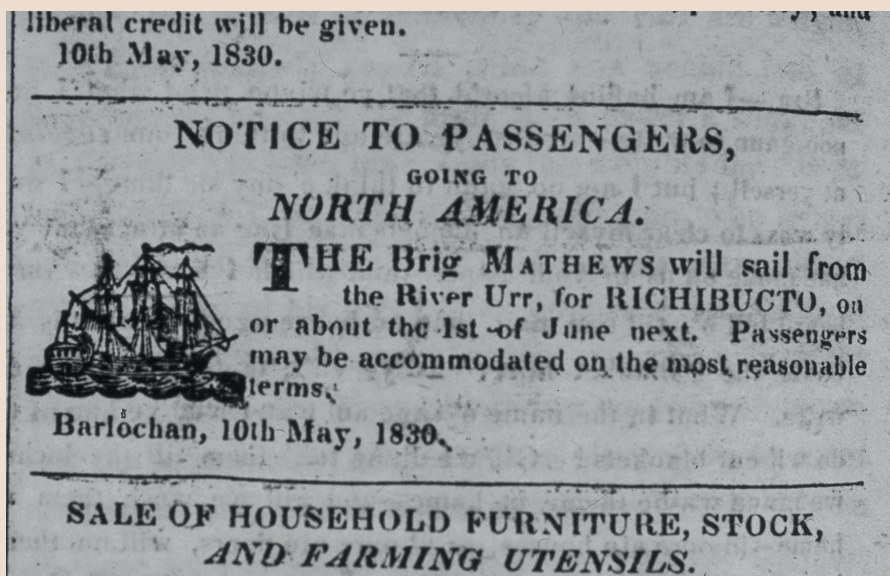
'a small neat built village on the western side of the Urr Water about 4 miles above its influx with the Solway Firth. It has one custom house, a post office, 2 or 3 inns or public houses and some grocer shops. Population about 200 who are chiefly sailors, fishermen and agricultural labourers.'

The development of the railway serving Dalbeattie and Castle Douglas meant a decline in port activity. However warehouses and timber yards continued to develop supplying railway sleepers as well as pit props and bark for tanning. By 1881 there were 68 houses and 255 people in Palnackie.



The next phase of expansion was in the late 1940s and early 1950s when local authority housing was developed on Riverside Drive laid out in typical late 20th century estate fashion.

Today the village which developed as a centre providing an essential link for seagoing trade to and from the surrounding agricultural land and planned villages of Castle Douglas and Dalbeattie, still retains its historic core adjacent to the quayside. Some businesses remain near the quay, but the saw mills and timber yards have gone. A major transport business does remain in the village, now road-based rather than using the sea and the village continues to prosper, having a shop, cafe, school, village hall and further housing planned.



Village Context

Future Prospects

The Local Development Plan 2 identifies two sites suitable for further residential expansion of the village, see map below. One is a sloping field to the east of the village adjacent to the public road (PAL.H1 Glen Road) and the other is a field near the northern entrance to the village (PAL.H2 North of Yettan Terrace).

The quayside remains the hub of economic activity, although visiting ships are a rare occurrence. Transport by road haulage is still a core business within the village.

There are possibilities for increased tourism activity related to the quayside.



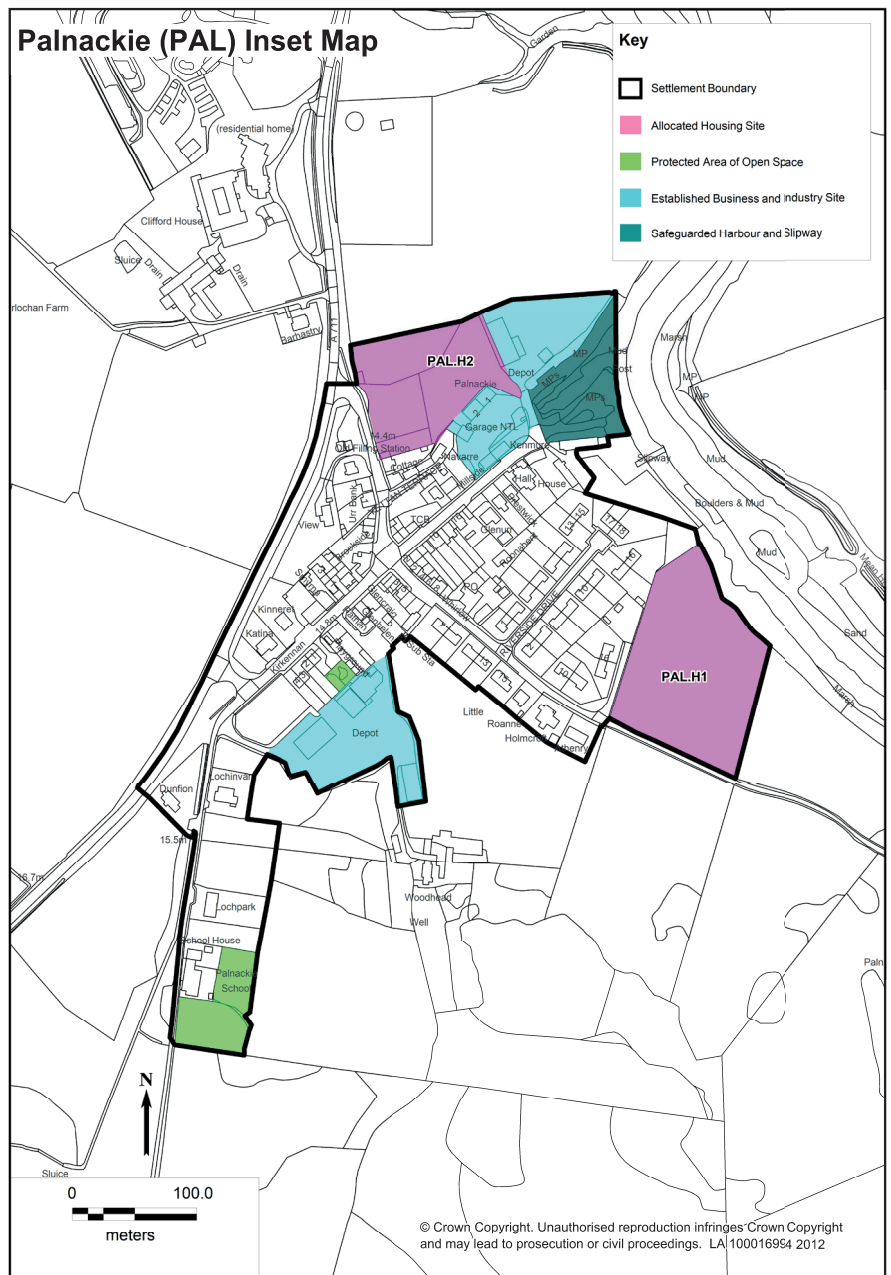
Model of the oldest house



Model of 1940's house



Model of newest house



Village Character

Palnackie is a planned village where the greatest growth occurred in the 1800s. A number of periods of expansion have resulted in different styles of building. By reading the built fabric of the village it is possible to understand the phased growth of Palnackie, which in turn reflects the aspirations of landowners, trends in building styles and changes in construction methods.

The following descriptions define the special characteristics of Palnackie.

The older buildings

The historic core is largely defined by the buildings which contribute to the special character and sense of place.

The older buildings in the village, dating from the early part of the 19th Century, consist largely of terraced two storey residences and later single storey residences of traditional construction and materials. Many are built right up to the pavement with large private gardens to the rear while others relate less to the road layout and more to the natural and manmade watercourses which are now largely hidden.

The oldest two storey terraces on Port Road and Glen Road define both "The Cross" and "The Port" and are a particularly important part of the character of the village.

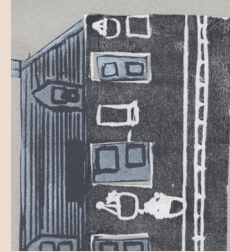


Guidelines

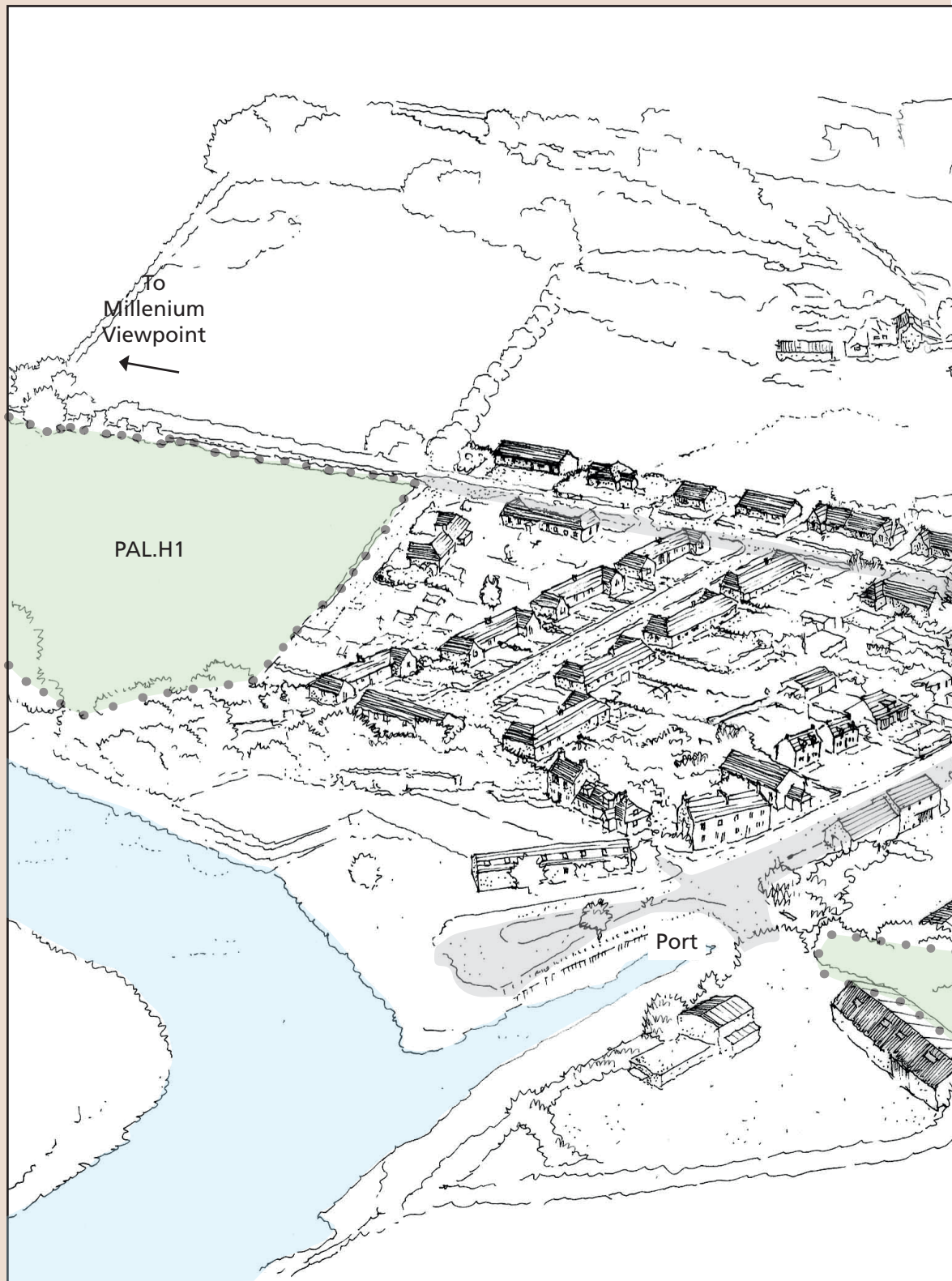
- New development in the village centre should respect and complement the character of the older buildings specifically taking the building line, the scale and the traditional proportions and rhythm created by detailing of the roof and windows. Specific guidance is provided under the Design Elements sections.
- The design of the housing at the village entrance development site (PAL.H2) and gap sites should complement the traditional terraced housing, while the design of the new housing to the east of Riverside Drive (PAL.H1) may provide an opportunity for a development reflecting current high quality and sustainable aspirations, styles and construction methods.

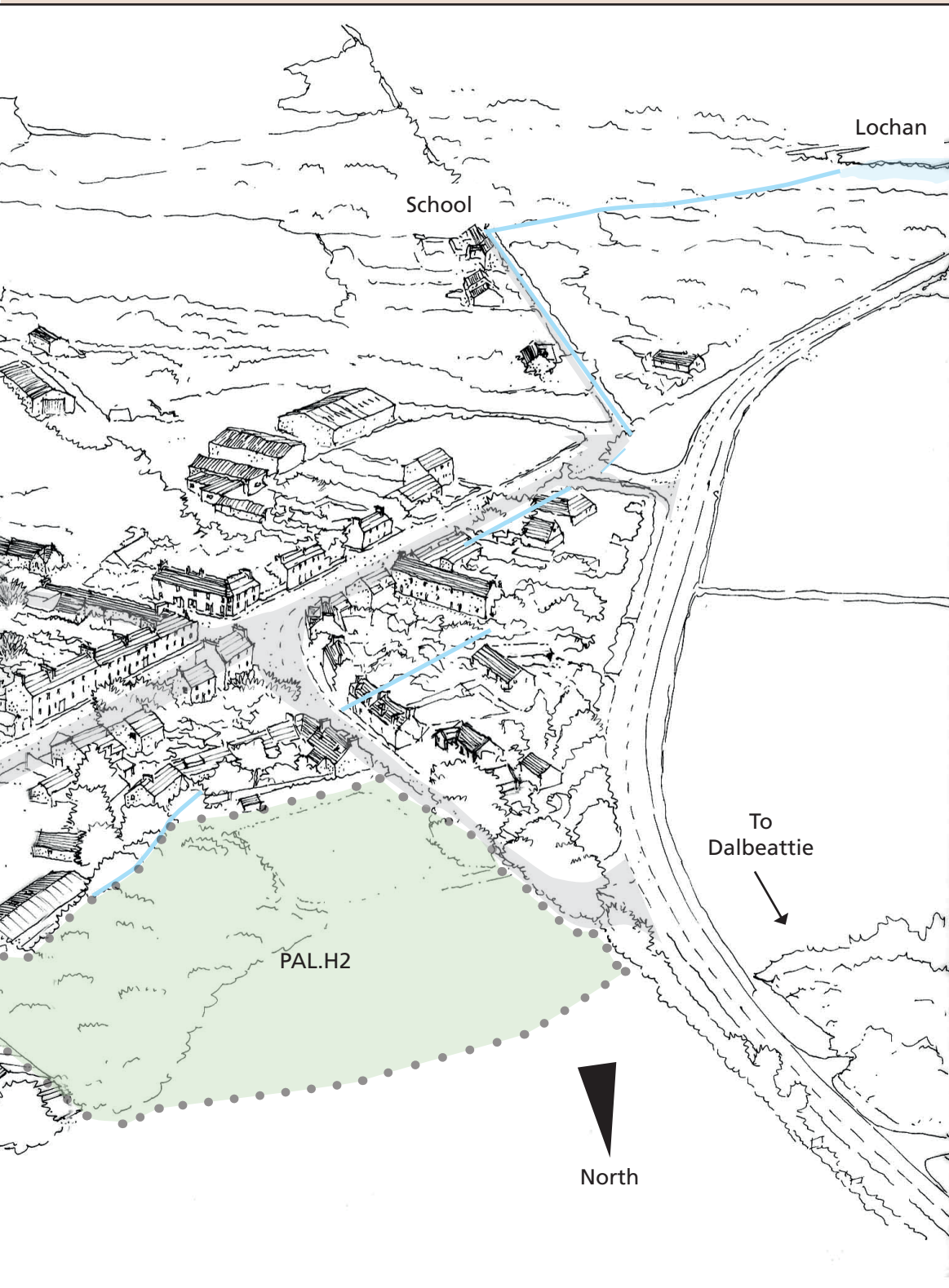
Key guideline

Encourage designs which respect traditional buildings but can be recognised as a new phase of the settlement's growth.



Palnackie Panorama





Village Character

Riverside Drive

The housing in the "The Drive" dating from the middle of the 20th Century is of more modern construction in a style used in many places by the local authority at that time. Using tiled roofs the semi detached buildings are set back from the pavement line with modest gardens to front and rear.



Guidelines

- The Riverside Drive development provides housing which reflects the style of the period, however the layout, scale, construction and materials employed are not regarded as traditional and are not critical to the identity of the village.

Key guideline

The housing in Riverside Drive (PAL. H1) should not specifically influence any new development in the site to the east of Palnackie.

Infill buildings

There are a number of modern houses and the village hall located on infill sites where industrial buildings have been removed or where development did not take place in the past. The houses are single, 1½ and 2 storey, usually detached, often designed in a suburban style. They are often set back from the street with gardens or paving on all sides with enclosed, projecting eaves, upvc windows and white dry dash finishes.

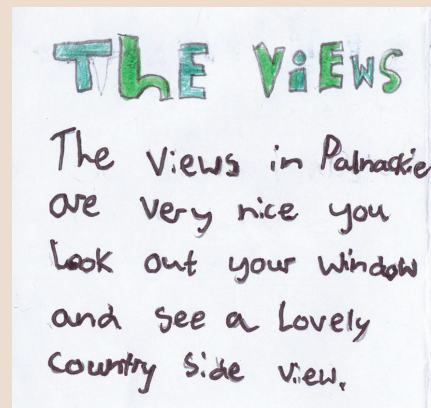


Guidelines

- Although providing 'desirable' housing and valuable community facilities the style of these buildings is not considered to contribute significantly to the character of Palnackie because the design is common to Scotland rather than being locally distinctive.

Key guideline

Encourage designs for gap sites which respect buildings of local character.



Features and view points

Views to the surrounding countryside add to the special character of Palnackie and include the surrounding fields, the meandering River Urr and distant hills.

Features such as the 'Cross', the 'Port', the 'School' and the 'Drive' are key reference points within the village.

The 'Millennium Viewpoint' is a key location providing a meeting place and event space as well as good views over the village from the south.

Guidelines

- New developments should respect local character by taking into account the need to retain views of important visual features from both outwith and within the village, to ensure that the views and the setting are maintained.



Village Character

Entrances, boundaries and lade

The rural character of surrounding countryside and the well defined village entrances are as important to Palnackie as the historic core. From the northern approach the entrance is defined by mature trees on both sides which create a gateway with a canopy over the road.

Stone walls of various heights are the usual form of boundary treatment within the historic core, with drystone dykes, stock fences and hedges being used as boundary treatment for nearby field enclosure. A wide variety of boundary treatments are employed in later phases of development of the village and include ornamental hedges, rendered walls, brick walls, perforated pre-cast concrete blocks and timber fences.



The mill lade is largely hidden in culverts or rear gardens but is an important element which has influenced the growth and layout of the village.

Guidelines

- In new developments it is important to encourage the retention of mature existing trees and boundary features, providing new planting where this will help screen commercial areas and add to the rural feel of the village.
- Positioning of new housing at village entrances should retain the well defined transition from countryside to settlement to reinforce the existing character.
- Stone walls are the most appropriate boundary treatment

in the historic core and the use of high boundary walls will help to retain the enclosed character of the village centre. On the edges of the village drystone dykes and hedges would help to retain a link to the surrounding field boundaries.

- The lade should be maintained and managed to retain this important historic feature.

Key guideline

Encourage new tree planting and traditional boundary features.



Streets and spaces

The main streets are partly enclosed by terrace housing and converge at "The Cross". These streets are wider and more formal than those found in many older settlements. These streets have a rectilinear layout with junctions at right angles and are a distinctive element in many planned villages. Port Street is also wide and leads down to a broad open space by the river where ships are sometimes berthed. The Port has played an important part in the development of Palnackie. In contrast with the wide streets, narrow lanes such as Yettan Terrace and Cannon Place have a more informal character without footways defined by raised kerbs.

Guidelines

- Wide streets are a feature of Palnackie however sweeping layouts and wide bell mouths are not typical of the settlement. It may be appropriate to use shared surfaces and narrow streets for new developments.

Key guideline

Encourage projects to enhance the quayside and develop new uses.

Traffic

The streets within Palnackie are generally felt to be safe places for pedestrians because the by-pass has diverted through traffic away from the village centre. Vehicles entering by the northern entrance are thought to travel too fast towards the centre of the village and there are concerns about the speed of vehicles entering the village past the primary school.

Guidelines

- New developments should try to retain and strengthen arrangements at village entrances which will help to encourage low traffic speeds and have a positive effect by making the streets safer for pedestrians.

Building Design Elements

New development and extensions to existing buildings should respect and complement the character of the older buildings. The cost of house building is largely defined by the type of building, materials used and design details. The desire for affordable housing puts even greater constraints on the quality of housing developed however it is felt that all developments should strive for high quality materials and design. It is hoped cost savings can be achieved by building smaller units rather than by using lower quality design. Specific guidance is provided below.

Scale

Older buildings in the village are of different house type (single / 1½ / 2 storey, terrace and detached) and scale but sit comfortably alongside each other. Their unity stems essentially from consistency in the traditional construction, use of materials and colour which play an important part in defining the character of Palnackie. Modern buildings in the village sometimes fail to achieve the same sense of harmony and this is due in part to inappropriate house type and scale, particularly the use of 1½ storey buildings where the upper floor windows are below or level with the eaves and where they are set back from the street to allow off street parking.



Guidelines

- The type and scale of new housing will depend on their location. At the entrance to the village and at infill sites the scale is critical and should relate to other nearby traditional buildings and contribute to the character of the village. Within the development sites the type and scale of the building is less critical and there may be opportunities to adopt less traditional designs.

Key guideline

- Encourage traditionally proportioned one storey or 1½ storey terraced-style development, particularly at the village entrance site (PAL.H2).
- Consider car parking to rear of new buildings
- Encourage a variety of building forms and rooflines which relate to adjacent buildings.

Materials

The materials used in the construction of a building, influence both the design and consequently the resulting appearance of the building. Granite has been widely used in Palnackie, in the form of split field boulders and locally quarried stone in the early buildings, to dressed granite from the Dalbeattie quarries, with red sandstone dressings from the Dumfries quarries around window and door openings in the later buildings. Slate, timber, cast iron and lead are materials used in traditional construction, and are all seen in the older buildings of Palnackie. These are materials which can and still are used in contemporary design. Brick has been little used in the village and, where it has, is often covered with a dry dash finish. More modern construction techniques, using rendered block, concrete roof tiles as well as UPVC windows and guttering, lead to buildings that are of a character seen throughout Scotland, and are not distinctive to Palnackie.



Guidelines

- It is recognised that it may not be economically practical to build using traditional construction methods and the community think that the materials used should reflect the time when the buildings were constructed as this is more honest than trying to make them look old. However it is considered important to be inspired by the colours, textures and details of older buildings to maintain a consistent appearance throughout the village.

Key guideline

Consider use of locally distinctive materials rather than universal materials.

Building Design Elements

Roofs and chimneys

The roofscape in the village is particularly important because Palnackie is set within a valley and can be viewed from higher ground. The majority of roofs in Palnackie are pitched and include chimney stacks. The roofs to the older houses are slate with stone skewes and have larger stacks with more chimneys. Later houses have a variety of roof materials, lack skewes and may only have a smaller single stack.

Guidelines

- Pitched slate roofs and chimney stacks are an important part of the roofscape of Palnackie. Chimney stacks are felt to balance the design of a house but if not functional should be properly proportioned and detailed so as to look convincing.

Key guideline

- Chimney stacks and skewes help to add variety to the roofscape.
- Avoid low pitched roofs and boxed eaves.



Facades

The frontages of buildings play an important role in the character of a village.

All the older buildings would have had windows which are taller than they are wide and the openings are often framed with raised borders of long blocks of granite or red sandstone. Arches are a feature on two storey terrace buildings and dormers are prominent on some single storey buildings. Small cast iron rooflights are also common.

The proportion and rhythm of openings on older houses is a critical part of how a building looks, with openings largely aligned over the one below in the case of 1½ or 2 storey buildings, leading to the creation of a 'bay' which can be repeated as often as required for the particular elevation, without the loss of a sense of proportion overall. This is often overlooked in the design of new housing. Rainwater down pipes are usually a discrete element of building frontages.

Guidelines

Attention should be paid to the shape and location of openings so that new buildings reflect the appearance of the more traditional buildings in the village. Care should be taken in the positioning of down pipes so that they do not become a dominant feature of the building frontage.

Key guideline

- Respect window and wall ratios in keeping with traditional buildings.
- Carefully detail raised bands around windows.

Colours

The dominant building stones are a light grey granite although red sandstone is often used for dressings. Nearly all the houses which are painted are coloured white or cream and the dressings picked out in a band of contrasting colour, usually black. Walls of newer buildings tend to be finished with a white pebble dash.

Guidelines

- The use of colour should broadly reflect established traditional details and although there is no recommended palette of appropriate colours, strong, vibrant colours from modern ranges of paints should be avoided. There are many variations on whites and pale greys now available that might be considered rather than brilliant white. While stone should remain unpainted, dark cement renders and timber walls, may be considered for painting. Staining is not traditional for finished joinery and painting is preferred.



Special Considerations

These guidelines are intended to influence future change in Palnackie. Guidelines which will make the greatest contribution to making Palnackie unique are repeated below:

- Encourage designs which respect traditional buildings but can be recognised as a new phase in the settlements growth.
- The housing in Riverside Drive should not specifically influence any new development in the site to the east of Palnackie.
- Encourage designs for gap sites which respect buildings of local character.
- Encourage new tree planting and traditional boundary features.
- Encourage projects to enhance the quayside and develop new uses.
- Encourage traditionally proportioned one storey or 1½ storey terraced-style development, particularly at the village entrance site (PAL.H2).
- Consider car parking to rear of new buildings.
- Encourage a variety of building forms and rooflines which relate to adjacent buildings.
- Consider use of locally distinctive materials rather than universal materials.
- Chimney stacks and skewes help to add variety to the roofscape.
- Avoid low pitched roofs and boxed eaves.
- Respect window and wall ratios in keeping with traditional buildings.
- Carefully detail raised bands around windows.



Acknowledgements

Pupils at Palnackie Primary School researched and recorded the unique character of Palnackie during Autumn 2009.

Their record of the village was presented and endorsed at a public exhibition in January 2010 and forms the basis of the Village Design Statement.

A group of residents, working in association with Solway Heritage and supported by Buittle Parish Community Council, then developed the record into a draft design statement through a series of meetings, workshops and visits. The draft document was subject to a six week consultation period in early 2013 as part of the supplementary guidance associated with the proposed Local Development Plan. An open information event was held in the Village Hall in March 2013 to gather comments on the draft design statement.

The Statement is adopted as supplementary guidance to the Local Development Plan 2 and will inform the application of the overarching policies and planning objectives for Palnackie.

The development and production of the Village Design Statement was delivered through the Sulwath Connections Landscape Project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Scottish Natural Heritage and Dumfries and Galloway Council.

The document is illustrated with drawings and images of work produced by pupils from Palnackie Primary School.

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Dumfries
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