



# THE OLD AND NEW TOWNS OF EDINBURGH



**unesco**

Old and New Towns of  
Edinburgh  
Inscribed on the World  
Heritage List in 1995

World  
Heritage  
Site

Management Plan  
—  
2025—2035

# The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh

World Heritage Site

Management Plan

—  
2025—2035

Map of the World Heritage Site  
boundary (©CEC)





• EDINBURGH •  
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL



HISTORIC  
ENVIRONMENT  
SCOTLAND

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The ONTE WHS exhibition at the Tron Kirk in 2019



ADVOCATE'S CLOSE



Advocate's Close looking across the New Town to Fife beyond

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 What is World Heritage and why does it matter?

World Heritage Sites (WHSs) are exceptional places recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as having such importance that they belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located. Each WHS represents a unique, or the most significant or best, example of the world's cultural and/or natural heritage. This is their Outstanding Universal Value, which transcends national boundaries and is of importance for present and future generations.

There are over 1000 World Heritage Sites globally and UNESCO is the organisation responsible for adding to or removing from the **List**. The list is intended to 'ensure as far as possible the identification, protection, conservation and presentation of the world's irreplaceable heritage'.

Each site must demonstrate that it is fulfilling its obligations in respect of UNESCO's requirements in implementing the **World Heritage Convention**. This is clarified in Appendix B.1.



### EXTRACT FROM UNESCO'S VISION FOR PEACE

**To strengthen bonds among all nations,** the preservation and protection of cultural heritage and the equal dignity of all cultures, on all continents, is fundamental.

The World Heritage United Kingdom annual conference 2023



### THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION'S 'FIVE CS':

- Credibility
- Conservation
- Capacity building
- Communication
- Communities

UNESCO aims to promote sustainable development, protect culture and foster peace through its **lists and designations** around the world. UNESCO's vision for peace underlines its very existence, and the role the preservation of cultural heritage plays in this is an invaluable one.

The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to help achieve this by being a "shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future." The seventeen goals highlight priorities such as gender equality, affordable and clean energy, sustainable cities and communities, and climate action.

**Throughout this plan, we will pinpoint which of the SDGs relate to the area in discussion.**



The WHS skyline from Calton Hill clearly showing the topography of the site (© Laura McRitchie)



## THE OLD AND NEW TOWNS OF EDINBURGH

Edinburgh has long been celebrated as a great city: an ancient capital, the medieval Old Town alongside the world-renowned eighteenth century classical New Town, all situated in a spectacular landscape of hills and valleys beside the wide estuary of the Firth of Forth. Its outstanding beauty, history, cultural, social and **economic value** benefit all aspects of modern life, and are deeply valued by its communities, its custodians, businesses and visitors.

It is the recognition of these qualities that led to the city's inscription by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in December 1995.

All World Heritage Sites have an associated Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV), which explains the importance of the Site. The SOUV is the term UNESCO applies to the detailed description of what is unique about the Site. The SOUV for the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh was retrospectively developed and adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2008. The SOUV highlights the way the city dramatically reflects significant changes in European urban planning and is reproduced in Appendix A.2.

## WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh is one of **35 World Heritage Sites** in the United Kingdom – 29 cultural, 5 natural and 1 mixed, in 2024. The six other Scottish Sites are New Lanark, St Kilda, the Heart of Neolithic Orkney, the Frontiers of the Roman Empire (the Antonine Wall), the Forth Bridge and the Flow Country. Other urban centres in the UK with World Heritage Site status are Bath, Greenwich, Durham, and Westminster.

St Kilda



New Lanark



Heart of Neolithic Orkney



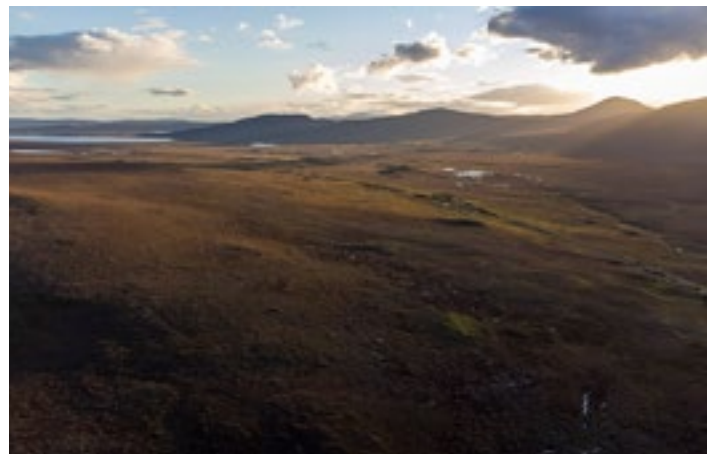
The Antonine Wall (© Rediscovering the Antonine Wall)



The Forth Bridge



The Flow Country (© Sam Rose)



## 1.2 Status of the plan and what it hopes to achieve

The purpose of the World Heritage Site Management Plan is to ensure that Edinburgh's Outstanding Universal Value is proactively conserved and enhanced for current and future generations to enjoy and benefit from. The geographical scope of the plan relates to the area within the designated World Heritage Site boundary. This is clarified in section 3.1 (location).

The Plan is a partnership document. It represents the consensus view of the members of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Partners with extensive input from its many communities and stakeholders. Pre-draft engagement was carried out to establish the key issues that should be addressed in the Plan. A draft Plan was then the subject of extensive public consultation in Spring 2024. The results have guided the completion of this final version of the Plan.

The Management Plan sets out what is significant about the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site, as a basis for understanding its important qualities, to determine the action necessary to protect and manage it.

The Management Plan:

- Includes the shared vision, long-term goals and shorter-term actions to preserve the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site's OUV
- Helps to explain the special qualities and values of the Site
- Advocates existing protective policies
- Influences the day-to-day management issues
- Provides supporting information on managing the opportunities and threats facing the Site
- Provides a framework to monitor the condition of the built environment

The Management Plan's success is dependent upon the achievement of its objectives which, in turn, depends on stakeholders across the Site making a commitment to the Action Plan. The careful coordination of partner organisations is possible through the World Heritage Site Steering Group. Through collective effort it will be possible to use resources to best effect. The remit and expertise of each partner adds a strength to this process that is greater than the sum of its parts.

The WHS Roundel inset in the pavement at the Mound precinct



Members of the Steering Group discussing the management plan



The three previous Management Plans



EWH workshop participants exploring the bronze model of the WHS  
(© Edinburgh World Heritage)



The Management Plan works within the Local Development Plan of the City of Edinburgh, which sets out planning policies to guide development. The Management Plan is a material consideration in the planning process and will continue to inform and respond to other policies and management proposals relating to the WHS area. (see Chapter 1.3).

City Plan 2030 (© City of Edinburgh Council)



Well Court in Dean Village was extensively restored by the residents with the support of EWH



### 1.3 Planning and Policy Framework

Scotland’s National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and Environmental Assessment Regulations require planning authorities to take account of OUV both in their policies and decisions on cases.

Amongst other policies that serve to protect the historic environment such as conservation areas, listed buildings, designed landscapes and the city skyline, the Edinburgh City Plan 2030 includes Policy Env 9 to protect the OUV of the Site. Historic Environment Scotland (HES) is a statutory consultee and engages with

the planning process from the earliest stages through a Planning Protocol.

Where HES objects to a planning application, and the Council is minded to grant consent, Scottish Ministers must be notified for them to determine if they wish to call-in the application for their decision.

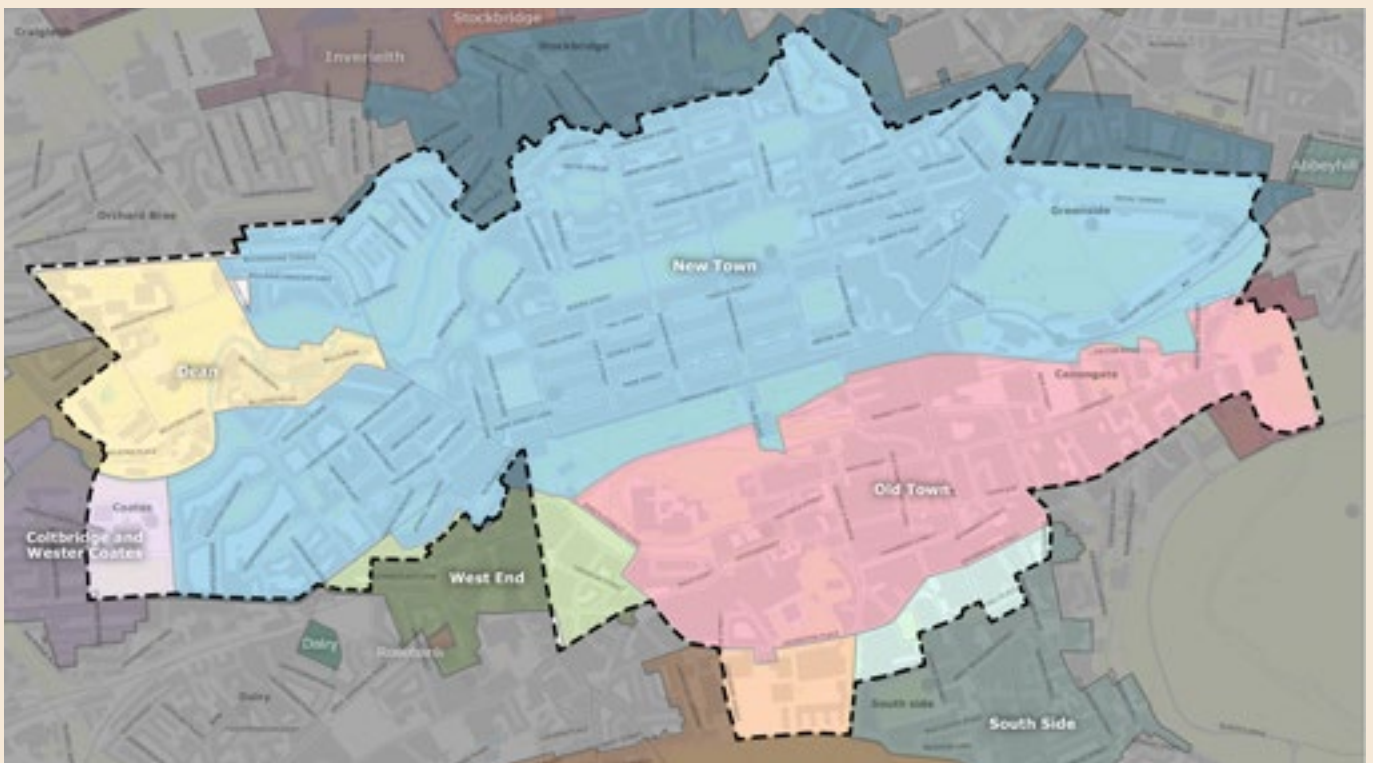
The council further commits to robustly considering heritage impact and positive opportunities across its policies, plans and proposals to ensure that heritage values are conserved or enhanced.



#### CITY PLAN 2030

City Plan 2030 sets out policies and proposals to guide development. Its policies are used to determine planning applications. The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site is protected by City Plan 2030 policy Env 9 –World Heritage Sites:

“Development which would harm the qualities of World Heritage Sites, and which justified the inscription of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh and/or the Forth Bridge as World Heritage Sites or would have a detrimental impact on a Site’s setting, its Outstanding Universal Value, integrity, authenticity or significance will not be permitted”.



Map showing the WHS boundary and the conservation areas within it

## 2050 Edinburgh City Vision:

working towards a city that is fair, pioneering, welcoming and thriving – a city that belongs to all of us, and where we all belong.

### 1.4 Who will deliver the plan

This plan prepared by City of Edinburgh Council, on behalf of the Council, Historic Environment Scotland and Edinburgh World Heritage as the bodies who have formal responsibilities in respect of the active management of the World Heritage Site: the 'Management Partners'.



#### THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

The Council is responsible for providing political leadership and governance for a comprehensive range of services across the city. The City of Edinburgh Council is Edinburgh's manager as a historic city, responsible for the majority of decisions affecting the World Heritage Site. As the Planning Authority it implements the planning system in the city, which is the primary mechanism for managing World Heritage Sites in the UK, as well as the management of public realm, tourism and key aspects of the Climate Emergency response.

It is also responsible for the provision of a range of **public services** that affect day-to-day life within the World Heritage Site, including strengthening and supporting communities, providing jobs and ensuring its residents are well cared for.



#### HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

Historic Environment Scotland is a non-departmental public body. It is the lead public body established to investigate, care for and promote Scotland's historic environment. Its board is appointed by Scottish Ministers.

Historic Environment Scotland offer technical expertise, support and significant funding to the historic environment via in-house experts and various grants schemes, directly employing the highest number of traditional crafts staff in Scotland and actively fostering apprentice development. Historic Environment Scotland is also a statutory consultee in the planning process.



#### EDINBURGH WORLD HERITAGE

Edinburgh World Heritage is the independent charity dedicated to the city's proactive conservation. It provides the grants, advice and support required to enable a rolling programme of essential conservation work. It engages communities with their shared heritage, works to ensure heritage is embedded into the city's response to the climate emergency and acts as the city's independent, expert advisor.

Edinburgh World Heritage is formally charged by the City of Edinburgh Council and Historic Environment Scotland with actively supporting the work of the World Heritage Steering Group and implementation of the Management Plan since 1999.

## STAKEHOLDERS

Communities of all kinds, professionals across sectors, businesses and the tourism sector all play a vital role in the management and care of the World Heritage Site. The management partners engage with business and tourism sector via their own organisations. The Management Plan's governance and delivery will be strengthened by setting up an Oversight Group to allow a more strategic discussion of the issues emerging from the delivery of the Management Plan and Action Plan. The Oversight Group will pursue issues through its members' own organisations.

Community engagement at the Meadows Festival aimed at raising awareness of the WHS



HES Rangers engaging with visitors in Holyrood Park



Walking tour of the Old Town, part of the EWH Photovoice workshop encouraging inclusion in World Heritage (© Edinburgh World Heritage)



**CO-ORDINATION**

A World Heritage Site coordinator post was created in 2009 to bring a focus to World Heritage issues across the partnership. The post ensures effective liaison and coordination of activities between the authors of this document.

The WHS Coordinator attending the World Heritage UK conference



Supporting the Spanish World Heritage Cities Civic Reception at Edinburgh City Chambers



Launching the previous management plan at Edinburgh Castle (© Marc Millar)



**THE STEERING GROUP**

The day-to-day management of the World Heritage Site is overseen by a Steering Group that is made up of members from Historic Environment Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council and Edinburgh World Heritage. There is a communications sub-group of the Steering Group that manages communication of the key messages around the delivery of the Management Plan. This Steering Group must demonstrate that it is fulfilling its obligation in meeting the requirement of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention.

CEC, EWH and HES Steering Group partner representatives and the Coordinator



ONTE Steering Group meeting



### THE OVERSIGHT GROUP & WIDER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Management of the World Heritage Site is the work of many people and goes far beyond the authors of this Plan. Local communities, businesses, institutions, organisations, funders and more all play a critical role in active city conservation.

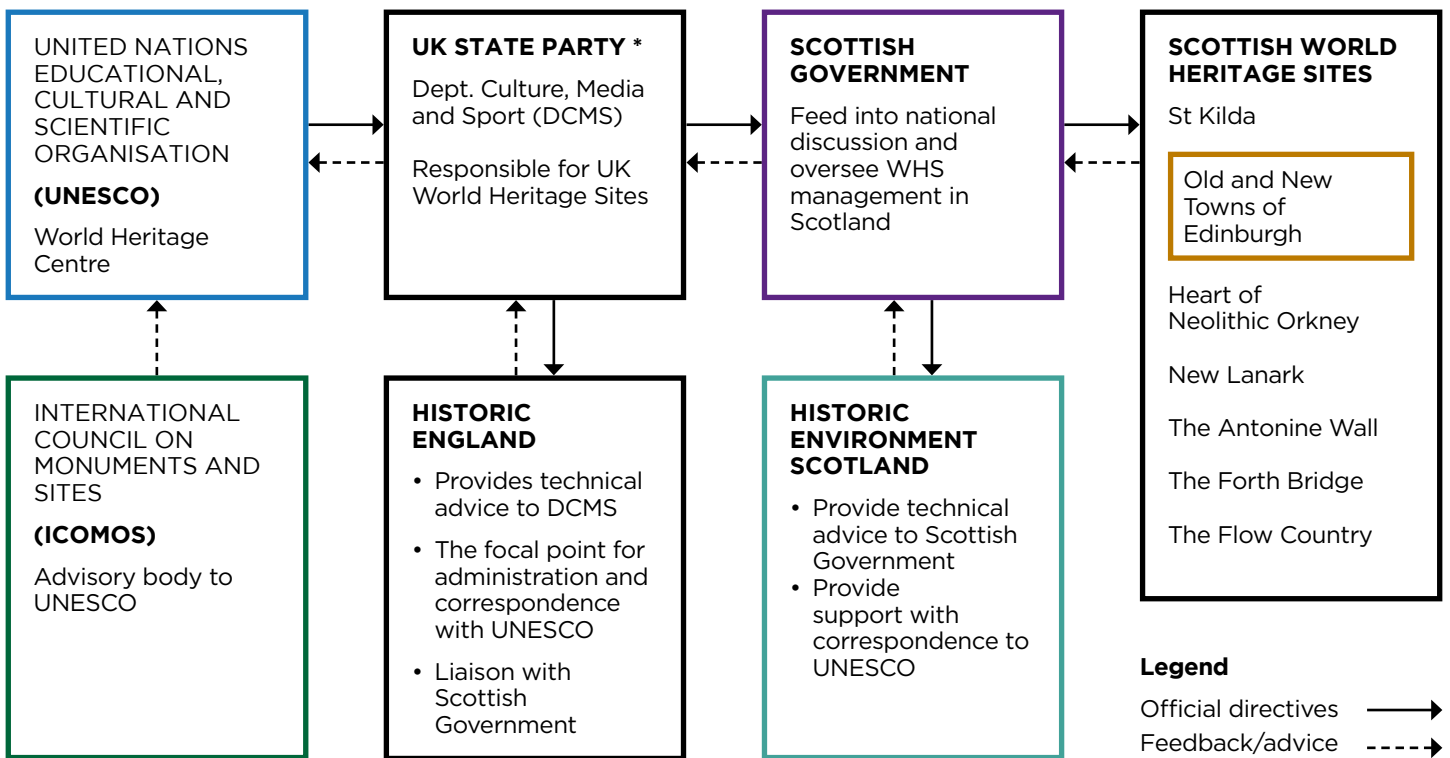
The governance of the Management Plan delivery will be strengthened by setting up an Oversight Group comprised of senior leaders, key stakeholders and community representatives. The group will meet annually to discuss progress against the Action Plan, engage in a strategic discussion of the issues

emerging from delivery and help inform the next Action Plan. The Oversight Group will pursue matters through its members’ own organisations.

To ensure robust transparency and community input, progress against the Action Plan will be published every year ahead of the Oversight Group meeting and made publicly available to enable wider community comment. This will be in addition to existing engagement already carried out by the authors of this Plan.

Further information on governance and roles can be found in Appendix B1.

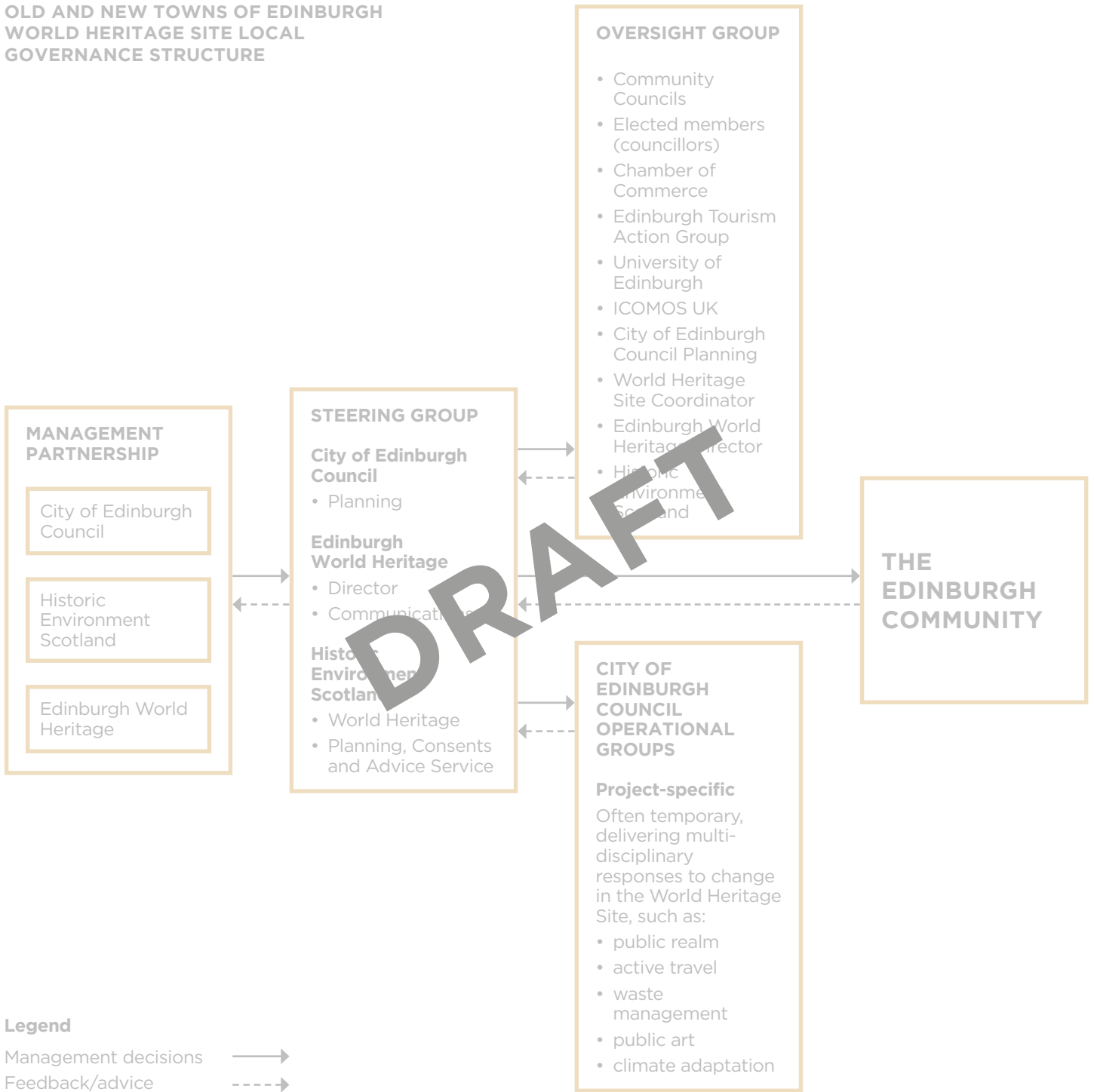
### OLD AND NEW TOWNS OF EDINBURGH WORLD HERITAGE SITE INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



**\*STATE PARTY**  
The UK ratified the World Heritage Convention in 1984. The Convention sets out the duty of the State Party to cooperate with the international community for the protection of world heritage. State Parties agree to help identify, nominate, protect, conserve, and present and transmit the cultural and natural heritage within their territory and other territories as requested. They elect the World Heritage Committee and make policy decisions. Within the UK Government the responsibilities of the State Party are undertaken by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) with the Minister for Heritage ultimately responsible.

**ICOMOS-UK**  
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES UNITED KINGDOM  
UK national committee, provides national advice to ICOMOS

**OLD AND NEW TOWNS OF EDINBURGH  
WORLD HERITAGE SITE LOCAL  
GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**



## 1.5 Preparation and structure of the Plan

This is the fourth Management Plan for the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site and covers a 10-year period. The Steering Group has taken the lead role in shaping the Plan.

**It is divided into 5 chapters covering:**

- **The role of the plan**
- **Its vision and aims**
- **Key facts and figures and why the WHS is special**
- **Key challenges and objectives**
- **Implementation and monitoring**

There is a separate Action Plan that will be updated every two years as part of the monitoring process. Action Plan progress will be reported annually.

This Management Plan relies on information gathered from a pre-draft consultation process from October to December 2022 coupled with a series of pre-draft engagement events, including focus groups held between March to April 2023, that were the source of the actions. The draft Management Plan and Action Plan were published for consultation in spring 2024. This finalised document has been amended and updated based on consultation feedback.

British Sign Language consultation video  
(© City of Edinburgh Council)



Lamp post wraps promoting the Management Plan consultation





Visitors to Arthur's Seat  
looking west across the city

## 2.0 VISION AND AIMS

### 2.1 The Vision

Following extensive community and stakeholder engagement, the vision established in previous management plans remains robust:

*“We share an aspiration for the World Heritage Site to sustain its Outstanding Universal Value by safeguarding and enhancing its exceptional historic environment. This underpins a confident and thriving capital city centre, its communities, and its cultural and economic life”.*

Aerial view of the WHS showing several New Town gardens and the designed landscape designation



As part of a busy city the WHS has activity 24 hours a day



The Usher Hall on Lothian Road is a centre of cultural activity in the WHS (© Neil Hanna)



The public realm supports the economic life of the city with a range of outdoor markets in several of the key areas of the WHS (© Neil Hanna)



Singer/songwriter Be Charlotte in concert in Edinburgh (© Rob McDougall)



The Edinburgh skyline is an important aspect of the OUV



The Mercat Cross in Parliament Square, a space for both civic and visitor activity



The Johnnie Walker Experience on Princes Street, a new use for a vacant department store building



The Edinburgh Pride March 2024, throughout the year the WHS sees a variety of activities including peaceful demonstrations (© Michael Boyd)



View of West Princes Street Gardens a public space in the valley that links the Old and New Towns (© Neil Hanna)



## 2.2 Aims of the Management Plan

The main aims of the Management Plan are to proactively:

- 1 Promote a sustainable approach that integrates conservation with the needs of all communities and visitors to the site

The Guide to Building Maintenance in a Changing Climate created by the WHS management partners



- 2 Build and maintain strong partnerships between local, regional and national organisations to help deliver the actions of the plan

ONTE WHS management partners with the UK Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (© DCMS)



- 3 Interpret and present the history and significance of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh to the highest quality and promote equality of opportunity to access and enjoyment

ONTE map activity at the 2025 World Heritage Day event at Edinburgh Castle (© Neil Hanna)



- 4 Ensure that the Outstanding Universal Value of the Site and its setting is understood, protected and sustained, with particular regard to the Key Themes set out in Chapter 4.0.

The broad high street, Old Town ridge, Princes Street Gardens and the New Town (© Lee Howard)



The ONTE WHS Management Plan links directly with the Council's high level aims to address climate change, eradicate poverty, promote sustainable economic growth and create great places.

The Old Town ridge and the Waverley Valley from above



## 3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

### 3.1 Location

The Old and New Towns World Heritage Site is located in the centre of Edinburgh, which sits on the southern shore of the Firth of Forth. Edinburgh is Scotland’s capital and second most populous city.



Above: Location plan detailing the boundaries of the ONTE and The Forth Bridge World Heritage Sites

Aerial image showing the boundary of the WHS

## 3.2 The World Heritage Property

The World Heritage property encompasses both the Old Town and the New Town together with the ancient mill settlements of Bell's Mill, the village of Dean and part of Stockbridge on the Water of Leith, where it cuts through high ground to the northwest of the area.

It covers the very centre of the city, encompassing many institutions of national significance including museums and galleries, the Court of Session, and much of the city's public administration, along with its office-based activity and its retail core. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was the daily place of work for over 70,000 people and is home to around 23,500 residents (about 5% of the city's total population).

The World Heritage property has retained its historic urban form and character to a remarkable extent. In the New Town the integrity of the street layout is a key defining factor of its character, while in the Old Town, the 'spine and ribs' pattern of the High Street and its closes and wynds maintains the medieval street and its associated land holding pattern. Equally important is the overlaying of the Old Town in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries with wide streets as a result of the City Improvement Acts and commercial ventures. There are many open spaces and graveyards throughout the property.

The urban landscape setting is formed by the ridges and valleys of ancient glacial terrain within the property that created the Old Town ridge and the glacial hollows that form the Grassmarket, Princes Street Gardens and the Waverley Valley. The North and Waverley Bridges and the Mound cross the Waverley Valley and link the Old and New Towns.

European Heritage Heads Forum delegates at Riddle's Court during a walking tour of the WHS



Aerial view of the city with Calton Hill in the foreground



The Museum of Edinburgh in the Canongate (© Neil Hanna)



Lansdowne Crescent and St Mary's Cathedral (© Neil Hanna)



Aerial view of the Dean Valley



View over the city looking South to the Pentland Hills



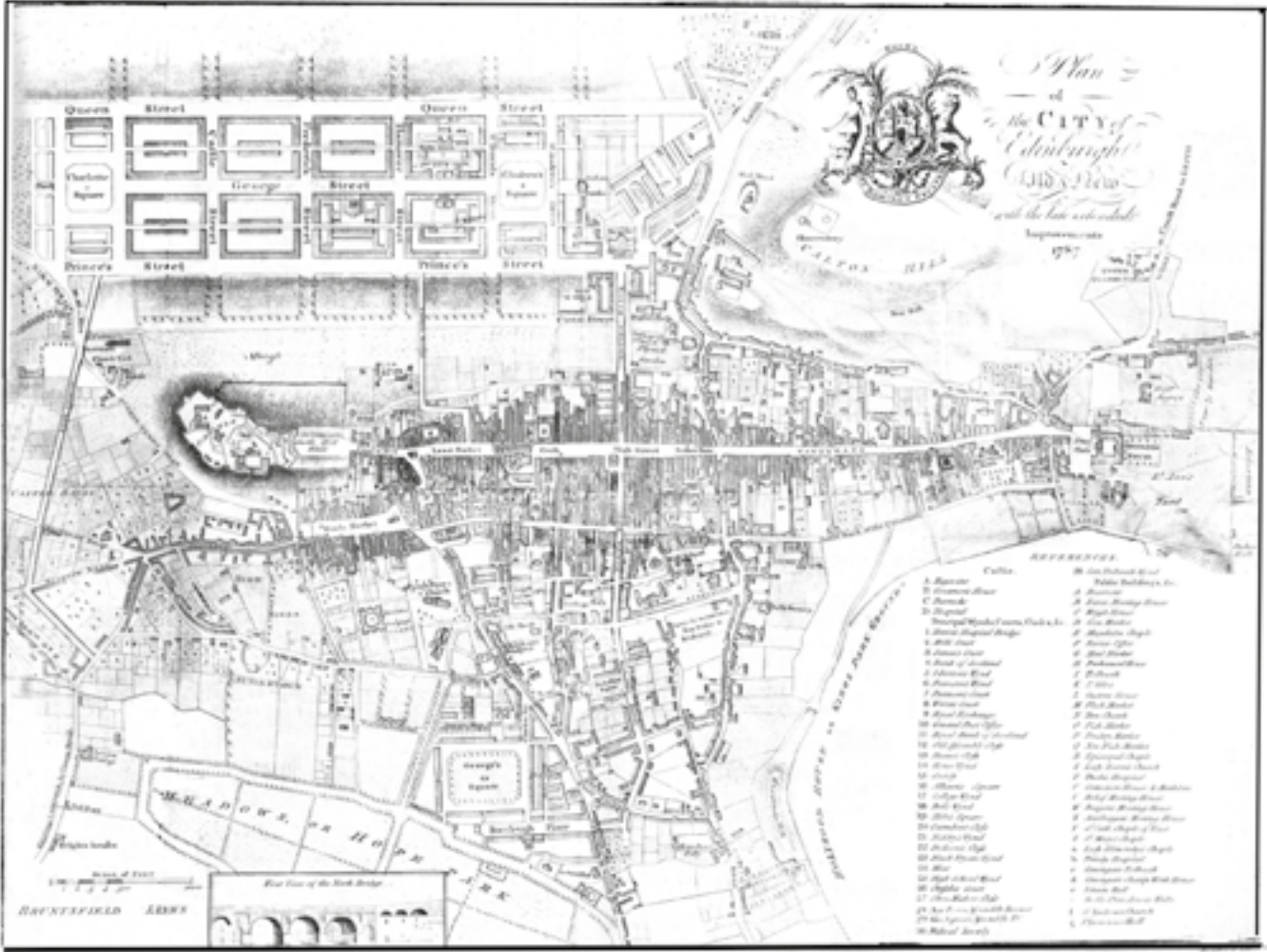
West Register House originally St George's Church, Charlotte Square in the First New Town (© Neil Hanna)




King Charles and Queen Camilla celebrating Edinburgh's 900th anniversary at Edinburgh Castle



The 1821 Kirkwood plan of the Old and New Towns  
 (© NLS. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)




### 3.3 Key facts




UNESCO inscribed the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh as a World Heritage Site in 1995. (© Edinburgh World Heritage)



The inscription recognised the striking contrast and quality in architecture between the medieval Old Town and the Georgian New Town. The medieval Old Town has retained its distinctive pattern of narrow passageways, known as closes and wynds. The New Towns, first designed in 1767, is the largest and best-preserved example of Georgian town planning in the United Kingdom.



Edinburgh is built on an extraordinary landscape of hills and valleys, formed millions of years ago by volcanoes and ice sheets. Together these factors have created a truly distinctive skyline and stunning views which are recognised around the world.



The Site also contains Scheduled Monuments, the best-known being Edinburgh Castle.



The Site has retained its historic urban form and character to a remarkable extent.



The Site contains nearly 4,500 individual buildings, of which over 75% are listed for their special architectural or historic interest. (© Neil Hanna)



The Site ‘represents a remarkable blend of two urban phenomena: the organic medieval growth of the Old Town and the eighteenth and nineteenth century town planning of the New Town’.



In the New Town, the integrity of the street layout is a key defining factor in its character. In the Old Town the ‘spine and ribs’ pattern of the High Street and its closes and wynds maintains the medieval street pattern.



The Old Town was overlaid in the nineteenth century by wide streets as a result of the City Improvement Acts. (© Robin Mair Photography)



There are many open spaces and graveyards throughout the Site. (© Neil Hanna)



The Old Town contains two twelfth century burghs (Edinburgh and Canongate) with two early royal palaces (one within the castle), a medieval abbey, and a wealth of early buildings. (© Neil Hanna)



The New Town contains a high concentration of remarkably intact world-class neo-classical buildings; best known being the Royal High School, Register House and Charlotte Square. (© Neil Hanna)



The wealth and grandeur of Edinburgh in the 18<sup>th</sup> century is inseparable from slavery. Many of its citizens, including those linked with the Scottish Enlightenment had connections, and benefited directly or indirectly from the exploitation of enslaved people. (© Neil Hanna)



The Site contains the dramatic river valley of the Water of Leith. The valley includes the original mill settlements of Bell’s Mill, the village of Dean and part of Stockbridge. (© Neil Hanna)



### IMPACT OF EDINBURGH WORLD HERITAGE

(Source: Edinburgh World Heritage)

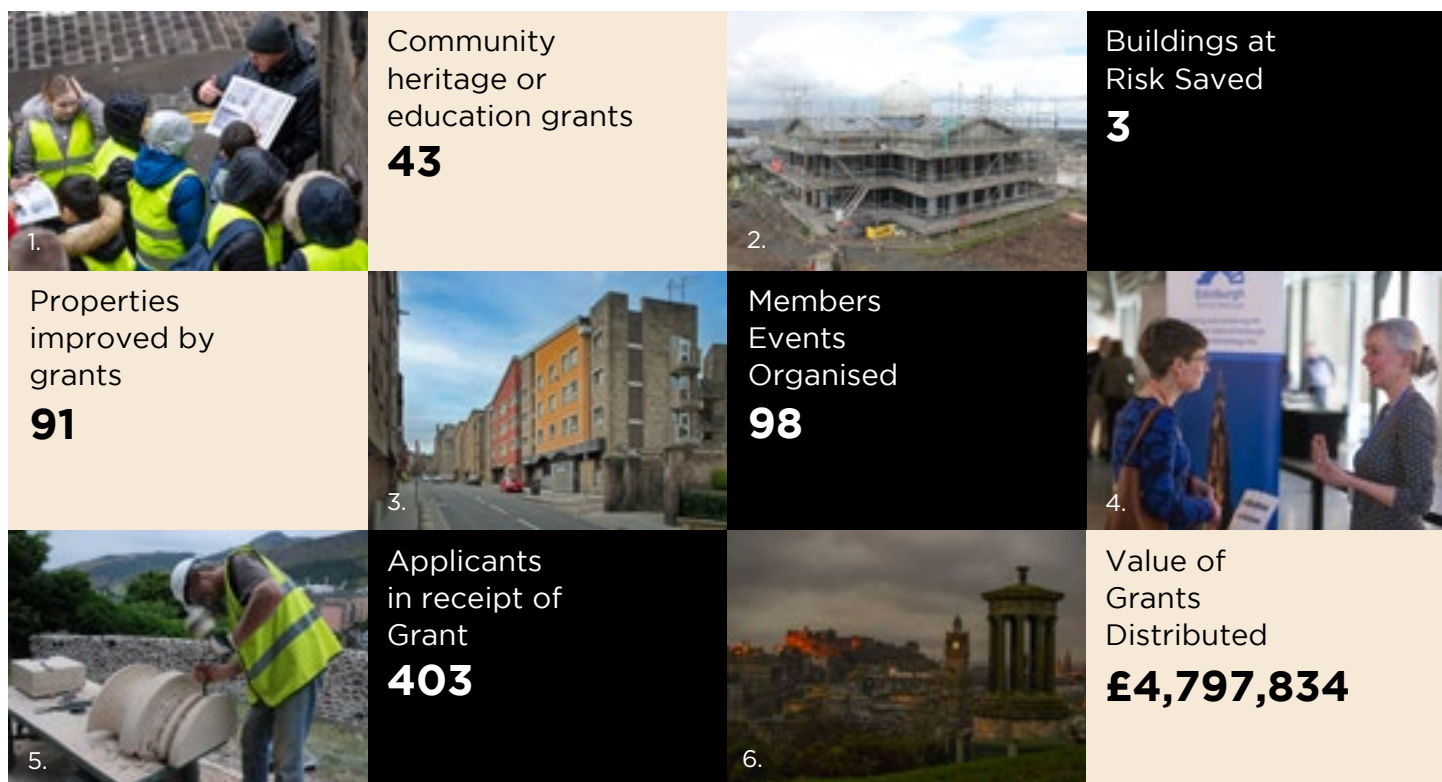


Image copyright: 1, Tom Duffin for Edinburgh World Heritage 2 & 4, Edinburgh World Heritage 3, Neil Hanna 5, Kevin McLean 6, Lee Howard

### SCHEDULED MONUMENTS, GARDENS AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPES AND CONSERVATION AREAS:

(Source: Historic Environment Scotland)

Scheduled Monuments	Gardens and Designed Landscapes	Conservation Areas
5	3	7
Edinburgh Castle Holyrood Abbey, precinct and associated remains Edinburgh Town Wall, Flodden Wall, Johnston Terrace to Grassmarket Edinburgh Town Wall, Flodden Wall and Telfer Wall, Heriot Place Edinburgh Town Wall, Flodden Wall, Drummond Street to Pleasance	Dean Cemetery The New Town Gardens Palace of Holyroodhouse	Coltbridge and Wester Coates (part) Dean (part) Marchmont, Meadows and Bruntsfield (part) New Town (part) Old Town (part) South Side (part) West End (part)



Pupils of Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce/  
Parkside Primary School, at Riddle's  
Court for the launch of the Gaelic Go  
Auld Reekie teaching pack

## 4.0 KEY CHALLENGES AND OBJECTIVES

### 4.1 Introduction to the consultation

World Heritage Site designation is a celebration of heritage that is already preserved. The designation should facilitate the delivery of the highest quality of environment.

Sustaining a living capital city centre is a balance between protecting the environment, strengthening society, and supporting a vibrant cultural scene. It should allow uses to evolve and provide for places to live and work (and access to them), without damaging the Outstanding Universal Value of the Site. However, the OUV of the WHS will, at times, be challenged by activity that has the potential to adversely impact on the unique qualities of the Site.

It is important that the Plan not only reflects the views of the key organisations involved in its management but those of its users, including residents, visitors to the city and broader stakeholders. With that in mind, an extensive programme of public consultation was carried out.

The online public consultation undertaken from October-December 2022 has informed the issues taken forward in this chapter; as have the discussions at various stakeholder workshops, community council meetings, social media signposting, face to face meetings in libraries, parks, graveyards and hairdressers, over the entire engagement strategy timeline from late-2021 to mid-2023. See Appendix D.4 for more information.

A draft Management Plan and Action Plan were prepared to reflect this feedback and were subject to further public consultation between February-April 2024. The results of this consultation were analysed and the findings have shaped the Management and Action Plans.

Management Plan consultation at Dumbiedykes Gala Day (© CEC)



The City sightseeing bus on the Royal Mile (© Robin Mair Photography)



Visitor management is a key challenge with high levels throughout the year (© Jenny Bruce)



**SAMPLE**

A total of 206 people responded to the consultation

**194** responded as an individual

**12** responded on behalf of an organisation

Responses mainly came from people who gave an Edinburgh postcode when asked for their details.

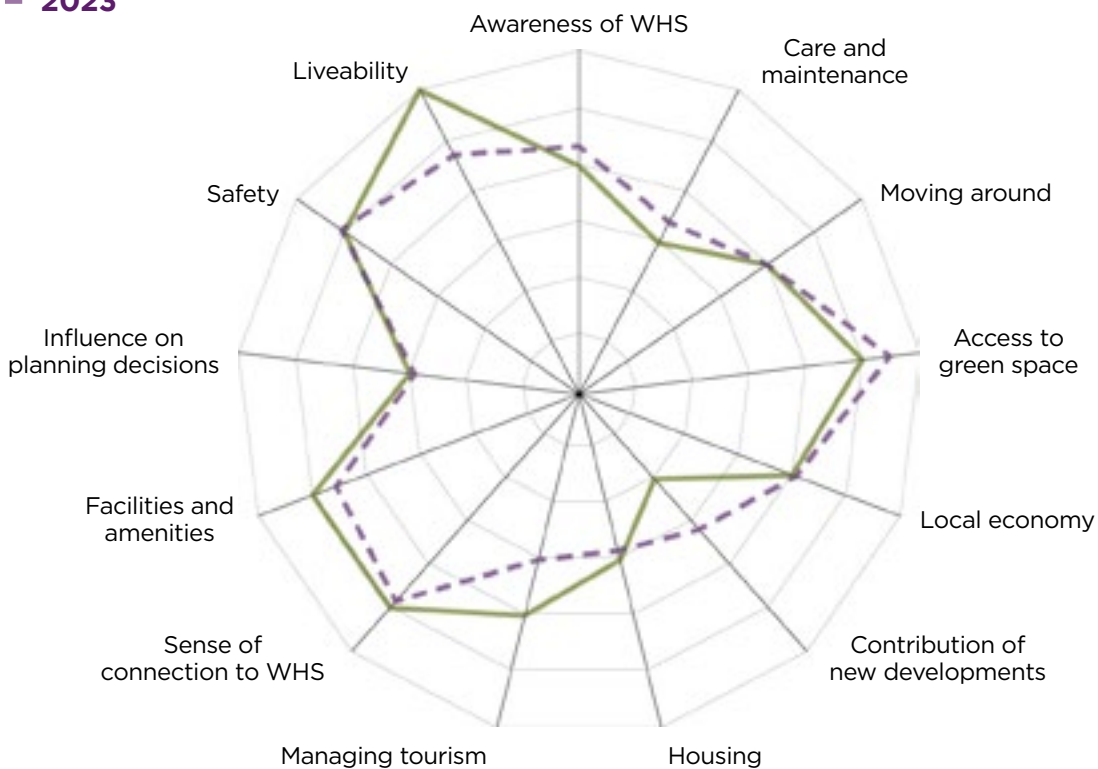
Only two responses were received from people who have a postcode *outwith* Edinburgh

**4.2 Public Consultation**

Each element of the public consultation was based on the Scottish Government Place Standard methodology. It consists of 14 questions which cover both the physical and social elements of a place. The questions were tailored to reflect the World Heritage issues. The same methodology was used in the previous plan, allowing for comparison of results:

PLACE STANDARD RESULTS

— 2016  
- - - 2023



**PRE-DRAFT CONSULTATION RESULTS**

The findings of the online consultation and the focus groups were analysed. This part of the project was delivered through City Centre Transformation funding to ensure cross-compatibility. The following summarises the key findings:

Overall, the research indicated that there is action needed by the WHS Partners in relation to all the key themes of the research. That said, there was also an indication that the **priorities for locals are:**

**A greater commitment shown by WHS Partners to tidying the city**

**A review of how Council decisions are made- to allow locals to feel more involved**

**Specifically around climate change, the need to see more activity to ensure buildings within the WHS are maintained and retrofitted**

**A regeneration plan for Princes Street - to give it more of a sense of value and appeal for locals and to enhance the sense of community within the WHS**

**A tourist levy - with money being ringfenced to reduce the impact of tourism and to benefit locals**

**Promotion of a clear plan in relation to mobility around the WHS- and through this, to give locals a sense of what the ‘end goal’ is and when this will be reached**

Many ideas were expressed for how to address these themes for the improvement and progression of the World Heritage Site. These themes are cross-cutting. For example, tourism is an important activity in the Old and New Towns, it influences developments within the city centre, it is an important factor in considering the interpretation and understanding of the WHS and it has an impact on the operational management of the city. It is therefore critical that the actions in this plan allow room for this interrelationship.

The moss covered stonework of the Tron Kirk illustrates maintenance needs (© Neil Hanna)



Graffiti in Queensferry Street Lane



Traffic and pedestrians on Princes Street (© Robin Mair Photography)



Short term let key boxes on a Lawnmarket door frame



Partner staff at the Tron Kirk for World Heritage Day 2019



The impact of climate change is an important aspect of the management of the WHS (© Julie Howden)



Old and New Towns of Edinburgh WHS Steering Group meeting



## PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The management partners now have over 30 years' experience in understanding the challenges that an urban World Heritage Site faces. These challenges are reflected in the consultation feedback. The Management Plan's success will be dependent upon careful coordination of partner organisations to ensure that collective resources and objectives are aligned to pursue actions to the best effect. The management partners must convey the importance of the World Heritage Site to the right people who can influence how actions are delivered to safeguard OUV. This includes communicating and engaging with all sectors: for example climate; tourism; economy; and local government. Failure to deliver on this commitment would be to fall short of fulfilling our obligations to the World Heritage Convention and would put the ONTE WHS at risk.

Influence and accountability will be increased through the 2-year action plan programme, setting up the Oversight Group, and reporting on tangible outcomes in the time-period.

May 2024 consultation feedback

## DRAFT-DOCUMENT CONSULTATION RESULTS

The findings of the online consultation on the draft Management and Action Plans were analysed. The following summarises the key findings (see further detail at Appendix D.4):

### Key takeouts from the Feb-April 2024 online consultation (source: jrs the research consortium)

Cleaning up the streets more generally, such as removing litter and graffiti.

A need for improved infrastructure within the WHS and maintenance of heritage buildings:

The poor quality of roads and pavements was highlighted frequently, and on-going maintenance of these is seen as a priority by many.

It was highlighted that the Management Plan does not specify what changes will be made to the WHS in the future in order to protect and promote it. Respondents would like to have seen this addressed in order to understand the plans in more detail.

Specific details, such as who the Management Partners are would also be welcomed.

Several recent developments were widely criticised, leading to a lack of confidence in the Council Planning Department. There were calls for new builds to be styled in line with heritage buildings to preserve the culture of Edinburgh.

The number of Airbnb's, hotels, and student accommodation was also criticised.

Residents feel that they are being pushed out of the city to accommodate the vast number of tourists who visit. Housing issues are a common concern amongst residents as house and rental prices increase.

Residents ask for their needs to be put before those of tourist and temporary visitors.

The introduction of a Transient Visitor Levy is widely supported.

Many respondents stipulated that this should be directed towards improving local services and maintaining the WHS for residents first, before tourists are considered.

Respondents have called for greater community engagement in the decisions made that affect the city - this includes through consulting with local people and community groups, and local stakeholders and developers.

In general, a large number of respondents found the plans difficult to understand, citing issues with unclear language. Both the Management and Action plan were felt to be vague and lacking in detail. It was suggested that the objectives should encompass specific and measurable end-points as well as future actions to achieve the objectives.

Many requested that the consultation process be simplified to make it more accessible, using clearer and simpler language.

## 4.3 Five Key Themes

The Management Plan seeks to address the key issues facing the active conservation of the World Heritage Site in the next ten years, with the two-yearly Action Plan identifying the next actions required to achieve this. Taken from the five lowest-scoring themes on Place Standard ‘wheel’,

**the five key challenges to be addressed by this plan are:**



**1**

Awareness, appreciation and activity around World Heritage Site status



**2**

Climate emergency



**3**

Conservation and maintenance of buildings and public spaces



**4**

Control, guidance, and contribution of new development to city centre

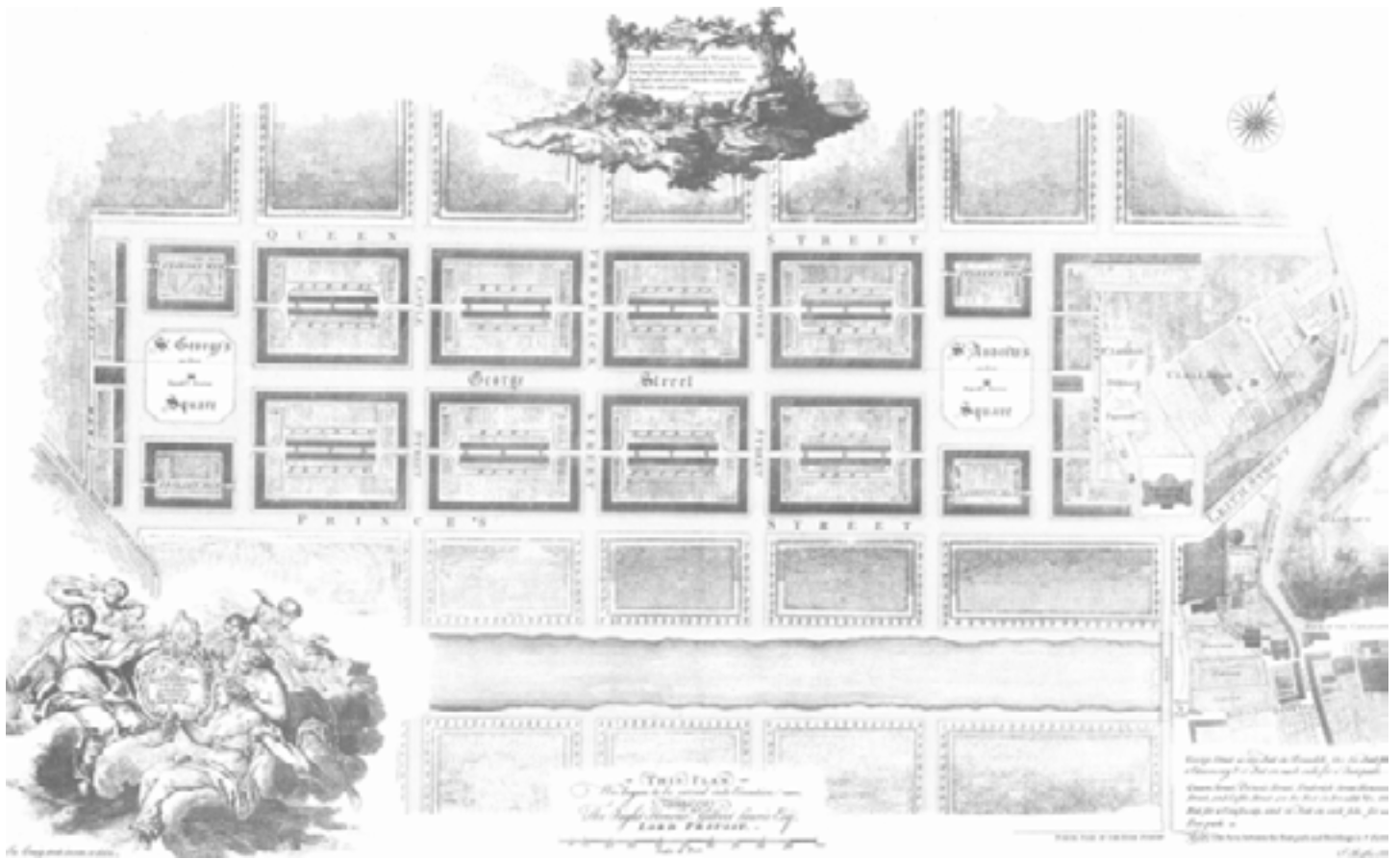


**5**

Sustainable visitor experience

The remaining themes from the Place Standard have not been disregarded. Where themes are beyond the scope of the Management Plan, we will still seek to influence them so that they are addressed by the relevant organisation. It is important to note that the previous theme of ‘Influence and sense of control’ has been embedded throughout the plan.

Final plan for the New Town by James Craig 1767  
 (© NLS. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)



As stated in chapter 1.4, the management partners are working with other city stakeholders to ensure that the safeguarding of the World Heritage Site is a consideration in other city-wide strategies. Appendix B.2 sets this out, and this is addressed in more detail in chapter 4.4.

A new sixth theme concentrates on the increasing interaction between WHS partners and Edinburgh’s universities. This research pipeline outlines opportunities for further collaboration to enhance our understanding of the site from multiple perspectives and via different disciplines. This is discussed in chapter 4.5.

Scottish Parliament reception celebrating the twenty fifth anniversary of EWH and twenty years of Scottish City Heritage Trusts (© Edinburgh World Heritage)



Interpretation board in St Andrew Square (© Neil Hanna)



## KEY CHALLENGE 1

### 4.3.1 AWARENESS AND VALUE OF WORLD HERITAGE SITE STATUS



### Sustainable Development Goals



4.  
Quality  
Education



11.  
Sustainable  
Cities and  
Communities

Visitors on the Castle esplanade  
(© Robin Mair Photography)



The launch of the Go Auld Reekie learning resource  
at the Museum of Edinburgh (© Neil Hanna)



The launch of Gu Dùn Èideann, the Gaelic version of the  
Go Auld Reekie learning resource at Riddle's Court (© Tom Duffin)



### CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

When asked to think about the level of awareness of World Heritage Site status, the consultation feedback stated that the concept of World Heritage Site status was known, but not necessarily understood.

**Limited understanding** of WHS status and its meaning. Edinburgh ‘the brand’ attracts tourism and boosts the local economy, but there is confusion over conservation and restrictions and associated funding.

Portal to the Past event at Riddle’s Court



It was thought by many that it is important for visitors and tourists to have a greater understanding of the city and the value of its WHS status.

- In a similar vein, a number of respondents felt that the “younger generation” are not aware of the role and importance of the WHS and believe they should be provided with the correct platform to learn about it. One respondent suggested engagement with local schools to increase awareness of the WHS.

May 2024 consultation feedback

### RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK

It is the ambition of the WHS Steering Group that by 2035, decision-makers, communities and visitors will be able to understand and express what World Heritage Site status means, the Outstanding Universal Value of the ONTE World Heritage Site, why it matters and what their role in its active conservation is. The Council will have successfully mainstreamed high-quality conservation into its processes, Key Performance Indicators and investment plans. Governance of the plan and its actions will be transparent, with communities actively supporting its delivery. All this will be celebrated, marking Edinburgh as the standard in partnership conservation practice.



Roofing demonstration at the launch of the ‘Guide to Building Maintenance in a Changing Climate’ at Acheson House

Ensuring a broad level of understanding of the WHS was thought to be important for a number of reasons:

- To ensure residents and visitors of Edinburgh protect and care for the city
- To improve infrastructure within the city
- To conserve the city’s characteristics and maintain its heritage

Many comments were generally positive and agreed with this statement but left no specific comments.

Others agreed that while it is important to preserve and disseminate the history of Edinburgh, this should not be done in order to expand the tourist sector and increase tourism which many feel is ruining their city and driving local people out.

May 2024 consultation feedback

The WHS Action Plan responds to the following objective:

**Objective 1:**

To coordinate the actions to ensure a broad level of understanding of the WHS and to widely transmit its value

Engagement stall at the Eurocities event  
(© Sandy Young Photography)



**INTERPRETATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Awareness of the World Heritage Site and its Outstanding Universal Value and wider cultural value to the city varies. Based on the engagement feedback, the qualities that make the Site unique – of 'outstanding value' – appear to remain unclear: the concept of World Heritage Site status was known, but not necessarily understood. Yet, to ensure that we all look after the World Heritage Site as best as we can, the OUV needs to be clearly understood by stakeholders, residents and visitors.

Jenny Holzer's 'Hurt Earth' projections onto Castle rock in 2021



**COMMUNICATION**

The work undertaken under the World Heritage banner is exceptional. Achievements include innovative collaborative projects from the climate emergency to providing grants for buildings in need of repair and sharing expertise internationally. This work should be more widely promoted.

The number of stakeholders, collaborators and different groups working under this banner is so widespread that the message can get diluted. It is recognised that to address this we must continue to work together and communicate what we do.

**Liveability predicated on appreciation of city’s history** – the character of the WHS evokes a sense of pride, but there is concern over housing and over-tourism, with both positive and negative feedback over transport links and access to amenities.

Concerns around over-tourism and the infrastructure needed to accommodate the number of visitors to Edinburgh were frequently voiced throughout the feedback.

- The vast number of Airbnbs in the old town, along with an increasing numbers of hotels and student accommodation buildings were widely criticised by respondents for ruining the character of the city.
- Many comments mentioned the ‘Disney-fication’ of Edinburgh’s old town in relation to Harry Potter with many of the shops now catering to this market and prioritising tourist.

A common theme amongst responses was that Edinburgh residents feel they are often put last in any management or development plans by the council, and that plans tend to favour the needs of visitors and tourists.

- Some respondents commented that they would like the plans to involve a commitment to maintaining the WHS as a place where residents of Edinburgh can live and work and not just a holiday destination for tourists.

It was clear throughout responses that there is a greater need for community engagement when developing plans. Local people want to be involved and have a clearer understanding of the impact any changes would have on them and where they live.

- There was also a call to engage with key stakeholders, investors and developers.

May 2024 consultation feedback

Participants at the virtual CVI workshop



Holyrood Park Strategic Plan consultation (© Neil Hanna)



There is a general concern over the number of tourists visiting the city and the impact this has on the infrastructure. This was a prominent theme throughout responses to several questions in this consultation.

- The number of Airbnbs in the city are thought to be driving up house and rental prices and subsequently, driving local residents out of the city centre.
- The number of tartan shops in the old town has been widely criticised throughout the feedback.
- The increase in large hotels to accommodate tourist are not thought to be in keeping with the historical architecture of the WHS.

May 2024 consultation feedback

Visitors on the High Street (© Neil Hanna)



The St James Quarter



**A sense of belonging** to the WHS is both at the expense of, and enhanced by, tourism.

Others agreed that while it is important to preserve and disseminate the history of Edinburgh, this **should not be done** in order to expand the tourist sector and increase tourism which many feel is ruining their city and driving local people out.

May 2024 consultation feedback

The Old Town ridge and Princes Street gardens from above



“Things like the fringe and the festivals actually make me feel like I belong a lot more, because I’m not originally from Edinburgh, so I like going down and seeing all the people that have come here.”

“I feel pushed out of the city a little bit now. I don’t feel it is the same city it used to be. I’m not saying tourism is a bad thing – I certainly love the students coming in, and it can be a bit manic, but very exciting. But I just don’t think Edinburgh has the infrastructure to cope with it all.”

May 2024 consultation feedback

The High Street during the Edinburgh and Fringe Festival period (© Neil Hanna)



Respondents believe that if more local residents remained in the city centre then they would maintain and preserve the heritage of the city, as opposed to the large number of tourists they perceive to be there instead who care less about the city.

- Investing in more housing for residents within the WHS was suggested by a number of respondents to ensure local people (that is residents) can remain.

May 2024 consultation feedback

**Value of WHS not necessarily reflected by retail opportunities** – Princes Street no longer felt to be one of the world’s ‘great city streets’, but St James Quarter welcomed as a positive addition to the city centre.

“It’s a really common complaint in Edinburgh that Princes Street is just ugly and full of rubbish. It devalues living here as well as visiting.”

May 2024 consultation feedback

Princes Street (© Neil Hanna)



**City’s green spaces a significant strength of the WHS** – despite concerns over privatisation of public space, the green spaces in the WHS were identified as one of its most valued assets.

“[Green space] is one of the undoubted strengths of the World Heritage Site.”

“While there is a lot of GOOD natural space, so much of it is hijacked for events.”

May 2024 consultation feedback

St Andrew Square (© Neil Hanna)



The Dean Valley (© Neil Hanna)



The Meadows during the summer festival season (© Neil Hanna)





## KEY CHALLENGE 2

### 4.3.2 CLIMATE EMERGENCY



## Sustainable Development Goals

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES  
AND COMMUNITIES



11.  
Sustainable  
Cities and  
Communities

13 CLIMATE  
ACTION



13.  
Climate  
Action

Heavy rain causing flooding at the Mound precinct (© Robin Mair Photography)



The WHS Action Plan responds to the following objective:

**Objective 2:**

To coordinate actions to ensure an appropriate response to the climate emergency whilst safeguarding OUV

A clogged gutter drain (© Robin Mair Photography)



Howe Street step broken by falling masonry from Storm Eowyn (© Neil Hanna)



The Ross Fountain frozen in winter



**CONSULTATION FEEDBACK**

When asked to think about the climate emergency, the consultation feedback stated that there needs to be clarity around what lies within the scope of the Management Plan. Concern was raised around adaptation of historic buildings and infrastructure that responds to the climate emergency and respects the OUV.

**RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK**

It is the ambition of the WHS Steering Group that by 2035 heritage is conserved and better maintained as a key part of the solution to the climate emergency by all. Energy sourcing is more sustainable and sensitive to the historic environment. Owners are empowered to undertake conservation-led energy efficiency measures and adaptation through clear guidance and supported with advice and selective grants.

## CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Issues relating to the climate emergency arguably impact on almost every other theme of action – conservation and maintenance through damage to buildings brought on by changes to the weather, to loss of intangible heritage through displaced peoples and everything in between. However, we thought it important to separate this part of the discussion as we continue to refine how we embed our response to the climate emergency in our everyday lives. This is also evident in how we brought up the theme of the climate emergency in the consultation – we recognise how wide-ranging and multi-faceted the issues are, and how it cannot be easily summarised into a single question with an answer on a sliding scale. We also recognise that much of the response to the climate emergency will be ‘top down’ and the role of the Management Plan is to ensure the safeguarding of the OUV.

We will continue to work closely with our partners to develop understanding of how we frame the issue of the climate emergency in the management of the World Heritage Site, including engagement with Climate Ready Edinburgh. See Appendix C for completed projects in relation to this theme.

The remains of a large wildfire on Arthur’s Seat after an unusually dry summer.



Repairs to a New Town chimney stack toppled by extreme wind during Storm Eowyn in 2025 (© Neil Hanna)



**Though many agreed it is vital to respond to the climate emergency, there was a desire for clearer and more specific information on what will be done to achieve these objectives.**

- A lack of detail and specificity on actions being taken or actions that are anticipated to respond to the climate emergency and safeguarding was highlighted throughout responses.
- It was felt that ‘engaging with work in response to the climate emergency’ was a broad and vague statement which many did not understand.
- Respondents also wanted to know who the ‘management partners’ referred to in the plans are.

## ADAPTATION

When asked to think about the climate emergency in relation to the WHS, participants sought to have a greater understanding of its impacts and the tools available to mitigate damage.

### **Among the responses, there was a strong desire for increased action to be taken in response to the climate emergency.**

Many felt that the council needs to be doing more to tackle climate change, regardless of WHS status. There was a feeling expressed that the climate emergency is not seen as a priority by the local authority.

- Respondents believed that more could be done to protect or ‘climate proof’ the city of Edinburgh in relation to the buildings, the green spaces and surrounding areas, e.g. better drainage systems.
- However, some commentators suggested that the right balance needs to be struck between tackling the climate emergency and preserving the heritage of the city.
- Guidance on conservation and care of historic and listed buildings in the WHS is thought to be needed to educate building owners on preservation and low-carbon iterations, to enable longer term sustainability of buildings and properties.

The plans were viewed widely as ‘woolly’ and ‘vague’, with respondents having little confidence that real action would be taken in regards to climate change and the WHS.

- Many critiqued current actions by City of Edinburgh Council in relation to climate change, leading to respondents questioning future plans. One respondent mentioned the stonework for the trams being shipped from China, while many commented on the poor recycling schemes and public bins that don’t get emptied frequently enough, non-electric buses and flooding problems.

May 2024 consultation feedback

CEC 2030 Climate Strategy (© CEC)



Solar panels concealed behind raised parapets



**Some effects of climate change are being witnessed**, including stronger winds, flooding and erosion to buildings, but the issue is not currently front-of-mind. This typically related to the perception that climate change is a long-term issue, and other priorities take precedence.

“It is only recently that people have taken on board the dangers of flooding and high winds, with a slow start to remedial work around the Water of Leith etc. The city needs to lead by example in its care for historic buildings etc and guidance on conservation and care for owners of properties within the WHS is needed. Guidance on future heating options, solar panels etc. has so far not been helpful.”

“The city has seen increases in flooding etc. Part of this many [sic] well be to do with the lack of drain clearing – some road drains are full of rubbish right to road level. It would appear that there isn’t much action in areas which a [sic] repeatedly flooded.”

“Obviously you’re aware of the effects of climate change, but not specifically for how it impacted the world heritage site.”

May 2024 consultation feedback

Severe flooding at the east end of Princes Street  
(© Robin Mair Photography)



**There is concern and confusion over retrofitting buildings and mitigating damage.**

There is perceived high cost associated with maintenance and retrofitting, and confusion over best practice.

In general, infrastructure maintenance and repair was frequently mentioned in relation to buildings, roads, and drainage systems.

- Some respondents expressed a belief that Edinburgh already lacks the infrastructure to deal with any adverse weather conditions such as heavy rainfall – a number of comments called for improved rainwater drainage.
- Road closures were also mentioned a number of times in relation to climate change, increasing congestion and causing more damage to roads.

May 2024 consultation feedback

Basil Spence/Canongate Housing buildings on the High Street (© Neil Hanna)



Thermal imaging of heat loss from a traditional roof



“I think the WHS should be much bolder in its climate adaptation. I agree, maintaining its heritage is important, but there’s no point if we cannot adapt buildings to meet future needs of the people in the city. Blue and Green infrastructure should be invested in in an innovative way that demonstrates a forward-thinking, adaptable city and provides a world-class example to other cities.”

“In favour of this however there should be a priority on appropriate adaptations specifically to areas of the WHS in which people reside and make their homes.”

May 2024 consultation feedback

### KEY CHALLENGE 3

#### 4.3.3 CONSERVATION AND MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS AND PUBLIC SPACES



### Sustainable Development Goals

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES  
AND COMMUNITIES



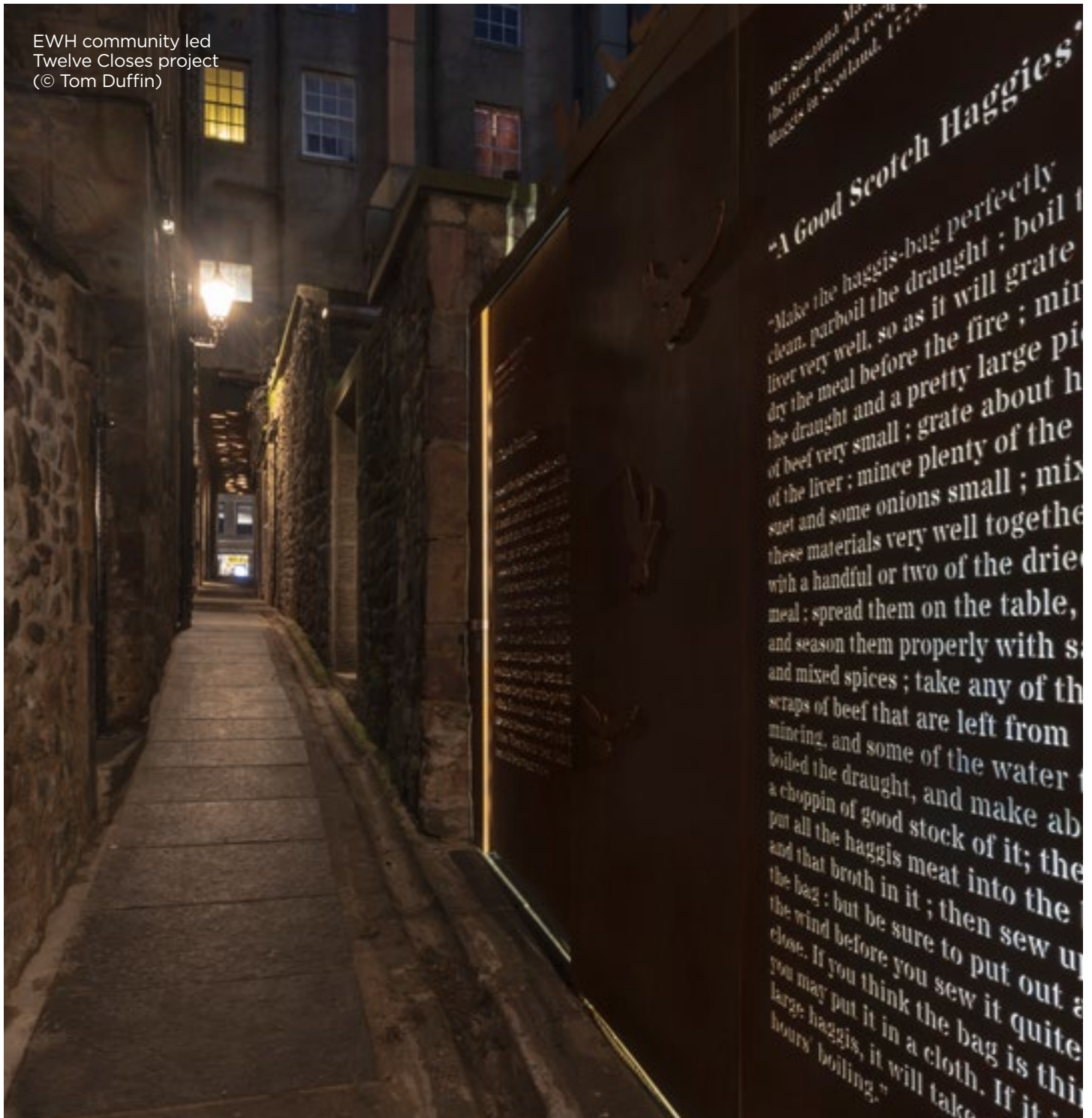
11. Sustainable  
Cities and  
Communities

12 RESPONSIBLE  
CONSUMPTION  
AND PRODUCTION



12. Responsible  
Consumption  
and Production

EWH community led  
Twelve Closes project  
(© Tom Duffin)



## CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

When asked to think about issues relating to the conservation and maintenance of the World Heritage Site, including safety, sense of upkeep of buildings and streets, and the impact of the climate emergency on the fabric of the site, respondents felt that there is still a lot to be done. Comments centred around the current ‘state’ of the Old Town citing poor planning and poor infrastructure, with a lack of ongoing maintenance and up-keep of roads and pavements. Graffiti and litter were also raised by many respondents.

### **There is a sense that the city’s built environment is not well-maintained.**

Maintenance is seen as a high cost, and there are concerns over poor quality of road surfaces and drains.

“Generally, not very well (maintained), especially street and public spaces. The level of care is disappointing.”

“I would say some places are better cared for than others – e.g. income from tourism keeps the Castle and Holyrood Palace and other major attractions keeps them well cared for. But Rose Street, Princes Street, and other parts of the city are either neglected or slowly becoming empty commercial spaces under the pressure of lack of funding.”

May 2024 consultation feedback

Maintenance of the public realm remains a challenge  
(© Neil Hanna)



Empty retail units on Princes Street  
(© Neil Hanna)



**Safety in the WHS is generally favourable**, however, concerns over untidiness (litter, graffiti) contributes to a feeling of “lawlessness.”

“I feel safe. I am fortunate to live in an area of the New Town where streets, homes, and open spaces do not feel threatening.”

The unchecked growth of graffiti in all parts of the city but especially the city centre has contributed to a general feeling of lawlessness and lack of safety. Street begging is a major issue, and inevitably makes visitors feel unsettled. Litter and bags of garbage on the street merely add to the uncared-for image, and I am sure visitors feel a lot less safe than I do.”

May 2024 consultation feedback

It was highlighted that the Management Plan does not specify what changes will be made to the WHS in the future in order to protect and promote it. Respondents would like to have seen this addressed in order to understand the plans in more detail.

- Specific details, such as who the Management Partners are would be welcomed.

May 2024 consultation feedback

Extensive graffiti at Patrick Geddes Steps in the Old Town. (© Neil Hanna)



Visitors enjoying Greyfriar’s Kirkyard (© Neil Hanna)



A full bin on Queensferry Street in the New Town



The WHS Action Plan responds to the following objective:

**Objective 3:**

To ensure ongoing investment in the conservation of the Site

**Objective 4:**

To work in collaboration with stakeholders to sustain the 'state of conservation'\* of the Site

**Objective 5:**

To ensure the World Heritage Site is a baseline consideration for all Council plans and strategies within its boundary that include alterations to the historic built environment

\* 'State of Conservation' includes the physical condition of the WHS and the conservation measures in place to protect it.

**RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK**

It is the ambition of the WHS Steering Group that by 2035, the World Heritage Site will be sustainably funded through the visitor levy (or other public means) to continue and enhance its conservation - responding to the increased conservation and support need of the city resulting from economic challenges and increased rate of deterioration due to climate change. With new funding and partnership support, the Council will deliver celebrated active conservation of the city's public realm, green spaces and graveyards.

A successful shop front restoration on Nicolson Street  
(© Neil Hanna)



Regular maintenance is a key conservation issue for historic burial grounds. Buddleia growth at Greyfriars Kirkyard (© Neil Hanna)



## GRANTS

Edinburgh retains most of its significant buildings and spaces in good condition. More than 400 applicants have received a grant in the lifetime of the previous management plan. However, this reflects investment in buildings rather than streets and public spaces, which explains the misstep in public perception. This is a decrease in the number of projects awarded funding from the previous plan which reflects the difficulty in delivering the grants programme during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Funding issues and grants to conserve the WHS were frequently mentioned within the comments.
- A number of comments questioned whether funding was solely limited to exteriors in specific areas and focused only on tenement buildings;
- Some comments suggested that grants should be means tested and building owners who can afford to invest in maintenance and repairs should be encouraged to do so out of their own pockets;
- Others questioned where the funding would come from and were concerned by absent landlords who don't live in Edinburgh or invest in upkeep of their properties;
- A tourist tax was frequently mentioned throughout responses as something to be considered;
- Respondents who mentioned the repayable grant scheme found this to be helpful.

May 2024 consultation feedback

Lawnmarket tenements under repair (© Neil Hanna)



Tourists on Princes Street (© Neil Hanna)



## TREATMENT OF PUBLIC SPACES AND PUBLIC REALM

The spaces between buildings, known as the ‘public realm’ make an essential contribution to the OUV of the WHS. This plan must provide the context to support the existing guidance.

City life also happens in the spaces between the buildings. There is a high demand for public space use all year round. There needs to be a balance of use and greater transparency of decisions about the events and activities that take place in them.

The cleanliness of streets and spaces contributes to people’s sense of pride, ownership and safety of the city. It also creates the impression that visitors take home with them. It is vital that the management partners help to shape and support the systems in place to ensure that a suitable standard is maintained, even during peak visitor times.

“Where will this investment come from? Many buildings are in a poor state of repair. With a dwindling city centre population there is less civic pride. Many buildings are owned in effect by ‘absentee landlords’ with little sense of belonging to Edinburgh.”

“The amenity of the Old and New Towns has rightfully been celebrated, but in recent years there has been a slow but noticeable decline in the public realm. Most important here is the need to plan maintenance – both of historic buildings and the public realm, but also of new buildings and projects.”

May 2024 consultation feedback

The Rose Street public realm in poor repair  
(© Neil Hanna)

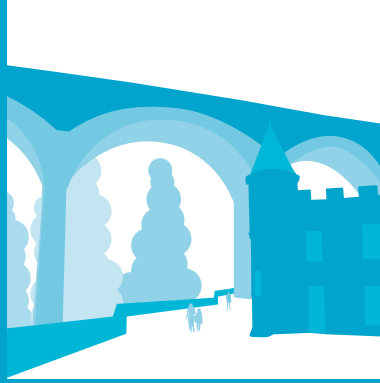


Historic building front in Nicolson Street in extreme disrepair affecting the streetscape (© Neil Hanna)



## KEY CHALLENGE 4

### 4.3.4 CONTROL, GUIDANCE, AND CONTRIBUTION OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS TO CITY CENTRE



### Sustainable Development Goals

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES  
AND COMMUNITIES

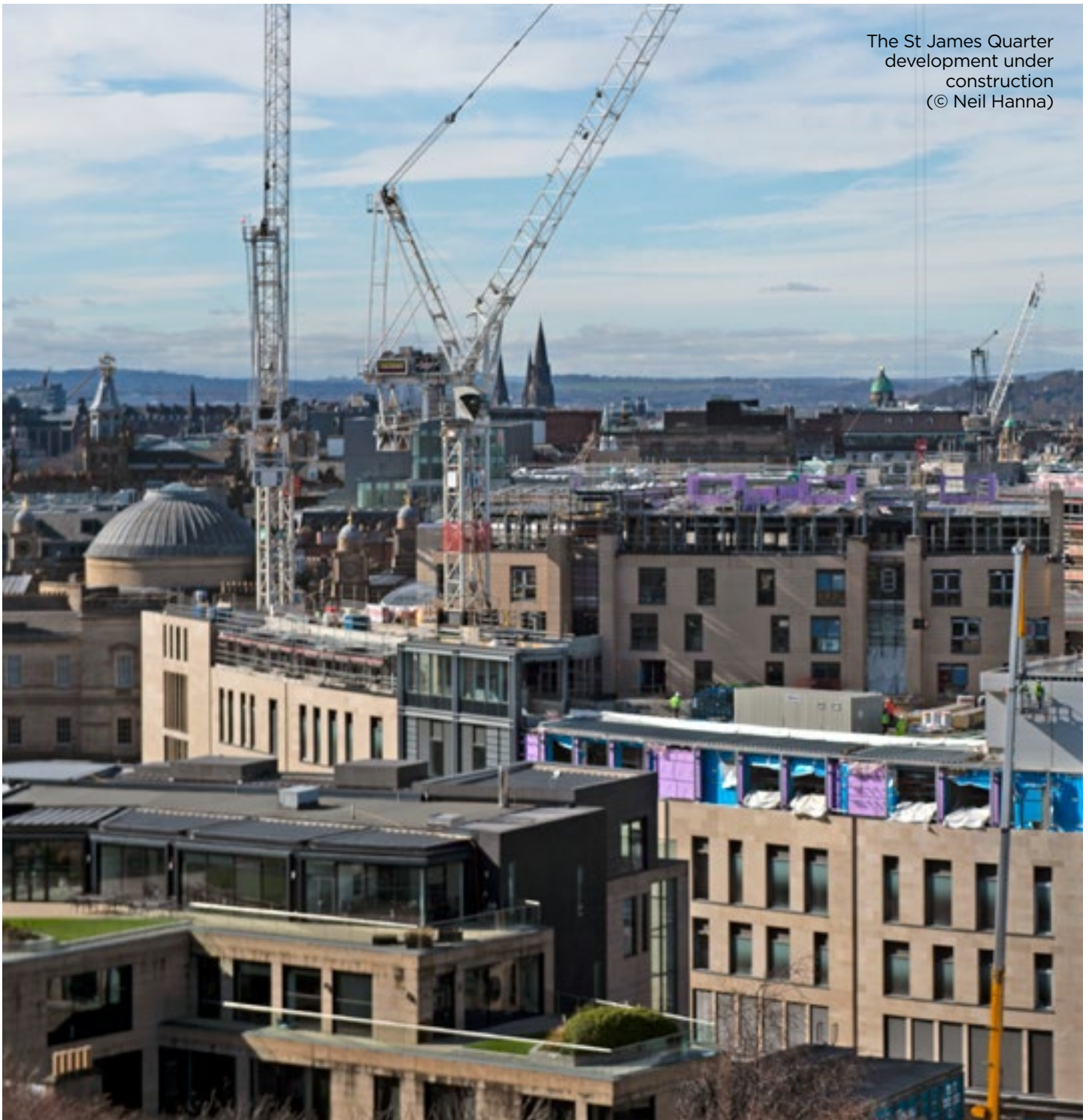


11.  
Sustainable  
Cities and  
Communities

12 RESPONSIBLE  
CONSUMPTION  
AND PRODUCTION



12.  
Responsible  
Consumption  
and Production



The St James Quarter  
development under  
construction  
(© Neil Hanna)

## CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Consultees discussed a number of issues relating to the management of the site and the contribution of new developments to the city centre. Topics included discussion over new developments such as St James Quarter, and the experience of engaging in the planning process - some respondents mentioning a lack of confidence in future planning

and developments. The challenge around maintaining the character and the heritage of the city alongside new developments was cited the most in response. Many commented that new developments should serve and sustain the local population. The issue of adapting housing to meet modern needs was also highlighted.



“New developments need to be tooled to serve the communities and residents who make their homes in the WHS. Turning the WHS into a space occupied only by listed buildings that are inaccessible and having all new developments be tourism spaces, retail spaces and student accommodation is eroding the city’s infrastructure and ability to support diverse communities to live here.”

“To meet the community, commercial and residential demands of today while preserving the historic culture and attraction of the city is a key challenge. The need to adapt to a net zero carbon emission future adds to this challenge. In addition, the growth of the modern tourist industry also places more demand on the built environment than it previously did so. But we need to adapt our heritage buildings – to allow double glazing, to adapt where we can for additional internal insulation and to support micro renewables where possible. Modern property requirements will also mean adaptations for enhanced accessibility standard. And enabling development is also vitally important to support the investment required to adapt and improve our heritage buildings...”

- More generally, a large proportion of respondents called for an increase in overall community engagement to allow local residents and local bodies to input on decisions that affect them.
- It is clear from responses that the local people of Edinburgh feel that they don't have a say in what happens within the city and are negatively impacted by plans approved by the city council.
- A main priority for respondents is for the WHS to work for residents and local people (for example, by investing in housing).

May 2024 consultation feedback

**Views on new developments are polarised.** There is a tension between understanding that Edinburgh needs to develop and evolve, whilst fearing that this will harm the city's historic fabric. There is, however, appetite for development of Princes Street to restore some of its former glory.

“...However, beyond this I think the proposed actions lack weight and do not reflect wording in the Action Plan. The Plan refers to the requirement on the City Council to ‘safeguard’ Outstanding Universal Value; to ensuring that heritage is ‘robustly’ conserved; and to the need for World Heritage to be a ‘baseline’ consideration in assessing developments. To my mind these objectives comprise something more than just ‘ensur[ing] that new development is sensitive to historic character’ and indeed amount to a recognition that World Heritage Site designation should be of paramount importance when considering new developments, plans or strategies”

May 2024 consultation feedback

Understanding the historic layers of the city as seen from Waverley Bridge (© Neil Hanna)



Creation of a new public space at the New Waverley development in the Waverley Valley (© Neil Hanna)



The WHS Action Plan responds to the following objectives:

**Objective 6:**

To improve tools to sustain Outstanding Universal Value

**Objective 7:**

To sustain effective partnerships that support the management of the WHS

**Objective 8:**

To ensure that development embraces the context of the WHS and is of the highest quality in terms of architecture, design and materials

**Participation in the planning process** is still seen as complicated and challenging. There is also the feeling that becoming involved in the process is inconsequential to the result of the planning decision.

Respondents have called for greater community engagement in the decisions made that effect the city – this includes through consulting with local people, community groups, and local stakeholders and developers.

May 2024 consultation feedback

Hotel on East Market Street. A new development that responded positively to pre-application advice  
(© Neil Hanna)



## RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK

It is the ambition of the WHS Steering Group that by 2035, all new development will conserve or enhance the OUV of the World Heritage Site – following the conservation philosophy of ‘positively managed change’ regardless of contextual modern or traditional style, and always promoting a strong sense of place. As a result of great care being taken over key applications, no negative precedents have been set with respect to climate emergency adaptation or other areas. This includes that the Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy is in place and delivering a positive mix of uses alongside considered new development to rejuvenate the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of this key area at a crucial point in its long history. More strategic area plans are completed or in train, and value is being added to the delivery of key Council strategies.

**PLANNING PROCESS**

Managing change is a key priority for the Management Plan. To ensure that the OUV is safeguarded, the management partners must retain an overview of all the systems in place to make this happen.

Management partners have a role to play in raising awareness on how interventions can contribute to or detract from the Site’s authenticity. Management partners also have a role in reflecting and interpreting the particular quality of its surroundings, responding to and reinforcing distinctive patterns of development, townscape, views, landscape, scale, materials and quality of the WHS. It is the management partners’ role to make sure these qualities (i.e. the OUV) are taken into account. Appendices B.2 and D.1 set out the policy framework and the planning ‘toolkit’ required to make this possible.

The WHS’s skyline and setting are vulnerable to unsympathetic development. The city’s topography and visual characteristics (landmarks, townscape characteristics) create a uniquely visible landscape setting for the city. A majority of key views from the ‘Skyline Study’ cut across the WHS; their protection is essential to the protection of the historic environment.

George Street looking towards St Andrew Square with the St James Quarter development behind (© Neil Hanna)



Leith Street has seen considerable development (© Neil Hanna)



A guided tour of a sensitively restored traditional building at Holyrood (© Andrew Godfrey)



Poorly maintained traditional building surface in the South side of Edinburgh (© Neil Hanna)



Managing Change guidance



**INTERPRETATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

It is the management partners’ responsibility to guarantee that all stakeholders understand the context to allow respectful change in line with the character of the area. Where proposals may cause harmful change, the management partners have a statutory duty to make it clear that this is not acceptable.

There is advice and support for owners of historic homes in maintaining their building. It is essential that this advice is pulled together so that owners can navigate through and find what they need.

**ADVOCACY**

The city is a dynamic, thriving capital city. It will evolve over time with new trends. The management partners must ensure that they are engaged with the broadest range of activities and strategies within the city. This will ensure that they can participate in change and influence decision-making in such a way that change sustains the OUV of the Site.

The management partners will also need to promote the maintenance of traditional skills. Historic buildings need a variety of crafts for their repair and conservation, from stonemasonry to metalwork, joinery and slating. With over 75% of all the buildings within the WHS being listed, maintaining these traditional skills is vital to the conservation of the city’s built heritage.

The HES conservation blacksmith at work (© Andrew Godfrey)



A conservator cleaning stonework



**INFORMING DESIGN QUALITY**

The majority of building stock in the WHS is traditionally constructed (often local sandstone under pitched roofs and covered with Scots slate). New materials should have the quality and integrity that befits this special context, and detailing should be carefully considered to ensure their long-term visual success.

Management partners have a role in raising awareness on how interventions can contribute to the Site’s authenticity. The Edinburgh Urban Design Panel also plays an important role.



Top image: Abbey Strand a good example of traditional construction and materials (© Neil Hanna)

Bottom image: Detail of traditional ironwork (© Andrew Godfrey)

**INFLUENCING NEW DEVELOPMENT**

Development within the WHS is expected and welcome. The management partners must influence the way in which this change can happen.



Development under construction at New Street (© Neil Hanna)

### KEY CHALLENGE 5

#### 4.3.5 SUSTAINABLE VISITOR EXPERIENCE



### Sustainable Development Goals



10. Reduced Inequalities



11. Sustainable Cities and Communities



12. Responsible Consumption and Production



15. Life on Land

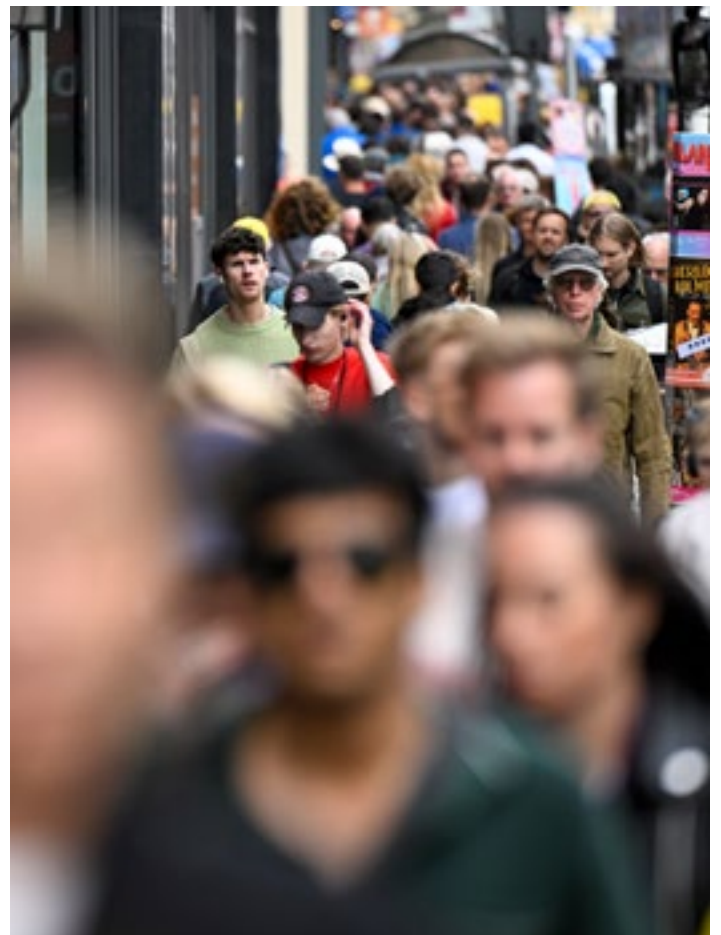
There is consistently heavy footfall at Waverley Bridge (© Robin Mair Photography)



The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo attracts thousands of visitors



South Bridge pavement dangerously crowded during the summer festival period(© Neil Hanna)



## CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Discussion over visitor management entered into almost every discussion during the consultation. When asked to think about a sustainable visitor experience, the most common theme by far was the Transient Visitor Levy; many specifying that this would be a positive initiative if directed towards improving the community and local services and preserving heritage. We have distilled some key points covering tourism’s positive contribution to the city, the volume of visitors, the disconnect between residents and the pressures of accommodation in the city.

**Tourism can be enhancing** by creating jobs and boosting the local economy. The WHS brings recognition to the city on a world stage.

**Too high a volume of tourists** was a concern, especially during the summer and winter festivals. From a care and maintenance standpoint, this adds to the wear and tear on city streets.

- Concerns around over-tourism and the infrastructure needed to accommodate the number of visitors to Edinburgh were frequently voiced throughout the feedback.
- The vast number of Airbnbs in the old town, along with increasing numbers of hotels and student accommodation buildings were widely criticised by respondents for ruining the character of the city.
- Many comments mentioned the ‘Disney-fication’ of Edinburgh’s old town in relation to Harry Potter with many of the shops now catering to this market and prioritising tourist.

May 2024 consultation feedback

A Cockburn Street pavement busy with tourists in winter  
(© Robin Mair Photography)



“Critics expressing concerns about tourism levels often lack direct involvement in the tourism sector, and their rhetoric can be detrimental. It’s crucial to recognize the value of our city as a destination that attracts visitors from around the world. Embracing the benefits of tourism while actively working to manage its impact ensures that we appreciate the privilege of living and working in such a beautiful city. The TVL could play a pivotal role in channelling resources towards sustaining and enhancing our cultural heritage, making Edinburgh a year-round destination for visitors to enjoy and appreciate..”

May 2024 consultation feedback

A tourist focused shop on the Royal Mile  
(© Robin Mair Photography)



**Overwhelming sense that WHS businesses are solely for tourists** selling ‘tartan tat’ and souvenirs rather than providing amenities for local residents.

**Demand for accommodation for tourists** puts pressure on local housing availability. Housing is being repurposed for short-term lets and is driving up the cost of living within the WHS.

“There seems like a general focus on tourism over locals in Edinburgh - much of the city’s function seems primarily in order to facilitate tourism. The plan to influence decision making to enhance the experience of both tourists and residents is good, but I am worried that the continued focus on tourists will continue to drive people out of the city. Edinburgh is not a theme park.”

We welcome tourists to the city but not to the extent that the local population is not able to afford to live in the city centre.”

“Excellent to hear about the transient visitor levy. However, over tourism remains endemic and ultimately, we need to accept there must be a limit on how many visitors we can welcome.”

May 2024 consultation feedback

An extensive temporary bar at the Mound precinct during the festival period (© Neil Hanna)



The WHS Action Plan responds to the following objectives:

**Objective 9:**

To improve understanding of the value of WHS status to tourism within the WHS and the city

**Objective 10:**

To sustain effective partnerships to advocate for and secure sustainable tourism within the WHS and the city to safeguard OUV

**RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK**

It is the ambition of the WHS Steering Group that by 2035, Edinburgh’s tangible and intangible cultural heritage has been actively conserved through pioneering implementation of the Visitor Levy – crucially ensuring that Edinburgh remains an attractive place to live, work and do business for years to come. It is a celebrated international example of tourism and community working hand-in-hand, city liveability for its inhabitants, excellent tourism offer and best practice of outstanding historic city management.

**TOURISM**

Sustainable tourism continues to be a key concern and driver of action throughout the World Heritage Site. The management partners and tourism stakeholders have a role in helping to preserve the environmental and cultural integrity of the site and supporting the sustainable development of its communities, including its resident population that must be supported.

Public engagement highlighted the importance of tourism to the city, but questioned the balance between meeting visitor needs versus community needs during peak times in the visitor calendar. The management partners recognise the need to support the operational systems in place as discussed under section 4.3.3 Conservation and maintenance of buildings and public spaces. The management partners also recognise the need to signpost good practice from other World Heritage cities where a Visitor Levy is in place, and how this can benefit residents.

Samhuinn Fire Festival part of the city’s winter celebrations (© Andrew Godfrey Photography)



Key boxes in the Old Town enable the high turnover involved with short term lets



Large crowds at Edinburgh’s Christmas attractions in Princes Street Gardens (© Robin Mair Photography)



## 4.4 Other challenges

### CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

The management partners will ensure that the consultation feedback on the nine remaining themes that have not been discussed in detail here will be raised at an appropriate level to inform emerging plans and strategies across the partnership. A summary of the discussions is presented below:



#### Moving around

Discussion over transport concerns the relatively compact size of the WHS in terms of its walkability, but highlights issues with congestion and cycling.

Traffic on the Mound  
(© Neil Hanna)



#### Facilities and amenities

Amenities were considered to be generally accessible, with a good mix of leisure facilities. Everyday services were considered harder to access in the WHS, such as GPs and supermarkets.

A local shop  
(© Neil Hanna)



#### Liveability

Discussion ranged from appreciation of the city's beauty and history, to concern over tourism and housing.

The Mound precinct with the Old Town ridge behind  
(© Neil Hanna)



#### Identity and belonging

Discussion covered appreciation for the diversity of residents and visitors to the city and the sense of connection it brings, as well as concern for the city centre feeling like it caters solely to tourists.

Festival visitors at George Square  
(© Neil Hanna)



## COMMON AREAS OF FOCUS

The Management Plan can address these remaining themes by influencing other plans and strategies and the work of other organisations to take account of the Outstanding Universal Value of the site in their own decision-making.

The ONTE WHS Management Plan shares common aspirations and will complement a range of plans and strategies in managing the complex range of issues facing the city centre and thus, the World Heritage Site.



### Natural space

Discussion centred on the good provision of well-maintained green spaces which was considered to be one of the strengths of the WHS.

St Andrew Square gardens  
(© Neil Hanna)



### City centre economy

Discussion ranged from concern over Princes Street feeling generic and the sense that there is difficulty for new independent business to get started, as well as positivity surrounding the new St James Quarter as a positive addition to the city centre.

St James Quarter



### FEELING SAFE

Whilst this is connected to the theme of maintenance, it's a subject in its own right which is addressed elsewhere in the council. Discussion ranged from the sense that the WHS generally feels safe, but graffiti and the closes of the Old Town can contribute to a sense of discomfort.

Covered arcade in the Cowgate  
(© Neil Hanna)



### Housing

Discussion over housing is entwined with concerns over short-term lets and student housing. There is concern over too few opportunities for affordable housing in the WHS, but an understanding that the current student housing stock supports the student population well.

New housing in the Quatermile development  
(© Neil Hanna)



**COUNCIL PLANS, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES RELATING TO THE CITY CENTRE**

**Strategy Opportunities to meet common goals**

Waste and recycling strategy

“Edinburgh City Centre is a place where people live, as well as work, and a World Heritage Site. This presents particular challenges both in terms of balancing the competing priorities of the different stakeholders, and in terms of providing a comprehensive recycling service.” (p.11)

Green gull proof recycling bag, Abercromby Place (© Neil Hanna)



City Mobility Plan  
inc. Active travel

Multiple reference to WHS (both p.46)

“A walkable city centre core right at the heart of the World Heritage Site, enabled by a pedestrian priority zone and a network of connected, high quality, car-free streets;”

“High-quality streets and public spaces where improvements allow for people to be inspired by the city’s unique heritage while they interact, relax or play;”

Recent street layout changes in the West End



Tourism

Multiple references to WHS. Specific recommendation for tourism sector to engage with WHSMP (p.17)

Tourists in Princes Street Gardens (© Neil Hanna)



Climate Ready Edinburgh

Multiple references to WHS. Clear cross-referencing.

Solar panel installation



Biodiversity Action Plan

No specific mention of WHS, but n.b. p.9 mentions importance of private gardens to Edinburgh’s biodiversity

Mature trees in Princes Street Gardens (© Neil Hanna)



**Strategy**                      **Opportunities to meet common goals**

Edinburgh 2050

No specific mention of WHS, but does mention skyline in Theme: Pioneering Edinburgh – in terms of architecture, culture and good quality of life

The Edinburgh skyline at dusk



Princes Street Framework

Specific mention of WHSMP

Princes Street from the gardens (© Neil Hanna)



Poverty

No specific mention of WHS/OUV, but potential for engagement via themes of connection and belonging, and wellbeing

Edinburgh College students at the Eurocities event in 2019 (© Sandy Young Photography)



Open space

Specific reference to EWH and graveyards conservation. Specific mention of WHSMP development (p.42). India Place Allotments case study references EWH grant (p.55). Specific reference to working with EWH to realise historical value of open space assets (p.58).

Calton Hill from above



Flood risk management

Specific reference to WHS and the impact of flooding to it

Flooding on Princes Street (© Robin Mair Photography)



**Strategy****Opportunities to meet common goals**Culture

Specific reference to WHS

The National Gallery  
(© Neil Hanna)Digital

No specific mention of WHS

ONTE digital apps created by  
Edinburgh College studentsCity housing

No specific mention of WHS

Housing and mixed use  
development in the Old TownPeopleNo specific mention of WHS. Opportunity to engage via  
trainingIntroduction to Building  
Conservation training  
(© Andrew Godfrey)South East  
Locality  
Improvement  
Plan 2017-  
2022ONTE WHS Management Plan 2017-22 referenced  
common themes with the Locality Improvement Plan.  
Opportunity exists to engage with the updated plan,  
this could include supporting engagement via heritage  
values in Dumbiedykes.Dumbiedykes from above  
Arthur's Seat

A dramatic view of Castle Hill at night and the Castle of Light event



## 4.5 Research pipeline

### ACHIEVING BEST PRACTICE

The management of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site is considered as an example of best practice internationally. People come from all over the world to research our practices. Research needs to be sustained to keep the management of the Site current and relevant to global trends and there are current knowledge gaps. Building on existing relationships with universities in Edinburgh and internationally will play a key role in bridging these gaps.

Such gaps include, but are not limited to, the following opportunities:

**Research into climate change** – collecting baseline climate data for the WHS:

- Create tools to monitor the impacts of climate change on the WHS
- Collect and compile data on natural hazards (flooding, ground/slope instability) in the WHS
- Carry out a high-level risk and vulnerability assessment of the WHS in relation to urban heat island effect
- Carry out a high-level climate change risk and vulnerability assessment for parks, gardens, green spaces, and natural setting in the WHS
- Collect and compile data on fauna and flora in the WHS to establish a baseline and propose solutions to protect and enhance it
- Map intangible heritage in/linked to the WHS and assess risk/vulnerability to climate change
- Based on data collected, pressing issues and gaps in knowledge, research specific climate change impacts on the WHS (per type and/or area in the WHS)

### Understanding the World Heritage Site from multiple perspectives

- **Hope Wang's research:** Co-creating the values of World Heritage Sites with Refugees
- Exploring the peripheries of heritage sites: their communities and values and how they relate to the WHS: **CUMET project** - Cultural Heritage in the Metropolitan Peripheries

### Fulfilling the recommendations of Historic Urban Landscape (HUL)

- Management Partners/University of Edinburgh/University of Seville

### Research into visitor experience:

- Understanding perceptions of overtourism and engagement of local communities and residents with tourism in the WHS (with Edinburgh Napier University)

### Research into materials:

- Understanding the materials used in new developments in the WHS
- Understanding the historic materials used in the public realm

### Research into green spaces:

- Understanding impacts on green spaces via data gathering - anticipate future problems/landslides

### Understanding the condition of previous EWH grant-funded projects

- Basic maintenance surveys of our 12 monuments and other past WH projects so we can find out what state they are in and push CEC to maintain
- Algorithm for learning what to look for in building at risk to reduce time spent surveying

**Monitoring the WHS from a macro view** to gain and track the condition of the World Heritage Site – what technology can we use for this?

- To allow EWH to target work and be proactive, rather than just being reactive to what grants are being applied for
- LIDAR scanning, AI, citizen science – multitude of approaches from University of Edinburgh to achieve the above

**Understand the WHS existing building stock:** breaking the buildings into typologies to be able to better target people with specific maintenance advice, and to define best practice in relation to energy retrofit and climate change adaptation interventions

**Research guidelines:**

- Outline when partners get involved with research projects and provide clear guidance for how to engage with the results.
- Research should fulfil a specific outcome and contribute to our appreciation and understanding of the WHS, ideally filling a gap in knowledge that does not already exist
- Research should not take up an unreasonable amount of resource from the Management Partners
- Research should be conducted or supervised by appropriately qualified staff
- Research should align with the purpose of the Management Plan and should be shared and communicated to a wide audience.

Masonry inspection of Holyrood Abbey



Community group Edge Transitions and primary school pupils engaging with nature in Holyrood Park



Building inclusive heritage interpretation together in Scotland's WHS workshop at EWH (© Edinburgh World Heritage)



Thermal imaging supporting energy efficient conservation and maintenance



## 4.6 The Actions

### ABOUT THE ACTIONS

This Management Plan has a separate Action Plan. This allows for the actions to be more dynamic. They will be monitored every year and updated every two years during the 10-year life of the Management Plan. This sharpens the focus on what the Action Plan can deliver throughout the life of the Management Plan, without the need to refresh the Management Plan itself so frequently. This flexibility will aid the monitoring and delivery of the actions.

The actions reflect what can be achieved by the management partnership. Through the consultation process, they seek to amplify the voices of the local population, visitors and broader stakeholders, as well as the views and expertise of the management partners. They will focus their concentration on heritage and what makes the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh a World Heritage Site. However, a key strength of the Management Plan is that it is not constrained to land-use issues and can cover a broader spectrum of subject areas than a typical planning document, such as visitor management, education and interpretation and culture more broadly. The Place Standard Tool recognises the correlation between the quality of the built environment with health and wellbeing, so this can also be seen as a benefit of a well-managed WHS. The plan can be used as an advocacy tool to support the actions of other city partners. It can also be used to influence funding and political support.

### SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES FROM THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

The following phrases emerged repeatedly from the pre-consultation engagement across all five key challenges that are being taken forward in the plan:

**community guidance**  
**promotion authenticity best-practice**  
**awareness-raising**  
**facilitation partnership-working**  
**advocacy**

Victoria Street at Christmas  
 (© Robin Mair Photography)



ONTE WHS publications and promotional material



Below are the objectives from sections 4.3.1-4.3.5 summarised in a table:

<b>1</b>	To coordinate the actions to ensure a broad level of understanding of the WHS and to widely transmit its value
<b>2</b>	To coordinate actions to ensure an appropriate response to the climate emergency whilst safeguarding OUV
<b>3</b>	To ensure ongoing investment in the conservation of the Site
<b>4</b>	To work in collaboration with stakeholders to sustain the 'state of conservation' of the Site
<b>5</b>	To ensure the World Heritage Site is a baseline consideration for all Council plans and strategies within its boundary that include alterations to the historic built environment
<b>6</b>	To improve tools to sustain Outstanding Universal Value
<b>7</b>	To sustain effective partnerships that support the management of the WHS
<b>8</b>	To ensure that development embraces the context of the WHS and is of the highest quality in terms of architecture, design and materials
<b>9</b>	To improve understanding of the value of WHS status to tourism within the WHS and the city
<b>10</b>	To sustain effective partnerships to advocate for and secure sustainable tourism within the WHS and the city to safeguard OUV



Calton Hill observatory restored in partnership by CEC and EWH  
(© Neil Hanna)

High level inspection as part of ongoing monitoring of building conditions. Waverley Valley from above



## 5.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

### 5.1 Monitoring

Monitoring is a responsibility of World Heritage Site inscription. This includes both monitoring the condition of the Site (State of conservation) and monitoring the implementation of the actions.

#### STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORT

UNESCO monitors the state of conservation of each World Heritage Site through its Periodic Reporting process. The **most recent Periodic Report** was completed in 2023. These reports are an important tool to gather information that identifies possible changes to the condition of a Site.

#### ACTION PLAN MONITORING

Case studies in Appendix C reflect a number of the key actions delivered across the partnership through the previous plan. Their progress has been tracked by the Steering Group throughout.

The governance of this new Management Plan has been designed to promote impactful expert and community participation, transparency and support action. Progress against the forward Action Plan will be supported and monitored through tracking, annual publication, collaboration and activities of the Oversight Group [This is detailed in the Action Plan and Appendix B.1 of this report].

The UK ambassador to UNESCO visiting the ONTE WHS at Acheson House



CFP and architects assessing the roof at 195-197 Canongate



## 5.2 Risk Preparedness

**UNESCO Operating Guidelines** (September 2023) recommend that risk assessment and response are key tools in site management. Managing a site that covers the expanse of a city centre differs from that of an individual monument.

### Physical risk

Fire and flood risk, climate emergency, development pressure, pandemics.

#### Fire and flood risk

General risk responses for the city are provided by the fire and police services, and the Council's Emergency Planning Team. Individual buildings have their own strategies and insurance in place.

HES co-operates with Fire and Rescue Services in managing a Historic Buildings National Fire Database, which provides fire-fighting crews with information on the importance and value of category 'A' listed buildings.

Similarly, SEPA (Scottish Environment Protection Agency) is the lead body in dealing with flood emergencies. During the life cycle of previous plans, a flood prevention scheme for the Water of Leith was implemented; flooding poses a threat to a limited part of the World Heritage Site, principally around the Dean Village and Stockbridge. However, it is now also acknowledged that increased surface water is an impact of the climate emergency and there are more frequent and localised instances of flood damage. A flood map of the WHS has been produced and will influence mitigation.

Vegetation growth in a gutter and down pipe on a traditional tenement in the Lawnmarket  
(© Neil Hanna)



Fire breaks on Arthur's Seat  
(© Neil Hanna)



Significant flooding on Princes Street  
(© Robin Mair Photography)



#### Climate emergency

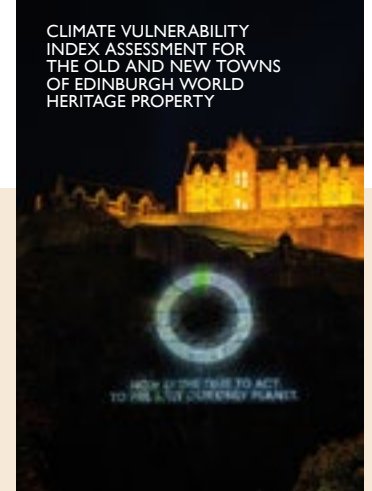
Understanding the physical impact of climate change and responses to it on the built and natural environments of the World Heritage Site is necessary. Known impacts of the climate emergency are affecting building fabric (for example, speeding up stone decay, increasing pressure on historic drainage systems) as well as creating pressure for the adaptation of buildings to reduce carbon emissions.

Energy efficiency programmes and research by the Site's management partners to change habits, address fuel poverty and to understand the sensitive adaptation of historic buildings remains a significant focus for the next ten years. Research projects such as the Climate Vulnerability Index and Climate Change Risk Assessment are informing next steps.

Heavy rain outside Old College, an example of weather extremes (© Robin Mair Photography)



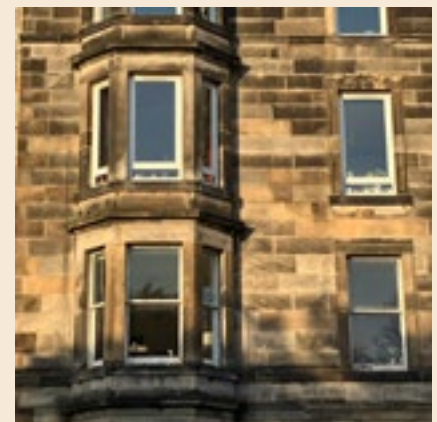
Climate Vulnerability Index (CVI) Assessment for the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh



**Development pressure**

The success of the city and its World Heritage Site creates pressure for development. There is also pressure from the cumulative impacts of small-scale development. Development which undermines the Outstanding Universal Value and threatens World Heritage status is a risk. The risk is managed through planning policy and guidance. Development pressure and the effectiveness of the protective measures are subject to monitoring.

Replacement glazing should match the character of the building to avoid harm (© Steven Robb)



Social distancing measures at Edinburgh Castle during the Covid-19 pandemic



**Pandemics**

National and international health events can impact the World Heritage Site in a number of ways, including suspension of awareness-raising activities, events, and all but essential building and maintenance projects. Closure of public buildings might also impact their routine maintenance and upkeep, as well as the need for public services to remain in the city centre. Restrictions on travel could be to the detriment of the tourism industry yet could be a positive impact on the local community in terms of creating more space to meet freely outside. How space within the World Heritage Site is used might change, with parks and public realm being used for gathering whilst indoor venues remain closed.

### Intellectual risk

Apathy, lack of awareness/understanding

The delivery of several Partners' projects during the period of the last Management Plan, such as establishing World Heritage Day events and creating a social media presence to raise the profile of the World Heritage Site, has seen some of the risk associated with lack of awareness and understanding mitigated. It will be important to facilitate access to ONTE WHS documentation in order to maintain the narrative of its management.

Raising awareness of the ONTE WHS on World Heritage Day 2019



### Organisational risk

Poor change management, lack of co-ordination, poor relationship management, inadequate resourcing and lack of succession management around key staffing (loss of knowledge and expertise) and economic risk locally and nationally.

The organisations and bodies that are focused on the management of the World Heritage Site require adequate funds to actively manage, effectively coordinate and carry out actions in relation to sustaining and enhancing the World Heritage Site. Funds have reduced significantly in recent years.

Adequate partner staffing levels are important for WHS management



Below:  
HES Operations Directorate staff induction day in central Edinburgh



The Dean Village sits on the Water of Leith leaving it vulnerable to flood risk (© Neil Hanna)





Aerial view looking towards Arthur's Seat (© Lee Howard)

# APPENDIX A: OLD AND NEW TOWNS OF EDINBURGH WORLD HERITAGE SITE

## A.1 Description of the Site

### TOPOGRAPHY

The City of Edinburgh possesses one of the most spectacular urban landscapes in the world. Its dramatically varied terrain rests on a complicated geological pattern of sediments, extinct volcanoes, lava flows and igneous intrusions. This pattern has been emphasised by the differential weathering of hard and soft rocks.

The city's topography is central to the character of the Site. It shaped the city's spectacular townscape and creates the dramatic views into, out of, and through the Site, including the key views out to the 'mountain' of Arthur's Seat; down to the Firth of Forth (the River Forth estuary); towards the green slopes within the city; to open countryside up to 30 kilometres beyond; and to views down from high vantage points onto roofscapes and open spaces.

Within the Site the landforms created the setting for the dramatic juxtaposition of the Old and New Towns across the green valley of Princes Street Gardens (the drained Nor' Loch). The Castle Rock and its geological 'tail' provided the perfect location for the original settlement of the medieval planned Burgh, shaping its subsequent development pattern of narrow property holdings on a single main street. Its steep, rocky slopes also ensured that a highly visible 'island' of natural landscape has been retained in the heart of the Site.

Aerial view of Holyrood Park at sunset. (© Lee Howard)



Eastward view over Edinburgh from above the castle



**ARCHAEOLOGY**

Edinburgh’s World Heritage Site, particularly the Old Town, is an area of high archaeological significance and potential, containing a range of nationally important scheduled monuments and extensive areas of well-preserved archaeological deposits. The area was analysed in 1981 as part of the Scottish Burgh Survey (Turner et al. 1981).

Archaeological excavations have shown that Edinburgh’s origins extend back into prehistory.

Edinburgh’s Castle Rock was fortified from the late Bronze Age (around 900 BC) and is arguably the longest continuously occupied site in Scotland.

By the eleventh century, settlement had almost certainly begun to develop along the rocky ridge that later became the Royal Mile.

Every time there is a significant development in the Old Town, there is potential for undiscovered archaeology.

Belt buckle, Victorian Farthing, James II coin, Roman dragonesque brooch and a nail, all found during excavations at Edinburgh Castle



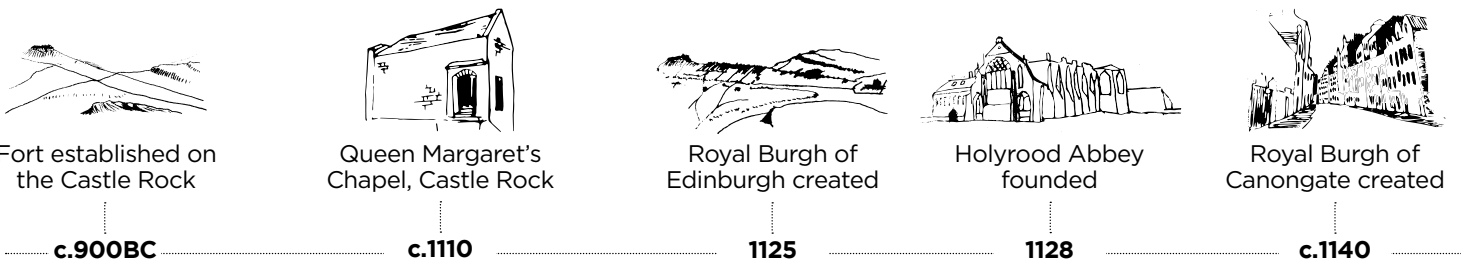
AOC Excavations behind India buildings in 2018-19, revealing a mid-12th century pre-burgh timber building. (© CEC and AOC)



Archaeological Condition Survey at Holyrood Park. (© Andrew Godfrey)



Historic cultivation terraces visible on the side of Arthur’s Seat





Detail of the Rothiemay map of the Old Town  
 (© NLS. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY**

Edinburgh’s architecture and its historical importance set it apart from most other cities of the world. The particular nature of Edinburgh’s duality is unusual: on the one hand, on a high ridge is the ancient Old Town, while in contrast lying below and to the north, is the eighteenth and nineteenth century New Town (the name ‘New Town’ applies to the whole area developed in classical style between the 1760s and the 1870s).

Aerial view of North Bridge towards Waverley Station



Aerial view of the Murray fue in the Second New Town



Edinburgh Castle  
Great Hall

c.1500

Building of NW tower, Palace  
of Holyrood House

1528-32

Gladstone's  
Land built

c.1600

Union of Crowns of Scotland  
England and France

1603

Building of Palace Block,  
Edinburgh Castle

1615

**THE OLD TOWN**

The Old Town contains two planned twelfth century burghs with two early royal palaces (one within the Castle), a medieval abbey, and a wealth of early buildings. The tradition of building taller was regulated and limited to five storeys on main streets through by-laws in the seventeenth century but the tendency was predominantly vertical, and the sloping nature of the Site allowed for the creation of tenements that must have been the world's tallest buildings of their age, some of them still to be seen.

The Old Town grew along the wide main street (the Royal Mile) stretching from the Castle on its rock through the Canongate to the Palace of Holyroodhouse. Edinburgh Castle dominates: a medieval military fortress extended as a Royal Palace within a square in Renaissance times but later re-classified as an army barracks and hugely extended as such from the mid eighteenth century. Of special interest are the twelfth century St Margaret's Chapel and the Great Hall of 1500. At the other end of the Royal Mile are Holyrood Abbey and the Palace of Holyroodhouse.

Along the Royal Mile is an array of architecturally and historically outstanding buildings. The Parliament House and High Court of Justiciary complex comprise the two-storey T-plan Parliament House, a key building of the Scottish Renaissance by Sir James Murray of Kilbaberton (1632-39) with neo-classical additions and extensions as a court of justice complex by Sir Robert Reid and others in the earlier nineteenth century. The City Chambers (formerly a multi-use complex with the Royal Exchange at its core and from 1811 the headquarters of the city council) on the High Street are the work of John and Robert Adam (1753); the plan is that of a private square protected from the Street by a single-storey rusticated screen. The Canongate Tolbooth c.1590 is identified by its powerful turreted steeple. Other notable public buildings within the Old Town include George Heriot's School (1628-60), built in the area 'outside' the town enclosed by the contemporary Telfer Wall, Surgeons' Hall (1829-32, Playfair), and the Old College of the University (1815-27, Robert Adam, completed by Playfair).

The Royal Palace buildings, Edinburgh Castle



The City Chambers (© Neil Hanna)



The Canongate Tolbooth building (© Neil Hanna)



Town Council ordinance requiring building in stone

1621



Moray House, Canongate

1625



George Heriot's Hospital and School

1628



Parliament House, Sir James Murray of Kilbaberton

1633



Tron Kirk (steeple later)

1636-47

By the early seventeenth century, much of the wealth of the Scottish nation had come into the hands of the Edinburgh merchant elite, which resulted in considerable new building. The nobility also built high-quality townhouses and all this activity came under the strict control of the municipal authorities. The heyday of the Old Town was the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

From the 1790s and especially after the development of the New Town, a slow social and economic decline began. During the later nineteenth century, the withdrawal of the middle classes from the Old Town began to be seen as a problem. In 1892 Sir Patrick Geddes proposed that the Old Town should be 'regenerated' by attracting back to it the university, the bourgeoisie, and the intelligentsia. The value of the pioneering efforts of Geddes in early restoration and new build housing infill, especially along the Royal Mile, was substantial both in terms of conservation and in maintaining the residential population of the area. These are exemplified at the theatrical red-roofed and half-timbered Ramsay Garden which was intended to reflect the character of the medieval town. Sir Patrick Geddes was also active in establishing community gardens or pocket parks in the Old Town during the early part of the 20th century. As part of his Civic Survey of Edinburgh in 1909, 75 open spaces in the Old Town were identified as having potential for community gardens. By 1911, nine of the gardens were 'in working order'. They are now represented by: Advocate's Close; the Patrick Geddes Memorial Garden on the south side of the West Port and the Scottish Wildlife Trust Garden which occupies a prominent position on the south side of Johnston Terrace, adjoining the Patrick Geddes Steps and the former Castlecliff Workshops.

The High Street, Parliament Square with St Giles' Cathedral (© Neil Hanna)



Ramsay Gardens (© Neil Hanna)



The Grassmarket in the Old Town dates back to the medieval period (© Neil Hanna)



The University of Edinburgh Old College building (© Neil Hanna)



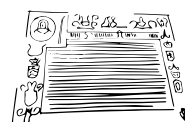
Rebuilding of Palace of Holyrood House, Sir William Bruce

1671-6



Mylne Square. First widefronted new tenements

1684-8



The 'Act of Union'

1707



PROPOSALS  
For carrying on certain  
PUBLIC WORKS  
in the CITY of  
EDINBURGH.

'Proposals' Document outlining New Town and North Bridge

1752

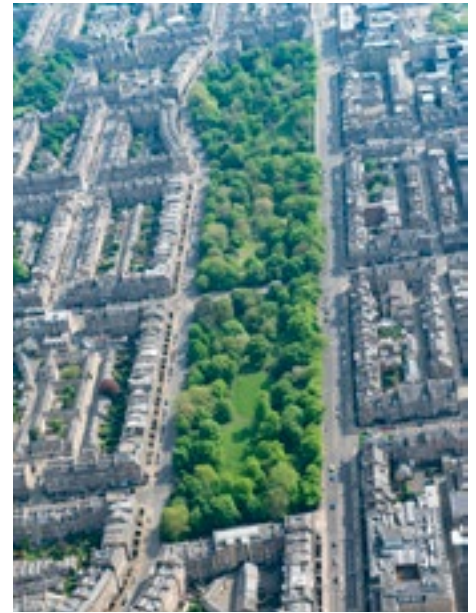
**THE NEW TOWN**

The New Town is important for two main reasons: its high concentration of world-class neoclassical buildings and the sheer extent of the area covered with classical ashlar- faced (highly finished stone) architecture, all consistent to a degree without parallel and, perhaps crucially, all now surviving remarkably intact.

The New Town consists of seven successive major developments, each different from, but closely related to, its predecessors, built in a continuous programme of construction from 1767, arguably until as late as 1890.

The First New Town originated in proposals published by Lord Provost Drummond in 1752. These were embodied in an Act of Parliament, which envisaged the development of the city’s lands to the north of the Old Town, linked by an urban viaduct across the valley, the North Bridge. The rectangular layout of the first New Town was the competition-winning work of James Craig, redrawn in 1767 after consultation with John Adam. The second New Town followed from 1801, planned by Sir Robert Reid, and William Sibbald, and located to the north of the first, breaking away from the previous strictly rectangular plan by the incorporation of some curved terraces. The third New Town, the work of Robert Brown from 1813 onwards, essentially continues the approach of its predecessors.

The New Town from above



The Old Royal High School (© Neil Hanna)



St Andrew’s Square building designed as a bank, now a hotel (© Neil Hanna)



James Craig prepares Plan of Edinburgh New Town

1766

Building of South Bridge

1785-8

Charlotte Square, Robert Adam

1791

Calton Hill scheme, W H Playfair

1819

Visit of King George IV

1822

The pattern of terraces and crescents changed with the fourth New Town, planned by William Henry Playfair. Instead of imposing a grid-iron upon the landscape, the buildings exploit the contours, view and trees of Calton Hill in a romantic manner. The fifth New Town, built from 1822 on the lands of the Earl of Moray to designs by James Gillespie Graham, cleverly links the first three New Towns as a unified scheme. It was intended as a self-contained enclave for aristocrats and professional gentry. The sixth New Town followed in the 1850s on Lord Provost Learmonth's Dean Estate, to the north of the Water of Leith, linked since 1831-32 by a spectacular bridge designed by Thomas Telford. The seventh and final New Town brought the hitherto detached Raeburn estate together with the rest, but building continued well into the later nineteenth century within the generally established precepts of the New Town ideal. Although the original idea was that the New Town should be a purely residential suburb, it rapidly proved to be attractive to business and government; drawing this element of the city away from the Old Town.

Most noteworthy for its planned ensembles rather than its individual buildings, the New Town has, however, a number of notable public buildings, including Register House (1774, Robert Adam), the Royal Scottish Academy (1822-36, W H Playfair), and the Royal High School (1829, Thomas Hamilton). The New Town was to become the location for some of the finest public and commercial monuments of the neo-classical revival in Europe.

Monuments symbolic of Scotland's past were grouped together on Calton Hill, in the aspiration to live up to the city's intellectual soubriquet, the 'Athens of the North'.

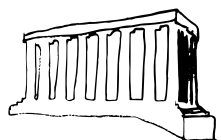
The Royal Scottish Academy  
(© Neil Hanna)



Calton Hill monuments  
(© Neil Hanna)



Register House  
(© Neil Hanna)



National Monument of Calton Hill begun

1822



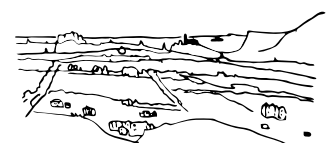
Moray Place, James Gillespie Graham

1822



City Improvement Act: Johnston Terrace, George IV Bridge, King's Bridge

1827



Bankruptcy of Town Council over Leith Docks extension Scheme

1833

**STREETSCAPE**

Natural stone paving slabs, extensively used throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, have an uninterrupted smooth surface which complemented the design of buildings.

The slabs were laid with the same precision as the stone courses of adjacent buildings. Much of the remaining stone paving is carried through into private staircases, closes, and finally even into the hallways, kitchens, bathrooms and cellars of the dwellings themselves. Many of the setted streets in Edinburgh are now more than 150 years old and this represents a remarkable survival. Footways in the New Town were made from various materials, from the horonized paths of Drummond Place, made of slivers of spoil from stone-working, to the Hailes-flagstoned pavements of Dundas Street. The Old Town was largely repaved in the nineteenth century with high-quality Carmyllie or Hailes flagstones.

What is now referred to as the ‘public realm’ was constructed to an extremely high standard in Edinburgh, although this quality was eroded to some extent in the second half of the last century. Carriageways, kerbs, pavements, footpaths, closes and wynds, boundary walls, railings, gatepiers, street signs, lamp posts, some historic bollards, and police boxes and other street furniture were either there from the beginning or were, for the most part, sensitively added as the materials became available or circumstances demanded an intervention

Local residents’ initiatives have also made a contribution. For example, in many streets in the New Town, residents have reinstated original railing-mounted streetlamps.

Parliament Square high quality public realm complementing the architecture (© Neil Hanna)



Finest quality railings and street lighting add to the character of the street scene (© Neil Hanna)



Aerial view of the New Town



Building of Scott Monument

1837-46

Cockburn Street constructed

1859-60

THE STRAIGHTEST BUILDING  
ERECTED UNDER THE  
IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1857  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
WILLIAM CHAMBERS  
OF EDINBURGH  
LORD PROVOST

City Improvement Plan

1867

Well Court, Dean Village, Sydney Mitchell

1883-6

Edinburgh College of Art

1909

## PARKS AND GARDENS

Edinburgh’s parks and gardens are integral to the New Town’s layout and architectural composition. In the Old Town the designed landscape at the Palace of Holyroodhouse covering the Palace Yard at Holyrood and the garden enclosed within the boundary wall were identified for their significance in Volume 5 of the first Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland (1987). The Old Town also contains gardens – early ‘pocket parks’ laid out by Sir Patrick Geddes – which are also significant for the part they played in the ‘regeneration’ of the Old Town and are essential in providing a pleasant environment.

Calton Hill is the most dominant ‘designed’ landscape within the Site due to its prominence and character. This never-completed project attracted complementary schemes of commemoration to focus on Calton Hill, including the Nelson Monument, the Burns Monument and the Playfair Monument.

The most significant of the many designed gardens in the Site is Princes Street Gardens, a green space planned like Queen Street Gardens to offer uninterrupted garden views to one sided streets at each edge of the first New Town. Protected from 1752 as a pleasure ground in the ‘proposals’ document, the gardens were formally opened in 1821. East Princes Street Gardens was re-designed in 1840 to receive the Sir Walter Scott Monument, one of a number of elaborate Gothic episodes planned within the geometric layout of the New Town. Overlaying its historical role as private pleasure ground, Princes Street Gardens has an important collection of monuments and statuary.

West Princes Street Gardens and the Ross Bandstand (© Neil Hanna)



Calton Hill (© Neil Hanna)



Old Town pocket garden, Dunbar’s Close



Scottish National War Memorial, Edinburgh Castle

1924-7



St Andrew’s House, Thomas Tait

1936



Canongate Housing, Sir Basil Spence

1969



Old Town conservation movement

1980s

**COLOUR**

The original stones of which the city was built were variations of yellow, which have now mellowed to grey. Edinburgh has at certain times in its life, been colourful by modern standards. Windows have been painted white, green, brown and most other rich dark colours.

New Town railings were also painted in various vibrant shades. Venetian blinds and planted balconies added to the scene. At some point in its history, however, probably around the time of Lord Cockburn in the early nineteenth century, Edinburgh took on an architectural mantle of respectability, often severe. Ruskin noticed this, with dismay. A delayed architectural reaction came eventually in the form of Rowand Anderson’s Gothic, red sandstone, National Portrait Gallery (1885-90), Well Court in Dean (1883) and, later in the Old Town, Geddes’s white and red-walled, red-roofed, Ramsay Garden (1892-94) which re-visited the perceived architectural chaos and confusion of the medieval town. Along with colour in the later nineteenth century Old Town came an interest in the romantic architectural effects of self-consciously random rubble construction. Layers of harling or limewash were often stripped from existing buildings, or new buildings designed to conform to this aesthetic. The colour issue has ebbed and flowed ever since, but the epoch of New Town conservation brought a renewed interest in ‘sanity’ and simplicity in keeping with the principles of modernism. The post-modern period revived colour and picturesque outline, notably at Ian Begg’s Scandic Crown Hotel (now the Radisson SAS) and Richard Murphy’s neo-Geddesian infills in the Canongate and off the High Street.

Ainslie Place in the New Town



The National Portrait Gallery (© Neil Hanna)



High Street buildings showing a variety of colours (© Neil Hanna)



Ian Begg’s Radisson SAS Hotel (© Neil Hanna)



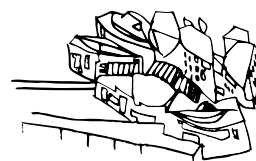
Old and New Towns of Edinburgh inscribed on the World Heritage List

1995



Museum of Scotland, Benson and Forsyth

1999



Scottish Parliament at Holyrood, Enric Miralles

2004



First ONTE WHS Management Plan

2005

## MATERIALS

From 1674 even the most ordinary buildings were constructed of stone. The main formations used for building are the Upper Old Red Sandstone (Devonian) at Craigmillar, and the carboniferous system of the Craigleith, Ravelston, Hailes, Dunnet and Binny sandstones. The geological processes that formed Edinburgh’s landscape also provided the materials for its buildings. Until the mid-nineteenth century the cost of imported building materials was prohibitive, and Edinburgh, situated amidst beds of local sandstone, used this high-quality local material as its main building and paving material. This, together with Scottish slate and the occasional use of high-quality imported stone, has contributed a vital ingredient to the essential character of the Site.

Looking at Rothiemay’s famous 1647 map of Edinburgh we can see the important introduction of stone-fronted tenements which takes us to the very beginning of the use of stone in ‘ordinary’ dwellings. As early as 1550, the expatriate Scot Alexander Alesius wrote that Edinburgh’s Royal Mile was “lined with buildings not constructed from bricks, but natural and square stones, so that even private houses can be compared with great palaces”. What distinguishes Edinburgh from other European capitals is the consistent use of ashlar (dressed stone) in the ‘show’ parts of the facades: those parts of the building which are on public view. Only in a handful of early New Town houses was rubble-work, originally stuccoed to represent ashlar, adopted for front elevations.

Slate roofs also make an extremely important contribution to the Edinburgh townscape. Generally, roofs are finished in West Highland slate laid characteristically in random widths and diminishing courses with a deeply textured, uneven appearance. New Town roofs were not generally ‘architectural’ and were concealed behind a parapet in views from the street.

Nevertheless, the topography of the city is such that slate roofs become a dominant feature in distant views.

Stone exterior of a 19th century Scottish Baronial building (© Neil Hanna)



Dressed stone houses in Dean Terrace (© Neil Hanna)



Stone fronted buildings in the Old Town (© Neil Hanna)



Slate roofs are a visible feature across the WHS (© Neil Hanna)



Second ONTE WHS Management Plan

2011



12 Monuments Project

2011-16



Third ONTE WHS Management Plan

2017



The St James Quarter

2021



Fourth ONTE WHS Management Plan

2025

## CONSERVATION

From at least the sixteenth century – early in a European context – building control was enforced through a key burgh figure, the Dean of Guild, whose role was crucial for the direction of future planning in Edinburgh. The Dean's Court controlled, among other matters, new buildings and the role was successively consolidated throughout the coming centuries. For example, as a precaution against fire, all roofs had to be of tile or slate from 1621, and in 1674 this was extended to building facades, which had thenceforth to be of stone, although many timber-fronted examples survived well into the nineteenth century.

What was just as remarkable as the formal force of the grand plan for a new monumental city was the consistency with which it was carried out over the following decades, through increasingly restrictive development controls by the Town Council and the private landowners and trusts concerned. It was a unique formula, using Town Council speculation along with Dean of Guild and feuing restrictions imposed by private speculators to protect the amenity of successive developments and therefore their value.

After the Second World War, habitation in the Old Town continued to decline. A similar pattern, if much less pronounced, was evident in the New Town where the need for conservation and restoration was first recognised in the late 1960s. A survey carried out by the Edinburgh Architectural Association was followed by an international conference in 1970, the outcome of which was the establishment of the Edinburgh New Town Conservation Committee.

The committee utilised Government and City Council aid to initiate a major programme of repair and rehabilitation. In 1980 the problems of the Old Town were again recognised by a small group of architects, resulting in the establishment of what was to become the Edinburgh Old Town Renewal Trust in 1985. In 1999 this organisation and the Edinburgh New Town Conservation Committee were merged to form the Edinburgh World Heritage Trust with a broad remit focused on the whole Site.

India Place at the junction with Mackenzie Place prior to demolition, 1961.



The rear of the South side of the Lawnmarket during demolition of Melbourne Place, 1967



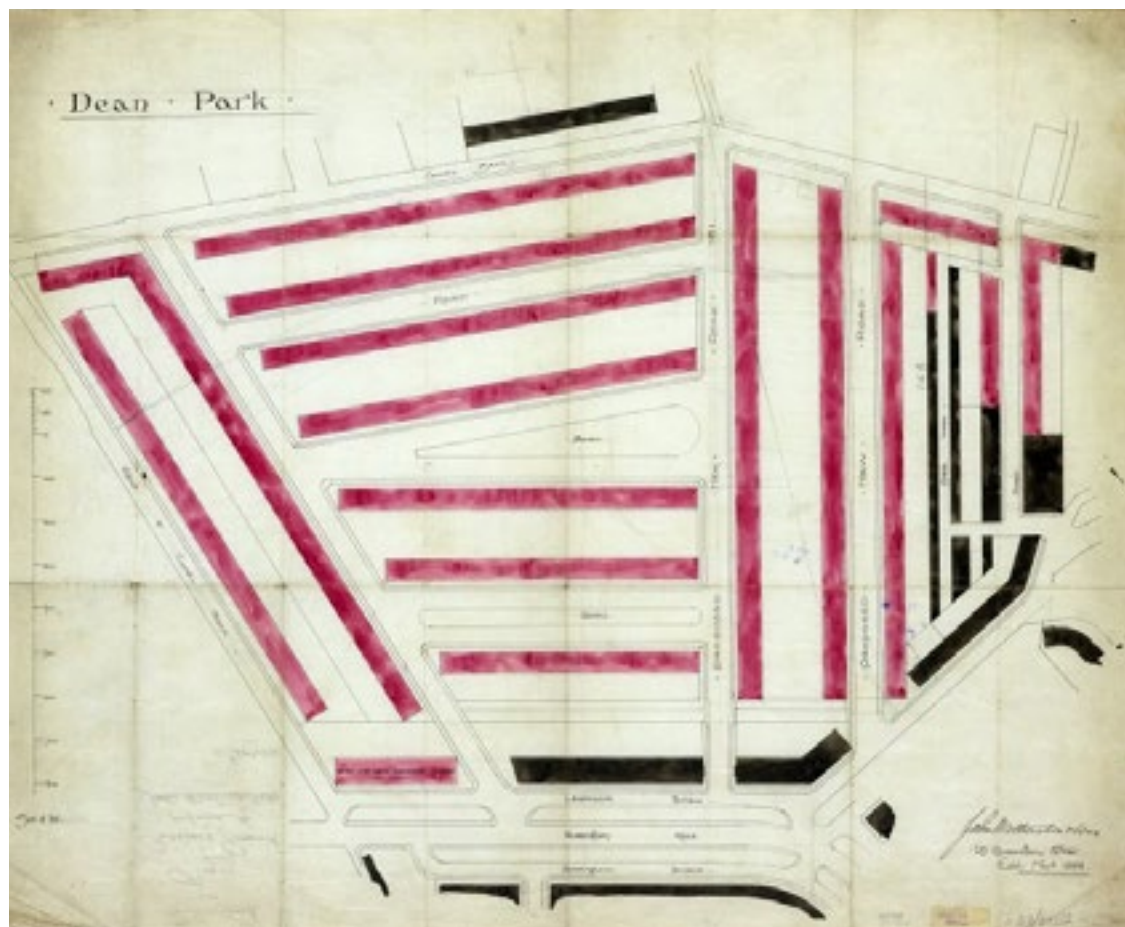
Jamaica Street, Edinburgh just prior to demolition



12 Guthrie Street being demolished in 1989



Plan of fueing ground for Dean Estate inscribed 'Dean Park' around Comely Bank, 1888



**RECENT DEVELOPMENT**

Over many hundreds of years, the Site has proved itself capable of adaptation to new uses and new ways of living. However, a very important feature of the Site’s cultural history has been its self-referential devotion to the idea of an ordered city where heritage has been highly valued. Edinburgh’s deeply ingrained culture of conservation has created the conditions for the City’s remarkable survival.

A considerable amount of development has taken place since the Site was inscribed. Most of the major changes which have taken place are measurable under the existing monitoring arrangements. However, the nature of the Site is such that often very small changes can have a considerable incremental effect on its character and archaeology. The Site has a complex, multi-layered and very detailed significance. This requires, simultaneously, an overview related to setting, infill and development and a close attention to minute details of building fabric, streetscape and landscape design.

Well Court (© Neil Hanna)



New Waverley Development (© Neil Hanna)



## A.2 Justification for inscription

Inscription on the list as a cultural site requires one or more of six criteria measuring Outstanding Universal Value to be met.

The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh met two criteria (II), (IV)

**Criterion (ii)** – *Have exerted great influence, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture, monumental arts, or town planning and landscape design.*

The successive planned extensions of the New Town, and the high quality of its architecture, set standards for Scotland and beyond, and exerted a major influence on the development of urban architecture and town planning throughout Europe, in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Aerial view of the planned New Towns



**Criterion (iv)** – *Be an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.*

The Old and New Towns together form a dramatic reflection of significant changes in European urban planning, from the inward looking, defensive walled medieval city of royal palaces, abbeys and organically developed burgage plots in the Old Town, through the expansive formal Enlightenment planning of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries in the New Town, to the 19<sup>th</sup> century rediscovery and revival of the Old Town with its adaptation of a distinctive Baronial style of architecture in an urban setting.

The Royal Mile in the Old Town  
(© Neil Hanna)



A palace fronted New Town house,  
Charlotte Square (© Neil Hanna)



The Flodden wall in the Old Town  
(© Neil Hanna)



The Old Royal Infirmary buildings  
built in the Baronial style  
(© Neil Hanna)



### A.3 Integrity

It is the exceptional quality and contrast in architecture and streetscape between the medieval Old Town and the Georgian New Town and its scale – it covers 4<sup>1/2</sup> km<sup>2</sup> and over 75% of the building stock within the Site is listed for its architectural or historical importance which sets the baseline for gauging the integrity of the Site.

This clarity of the urban structure is what needs to be maintained to ensure integrity remains intact. The combination of the topography and the buildings upon it creates a spectacular urban landscape which is punctuated with church spires, steeples and monuments. The integrity of the Site is fragile as it relies on the legibility of the skyline. The cumulative effect of the mass, height, form, design and materials of a proposed development could potentially damage the skyline and surrounding townscape, impacting landmark buildings, features in the urban area, and the landscape setting of the city. Development that fails to respect the skyline could introduce a form that detracts from the spectacular views, panoramas and iconic skyline that give Edinburgh its integrity.

Irreversible change to the skyline has the potential to compromise the integrity of the site.

### A.4 Authenticity

The Site continues to retain its historic role as the administrative and cultural capital of Scotland, while remaining a vibrant economic centre.

High-quality workmanship is an aspect of Edinburgh's authenticity which is extremely important to maintain. The identification and support of sources of craft expertise and the necessary traditional materials needed for repair and restoration is a key challenge for the Management Plan.

Material authenticity extends beyond the fabric of buildings, to the patterns of urban form and the qualities of urban spaces.

Edinburgh's setting is an indispensable part of its character and is widely understood as being a key feature of the Site's authenticity. The need to maintain key aspects of the city's setting - such as the view out to Arthur's Seat or down to the Firth of Forth as well as many other key vistas and views that contribute to this quality cannot be over-emphasised.

The concern for maintaining these patterns is present everywhere. In the New Town, the integrity of the street layout is a key defining factor in maintaining the New Town character. In the Old Town, concern was for the 'spine and ribs' pattern of the High Street. The closes and wynds maintaining the existing - and reinstated lost - relationships with the medieval street pattern.

The Edinburgh skyline

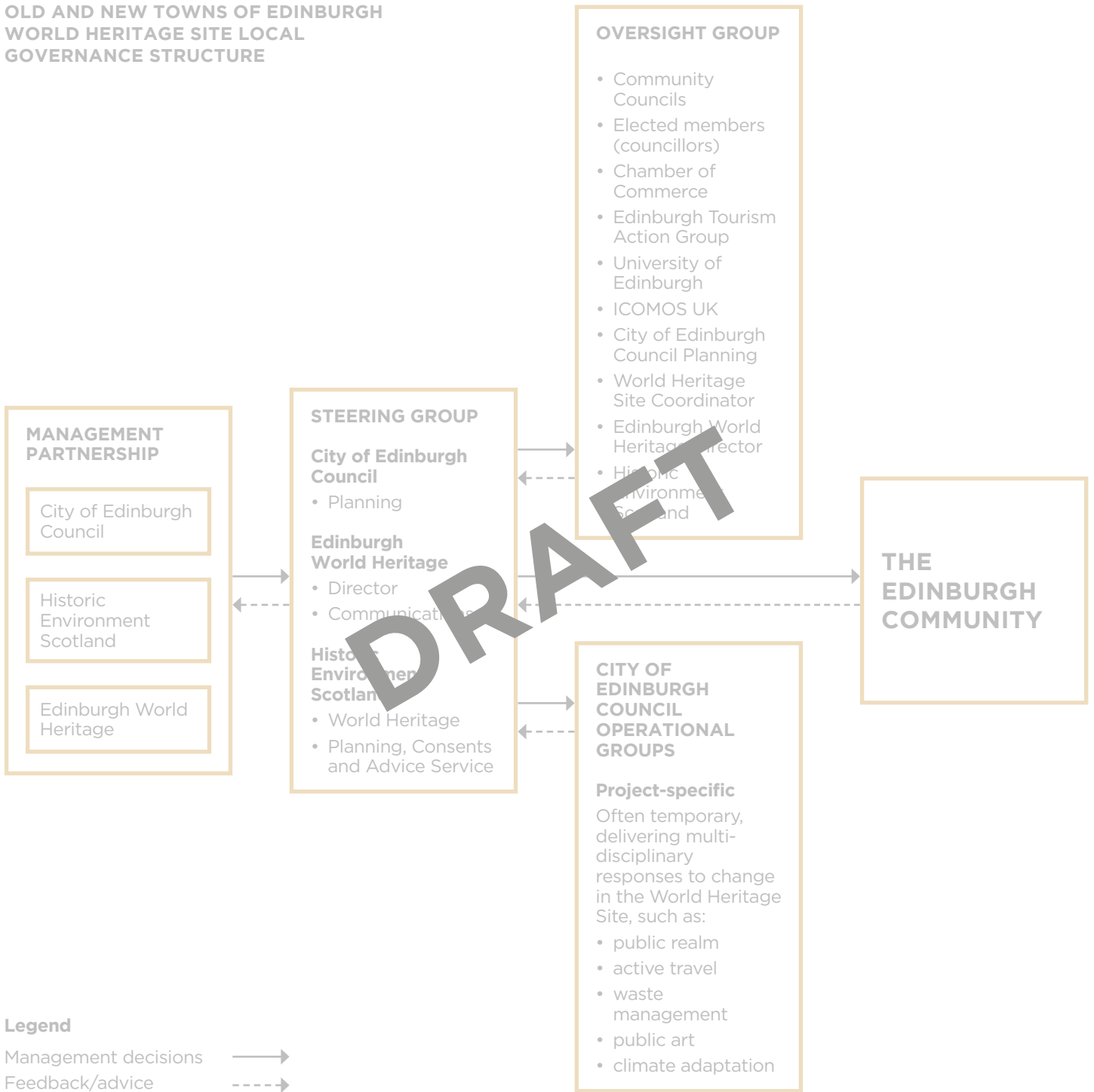


The Flodden Wall with Edinburgh  
Castle in the distance  
(© Neil Hanna)



# APPENDIX B: MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE

## OLD AND NEW TOWNS OF EDINBURGH WORLD HERITAGE SITE LOCAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



## **B.1 Governance**

World Heritage Sites are subject to local, national and international scrutiny.

### **INTERNATIONAL**

UNESCO is the UN agency with global responsibility for protecting cultural heritage internationally. ICOMOS (the International Council on Monuments and Sites) are UNESCO's advisers on cultural world heritage sites and ICOMOS-UK plays a leading role in advising on the 1972 World Heritage Convention.

The 1972 World Heritage Convention deals with the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world that is of outstanding value to all humanity. The World Heritage Convention has now been ratified by 196 State Parties and, as of 2024, there are currently 1,223 properties on the WH List. There are 35 World Heritage Sites in the UK. Liverpool was delisted in 2021.

### **NATIONAL**

The UK Government ratified the World Heritage Convention in 1984. DCMS (Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport) has overall responsibility for managing World Heritage Sites in the UK in complying with the World Heritage Convention. This is not devolved but Scottish Government has a role in ensuring DCMS meets the Convention. The management of the historic and natural environment in Scotland is a devolved matter, with responsibility sitting with Scottish Ministers. A concordat between DCMS and the Scottish Government means that Scottish Ministers are responsible for the proper management of the Scottish World Heritage Sites.

UNESCO membership is reserved to the UK Government. DCMS acts as the State Party to UNESCO and is also responsible for nominating sites in the UK for inscription under the Convention. Under the 1999 post-devolution concordat between the UK Government and Scottish Government, DCMS looks to Scottish Ministers to ensure compliance with the Convention in relation to Sites in Scotland, and to identify Scottish Sites that should be on the UK tentative list for possible nomination as World Heritage Sites. As lead public body for the historic environment, Historic Environment Scotland carries out these functions on behalf of Scottish Ministers.

### **LOCAL**

The day-to-day management of and decision-making regarding the World Heritage Site is overseen by a Steering Group that is made up of members from Historic Environment Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council and Edinburgh World Heritage Trust. There is a communications sub-group of the Steering Group that manages communication of the key messages

around the delivery of the Management Plan. This partnership must demonstrate that it is fulfilling its obligation in meeting the requirement of the World Heritage Convention. World Heritage is managed via the planning system in the UK and formal reporting takes place via the City of Edinburgh Council Planning Committee.

The Oversight Group will comprise of the convenor and vice-convenor of the planning committee, representatives of senior Council leaders, Historic Environment Scotland, Edinburgh World Heritage Trust, elected members (ward councillors), representatives of the community councils within the site, ICOMOS-UK, the Chamber of Commerce, the University of Edinburgh and the Edinburgh Tourism Action Group. However, this membership requires flexibility to expand and adapt to meet the needs of the World Heritage Site. The group will meet annually to discuss progress against the Action Plan, engage in a strategic discussion of the issues emerging from delivery and help inform the next Action Plan. The Oversight Group will pursue matters through its members' own organisations.

To ensure robust transparency and community input, progress against the Action Plan will be published every year ahead of the Oversight Group meeting and made publicly available to enable wider community comment. This will be in addition to existing engagement already rolled-out by the author organisations.

## **B.2 Planning, Policy and Legislative Framework**

### **NATIONAL**

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is the national spatial strategy for Scotland. It was published in February 2023 and sets out the spatial principles, regional priorities, national developments and national planning policy.

NPF4 recognises the international importance of World Heritage Sites. It asserts that proposals affecting a World Heritage Site, or its setting, will only be supported where OUV is protected, and it notes that the beneficial outcomes for the historic environment asset or places should be secured early in the phasing of development.

This responds to the international importance of World Heritage Sites and the obligations associated with their inscription.

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019) and The Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 provide a framework for local and regional planning policy and act as the principal pieces of primary legislation guiding planning and development in Scotland. Additionally, individual buildings, monuments and areas of special archaeological, architectural or historic interest are designated and protected under The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 and the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act.

Our Past Our Future, the Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland, emphasises the need to understand the historic environment holistically, combining both intangible (those aspects we cannot see - stories, traditions and concepts) and tangible heritage (physical things).

Normal statutory controls for each of these designations still apply, and there are local plan policies seeking to protect them.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)**

EIA is a process for identifying the environmental effects of development proposals. It aims to avoid, reduce and offset any adverse effects. Certain types of development, and development in environmentally sensitive areas, are more likely to require EIA.

UNESCO's guidelines state that 'Impact assessments for proposed interventions are essential for all World Heritage properties.' World Heritage Sites are specifically mentioned in the EIA regulations as a factor which might influence whether or not EIA is required.

The EIA process should address the impact of proposals on a Site's OUV and its specific attributes. Guidance is available on the [Scottish Government's website](#).

### **HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (HIA)**

HIA is used to assess and evaluate both tangible and intangible impacts on OUV. This includes any effects on specific attributes, setting and underlying archaeology. The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) has produced Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments. UNESCO encourages assessors to refer to this and use it as a starting point in considering impacts.

When an EIA is required, this assessment should be incorporated into the process. When EIA is not a formal requirement, it is still essential to assess the impact of a proposal for change on the OUV of the World Heritage Site. The planning authority or conservation body may therefore request an HIA to show how proposals will affect OUV.

### **LOCAL**

Outstanding Universal Value is also a material consideration in the planning process and City Plan 2030 policy Env 9 -World Heritage Sites - is in place to protect it. Policy Env 9 states:

*"Development which would harm the qualities of World Heritage Sites and which justified the inscription of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh and/or the Forth Bridge as World Heritage Sites or would have a detrimental impact on a Site's setting, its Outstanding Universal Value, integrity, authenticity or significance will not be permitted".*

City Plan 2030 sets out policies and proposals to guide development. It establishes the long-term vision for land use in the city. It includes general policies focused on the city-wide built heritage as well as specific guidance regarding the World Heritage Site. These documents are the main source of reference in making decisions on planning applications.

In addition, the Council's wider policies and guidance on the design of development provide detail on issues such as heights, massing, detailing and the appropriateness of materials. The Skyline policy plays an important role in protecting the setting of the World Heritage Site. This policy identifies key public viewpoints and is used in assessing proposals for high buildings. This is necessary to protect some of the city's most striking visual characteristics, the views available from many vantage points within the city and beyond, of landmark buildings, the city's historic skyline, undeveloped hillsides within the urban area and the hills, open countryside and the Firth of Forth which create a unique landscape setting for the city.

## **LOCAL NATIONAL PANELS**

### **The Edinburgh Urban Design Panel**

The Edinburgh Urban Design Panel gives design advice. Its aim is to raise the quality of new buildings, streets and spaces in Edinburgh. It does this by reviewing schemes and giving reports on them. These reports help designers, developers and planners improve their plans.

The panel meets monthly and reviews between one and three schemes per meeting. As well as new developments, the Panel also reviews Council policy and guidance that has an impact on urban design.

Once a planning application is made, Panel reports are available online. You can see these in the Panel's directory.

### Who are the Panel members?

The members are drawn from a range of organisations including Architecture and Design Scotland, Edinburgh World Heritage, Historic Environment Scotland, The Cockburn Association, Police Scotland, the Royal Town Planning Institute.

The McEwan Hall extension was positively influenced by the Edinburgh Urban Design Panel (© Neil Hanna)



The Scott Monument,  
Princes Street Gardens  
(© Neil Hanna)



## APPENDIX C: CASE STUDIES

### C. Case studies

Key achievements of the previous management plan are set out below:

#### CARE AND MAINTENANCE

The bricks and mortar that makes up the physical fabric of our city needs constant care and attention. We achieve this in two ways: by providing grants, and by undertaking public realm projects.

Edinburgh World Heritage runs a Conservation Funding Programme, funded by Historic Environment Scotland, which provides grants to property owners and community groups to conserve and enhance buildings and public spaces in and around the World Heritage Site. As well as offering funding to carry out the works, the Conservation Funding Programme engages with owners and the local community, supporting traditional skills and materials, offering advice, and fostering a greater awareness for the importance of the site or building being conserved.

For our work in the public realm, we are at pains to ensure the importance of what makes the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site special and unique the world over – the Outstanding Universal Value – is included and celebrated in project discussions and outputs.

Well Court, Dean Village, a beneficiary of the Conservation Funding Programme (© Neil Hanna)



Conservation works funded by EWH (© Edinburgh World Heritage)



## CASE STUDY: TWELVE CLOSES PROJECT

### The closes of the Old Town

Twelve Closes is an exciting and challenging urban renewal initiative to enhance and improve twelve of Edinburgh's historic pedestrian streets running off the **Royal Mile**. The project, launched in 2015, puts the communities who live and work in the closes at the heart of the improvements. The project is being delivered in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council and Edinburgh Napier University.

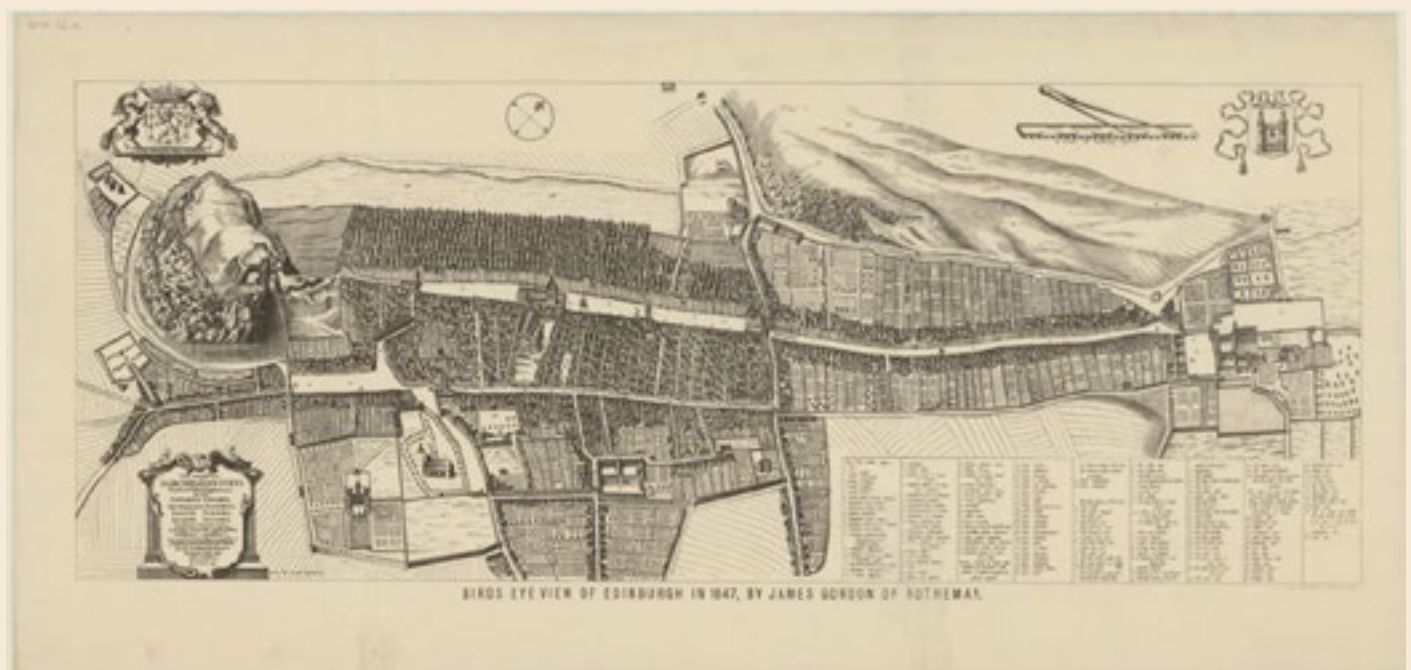
Edinburgh World Heritage receives part of its funding from **Historic Environment Scotland** which enables us to support our projects.

### Why the closes?

The project was designed in response to the condition of many of the closes in the Old Town. These steep, narrow, alleyways are a critical feature of the city's character and inform the designation of Edinburgh's urban core as a World Heritage Site.

The medieval development of the city included the street pattern that can be observed today, one that is often described as resembling the bones of a fish, with the Royal Mile as the spine. These through-routes provide excellent pedestrian links across the Old Town. However, they are often perceived as smelly, dirty and unsafe – and that is if they are known about. This project makes improvements to the closes to encourage awareness and exploration of the Old Town beyond the main street and create a sense of custodianship for the closes by local businesses and residents.

Rothiemay map of the Old Town of Edinburgh  
(© NLS. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)



### Small changes, big impact

The project aims to make the closes more interesting, attractive and visible, increasing footfall which will in turn make them feel safer and less prone to anti-social activity.

Tangible solutions such as creative lighting, interpretation and artwork help to reveal the incredible history and fascinating stories contained within the closes. The project also identifies any management issues associated with each close, such as poor signage and waste management, and consider how any new interventions could help mitigate them.

### Working together in partnership

We work with the School of Creative Industries from Edinburgh Napier University to deliver community workshops for each of the closes. These workshops generate debate about the current state of the close and what may be desirable to enhance the spaces. Participants are encouraged to think about the history and development of the close and how it could inspire lighting and artistic interventions. Edinburgh Napier University first draw up proposals, which are then developed and refined through consultation. Once the final design has been agreed, a schedule and specification are drawn up by the University.

The City of Edinburgh Council, as custodian of the public realm, is a crucial partner. They lead on the clean-up of the closes, the installation of any new features or artwork and will take responsibility for management and maintenance thereafter. The council's Street Lighting team help progress lighting specifications by designing the electrical circuits, procuring the fittings and installing the interventions in the closes.

### Outcomes

The project intends to create a template for future co-design public realm projects, engaging people with the city's outstanding historic built environment and enabling them to have a say in how design is used to improve their local area. The design solutions must be attractive and understandable and enhance the essential character of the closes. This approach is critical to the successful management of the World Heritage Site.

The entrance to Stevenlaw's Close  
(© Tom Duffin)



Pirrie's Close artwork installation  
(© Tom Duffin)



Carruber's Close with new lighting and artwork  
(© Tom Duffin)



**CASE STUDY:  
THE CANONGATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT ENERGY  
EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION PROJECT:  
TACKLING A POST-WAR BUILDING**

The Canongate Housing Development Energy Efficiency and Conservation project aimed at improving the energy efficiency of a mixed tenure tenement block of the post-war era and restore or repair its original features. It is a category B-listed development designed by Sir Basil Spence in the late 1960s.

Like many buildings of this period, the Canongate Housing Development is energy-inefficient due to minimal insulation, single glazing and thermal bridging, generating high energy consumption and carbon emissions. The buildings' fabric has significantly degraded over time and residents suffered from poor ventilation, mould, and condensation issues.

This pilot project was delivered in March 2021 by Edinburgh World Heritage in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council. Property owners and tenants were also supported by Edinburgh World Heritage's Conservation Funding Programme (funded by **Historic Environment Scotland**), which provided expertise, advice, and support throughout the project. In total, the project cost £1.2M, with key contributions from the **Scottish Government's Energy Efficiency Scotland programme**, **Scottish Power Energy Networks' Green Economy Fund**, and property owners.

The project reduced carbon emissions and energy consumptions, improved the EPC rating to band C and improved living conditions within the 12 flats and 2 commercial units. It also helped develop and test an innovative and replicable delivery model for energy efficiency retrofit of domestic/non-domestic listed properties in multiple ownership, considered as hard-to-treat. This supports Edinburgh's goal to become a net zero emissions city by 2030, and contributes to the Scottish Government's ambitious plans to meet climate change targets by 2045.

The Canongate Housing Development in 2021  
(© Neil Hanna)



The buildings just after completion in 1969  
© Courtesy of HES (Records of Spence, Glover and Ferguson, architects, Edinburgh, Scotland)



Replacement double-glazed windows replicating the original design detail  
(© Edinburgh World Heritage)



**Energy efficiency** measures included the installation of double-glazed windows, insulation in the attic, the roof and within cavity walls, installation of LED lighting, upgrades to heating systems and improvements to the ventilation – addressing recurring condensation and mould issues in the flats.

The conservation work included careful repairs to concrete balconies and the exterior stairwell, of high cultural significance, which had significantly deteriorated over the years, the restoration of Spence's original painting scheme to the exterior of the building, as well as the reinstatement of the original window design. The overall building fabric was repaired, including the roof and structural issues with the walls. Importantly, these works also featured the reinstatement of the original window scheme, including balcony windows, to Sir Basil Spence's original specifications, enhancing the architectural integrity of the building and the Canongate.

Edinburgh World Heritage also engaged with tenants and property owners of surrounding buildings, who participated in training opportunities, including workshops on maintenance and ways to make their homes more energy efficient. Additionally, more than 50 local companies and more than 120 people were employed over the project's three-and-a-half-year life cycle. Staff were able to learn new skills in energy efficiency solutions for historic buildings, as well as specialist conservation techniques.

**CASE STUDY:  
THE EDINBURGH SPYSTER TRAIL**

This story trail has been designed to make children more aware of traditional buildings in the city, get them involved in identifying simple signs of decay and neglect, and encourage a conversation about the importance of maintaining our buildings.

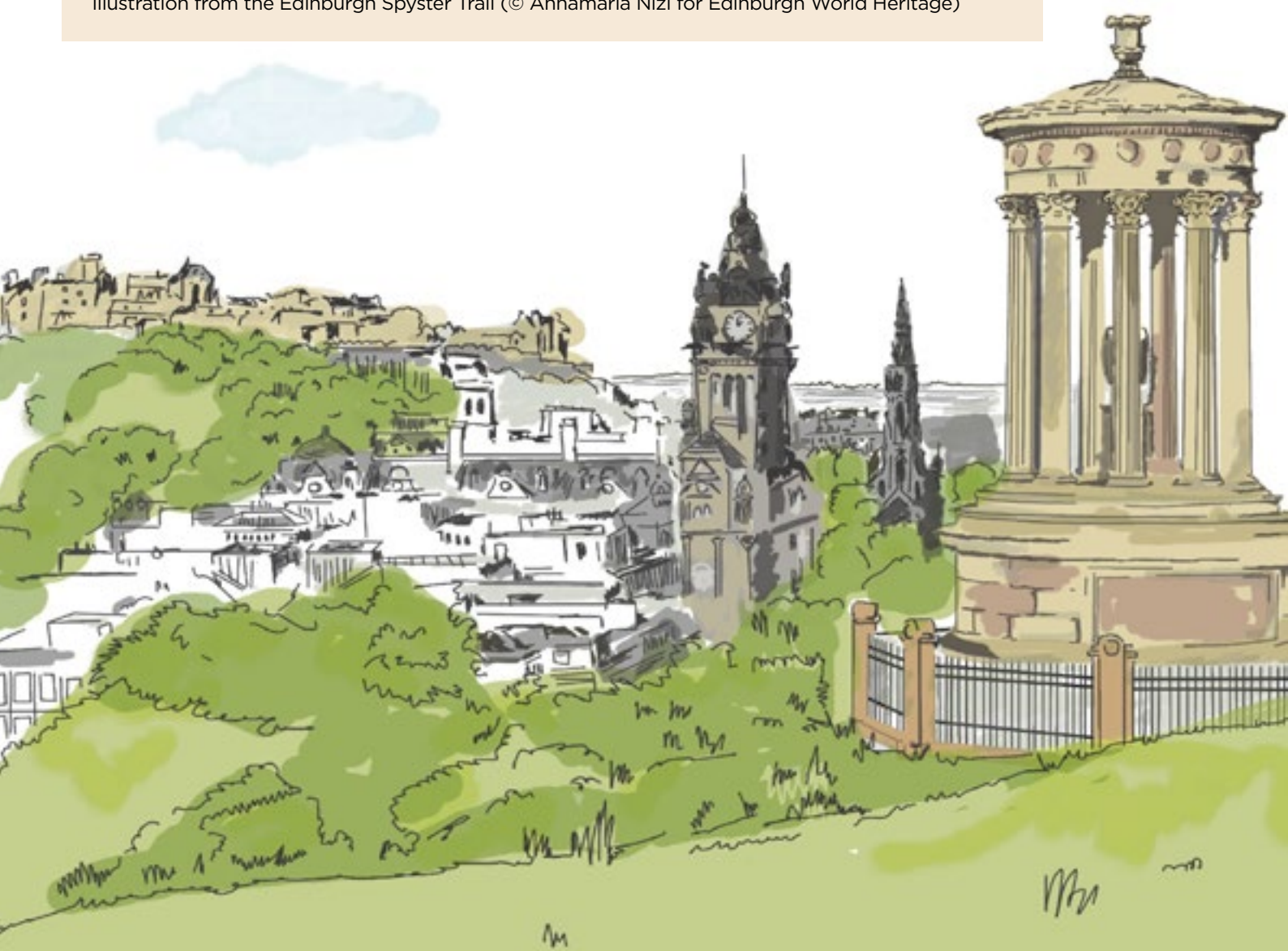
Written by children's author Vivian French together with Edinburgh World Heritage, this resource was supported by a grant from the Scottish Book Trust and published as part of #BookWeekScotland2020.

Designed as an outdoor activity, the resource takes the form of a 'story trail' and is aimed at children in primaries 3 - 4 and their families, who are invited to help Moe the Magpie spy evidence of neglect on poorly maintained traditional buildings in Edinburgh.

Participants could submit their findings to Edinburgh World Heritage via email or post and received a special Spyster badge from Moe as a reward.

Thank you to Vivian French, Annamaria Nizi, Scottish Book Trust and the children and staff of Lorne Primary School for their support in creating this resource.

Illustration from the Edinburgh Spyster Trail (© Annamaria Nizi for Edinburgh World Heritage)



## CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Heritage and sustainability go hand in hand, and we have been working hard to solidify these connections in all that we do to protect the World Heritage Site for future generations. Most notable has been our involvement in the Climate Change Risk Assessment and Climate Vulnerability Index work.

### CASE STUDY:

#### **THE CLIMATE CHANGE RISK ASSESSMENT OF THE OLD AND NEW TOWNS OF EDINBURGH WORLD HERITAGE SITE (CCRA)**

The Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) project aimed to understand and define the challenges posed by climate change to the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site and its communities. It was supported by the **Place-Based Climate Action Network (P-CAN)** and the **Atlas World Heritage (Atlas.WH) project** and delivered between July 2020 and November 2021 by Edinburgh World Heritage.

The project's methodology relied on an extensive engagement process involving the World Heritage Site's diverse communities – individuals who live, work or visit and community groups, and local stakeholders with a connection to the Site. A bottom-up approach was tested to identify the impacts of climate change on the Site and these communities, using two climate change risk and vulnerability assessment methodologies: a specific methodology developed during the project and used in 20 online workshops gathering 97 participants, and the **Climate Vulnerability Index (CVI)** created by James Cook University Australia and applied for the first time to an urban World Heritage Site in Edinburgh.

40 different impacts were identified and classified under 11 typologies. They were compiled under three groups:

#### **Physical impacts** including:

- Accelerated deterioration and physical damages affecting buildings, public realm, gardens & green spaces, natural environment, and physical assets in general
- Flooding affecting buildings, public realm and green spaces
- Water ingress in buildings

#### **Impacts on use** including:

- Disruption of use affecting culture, green spaces, local community, tourism, public realm
- Disruption to operations affecting culture, public services, businesses, tourism
- Mobility issues

**Response to climate change** including:

- Inappropriate interventions in response to climate change that affect the character of the ONTE WHS and its Outstanding Universal Value
- Tourism affected by these inappropriate climate adaptation interventions
- Inappropriate adaptation works or energy efficiency retrofit interventions to historic buildings ('maladaptation') and their associated unintended consequences or damages
- Impact on Edinburgh's attractiveness as a place to visit, to study or work due to changes of behaviour of international visitors, university students and staff
- Challenges to address increased need for maintenance in historic buildings and/or to transition them towards net-zero, potentially leading to their disuse and threatening their long-term integrity

The project's outcomes included a robust dataset of evidence that informed a draft Climate Action Plan for the Site, a replicable and integrated approach to climate change risk assessment, learnings dissemination and new research opportunities.

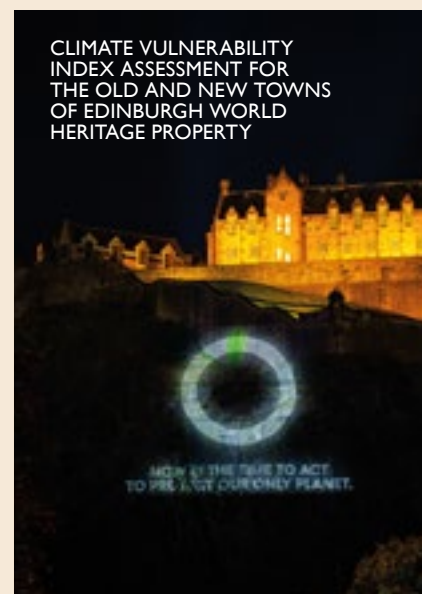
**CLIMATE VULNERABILITY INDEX ASSESSMENT (CVI)**

The CVI methodology is based on a risk assessment approach and builds on the vulnerability framework described by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The CVI process enables a systematic evaluation of the threats of climate change. It comprises two distinct primary outcomes, assessing: 1) OUV vulnerability, evaluating potential impacts to the values and attributes for which the property has been internationally recognised; and 2) Community vulnerability, assessing the level of economic, social and cultural dependence that associated communities (local, national and international) have on the WH property.

Workshops were carried out in May/June 2021, involving site managers, researchers, community representatives, business owners, management agency representatives, and other stakeholders, to identify the climate stressors that present the greatest threat to The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh (ONTE). Both OUV and Community vulnerability were assessed as 'Moderate' overall, indicating loss or alteration to some key World Heritage values, but not leading to a significant decline in OUV, and acknowledging a moderate level of adaptive capacity within the community.

As with the CCRA, the outcomes include a robust dataset of evidence that informed the draft ONTE Climate Action Plan, a replicable and integrated approach to climate change risk assessment, learnings dissemination and new research opportunities.

The front cover of the ONTE CVI



### **HIGHLIGHT: CLIMATE EMERGENCY MANIFESTO**

In September 2020, Edinburgh World Heritage published a manifesto which proposes key principles to address these challenges while stressing the importance of preserving the ‘heritage values’ of the Old and New Towns World Heritage Site.

The Edinburgh World Heritage climate manifesto calls for the historic environment to be at the heart of the city’s response to the climate emergency through a 10-point programme aimed at policymakers, experts and residents.

Published against a backdrop of changing weather patterns in Edinburgh, the manifesto points out ways in which Edinburgh’s traditional buildings – such as tenements, houses, shops and public buildings, can be sensitively improved to reduce energy consumption and better adapt to changing weather patterns.

### **CONTROL AND GUIDANCE**

In cities like Edinburgh, there is a multitude of guidance, policies, and strategies each working to manage and protect a different area of city life. We wanted to better understand how heritage is perceived as a means of management, and how it could be better integrated in management processes.

### **CASE STUDY: MAINSTREAMING HERITAGE STUDY**

In late 2020 as part of the AtlaS.WH project, Edinburgh World Heritage undertook a comprehensive study into barriers preventing the mainstreaming of heritage in city management to better understand how we can improve not only stakeholders’ sense of control in city management, but also local residents.

Identity map - Edinburgh (© A'urba)



The main findings and recommendations within this report are based on three main sources:

- International comparisons and case studies, primarily drawing on two key publications from the AtlaS. WH project: *The Thematic Study of Common Challenges* and the *Diagnostic Study of Urban World Heritage Sites within the Atlantic Area*.
- Interviews with heritage managers other UK local authorities, including Manchester, Durham, Stirling, and Inverness.
- Interviews with senior officers and politicians within City of Edinburgh Council.

The report has revealed four main barriers preventing the mainstreaming of heritage in Edinburgh:

1. Heritage is not viewed consistently as a key driver of urban renewal
2. There is an inconsistent interface between the World Heritage Site Management Plan and other city management systems, plans and processes
3. Heritage is often seen as an issue to be managed within the planning department, which can prevent it playing a broader role across diverse areas of city life
4. Resources dedicated to the management of the city's heritage, both financial and organisational, are constrained

WHS Core Zone (© A'urba)



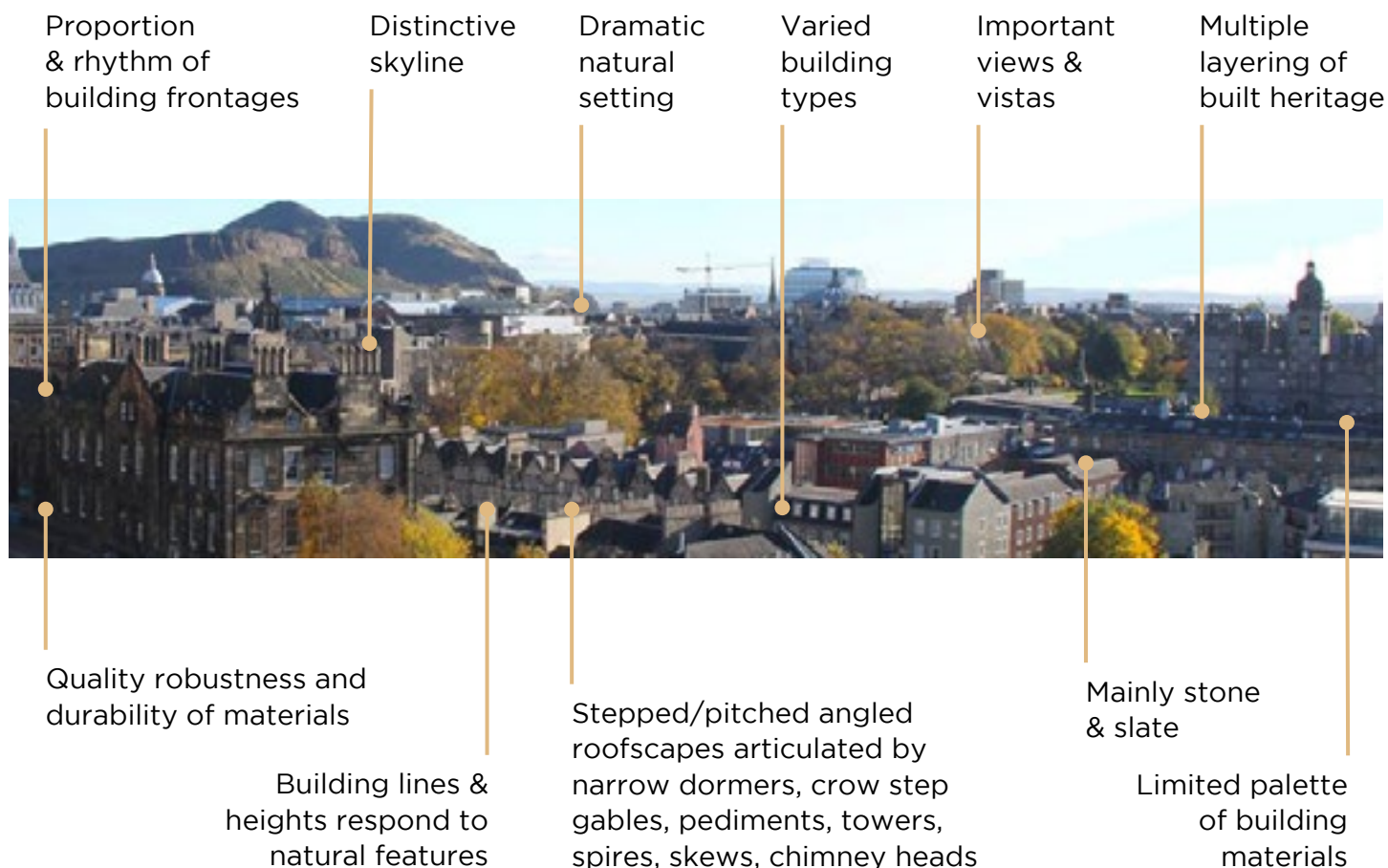
These barriers are not unsurmountable. We therefore recommend 10 interventions designed to realise this potential. Highlights from these new measures include:

- Comprehensive training, provided by Edinburgh World Heritage, across departments within City of Edinburgh Council and other institutions
- Integrated planning and governance for the World Heritage Site Management Plan, in line with recommendations from the AtlaS.WH partnership
- Providing additional expert resource to City of Edinburgh Council, via secondments, to address skills gaps
- Giving heritage a 'seat at the table' when key decisions are taken

We believe that mainstreaming heritage will result in a wide range of benefits to the city in areas as diverse as health and wellbeing, the provision of affordable housing, and the response to the climate emergency. More specifically, implementing these recommendations will lead to:

- More informed decision making across all areas of city life, including the crucial response to the climate emergency
- Heritage will play a greater role in supporting people's wellbeing and mental health
- Staff working in city institutions will have a greater sense of ownership and understanding of the city's cultural heritage
- Money will be saved because heritage is considered at a project's outset, and therefore re-work is avoided
- And the site becomes better protected for both current and future generations

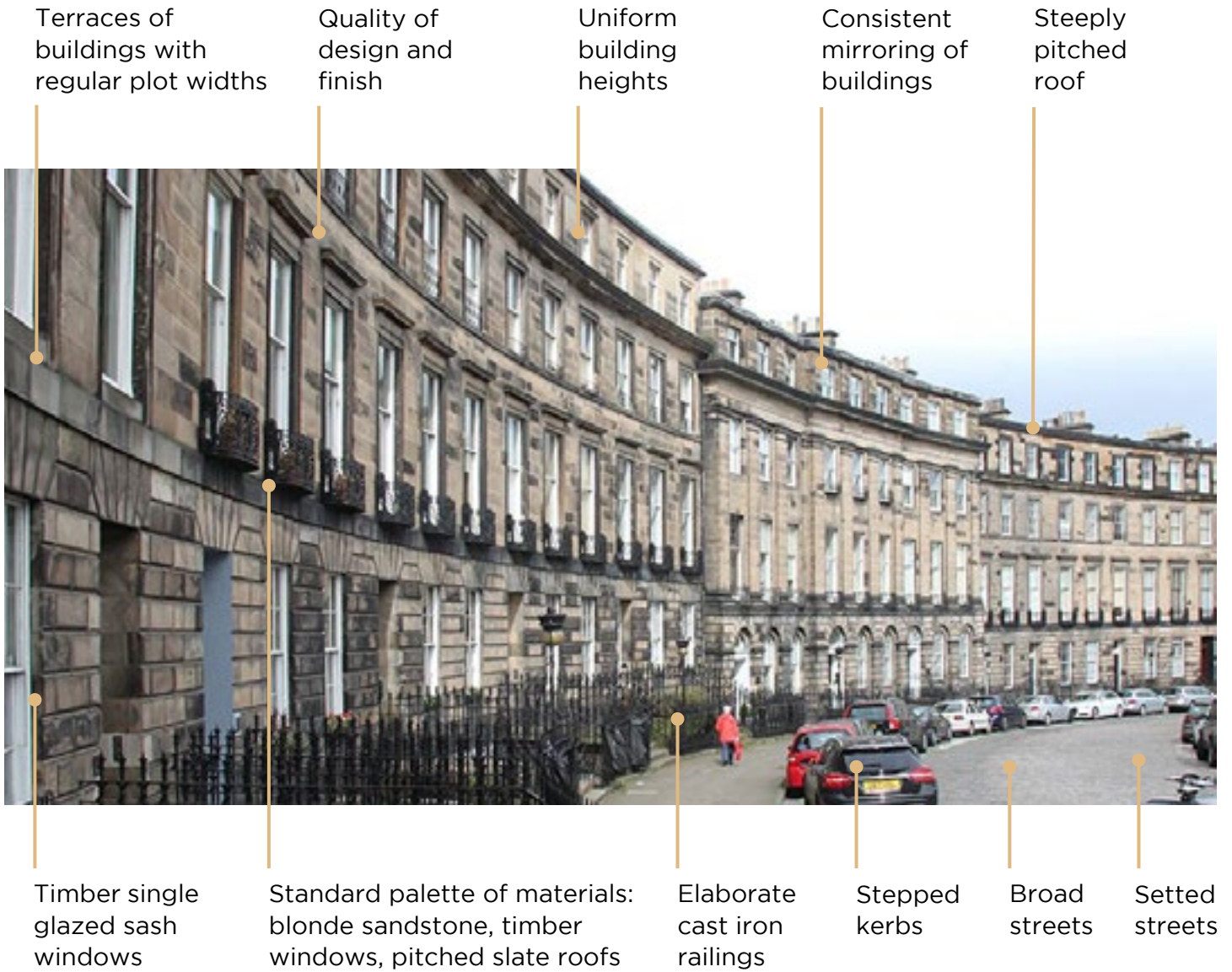
## IDENTIFYING AND MAPPING ATTRIBUTES THAT CONVEY THE OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE OF THE OLD AND NEW TOWNS OF EDINBURGH WORLD HERITAGE SITE



Understanding the OUV and the attributes (features of interest or traditions) that convey the OUV is fundamental for the protection and management of the World Heritage Site. The identification of attributes and of related other values helps to better understand the World Heritage property and its wider setting.

The Operational Guidelines (para 82, Annexe 5) suggests the following attributes might be considered to convey Outstanding Universal Value:

- Form and design;
- Materials and substance;
- Use and function;
- Traditions, techniques and management systems;
- Location and setting;
- Language, and other forms of intangible heritage;
- Spirit and feeling; and
- Other internal and external factors



The Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, the original Nomination Document, the UNESCO Advisory Body evaluation and the WHS Management Plans were used to define the attributes.

Key themes were identified:

- Conservation
- Culture
- Early origins
- Enlightenment
- Green space
- Materials
- Quality of architecture
- Skyline
- Status
- Topography
- Urban morphology

Within these key themes, 264 attributes were identified and many corresponding individual receptors. Vulnerability to change, likelihood of change and mitigation tools are also considered.

## CONTRIBUTION OF NEW CITY CENTRE DEVELOPMENTS

The success of the city and its World Heritage Site creates pressure for development. Approximately 1,000 planning applications are determined in the WHS each year. A small number of those are major developments associated with the natural growth of a thriving and dynamic city centre.

### CASE STUDY: FORMER ROYAL HIGH SCHOOL

#### THE SITE

The former Royal High School is a category A listed building (reference 27987, listed on 19 April 1966) in the New Town Conservation Area and ONTE WHS. It is an integral part of the landscape and setting of Calton Hill which itself is a national cultural asset and a SSSI. The building is acknowledged as an internationally important landmark in the evolution of European Neo-Classicism.

The City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) owns the building. It ceased to operate as a school in 1968 and has been in a number of different uses since this time. It is currently unoccupied. In 2009 CEC initiated a procurement competition to find a new use for the building. The preferred bidder, Duddingston House Properties (later also including Urbanist Hotels) proposed a hotel use for the site.

#### BACKGROUND

CEC Planning advice was given in 2010 raising concern over the scale of development and the interventions proposed to the listed building, detailing the following issues for consideration: the scale of development that can comfortably be accommodated without detrimental impact on the setting of a category A listed building of key importance in the WHS; and the impact any proposal would have on how the building, its setting and views are considered more widely as part of the landscape character of Calton Hill.

The pre-application process for the proposed development formally began in 2012 and applications were submitted in 2015 and 2017.

Former Royal High School building, Regent Road



The building within its designed landscape setting is the epitome of Edinburgh as the Athens of the North



## DECISION

CEC refused planning permission and listed building consent for the proposed development, which was appealed by the developers. The appeals were heard at Public Local Inquiry (PLI) by Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA) Reporters. CEC (as Planning Authority), Historic Environment Scotland (HES), Edinburgh World Heritage Trust (EWH), The Cockburn Association (the Edinburgh Civic Trust), and a number of other groups and organisations made representations against the proposals at the PLI (the New Town and Broughton Community Council; The Architectural Heritage Society for Scotland; the Royal High School Preservation Trust; The Regent, Royal and Carlton Terraces and Mews Associations)

The DPEA recommended refusal of all four appeals to Scottish Ministers, who upheld this recommendation, dismissed the following appeals and refused planning permission for the proposed development.

## THE FUTURE

In July 2024 plans were approved to turn the building into a new 'National Centre for Music'.

Music students in Canongate Kirkyard, with the Former Royal High School behind (© Edinburgh World Heritage)



## MANAGING HERITAGE IN A CHANGING WORLD ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORM

Providing training to city managers to be better aware of the issues facing the World Heritage Site is a crucial means of managing development in the World Heritage Site. Over the last five years, the World Heritage Site management partners have provided hours of training to council officers, politicians, students, and heritage managers in various ways. Notably, as part of the AtlaS.WH project, a brand-new, free to access online training platform was developed as a lasting legacy of the project, to introduce learners to the fundamental concepts of managing World Heritage Sites, to its day-to-day implications here in Edinburgh. We hope that with greater contextual awareness of the theory and practice of managing a World Heritage Site will continue to impact decisions on new developments throughout the city.

Over five modules, this training explores the key questions around how Edinburgh's World Heritage Site can be best managed in in the context of our vibrant, fast-changing capital city.

This training is aimed at anyone who wants to understand how Edinburgh's world heritage site is managed within a living and breathing capital city. This may include heritage professionals, council officers of any department, developers, architects and students.

It covers the principles governing the management of an urban world heritage site in the UK and enhance your learning with case studies and examples of best practice from Europe and the wider world. This course will help to inform your thinking about heritage and maximise the wider benefits it can bring to city management.

This online training course has been developed as part of the Interreg-funded AtlaS.WH project which is working towards sustainable heritage management in five European urban world heritage sites.

Online training



Heritage manager



Learning from case studies



## AWARENESS OF WHS STATUS

Awareness of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site is always top of the list of ongoing actions and achievements. Having awareness of the World Heritage Site and what this means for Edinburgh underpins everything we do to care for and celebrate this beautiful corner of the world. We have held themed events for residents, promoted fascinating stories of local histories on our website resource and social media, adapted our offers during the Covid pandemic and striven to seek new and engaging ways to bring the World Heritage Site's relevance to the masses.

Raising awareness of the WHS at the Knight at the Castle event  
(© Rob McDougall)



**CASE STUDY:  
MAKING LASTING IMPRESSIONS:  
GREYFRIARS KIRKYARD COMMUNITY  
LEARNING AND INTERPRETATION PROJECT**

During the summer of 2021, a holiday club led by Edinburgh World Heritage and Archaeology Scotland worked with young people from 6VT Youth Café and through a series of games and activities helped them learn about some of the beliefs, ideas and history that created Scotland’s most famous graveyard.

As part of the National Lottery Heritage funded Making Lasting Impressions: Greyfriars Kirkyard Community Learning and Interpretation Project, the young people were also given the opportunity to develop graveyard games and a visitor survey which will be given to future project participants.

This invaluable feedback is being used to inform our understanding of the value of Greyfriars Kirkyard, which is owned by the City of Edinburgh Council, to people today, and will be part of efforts to manage the site in an inclusive, balanced and sustainable way.

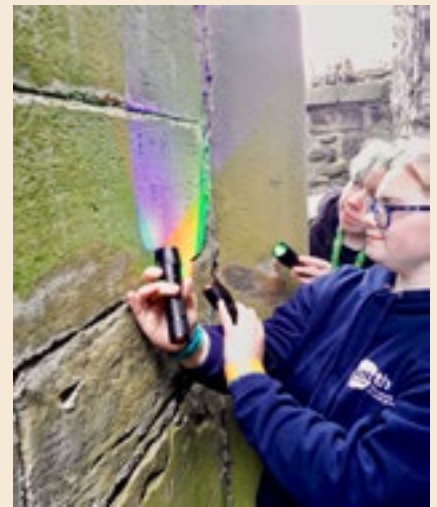
The holiday club was part of the ongoing partnership between Edinburgh World Heritage and 6VT Youth Café, whose young people also designed the logo for the Making Lasting Impressions project and took part in its launch.

To coincide with Scottish Archaeology Month, Edinburgh World Heritage and Archaeology Scotland have made available activities to help more young people engage with the people, places, and events of Greyfriars Kirkyard.

Originally developed as part of the holiday club, the young people recommended that they be made available to the public.

The holiday club represents the first of many activities with young people that Edinburgh World Heritage will be delivering in partnership with Archaeology Scotland, who awarded Heritage Hero certificates to all the young people who took part in the holiday club.

Members of 6VT Youth Café using coloured torchlight to identify historic graffiti on the John Bayne of Pitcairnie Tomb (© 6VT)



Scavenger Hunt for Easter Holiday Club 2023 (© 6VT)



The Greyfriars Kirkyard visitor self-survey form was piloted by 6VT in July 2021 (© 6VT)



## **CASE STUDY: TRON EXHIBITION - 'OUR WORLD HERITAGE'**

"Our World Heritage" - an exhibition that showcased the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh, as well as Scotland's other five World Heritage Sites, attempted to capture the essence of the place through the voices and opinions of local people.

'Our World Heritage' exhibition opened at the historic Tron Kirk in Edinburgh on 26 July 2018. This exhibition showcased the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh, as well as Scotland's other five World Heritage Sites. The exhibition, housed within the atmospheric 17th century former kirk, captured the essence of the World Heritage Site in Edinburgh through the voices and opinions of local people. The story was told in a series of videos, quotes, and specially commissioned portraits from award-winning Scottish photographer Alicia Bruce.

'Our World Heritage' explained what makes Edinburgh's heritage so special and internationally recognised as well as highlighting some of the issues associated with the World Heritage Site. A series of sections, with titles such as 'City of Contrasts', 'Survival Stories', and 'High and Mighty' set out the formal reasons for the city's UNESCO inscription, but also challenged residents and visitors to think differently about the city and consider some uncomfortable questions. These ranged from whether we are doing enough to conserve the authenticity of the site, the role of the transatlantic slave trade in funding the city's extraordinary 18th and early 19th century expansion, and the absence of women in the city's many grand statues and monuments.

Visitors at the 'Our World Heritage' exhibition in the Tron Kirk



**CASE STUDY:  
GO AULD REEKIE HANDLING BOX**

In October 2022, Historic Environment Scotland’s World Heritage team launched a new teaching resource called ‘Go Auld Reekie’: an object handling box and teaching pack based on life in Edinburgh during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A key aim was to make the resource inclusive, diverse and to give an honest depiction of this period. It includes direct reference to the fact that the growth and success of the city was a result of Edinburgh’s links with Britain’s colonial past and connections to the Atlantic Slave Trade.

Individuals in the resource represent real people of the time, including those from under-represented groups who lived and worked in Edinburgh during this time. ‘Go Auld Reekie’ is one of the first diverse resources produced by HES and is timely in recognising Scotland’s colonial history. It also helps fulfil a key recommendation from the ‘Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Legacy Review’ undertaken by the City of Edinburgh Council by providing learning materials to fill a gap in respect to Scotland’s role in slavery and colonialism.



Further information can be found and the resource downloaded for free from the [HES website](#).

The handling objects and teaching pack (© Neil Hanna)



A costumed interpreter as John Edmonstone, a real person described in the resource, at the launch event (© Neil Hanna)



Children from the Edinburgh Gaelic medium primary school, using the Gaelic version of the learning resource (© Tom Duffin)

Young people interacting with the handling items during the launch at the Edinburgh Museum (© Neil Hanna)



## VISITOR MANAGEMENT

We have been hard at work behind the scenes inputting into Edinburgh's 2030 Tourism Strategy. The strategy, launched in January 2020 and commissioned by the Edinburgh Tourism Strategy Implementation Group, focuses on authenticity, people, and place, with an emphasis on managing growth more effectively. It asks such questions as, how can tourism work better for the city and enhance the quality of life for Edinburgh's residents? Unsurprisingly, conversations around short-term lets were high up on the agenda.

### CASE STUDY: UNESCO TRAIL

Scotland is a country which is dedicated to making the world a more sustainable place, in keeping with UNESCO's values. This begins by making Scotland a sustainable place to visit, and the **UNESCO Trail** is part of this important journey.

Sustainable tourism continues to be a key concern and driver of action throughout the World Heritage Site. Led by Visit Scotland, and in partnership with the other Scottish UNESCO designations, ONTE WHS management partners helped to shape a UNESCO National Trail for Scotland, a world first connecting Scotland's multiple sites of interest, promoting sustainable travel choices and responsible tourism year-round.

All the information you need to make responsible and sustainable choices is available when you are following Scotland's UNESCO Trail. This will help preserve the environmental and cultural integrity of the sites and support the sustainable development of the communities which care for them.

Scotland's UNESCO Trail



## INFLUENCE AND SENSE OF CONTROL

We understand that the planning system can be complex to engage with for individuals or business owners in the WHS. The City of Edinburgh Council and Historic Environment Scotland have mechanisms in place for online consultation to support policy development and systems in place to engage with new development. Edinburgh World Heritage complements this by providing independent expert advice, acting as a bridge between interested parties, to help support communities to protect their heritage. The partnership as a whole wants to provide a more active role for stakeholders to participate in the process and feel a greater sense of influence and control in planning decisions.

### NEIGHBOURHOOD FOCUS

Edinburgh World Heritage launched a new neighbourhood focus approach targeting areas of the city that will benefit most from our grants and advice.

This new neighbourhood focus approach will build on our previous area-based work and will maximise the community and public value of what we do.

Property or business owners in or around the Canongate, Cowgate, South Bridge, Lothian Road/Tollcross, or Forrest Road may be eligible for grants for conservation work, maintenance and energy efficiency improvements.

What are our Neighbourhood Focus aims?  
By supporting neighbourhood areas with grants and conservation work we hope to:

- Empower communities to connect with and protect their heritage
- Improve the condition of buildings and restore the historic character of the area
- Make buildings more energy efficient through sensitive, visually unobtrusive means
- Respond to local needs to make the area a better place to live and do business

The Canongate, a neighbourhood focus area (© Neil Hanna)



EWH offers the following support:

- Grants and expert advice for the external conservation and repair of tenements, shops, and places of heritage or community value
- Grants for building maintenance
- Grants and advice for community public realm work such as interpretation, streetscape materials, historic railings and monuments
- Grants and expert advice for sensitive energy efficiency and climate change adaptation improvements
- Support for generating action on key local matters raised by residents and businesses

South Bridge shop front restored by EWH grant funding (© EWH)



The Tron Kirk in Hunter Square, a traditional gathering point for the community  
(© Neil Hanna)



# APPENDIX D: FURTHER INFORMATION / PLANNING TOOLKIT

## D.1 Conservation Areas

Coltbridge and Wester Coates

Dean

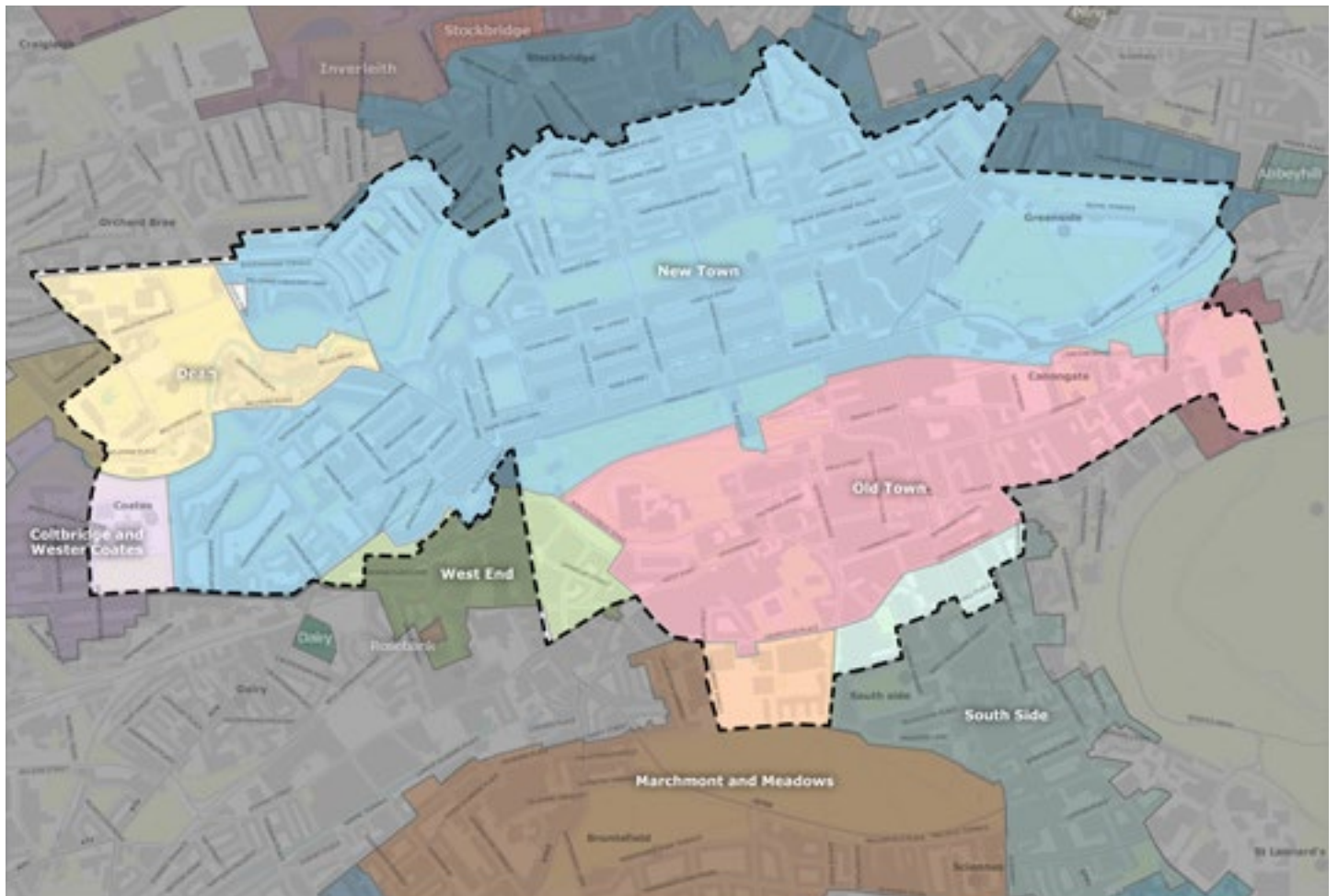
Marchmont, Meadows & Bruntsfield

New Town

Old Town

South Side

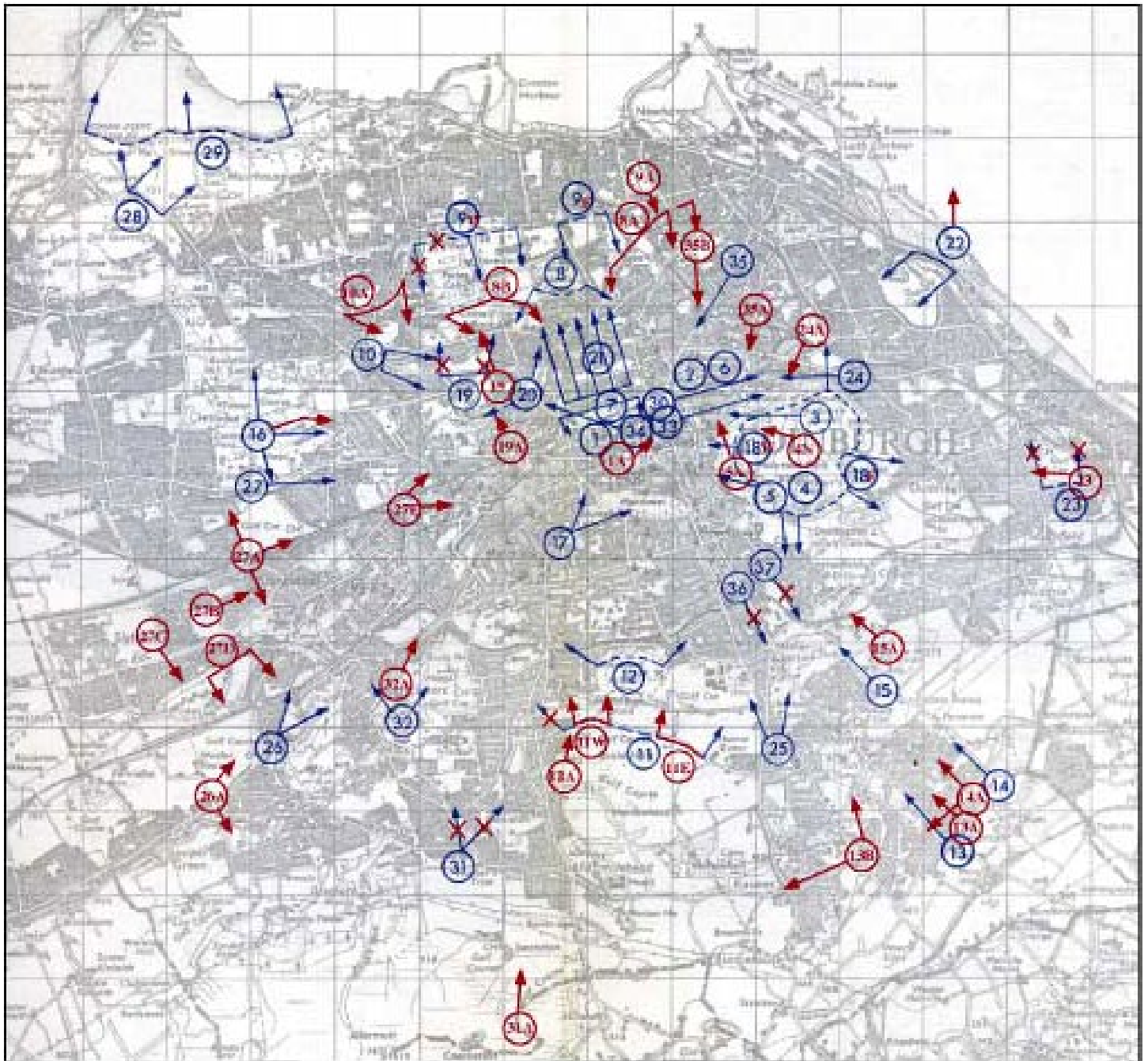
West End



## D.2 Key View Policy

### Key Views - Centre

The emphasis of the Key Views Policy is on protecting and enhancing views. This policy is used to assess the impact of proposals on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site.








**Red key views** - William Holford Associates 1968 analysis







**Blue key views** - Colvin and Moggridge 2007 analysis

## D.3 Attributes


### Vulnerability key

-  Very high
-  High
-  Medium
-  Low
-  Negligible

Themes: **Conservation**

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
1980s repair of buildings by housing associations and renewal of the built environment	Public funding	 High	Policy / funding
High quality repairs to the built fabric of the World Heritage Site	Supply of craftsmen, procurement, funding, knowledge of owners	 Very high	Training / funding
The city is continually adapted to new uses and new ways of living	Planning judgements	 Medium	Policy / training
The WHS retains most of its significant buildings and spaces	Physical development, environmental change, incremental change	 High	Sensitive adaptation / training /policy
The city is in good condition when compared with other historic cities of the same era	Incremental change, poor quality repair, maintenance	 High	Policy / training / maintenance
Edinburgh New Town Community Council work protected and enhanced the built environment	Incremental change, poor quality repair, maintenance	 Low	Policy / training / maintenance

Themes: **Conservation + Culture**

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
The WHS Management partnership	Politics, funding, knowledge	 Medium	Policy / training

Themes: **Conservation + Culture + Status**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
A history of dedication to the concept of an orderly city where heritage has been, and is, highly valued	Breakup of community, loss of community and memory	⬆️ High	Policy / training
Several periods of Old Town dilapidation, which led to phases of renewal and improvement	Breakup of community, loss of community and memory	⚠️ Very high	Policy / training

Themes: **Conservation + Quality of Architecture**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The impressive survival of the first New Town	Physical development, environmental change, incremental change	⬆️ High	Policy / maintenance
The retention of the city's authenticity and aesthetic qualities	Physical development, environmental change, incremental change, loss of community and memory	⬆️ High	Policy / maintenance
The highest concentration of protected buildings in Scotland	Physical development, environmental change, incremental change	⬆️ High	Policy / training
A remarkable assembly of early and ancient buildings in one city	Physical development, environmental change, incremental change	⬆️ High	Policy / training
A series of high quality major neoclassical buildings and terrace blocks	Physical development, environmental change, incremental change	⬆️ High	Policy / training

Themes: **Conservation + Status + Culture**










<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
A remarkable and varied collection of statues and monuments	Environmental change, neglect, maintenance	🟡 Medium	Policy / training

Themes: **Conservation + Urban Morphology**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
A tradition of respectful development within the Old Town	Planning judgements	🟡 Medium	Policy / training
The reuse and restoration, from around 1900, of the older buildings in the Old Town	Planning judgements	🔴 Very high	Policy / maintenance
The retention of the integrity of the New Town street layout	Physical development, environmental change, incremental change	🟢 Low	Policy

Themes: **Culture**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
A thriving city where communities live and work	Physical development, environmental change, incremental change, loss of community and memory	🔴 Very high	Policy
The city supports a complex range of social and economic diversity	Physical development, environmental change, incremental change, loss of community and memory	🔴 Very high	Policy

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
The continuation of a tradition of specialist shops based within the Old Town	Economy, politics, incremental change, planning judgements	 Very high	Policy
The hosting of the Edinburgh International Festival, a world famous and significant three-week celebration of the arts	Disease, terrorism, funding	 Medium	Funding / city marketing / Counter Terrorism
The city supports a large number and diverse range of residents	Physical development, environmental change, incremental change, loss of community and memory	 High	Policy / enforcement
The host of many festivals including the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Edinburgh International Book Festival, Edinburgh Jazz and Blues Festival, Edinburgh Art Festival, and the Edinburgh International Film Festival	Disease, terrorism, funding, planning judgements	 High	Policy / guidance / Counter Terrorism
Edinburgh supports a high quality of life	Physical development, environmental change, incremental change, loss of community and memory	 High	Policy
The city continues to be a place of work with historic buildings linked to a range of work types	Physical development, environmental change, incremental change, loss of community and memory	 High	Policy
Understanding the visual, intellectual, and cultural value of the WHS	Loss of community and memory	 Low	Interpretation
The positive legacy of charitable trusts and public boards	Economy, politics	 Low	Interpretation
The desire of individuals and organisations to participate, demonstration of civic pride	Economy, politics, collective memory	 Medium	Policy / training

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
<p>In 2022 the population of the city centre ward was 33,106</p> <p>In 2023 the number of university students was 73,045 (inc. Queen Margaret University)</p>	Physical development, environmental change, incremental change, loss of community and memory	 Low	Policy
Edinburgh's spirit of ambition	Economy, politics, collective memory	 Medium	Interpretation
Edinburgh has made significant contributions to world culture and progress throughout its history	Loss of community and memory	 Low	Interpretation
Resilient and successful responses to setbacks through the city's history	Economy, politics, collective memory	 Low	Policy / training
Historic and current close cultural and political links with mainland Europe	Economy, politics, collective memory	 Low	Policy / training
The WHS represents the essence of the cultural traditions of Scotland	Loss of community and memory	 Low	Policy / training
The WHS is testimony to the growth of Scottish civilisation, church, law, and the legal system	Economy, politics, collective memory	 Low	Policy / training
There is a strong historical tradition of education	Economy, politics, collective memory	 Low	Interpretation
The city is associated with many famous writers both past and present	Loss of community and memory, economy	 Low	Interpretation

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
Edinburgh has a renowned literary history and was designated as the first UNESCO City of Literature	Loss of community and memory, economy	🟢 Low	Interpretation
The complex religious history of Scotland can be seen in the buildings of the WHS	Politics, collective memory	🔴 High	Interpretation

### Themes: **Culture + Conservation**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
There is a deeply ingrained culture of conservation which continues and created the conditions for the city's remarkable survival.	Supply of craftsmen, procurement, funding, knowledge of owners, incremental change, poor quality repair, maintenance, politics, economy	🟡 Medium	Training / funding / engagement

### Themes: **Culture + Quality of Architecture**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The monuments grouped on Calton Hill are a symbolic representation of Scotland's illustrious past	Physical development, environmental change, incremental change, loss of community and memory	🔴 High	Interpretation

Themes: **Culture + Status**

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
The strong tourism economy	Politics, economy, disease, terrorism	⬆️ High	Policy / enforcement / Counter Terrorism
A series of bold municipal initiatives	Physical development, environmental change, incremental change	⬆️ Low	Interpretation

Themes: **Culture + Urban Morphology**

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
The pioneering response to the issues created by the Old Town slums in the 1860s	Physical development, environmental change, incremental change	⬆️ High	Policy / training
The influence of the system of land tenure in Scotland on the development of the city	Politics, collective memory	⬆️ Low	Interpretation

Themes: **Early Origins**

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
The prehistoric landscape character and how that shaped the place that would become Edinburgh	Failure to share knowledge	⬆️ Low	Interpretation
Two twelfth century burghs (Edinburgh and Canongate) with two early royal palaces (one within the castle), a medieval abbey, and a wealth of early buildings	Failure to share knowledge	⬆️ Low	Interpretation

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
Edinburgh's Castle Rock was fortified from the late Bronze Age (around 900 BC) and is arguably the longest continuously occupied site in Scotland.	Failure to share knowledge	🟢 Low	Interpretation
The WHS, particularly the Old Town, is an area of high archaeological significance and potential, containing a range of nationally important scheduled monuments and extensive areas of well-preserved archaeological deposits	Failure to share knowledge	🟢 Low	Interpretation / digitisation

### Themes: **Early Origins + Culture**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The archaeology above and below ground	Failure to share knowledge	🟢 Low	Interpretation

### Themes: **Early Origins + Materials**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The City of Edinburgh rests on a complicated geological pattern of sediments, extinct volcanoes, lava flows and igneous intrusions. This pattern has been emphasised by the differential weathering of hard and soft rocks.	Environment change	🟢 Low	Conservation / research

Themes: **Enlightenment + Culture**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The population became segregated by the construction of the New Town	Physical development, social change	⊖ Medium	Policy / interpretation
The high quality and consistency of building in the New Town reflected the people who inhabited it	Physical development, social change	⊖ Medium	Policy / interpretation
The city is inextricably linked to the foremost intellectuals of the 18th century Scottish Enlightenment	Failure to share knowledge	⊕ Low	Interpretation
One of the city's greatest features was its existence at the epicentre of the Scottish intellectual tradition	Failure to share knowledge	⊕ Low	Interpretation
The University of Edinburgh, established in 1583, one of Scotland's four ancient universities and the sixth-oldest university in continuous operation in the English-speaking world	Failure to share knowledge	⊕ Low	Interpretation

Themes: **Green Space**





<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
A wide range of wildlife habitats throughout the WHS support the natural heritage value and biodiversity of the city	Physical development, environmental change	⊖ Medium	Policy / climate adaptation & mitigation

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
Historic municipal planting, and walks on the north side of the railway line in Princes Street Gardens	Environmental change, public funding, failure to share knowledge	🟡 Medium	Policy / training
Many areas of open green space throughout the WHS	Neglect, maintenance, procurement, public funds	🟠 High	Maintenance / funding / engagement
The city centre has several historic burial grounds and graveyards	Neglect, maintenance, procurement, public funds	🟠 High	Maintenance / funding / engagement / interpretation
The wooded river gorge of the Dean Valley	Environmental change, neglect, disease	🟢 Low	Policy / climate adaptation & mitigation
Two Special Sites of Scientific Interest, Calton Hill and Castle Rock, and an Urban Wildlife site, the Water of Leith Valley	Physical development, environmental change	🟢 Low	Policy / training
The WHS is contained by natural buffers such as parks and valleys	Physical development, environmental change	🟢 Low	Policy/funding/ climate adaptation and mitigation


### Themes: **Green Space + Culture**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The Fourth New Town, instead of imposing a grid-iron upon the landscape, the buildings exploit the contours, view, and trees of Calton Hill in a romantic manner	Physical development, neglect, disease	🟠 High	Policy / training


Themes: **Green Space + Urban Morphology**










<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
Edinburgh's small squares, parks (pleasure grounds) and gardens, are integral to the New Town's layout and architectural composition	Environmental change, politics, loss of community, public funding	 High	Guidance / training / policy / funding
The juxtaposition of green valleys with visible natural rockfaces	Physical development	 High	Policy
The New Town Gardens group	Environmental change, politics, loss of community	 High	Policy / maintenance
The Old Town 'pocket parks' laid out by Sir Patrick Geddes	Environmental change, politics, loss of community, public funding	 Medium	Policy / maintenance / interpretation

Themes: **Green Space + Urban Morphology + Enlightenment**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
Gardens creating an illusion of the countryside in the city (rus in urbe)	Physical development, environmental change	 Medium	Policy / maintenance / interpretation


Themes: **Materials**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The high quality of craftsmanship of the public realm	Loss of knowledge, procurement, physical development	 Very high	Procedure / training / enforcement


Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
High quality, robust, and durable materials used to build the fabric of the WHS	Procurement, funding, policy	 Very high	Guidance / procurement / enforcement
The retention of many traditional setted streets in both the Old and New Towns	Loss of knowledge, procurement, physical development	 Very high	Guidance / training / policy / funding / procurement
The extensive use of tile or slate roofing materials	Traditional skills, procurement, knowledge, availability of materials	 High	Policy / guidance / training / procurement
Scots slate roofs make an important contribution to the Edinburgh townscape. The topography of the city is such that slate roofs become a dominant feature in distant views	Traditional skills, procurement, knowledge, availability of materials	 High	Policy / guidance / training / procurement
The traditional harling and colour in several areas of the WHS e.g. Dean Village, Canongate	Traditional skills, knowledge	 High	Policy / guidance / funding
Slate roofs are laid characteristically in random widths and diminishing courses with a deeply textured, uneven appearance	Traditional skills, procurement, knowledge, availability of materials	 High	Policy / guidance
The retention of the majority of the original elaborate cast iron railings	Physical development, maintenance	 High	Policy / guidance / funding
A harmonious appearance created by the limited palette of building materials	Physical development, knowledge, planning	 Very high	Policy / guidance
Buildings built of a standard palette of materials - blonde sandstone, timber windows, pitched slate roofs	Physical development, knowledge, planning	 Very high	Policy / guidance / enforcement

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
The quality of the stepped kerbs throughout the WHS	Physical development	 Very high	Policy / guidance
From 1674 even the most ordinary buildings had facades of stone	Environmental change, traditional skills, procurement, knowledge, availability of materials	 High	Policy / guidance / interpretation
The New Town is important for the sheer extent of the area covered with the finest classical ashlar-faced architecture	Environmental change, traditional skills, procurement, knowledge, availability of materials	 High	Policy / guidance
New Town buildings were constructed from the highest quality materials available at the time	Environmental change, traditional skills, procurement, knowledge, availability of materials	 High	Policy / guidance / interpretation
The consistent and widespread use of local sandstone under pitched roofs	Environmental change, traditional skills, procurement, knowledge, availability of materials	 High	Policy / guidance
The impressive survival of original stone floors within building interiors	Physical development, maintenance	 High	Policy / guidance / enforcement
The original stones of which the city was built were variations of yellow, which have now mellowed to grey	Environmental change, traditional skills, procurement, knowledge, availability of materials	 High	Policy / guidance
The use of high-quality stone and slate throughout the WHS	Environmental change, traditional skills, procurement, knowledge, availability of materials	 High	Policy/ guidance
The consistent use of stone in architecture - a national tradition	Environmental change, traditional skills, procurement, knowledge, availability of materials	 High	Policy / training
The impressive stone entrance platts on New Town buildings	Physical development, maintenance	 Medium	Policy / guidance


Themes: **Materials + Conservation**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
A wealth of internal features and a remarkable survival of many historic interiors, especially in the New Town	Traditional skills, physical development, loss of knowledge	 Very high	Policy / law / enforcement

Themes: **Materials + Skyline**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The slate roofs of buildings in both the Old and New Towns are visible as a significant feature in distant views of, and across, the city	Planning judgements	 High	Policy / guidance


Themes: **Quality of Architecture + Materials**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
A high level of quality of design and finish of buildings throughout the WHS	Traditional skills, procurement, knowledge, availability of materials, planning judgements	 High	Policy / training / interpretation




Themes: **Quality of Architecture**

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
The globally recognised Princes Street with its panoramic views of the gardens and Old Town ridge enabled by there being no buildings on the South side	Physical change, environmental change, planning judgements	⬆️ High	Policy / enforcement
High standard late Victorian and early 20th century commercial architecture	Physical change, planning judgements	⬆️ High	Policy / training
The significant number of monument bridges	Physical change, environmental change, traditional skills , funding, road use, maintenance	⬆️ High	Policy / enforcement / interpretation
The Neo-Greek architecture of the city leading to it being known as the ‘Athens of the North’	Physical change, environmental change, traditional skills , funding, road use, maintenance	⬆️ High	Interpretation
A tradition of bridges as megastructures with houses and shops both above and below, South Bridge and George IV Bridge	Physical change, environmental change, traditional skills , funding, road use, maintenance	⬆️ High	Policy / training
The city was at the forefront of the Greek Revival period	Loss of knowledge, planning judgements	⬆️ High	Interpretation
North Bridge is an urban viaduct and main artery between the Old and New Towns	Physical change, environmental change, traditional skills , funding, road use, maintenance	⬆️ High	Policy / interpretation
Substantial New Town houses, with tenements on cross streets	Physical change, maintenance	⬆️ High	Policy / training
The visible change from Neoclassical to Victorian Renaissance architecture seen across the city	Physical change	⬆️ High	Policy / interpretation


Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
Many examples of Roman Doric style buildings throughout the city	Loss of knowledge, planning judgements	⬆️ High	Interpretation
The architectural 'Super Romantic Fantasy' style's contribution to parts of the WHS	Physical change	⬆️ High	Policy / Interpretation
Some of the finest public and commercial monuments of the Neoclassical revival in Europe	Physical change, planning judgement, loss of knowledge	⬆️ High	Policy / training
The New Towns has a remarkably large area of buildings covered with classical ashlar faced architecture	Physical change	⬆️ High	Policy / training
The Old Town has an impressive range of 19th century commercial buildings	Physical change, planning judgements	⬆️ High	Policy / training
The New Towns architectural consistency is to a degree without parallel	Physical change, planning judgements	⬇️ Medium	Policy / training
City with the largest amount and best-preserved Georgian town planning in the United Kingdom	Physical change, planning judgements, incremental change	⬇️ Medium	Policy / training
The 17th century consolidation of the national architectural tradition in Edinburgh	Loss of knowledge	⬆️ Low	Interpretation
The survival of the authenticity of detail on the buildings throughout the WHS	Planning judgements, physical change	⬆️ High	Policy / training / guidance / maintenance / funding

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
There is a high standard of public realm	Physical change, environmental change, road use, maintenance, procurement, politics, incremental change	 Very high	Guidance / procurement / training


### Themes: **Quality of Architecture + Conservation**

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
The Old Town is substantially interesting architecturally in its own right	Physical change, incremental change, planning judgements	 High	Policy / training
The New Town has survived virtually intact	Physical change, incremental change, planning judgements	 High	Policy / interpretation
The impressive domestic buildings in the Old Town starting in the 16th century	Physical change, maintenance	 High	Policy / training


### Themes: **Quality of Architecture + Culture + Enlightenment**

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
Calton Hill was designed as a classical alternative to the Gothic citadel	Loss of knowledge, physical change, planning judgement	 High	Policy / interpretation / training



Themes: **Quality of Architecture + Enlightenment**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
There is a long tradition of classicism within the culture and historic fabric of the city	Loss of knowledge	 Very high	Training / policy


Themes: **Quality of Architecture + Materials + Conservation**


<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
There is a wide variety of building types from many periods throughout the city	Incremental change, planning judgements	 High	Training

Themes: **Quality of Architecture + Status**








<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
Calton, Regent & Royal Terraces have a grandeur and scale unmatched elsewhere in Edinburgh, rivalling St. Peter's, and Nash's Regent Park but built of stone	Physical change, incremental change, planning judgement, maintenance	 Very high	Policy / training
The baroque influence on the Moray Estate demonstrated by its layout and connection to the landscape	Physical change, incremental change, planning judgement, maintenance	 Very high	Policy / guidance / training / interpretation

Themes: **Quality of Architecture + Urban Morphology**


<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The highest standards of design and management for architecture, environment, transport, and services	Planning judgements	 Very high	Guidance / training
There are many basements in buildings throughout the city due to the hilly nature of the site	Incremental change	 High	Policy / enforcement
The architecture of the city is multi-layered and very detailed	Loss of knowledge	 Very high	Training / interpretation
The New Town is a fine example of order and decorum with a highly planned layout	Physical change, planning judgements	 High	Policy / guidance
The historic development of Calton Hill maximised the long views across the city	Physical change, planning judgements	 High	Policy / guidance / training
Edinburgh is one of the most spectacular urban landscapes in the world	Planning judgements	 High	Policy / training / interpretation
The elegant proportion and rhythm of New Town building frontages	Planning judgements, physical change	 High	Policy / training
Impressive examples of Scottish Baronial style buildings throughout the city	Loss of knowledge, physical change, planning judgement	 High	Interpretation
The window openings throughout the WHS are modest in scale and have clear vertical proportions	Planning judgements, physical change	 Medium	Policy / training

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The Old Town and New Town are stronger together because of the juxtaposition of their different characters with the evolution of the New Town inspired by the character of the Old Town	Knowledge	 Medium	Policy/training/guidance/interpretation


## Themes: **Skyline**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The unique Old Town skyline pierced by Castle Rock, lofty church spires and the high towers and cupolas of public buildings	Planning judgements, physical change	 Very high	Policy / training
Regulations for tall buildings in the Old Town limiting them to no more than five storeys high	Planning judgements, physical change	 Very high	Policy
The construction of the Old Town built with a predominantly vertical tendency	Planning judgements, physical change	 Very high	Policy
The distinct and unique Edinburgh skyline	Planning judgements, physical change	 Very high	Policy
Stepped/pitched angled roofscapes throughout the city	Planning judgements, physical change	 Very high	Policy
Buildings articulated by narrow dormers, crowstep gables, pediments, towers, spires, skews, chimney heads	Planning judgements, physical change	 Very high	Policy / guidance
Steeply pitched roofs	Physical change, planning judgements	 Very high	Guidance






Themes: **Skyline + Materials**

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
Steep slated roof and stone chimney stacks	Planning judgements, physical change	 Very high	Guidance

Themes: **Skyline + Materials + Quality of Architecture**

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
The city's important views are terminated in long vistas and landmark features	Planning judgements, physical change	 Very high	Policy / guidance

Themes: **Status**

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
A town of unparalleled richness and diversity	Loss of knowledge, politics, physical change, loss of community and memory	 High	Policy / training
Edinburgh's international reputation as the Athens of the North	Loss of knowledge	 Medium	Interpretation
The Old Town became more characterised as the business district after the creation of the New Town	Economy, politics	 Medium	Policy / city marketing / interpretation
One of the great cities of Europe	Politics, loss of knowledge	 Low	Interpretation / cultural diplomacy
The city stands as an architectural symbol of nationhood	Loss of knowledge	 Low	Interpretation

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
Edinburgh is home to national, cultural, and commercial institutions	Loss of knowledge	✔ Low	Interpretation
The city is the seat of government and justice within Scotland	Politics, loss of knowledge	✔ Low	Interpretation
A fiercely proud municipal authority	Politics, loss of knowledge	✔ Low	Interpretation
Two extant major early royal palaces, in Edinburgh Castle and the Palace of Holyroodhouse	Environmental change, politics	✔ Low	Interpretation
The city was built by some of the greatest architects of their generations	Loss of knowledge	✔ Low	Interpretation
The place of national establishment, including law, libraries, government, and Scottish banking	Politics, loss of knowledge	✔ Low	Policy / training
The grander merchant houses of the Old Town	Physical change, environmental change, maintenance	✔ Low	Policy / interpretation
The greatness of the city is affirmed by its civic core which is key to Scotland	Politics, loss of knowledge	✔ Low	Interpretation
There are multiple important historic educational institutions	Loss of knowledge	✔ Low	Interpretation
A significant European capital city from the Renaissance period to the present	Loss of knowledge	✔ Low	Interpretation /cultural diplomacy
The self-awareness of the high-status Edinburgh held globally	Loss of knowledge	✔ Low	Interpretation

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
Edinburgh is the creation of a spectacular programme of civic expansion	Loss of knowledge	✓ Low	Interpretation
The prestigious architecture of national stature	Loss of knowledge	✓ Low	Interpretation
The city greatly influenced the advance of urban development on an international scale	Loss of knowledge	✓ Low	Policy / training
The desire for national prestige of an international character	Loss of knowledge, politics	✓ Low	Policy / training
Contemporary institutions e.g. the Scottish Government and the City of Edinburgh Council	Politics	✓ Low	Politics

### Themes: **Status + Culture**


<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The complex city centre	Planning judgements, physical change, community, and memory	⬆ High	Policy / training / engagement / enforcement / interpretation
Edinburgh has a strong and flourishing visitor industry and is a popular tourist destination	Economy, politics, terror, disease, planning judgements	⊖ Medium	Counter Terrorism / marketing / guidance / enforcement
The presence of the merchant elite in the city	Loss of knowledge	✓ Low	Interpretation
Responded to threats to greatness with a grand manner	Loss of knowledge	✓ Low	Interpretation

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The New Town was partly built as a response to the loss of the Scottish Parliament and 18th century instability	Loss of knowledge	Low	Interpretation
Edinburgh is an architectural symbol of nationhood for Scotland	Loss of knowledge	Low	Interpretation / research
Edinburgh Castle has been an occupied military fortress and one of Scotland's most important strongholds for centuries	Politics	Low	Interpretation
The city hosts a wide range of national museums, galleries, archives, and libraries	Politics	Low	Interpretation / engagement / research
A long history as the administrative and cultural capital of Scotland	Politics, loss of knowledge	Low	Policy / engagement / interpretation



### Themes: **Status + Enlightenment**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
Edinburgh has an international reputation as a major centre of thought and learning	Loss of knowledge	Low	Interpretation


Themes: **Status + Enlightenment + Culture**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
Calton Hill as Edinburgh's version of the Athenian Acropolis, linking to the vision of Edinburgh as the 'Athens of the North'	Loss of knowledge, planning judgements	 High	Policy / interpretation / research

Themes: **Status + Urban Morphology**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
A range of Neoclassical buildings of world class distinction	Physical change, planning judgements, loss of knowledge	 High	Policy / training
The town was sacked by the English army in 1544, because of its status as Scotland's capital, which led to much of the Old Town being rebuilt	Loss of knowledge	 Low	Interpretation

Themes: **Status + Urban Morphology + Enlightenment**



<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The city had a profound influence on town planning in Europe and beyond in both the 18th and 19th centuries	Loss of knowledge	 Low	Interpretation / cultural diplomacy / research

Themes: **Urban Morphology**


<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The tradition of tenement dwellings	Social change, tourism	⚠ Very high	Policy / guidance / enforcement
Setting infill and development with close attention to minute details of building fabric, streetscape, and landscape design	Physical change, planning judgements	⚠ Very high	Policy / guidance / training
The layering of the Old Town townscape with 18th century buildings over medieval streets	Physical change, planning judgements, lack of knowledge	⚠ Very high	Policy / guidance / training
The high density of the Old Town with consistent spaces between buildings	Physical change, incremental change, planning judgements	⚠ Very high	Policy / guidance
Traditional tenement buildings are predominant in the Old Town	Tourism, social change, maintenance	⚠ Very high	Policy / guidance / enforcement
The buildings in the city centre are generally of a uniform height	Physical change, planning judgements	⚠ Very high	Policy / guidance / training
The Third New Town construction is unique due to the inclusion of mansard roofs	Incremental change, loss of knowledge	⬆ High	Policy
Fragmented hinterlands, that are lower and less uniform than the city centre	Lack of knowledge, physical change	⬆ High	Policy
The inclusion of mews for coaches and servants	Physical change, planning judgements, loss of knowledge	⚠ Very high	Policy / training / interpretation
Minor tradesmen's streets	Physical change, planning judgements, loss of knowledge	⚠ Very high	Policy / training / interpretation

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
Terraces of buildings with regular plot widths	Physical change, planning judgements	! Very high	Policy / training / interpretation
The diagonally set square on Melville Street is a different planned layout specific to the Third New Town	Planning judgements, physical change, road use	^ High	Policy
The many Old Town closes illustrate the layering of the city on the original landholding pattern	Physical change, planning judgements	^ High	Policy / interpretation / conservation / enforcement
New Town building consistency, usually three storey and a basement with some four storey corner buildings and central pavilions	Physical change, planning judgements, loss of knowledge	^ High	Policy / training
The 'spine and ribs' street pattern of the Old Town	Physical change, planning judgements	^ High	Policy / interpretation / training
The Old Town hard urban form is of continuous frontages built to a consistent and harmonious height	Physical change, planning judgements	^ High	Policy / training
The Old Town was cultivable land on slopes which was then built on over time	Loss of knowledge	- Medium	Interpretation
The influence of Sir Patrick Geddes	Loss of knowledge	- Medium	Interpretation / research
Oval and polygonal streets in the New Town	Physical change	! Very high	Policy
The Old Town has a little altered street plan	Physical change, planning judgements	^ High	Policy / training
The Dean Development of the Seventh New Town	Physical change, maintenance	^ High	Training / interpretation



Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
The Dean Village development of an existing Milling community to a suburban enclave	Flood, physical change, environmental change, loss of knowledge	⬆️ High	Training / interpretation / adaptation & mitigation
The ordered classicism of the New Town	Physical change, planning judgements	⬆️ High	Policy / training
Civic Survey and Plan for the City and Royal Burgh of Edinburgh (Abercrombie and Plumstead plan) 1949 - Old Town post war rehabilitation	Physical change, planning judgements	⬆️ High	Training / interpretation
The Moray fues were envisaged as a self-contained enclave for aristocrats and professional gentry	Physical change, planning judgements	⬆️ High	Policy / training
The densely packed streets of the Old Town	Physical change	⬆️ High	Policy / training
Old Town architecture reflects a gradually changing vocabulary	Lack of knowledge, physical change	⬆️ High	Policy
Georgian interventions in the Old Town	Lack of knowledge, physical change	⬆️ High	Policy
Broad streets in both the Old and New Towns	Physical change, planning judgements	⬆️ High	Policy / training
A broad high street, which was unusual for a medieval town in Scotland	Physical change, planning judgements	⬇️ Medium	Policy / training
The High Street/Lawnmarket is largely early classical in character	Physical change, planning judgements	⬇️ Medium	Policy / training
The unique couple of the medieval Old Town and the classical New Town	Lack of knowledge	⬇️ Medium	Policy / Planning Judgements

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
The Burgh of the Canongate	Loss of knowledge	 Low	Interpretation / research
The understanding of the history of the charter towns	Loss of knowledge	 Low	Interpretation / research
The geometrical organisation of the New Town	Physical change, planning judgements	 Low	Policy
The Old Town	Physical change, planning judgements, loss of knowledge, loss of community and memory	 Low	Policy / training
The New Town	Physical change, planning judgements, loss of knowledge, loss of community and memory	 Low	Policy / training
Building control from the 16th century	Loss of knowledge	 Low	Interpretation
The Old Town protected by walls	Loss of knowledge	 Low	Interpretation
Renaissance period as represented by the Canongate Tolbooth	Loss of knowledge	 Low	Interpretation
Seven major New Town developments plus several smaller ones	Loss of knowledge	 Low	Interpretation
Edinburgh's duality is unusual (contrast between the Old Town and New Town)	Loss of knowledge	 Low	Interpretation
The influence of the Water of Leith to the city	Environmental change	 High	Adaptation & mitigation



Themes: **Urban Morphology + Conservation**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The Old Town's Medieval 'fishbone' layout provides a clarity of structure unrivalled in Europe	Physical change, planning judgements	 Very high	Policy / interpretation / training


Themes: **Urban Morphology + Culture**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The city's relationship with the Forth estuary	Physical change	 Very high	Policy / guidance / training
The characteristic Scottish termination of the axis of streets with public monuments	Physical change, planning judgements, lack of knowledge	 Very high	Policy / guidance / training


Themes: **Urban Morphology + Enlightenment**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
James Craig's plan for the New Town	Physical change, planning judgements, lack of knowledge	 Medium	Interpretation / research
The planning of the city followed European principles	Lack of knowledge, physical change	 Low	Policy





## Themes: **Urban Morphology + Green Space**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
Shared areas of garden for residents were included as a feature in the New Town from the beginning	Environmental change, politics, loss of community	 Very high	Policy / maintenance

## Themes: **Urban Morphology + Materials**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The varied levels of the city due to its hilly nature make roofscapes a highly visible feature across the WHS	Physical change, environmental change, traditional skills, maintenance, materials shortage, procurement	 Very high	Policy / guidance

## Themes: **Urban Morphology + Quality of Architecture**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
Consistent mirroring of buildings in the New Town	Incremental change, physical change	 High	Policy
Sir Patrick Geddes and his legacy in pioneering and innovative urban planning, sociology, and philanthropy	Loss of memory	 Low	Interpretation / research
Examples of Old Scots and Flemish Style architecture, for example, Cockburn Street	Loss of memory, physical change	 High	Policy / training
The New Town terraces each have a central block with an originally significant building	Loss of memory, physical change	 High	Interpretation

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
Palace fronts including frontages post 1791	Incremental change, physical change	⬆️ High	Interpretation / policy
Building control enforced through the Dean of Guild from the 16th century	Loss of memory	⬆️ Low	Interpretation
Royal Mile/High Street	Physical change, tourism, road use	⬆️ High	Policy / enforcement / guidance / procurement









### Themes: **Urban Morphology + Status**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The most extensive example of Neoclassical rationalist town planning anywhere in the world	Loss of knowledge	⬆️ High	Interpretation / research
A continuous programme of construction from 1767 to 1890	Loss of knowledge	⬆️ Low	Interpretation / research

### Themes: **Urban Morphology + Status + Culture**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The Improvement acts 1827 onwards	Loss of knowledge	⬆️ Low	Interpretation / research

Themes: **Urban Morphology + Topography**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The planned alignments of key buildings in the Old and New towns	Physical change, planning judgements	 Very high	Policy / training
Unrivalled urban and landscape qualities	Physical change, environmental change, planning judgements	 High	Policy
The topography leads to dramatic and immediate relationships with other parts of the city	Physical change, planning judgements	 High	Policy / training
William Starks plan for the Third New Town aimed at picturesque variety by using contours, oblique views, and trees, rather than imposing the geometry and symmetry of the First New Town	Physical change, incremental change, planning judgements, maintenance, loss of knowledge	 Very high	Interpretation / policy / research
The linear development of the Fourth New Town from Waterloo Place	Physical change, incremental change, planning judgements, maintenance, loss of knowledge	 Very high	Interpretation / policy / research
The later New Towns broke from the strict grid pattern of the First New Town to create circuses, curved terraces, and D shaped Crescents	Physical change	 Very high	Interpretation / policy / research
The design of the seventh New Town exploited the contours around Calton Hill to create impressive terraces	Physical change, incremental change, planning judgements, maintenance	 High	Policy / training
The city has one of the most spectacular urban landscapes in the world	Planning judgements	 High	Policy / training / guidance

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
Dramatic views in and out of the site including views to open countryside up to 30 km beyond the boundary	Physical change, planning judgements	⬆️ High	Policy / training / guidance (key views)
The Old Town and New Towns exploit the topography they are sited on for the maximum picturesque value and land use	Physical change	⬆️ High	Policy / training
The Old Town is composed of long and narrow tofts / landholding patterns	Physical change, planning judgements	⬇️ Medium	Policy / training
The topography of the Second New Town on a North facing slope	Physical change	⬇️ Medium	Policy / guidance / training
Juxtaposition between the two towns	Lack of knowledge	⬇️ Medium	Policy
The topography of the whole site	Physical change	⬇️ Medium	Policy / guidance / training
Dramatically varied terrain	Physical change	⬇️ Medium	Policy / guidance / training
The tall facades of the High Street/Lawnmarket are usually taller on the rear elevation due to the steep hill they are sited on	Physical change, planning judgements	⬇️ Medium	Policy / training
Contrast with the Old Town	Lack of knowledge	⬇️ Medium	Policy
The high ridge of the ancient Old Town	Physical change	⬇️ Medium	Interpretation
The New Town was created as a contrast on a fresh site that was set apart from the existing Old Town	Physical change	⬇️ Medium	Policy / interpretation

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The dramatic siting of the Old Town	Physical change, planning judgements	🟢 Low	Policy / interpretation
The Old Town is situated in a spectacular site on the spine of glacial debris trailing from Castle Rock	Physical change, Planning judgements	🟢 Low	Interpretation
The naturally constrained nature of the site dictated how the city was built	Physical change, Planning judgements	🟢 Low	Guidance / interpretation

### Themes: **Urban Morphology + Topography + Conservation**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
There are multiple layers of built heritage from many different periods in history	Physical change, planning judgements, lack of knowledge	🔴 Very high	Policy / guidance / training
Edinburgh was built to create many important views and vistas	Physical change, planning judgements	🔴 Very high	Policy / guidance / training

### Themes: **Urban Morphology + Topography + Green space**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Key factors affecting the value</b> i.e. Impacts/Risks	<b>Vulnerability to change</b>	<b>Mitigation tools</b>
The Waverley Valley forms a great arena within the heart of the city	Physical change, planning judgements	🔴 Very high	Policy / guidance / training / interpretation
The city sits within a dramatic natural setting	Climate change/erosion	🟢 Low	Interpretation
Edinburgh is built on and surrounded by hills and valleys	Climate change/erosion	🟢 Low	Interpretation

Themes: **Urban Morphology + Topography + Skyline**

Attributes	Key factors affecting the value i.e. Impacts/Risks	Vulnerability to change	Mitigation tools
The buildings of the Old Town give the impression of growing out of the buildings beneath them	Physical change, planning judgements	⬆ High	Policy / guidance / training / interpretation
Dramatic changes in level reflect the topography and setting	Physical change, planning judgements, loss of knowledge	⬆ High	Policy / guidance / training / interpretation
The lines and heights of the buildings respond to the surrounding natural features	Physical change, planning judgements, loss of knowledge	⬆ High	Policy / guidance / training / interpretation

## Glossary

### Acropolis

The citadel of a Greek city, placed at its highest point and containing the main temples and buildings

### Ashlar

Blocks of masonry cut to even faces and square edges, laid in horizontal courses and most often used on the front of buildings

### Chimney head

Sometimes called a stack, it is the element of the chimney visible above the roofline

### Citadel

A fortress, typically one on high ground above a city

### Classicism

The following of ancient Greek or Roman principles and style in art and literature, generally associated with harmony, restraint, and adherence to recognised standards of form and craftsmanship

### Crowstep/s

A series of squared stones which form step like projections on the sloping sides of a gable

### Dormer

A window set in a sloping roof with a roof of its own

### Flemish

A style inspired by the 17th century architecture of Northern Europe, often of red brick construction with stepped gables

### Fue

A common form of land tenure in Scotland in the past

### Gable

The upper end wall of a building which mirrors the shape (usually triangular) of the pitched roof against which it abuts

### Georgian

The art and architecture produced in Britain and Ireland during the period of the reigns of George 1st to George 3rd, 1714 to 1820

### Gothic

A style of art and architecture from the 12th to 16th centuries characterized by lightness, verticality and later an increasing intricacy

**Gothic Revival**

The architecture and decorative arts produced from a revival of interest in the Medieval Gothic style starting in the 18th century and flourishing in the 19th

**Greek Revival**

An architectural style inspired by the architecture of classical Greece

**Harling**

An exterior rough textured surface finish traditionally of lime and coarse aggregate mortar. It is a common type of traditional surface finish on masonry buildings of solid wall construction in Scotland

**Mansard**

A mansard or mansard roof is a multi-sided roof with two slopes on each of its sides, the lower slope is at a steeper angle than the upper. They often have dormer windows

**Mews**

A row or courtyard of stables and carriage houses with living quarters above them, built behind large city houses

**Neoclassical**

An architectural style that began in the mid-18th century

**Neo-Greek**

A later subset of the Neoclassical style

**Old Scots**

See Scottish Baronial

**Pediment**

In classical architecture a pediment is a low-pitched gable crowning a portico or façade

**Platt**

A platform, doorstep, or landing

**Renaissance**

The arts in Italy from the early 14th to the mid-16th century

**Romantic (classicism)**

A term sometimes used to characterize an aspect of Neoclassicism in which an interest in antiquity is tinged with Romantic feeling

**Roman Doric**

One of the eight Orders of classical architecture. The Orders consist of variations of an assembly of parts made up of a column (usually with a base), a capital, and an entablature.

**Rus in urbe**

A term used to describe the illusion of countryside created by a building or garden within a city

**Sack/sacked/sacking**

To attack a building or town, causing destruction and stealing valuable items

**Scottish Baronial**

The leading architectural style in mid-19th century Scotland. Based on the castellated style of the late 16th and early 17th century tower house.

**Scottish Enlightenment**

The period in 18th and early 19th century Scotland characterised by an outpouring of intellectual and scientific accomplishments.

**Sett**

A broadly rectangular quarried stone used in paving roads and walkways

**Skews**

An architectural detail that projects above a roof/ridge of a building

**Spire**

An acutely pointed termination of a turret, tower, or roof (usually of a church)

**Super Romantic**

An 18th and 19th century revivalist movement focussed on building styles that evoke a sense of the distant past

**Tenement**

A type of building shared by multiple dwellings, typically with flats or apartments on each floor and with shared entrance stairway access

**Toft**

A plot of land behind a building, often bounded at the rear by a back lane

**ACRONYMS:**

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)

World Heritage Site (WHS)

## D.4 The Consultation Process

The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh WHS has been designated since 1995. The management partners have over 25 years of experience in understanding the threats to the health of the WHS.

A public, pre-draft consultation process was undertaken in December 2022. It was informed by discussions at stakeholder workshops, community council meetings, social media listening exercises, as well as face to face meetings in libraries, playgrounds, graveyards and hairdressers. The consultation was overseen by the WHS Steering Group.

### THE FIRST STEPS

A review of the first and second plan was carried out to reflect the current context. Other similar national and international examples of Management Plans were looked at (Bath, Bruges, Vienna, Regensburg, Florence and Porto) for their good practice.

This international perspective was also bolstered by Edinburgh World Heritage's involvement in the AtlaS.WH project between 2018-2021 which explored participatory governance in the sustainable management of urban World Heritage Sites in the Atlantic Area, providing a strong basis for review and development of Edinburgh's management plan.

### BUILDING ON BEST PRACTICE: A PEOPLE-CENTRED APPROACH

The engagement strategy from the previous plan provided the benchmark for how to undertake the consultation for this plan. This chimes with the aims of the Management Plan which highlights a people-centred approach to the Site's various stakeholders, and balances protecting the built environment of the city with its intangible qualities.

When developing the engagement activities for the Management Plan and more widely through partnership activities, we aimed to engage with people with protected characteristics. This included newly-arrived families and refugees, the D/deaf community, Edinburgh's Black and Caribbean communities, and LGBT+ communities.

However, we remain aware that our engagement can find itself speaking with the same audiences who are already engaged in their local heritage as members of community councils or local heritage groups. We want to continue to improve how we reach those less likely to participate.

### ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

An aligned approach to consultation and engagement for the Management Plan was important to ensuring a level understanding of the connection with the **City Centre Transformation** strategy. The Management Plan must reflect the views not only of the organisations involved in its management, but also the users of the Site: those who live, work in and visit it. Extensive consultation activities to capture this wide range of stakeholders formed the engagement strategy which is summarised in the tables below.

**PRE-DRAFT ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

Tool / Event	Description
Professionally recruited focus group discussions (I)	<p>Representative panels of residents across the city. Qualitative information on key threats and opportunities. Key finding: the Management Plan should consider what additional measures or provisions are needed to centre the experience of local people without compromising the touristic offer to the city.</p> <p>December 2021.</p>
Professionally recruited focus group discussions (II)	<p>A further set of focus groups with residents within and outwith the World Heritage Site.</p> <p>The format was on the modified Place Standard Tool to allow for comparison across all engagement activities and would include a deep dive into key topics identified by pre-consultation, supported by Sustrans Places for Everyone funding scheme.</p> <p>March-April 2023</p>
Online forums	<p>Two online forums were held in which a vast cross section of stakeholders was invited, including representatives from the community, local organisations and residents. This combines the community and expert workshops of the previous engagement plan.</p> <p>27 October 2022 and 10 November 2022</p>
Individual group engagement and other community events	<p>Individual community councils and community groups participated in bespoke engagement activities following on from blanket call-out and subsequent follow-ups, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Southside Community Council</li> <li>• Edinburgh Tourism Action Group (ETAG)</li> <li>• Edinburgh Urban Design Forum</li> <li>• Edinburgh Civic Forum</li> <li>• New Town and Broughton Community Council (NTBCC) (and India Street residents association)</li> <li>• Dumbiedykes Gala Day</li> <li>• The Big Draw event at Greyfriars Kirkyard</li> </ul> <p>September-December 2022</p>

Tool / Event	Description
Online consultation	Via CEC's online Consultation Hub (376 responses). Alignment with City Centre Transformation and supported by social media engagement.  October-December 2022
Social media engagement	'Softer', self-selecting online engagement in the style of a weekly question/thematic poll promoted on Facebook and Twitter, based on the themes and prompts used for the wider community consultation e.g. 'Is it easy to live in the World Heritage Site?'  October-December 2022

### CONSULTATION DRAFT ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Tool / Event	Description
Online consultation	Via CEC's online Consultation Hub (206 responses)  February - April 2024
Individual group engagement and other community events	Individual community councils and community groups participated in bespoke engagement activities following on from blanket call-out and subsequent follow-ups, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edinburgh Civic Forum</li> <li>• New Town and Broughton Community Council</li> </ul> March - April 2024
Social media signposting towards the online consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion of WHS and online consultation on Forth Radio (45,688 people reached, listen-through rate of 99%)</li> <li>• Facebook, LinkedIn, X, Instagram promotion of WHS and online consultation, including video from Planning Convener and British Sign Language advert</li> </ul> February - April 2024

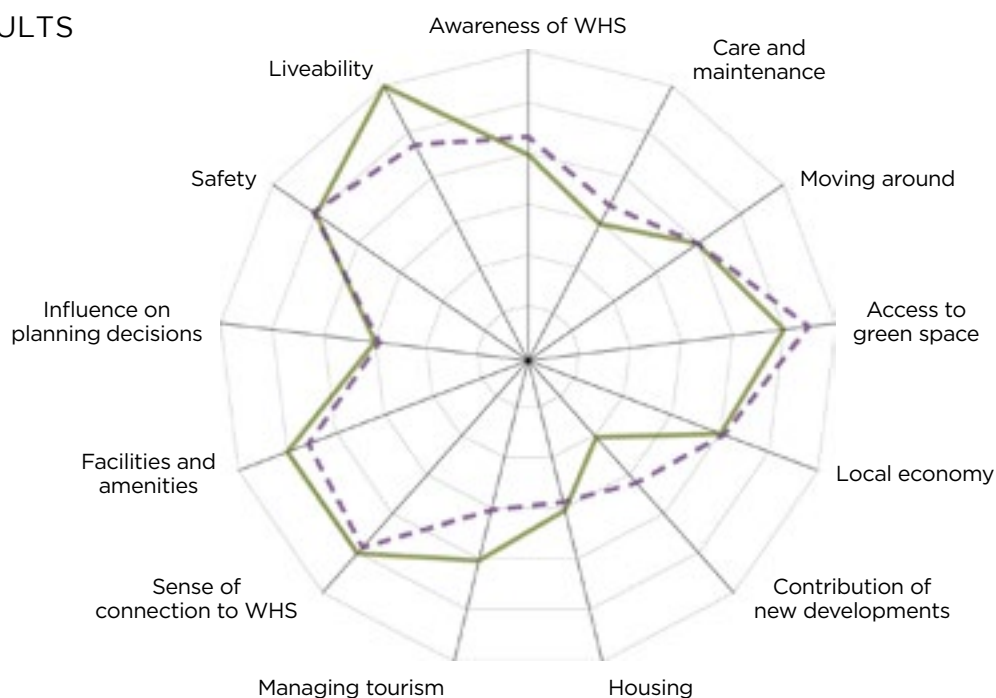
Tool / Event	Description
Physical signposting towards the Online consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signposting to the online engagement via 10 lamp post wraps on the boundary of the WHS,</li> <li>• Leaflet drops targeted to 2500 postcodes within the WHS boundary</li> <li>• 2500 Promotional postcards linking to the consultation deposited in libraries within/outside WHS boundary, and in cafes and cultural venues across the city</li> </ul> <p>February - April 2024</p>
Collaborative promotion with Climate Ready Edinburgh consultation events	<p>Targeted events where colleagues presented the project and shared links to the online consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Women in Property’</li> <li>• RIAS (Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland)</li> <li>• University of Edinburgh climate conference</li> </ul>

### PLACE STANDARD TOOL

Each of the engagement activities was based on the modified Place Standard Tool to ensure comparability. The Place Standard **methodology** consists of 14 questions which cover both the physical and social elements of a place. The questions were tailored to reflect the World Heritage issues.

### PLACE STANDARD RESULTS

— 2016  
 - - - 2023



Out of the 14 themes of the Place Standard, 9 were kept:



Moving around



Natural space



Facilities and amenities



Work and local economy



Housing and community



Identity and belonging



Feeling safe



Care and maintenance



Influence and sense of control

And 5 'Outstanding Universal Value'-related new ones were added:



Awareness of World Heritage Site status



Consciousness of climate change and its impacts



Contribution of new developments to the city centre



Liveability



Visitor management

The public was asked what they think works well, and where improvements could be made.

The online consultation gathered the views of 376 respondents.

The ONTE Steering Group discussing the management plan



Consultation at Dumbiedykes open day (© City of Edinburgh Council)



Community engagement at McDonald Road Library (© CEC)



## THE THOUGHT PROCESS: DESIGNING ACTIONS

Once we gathered these views through the use of tailored Place Standard activities, we held a series of workshops to identify deliverable actions to tackle the issues emerging from the consultation. These were based on the Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Plan Development Research report delivered by research consultancy JRS in May 2023. The Executive Summary is shared below.

These actions form a separate Action Plan. This Action Plan is a live document which captures key information known at this stage. It is intended to be dynamic, and actions will need to be flexible. It will be reviewed and updated every two years as part of the Management Plan's monitoring schedule.

## Executive Summary of JRS Research report, May 2023

### INTRODUCTION

Edinburgh's World Heritage Site (WHS) partners commissioned the JRS Research Consortium to undertake two elements of research to support the development of the WHS Management Plan 2023. First, JRS analysed findings from the 376 responses to the WHS Partners' consultation. JRS also undertook a series of 14 group discussions with a sample of people who live, work and/or regularly visit the WHS. The sample for the group discussions included a wide range of demographic subgroups and only involved individuals who stated they would not typically respond to a public consultation.

The WHS consultation ran from October 28<sup>th</sup> 2022 to December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and the group discussions were undertaken between 28<sup>th</sup> March and 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

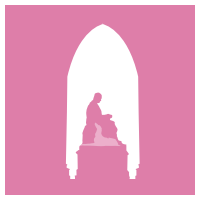
The objectives of the research were to explore attitudes to 14 themes identified as important to the WHS Management Plan. These themes, as outlined below ranged from 'how safe people feel within the WHS' to 'attitudes towards housing provision in the WHS'.

This report provides the findings from the research undertaken by JRS.

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Overall, most who live, work and / or regularly spend time in Edinburgh's WHS for leisure purposes are positive about and proud of their city. That said, there were issues or concerns expressed in relation to all of the themes explored within the research. A topline overview of key findings in relation to each theme, order as in the report are as follows:

## CONTEXT



**Q1** - is there good awareness of the WHS

Consultation Score 4.4/7 - Groups Score 5/7 (1 - unaware; 7 - extremely aware)

- While respondents recognised that it was good that many would be aware of Edinburgh's WHS status, concern was also expressed about the volume of tourism within the WHS at this time. As such, many felt it was important to be careful about the degree to which the WHS status is promoted



**Q10** - feeling of connection to the WHS

Consultation Score 4.8/7 - Groups Score 4.9/7  
(1 - no sense of belonging; 7 - strong sense of belonging)

- Generally respondents felt they did feel a sense of belonging to or in the WHS. That said, many also had concerns that the WHS was being 'taken away from them' and developed solely for the benefit of tourists



**Q14** - easy to live, work and visit- the WHS

Consultation Score 4.7/7 - Groups Score 4.9/7 (1 Not easy at all; 7 Very easy)

- Respondents found this question too general and wide-reaching to be answered easily or meaningfully. That said, most were positive about the quality of their lives in relation to Edinburgh although there were many challenges noted, including with travel and with housing

## FUNDAMENTAL NEEDS



**Q13** - feeling safe

Consultation Score 5.1/7; Groups Score 5.3/7  
(1 - feel extremely unsafe; 7 - feel extremely safe)

- The WHS was felt to be broadly safe - with this being reflected in the positive scores received from the consultation and the groups. The only issues that were expressed related to either specific circumstances (such as times where lots of alcohol has been consumed), or specific 'hot spot' locations (such as the Meadows and the darker lanes of the old town)



**Q9** - balance visitor vs local needs

Consultation Score 3.0/7 - Groups Score 3.9/7  
(1 - unhealthy balance; 7 - healthy balance)

- The question relating to 'the balance of needs between locals and visitors' received amongst the most negative scores across the research. In simple terms it was widely felt that the WHS is being developed solely for the benefit of tourists and without any real consideration for the needs of locals in relation to issues such as retail offering, housing and movement

**Q8** - housing

Consultation Score 2.8/7; Groups Score x2.8/7  
(1 - fails to support community needs; 7 - exceeds community needs)

- Housing also received negative scores with many respondents stating that they felt the housing situation in Edinburgh was at a crisis point. Specifically, within the WHS it was felt that too many properties are being taken away from potential use by locals and used for short term lets or student accommodation. This, it was felt, has led to an imbalance in supply and demand which has resulted in very high property prices and often poor quality

**Q5** - local economy

Consultation Score 4.1/7 - Groups Score 4.0/7  
(1 - very inactive; 7 - extremely active)

- The local economy, at least as it relates to retail, catering and leisure offerings within the WHS was not felt to be thriving. Princes Street in particular was felt to be evolving in a very disappointing way- with no sense of community

**Q11** - facilities and amenities

Consultation Score 4.5/7 - Groups Score 4.7/7  
(1 - my needs are not met at all; 7 - my needs are met in every way)

- Generally, respondents were relatively positive about the provision of facilities and amenities in the WHS. That said, most respondents appeared to answer this question in relation to amenities accessible within or from the WHS

**ADDITIONAL NEEDS****Q3** - moving around the WHS

Consultation Score 4.0/7 - Groups Score 4.6/7  
(1 - extremely difficult; 7 - extremely easy)

- Scores from the question on 'ease of movement' around the WHS were within the middle of the range of scores. Positive scores typically related to the relative ease of walking around what is regarded as a relatively small area. Despite this, many or most respondents expressed concerns about at least one mode of travel within the WHS - e.g. road congestion that causes difficulties with use of public transport or private cars, or the ongoing risks of cycling

**Q4** - access to green spaces

Consultation Score 5.5/7 - Groups Score 5.3/7  
(1 - very little natural space; 7 - a great deal of natural space)

- Respondents across the research felt positive about the WHS offering of green space- although it was noted that this included green space within or accessible from the WHS. The main issues expressed related to cleanliness, anti-social behaviour and occasional restrictions to access during festival periods

**CARE****Q2** - care and maintenance of buildings and streets

Consultation Score 3.5/7 - Groups Score 4.0/7  
(1 - poorly cared for; 7 - excellently cared for)

- Many had concerns about the care being shown to the WHS. The main issues related to the litter problem and the belief that buildings are not being cared for enough

**Q6** - conscious of climate change

Consultation Score 4.8/7 - Groups Score 3.4/7  
(1 - I feel no impact of the effects of climate change in the World Heritage Site; 7 - I feel a great deal of impact of the effects of climate change in the World Heritage Site)

- It should be noted that the question on climate change was interpreted in a variety of ways by respondents. That said, the main concerns around climate change were the need to see more activity to ensure buildings within the WHS are both maintained as a result of weather-related erosion and retro-fitted to ensure they contribute to the efforts to reach net-zero targets. Both of these challenges, it was felt, would require significant ongoing public sector financial support

**CONTROL AND INPUT****Q7** - new development

Consultation Score 3.2/7 - Groups Score 3.8/7  
(1 - very negative contribution; 7 - very positive contribution)

- Despite some respondents being positive about some developments (e.g. the St James Quarter) and feeling strongly that Edinburgh needs to keep evolving to ensure it remains a modern city, most had concerns about some recent developments, especially the St James Quarter and Haymarket Edinburgh). These developments were felt to not be in keeping with Edinburgh's historic heritage

**Q12** - influence on planning and decision making

Consultation Score 2.9/7 - Groups Score 2.3/7  
(1 - do not feel able to participate in decision-making; 7 - feel able to participate in decision-making)

- Overall, respondents did not feel they were able to participate in planning decision making within the WHS. This was due to either a lack of awareness of the process, the perceived complexity of the process or because it was felt that their contributions would not be listened to

Overall, the research indicated that there is action needed by the WHS Partners in relation to all the key themes of the research. That said, there was also an indication that the priorities for locals are:

- A greater commitment shown by WHS partners to tidying the city
- A regeneration plan for Princes Street - to give it more of a sense of value and appeal for locals and to enhance the sense of community within the WHS
- A tourist levy - with money being ringfenced to reduce the impact of tourism and to benefit locals
- Promotion of a clear plan in relation to mobility around the WHS - and through this, to give locals a sense of what the 'end goal' is and when this will be reached
- Finally, there needs to be a review of how planning decisions are made - to allow locals to feel more involved

## **Key findings of JRS Research report, May 2024**

### **INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVES**

- The consultation was undertaken by the World Heritage Site Management Partners (City of Edinburgh Council (CEC), Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and Edinburgh World Heritage Trust (EWHT)) using the City of Edinburgh Council consultation Hub as the platform to engage, with the aim of gathering feedback on the draft Management Plan for the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site (WHS).
- The Draft Management Plan identifies issues and opportunities within the WHS and presents an action plan for implementation over a two-year period to tackle these issues. Themes include: – Awareness, appreciation and activity around World Heritage Site status, Climate emergency, Conservation and maintenance of buildings and public spaces, Control, guidance, and contribution of new development to the city centre, Sustainable visitor experience.
- To gather feedback from the people of Edinburgh around this new plan, the World Heritage Site Management Partners ran a consultation with the aim of understanding whether residents feel they are doing enough in the plan to protect and enhance the Site and gather any further suggestions for protecting the WHS. Respondents were given access the Draft Management Plan via a link in the questionnaire.
- The consultation comprised six core questions, covering five themes. The questions asked were around:
  - Theme 1: Awareness, appreciation of, and activity around World Heritage Site status
  - Theme 2: Climate emergency
  - Theme 3: Conservation and maintenance of buildings and public spaces
  - Theme 4: Control, guidance and contribution of new development to the city centre
  - Theme 5: Sustainable visitor experience
  - Any other feedback on the Draft Management Plan
- In addition to the questions that focused on these core themes, a few quantitative questions were asked around the consultation engagement process.

- The questionnaire used in the consultation was designed and promoted by the World Heritage Site Management Partners teams. JRS was commissioned by the World Heritage Site Management Partners to analyse responses to the consultation. This set of charts constitutes the output from this analysis process.

## **METHODOLOGY**

- The consultation questionnaire was designed by the World Heritage Site Management Partners, and the online consultation was run using Citizen Space and managed by the World Heritage Site Management Partners.
- The questions were primarily qualitative, with a few quantitative questions to collect detail around the engagement process.
- The online consultation was open from 12th February until 16th April 2024.
- A total of 206 responses to the online consultation were received, along with one substantive written/email response.
- Data was securely transferred to JRS for analysis • This included a download of all responses from Citizen Space, and a transfer of the project email inbox with further written responses.
- To analyse the qualitative data, JRS undertook the following process:
- After transfer from the client team, all responses were allocated a Unique Reference Number (URN)
- Comments were spell-checked and sense checked: this process involved removing any comments including profanities, instances where respondents have typed 'no comment' or 'don't know' etc into the comments box, and those where no sense can be made of the wording
- An initial codeframe was produced based on a review of the first 100 open responses, and this codeframe was then used as the basis for coding all other open comments, with additional codes added as necessary during the process
- Once all comments were coded, analysis of the key themes was undertaken, including identifying any differences between responses from individuals and those from organisations / groups
- Analysis of the quantitative data was a straightforward process as only a few supplementary quantitative questions were asked, which all involved 'Strongly disagree-Strongly agree' Likert scale questions.
- Responses were analysed based on the percentage, per response, of the total base of respondents for each question

## **KEY ISSUES**

Key issues identified within the WHS consultation related to over-tourism, modern developments, a lack of affordable housing, and maintenance issues related to graffiti and litter.

- Respondents see a need for improved infrastructure within the WHS and maintenance of heritage buildings. The poor quality of roads and pavements was highlighted frequently, and on-going maintenance of these is seen as a priority by many.

- Respondents frequently suggested cleaning up the streets more generally, such as removing litter and graffiti.
- It was highlighted that the Management Plan does not specify what changes will be made to the WHS in the future in order to protect and promote it. Respondents would like to have seen this addressed in order to understand the plans in more detail.
- Specific details, such as who the Management Partners are would also be welcomed.
- Several recent developments were widely criticised, leading to a lack of confidence in the Council Planning Department. There were calls for new builds to be styled in line with heritage buildings in order to preserve the culture of Edinburgh.
- The number of Airbnbs, hotels, and student accommodation was also criticised. Residents feel that they are being pushed out of the city to accommodate the vast number of tourists who visit. Housing issues are a common concern amongst residents as house and rental prices increase. Residents ask for their needs to be put before those of tourist and temporary visitors.
- The introduction of a Transient Visitor Levy is widely supported. Many respondents stipulated that this should be directed towards improving local services and maintaining the WHS for residents first, before tourists are considered.

### **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS RELATED TO THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS**

Respondents were invited to provide additional feedback or suggestions about the engagement process. A total of 89 people left an additional comment. Generally, the key theme amongst the additional comments were about the consultation itself and the engagement process.

- It was felt that the consultation was not accessible to many, both in terms of methods of access, and in the language used throughout the consultation.
- Respondents wanted more detail in the plans such as targets and success criteria. Greater specificity as to who the management partners are and how the council will work with them was also desired.
- Further clarity on the OUV was also felt to be needed.
- In line with previous responses, many highlighted the need for greater community engagement, with the City of Edinburgh Council listening to what residents of Edinburgh think would improve their city.
- Further, it was common for respondents to criticise the City of Edinburgh Council and other agencies involved in the consultation. There was little confidence amongst respondents that their concerns and options would realistically be taken into account, accusing the consultation of being bias towards an already set agenda.
- Respondents have called for greater community engagement in the decisions made that affect the city - this includes through consulting with local people and community groups, and local stakeholders and developers.

- In general, a large number of respondents found the plans difficult to understand, citing issues with unclear language. Both the Management and Action plan were felt to be vague and lacking in detail. It was suggested that the objectives should encompass specific and measurable end-points as well as future actions to achieve the objectives.
- Additionally, many requested that the consultation process be simplified to make it more accessible, using clearer and simpler language

### QUOTES FROM THE MAY 2024 CONSULTATION REPORT:

“The lack of detail in the Plan about any specific SMART actions to protect the OUV of the WHS or to improve understanding of the WHS and its value is worrying. There is no detail of how the lack of understanding highlighted by the initial consultation will be tackled – either in the local population or the visitor/tourism sector. It is insufficient to state that this deficit is tackled with a concrete and comprehensive communication plan, focussed on specific groups of stakeholders including businesses, residents and visitors. Unlike many similar cities with WHS status, Edinburgh does not have a dedicated WHS visitor centre at which visitors (and others) can learn about the WHS.”

“It is of course important that Edinburgh’s history is preserved and disseminated, but this should not be done with a view to the expansion of the tourism sector. I am one of the thousands forced from Edinburgh by over inflated House prices caused primarily by over-tourism and short term lets.”

- “My understanding is it basically just means that Edinburgh’s buildings, like the castle or the old style buildings are protected..”

- “People, will be looking at all the UNESCO sites across the world and putting Edinburgh on their bucket list.”
- “I guess there’s a tension between preserving the WHS and actually living in the city.”

“How are you engaging? How are you safeguarding? Be specific about the actions you will take.”

“Engage with the residents, taxpayers and businesses of all types more so that your decision making is more informed, which will hopefully mean that it better meets the needs of residents, both present and future, and businesses, and then visitors. We do not want to live in a theme park. We do not need more hotels nor student residences. We do need more housing for local people. We do need better transportation provision. And it should be implemented as cost effectively as possible...”

“The sixth issue is collective engagement. The proposed scrutiny group is constructive but does not capture the scale and diversity of all the players in the WHS’s management. Opportunities need to be given to key heritage stakeholders, residents’ groups, and local businesses to support delivery of the aims and objectives of the Plan.”

“I have grown up in Edinburgh and only studying geography in my later years of schooling did I become aware of the role and importance of the WHS. It seems that there may be possibility for engagement with local schools as part of the curriculum throughout a range of subjects and ages. This would ensure greater awareness and engagement with the significance of what we have on our doorstep.”

“It would be great to understand better and see in practice the city’s commitment to how the world heritage site remains a place where many people try to live and make their homes.”

“We welcome the management and action plan. It is essential to raise awareness of the need to understand and maintain the World Heritage Site in Edinburgh. Edinburgh’s distinct architecture attracts tourism from around the world and it is essential to conserve that characteristic. We believe that engagement with key developers, investors, stakeholders and the wider community is important to transmit the value of heritage site and help maintain it.”

“They are completely backwards. They constantly ignore the fact that people live in the middle of the city. Residents are constantly put last in any plans by the council who seem to want the city centre, particularly the old town cleared of the communities that once flourished there and replaced by hotels, air bnb flats, students, tourists and tartan shops. There is absolutely no consideration of working people who live in the old town.”

- “Central Edinburgh is a unique and wonderful place, I fear for its future.”
- “I choose to live in the World Heritage Site because there are few better places to live within a reasonable budget and have a quality way of life to bring up a family.”

“Sounds worthwhile but not enough detail to judge. Where does the money come from to achieve this? Each element of the strategy should include strategies to bring in income to fund it.”

“I think some more measurable indicators would be helpful. There is no annual or biennial review of the world heritage site. The link to earlier review by UNESCO didn’t work when I tried it, but hopefully the new report will provide measurable indicators about the progress made in Edinburgh, which is remarkable.”

“Based on the content available here they are a very weak set of actions with no targets, measures or success criteria. No accountability either. Nowhere near strong enough for such serious matters. More robust thinking required please.”

“There is currently a lack of connection with ordinary Edinburgh citizens to this whole concept of the status of the city as a World Heritage site. It is viewed as something for tourists at the expense of something which has meaning for locals, so it would be good to broaden a sense of ownership regarding this.”

“Plans are good, but locals should be more included in what happens and what the impact on them is, where we have to live and work here everyday.”

“It’s definitely a good idea. A beautiful place like Edinburgh needs everyone to understand what the WHS means to them and how they can all protect and benefit it.”

“I think the proposed changes are going nowhere near enough. They are too woolly and too generic; they amount to lukewarm expression of loose intent – not to any real tangible commitments. There are concrete actions that, using existing research and previously commissioned projects, could already be put to immediate implementation – an example is to allow slim profile double glazing (this would make a big difference to energy use, liveability). Another is recycling – the current processes are wholly inaccurate and there is no real, concrete plan to resolving this (largely because a small but privileged group has a loud voice). Why not commit to a direct, inclusive survey of ALL residents in the area, and ask us what would make the real difference?

I feel this action is among the most important but falls far short of anything concrete in the immediate commitments.”

“It is important to do this. If visitors had a profound understanding of place they would appreciate the experience more. Too many are superficiality [sic] herded around the city and do not appear to benefit from or understand what they are witnessing.”

“There needs to be better understanding of the qualities and attributes of the OUV, and for this to be clearly stated and accessible. This should include tools for measuring the impact of change to the significance of the heritage asset, and the levels of acceptable change that would not affect or alter OUV.”

“I think it’s nonsensical. You are destroying the culture of this city by the level of tourism that’s being pursued. Air B&Bs are killing Edinburgh; the city is pursuing economic growth and sacrificing everything for it.”

“I think the council should be doing more to tackle the climate emergency, regardless of the status of Old and Newtown as world heritage sites. I am concerned that the climate emergency is not a priority for our local authority here and this isn’t mollified by the outlined plan.”

“There should be more guidance on decarbonising the listed buildings, heritage buildings and areas that fall into conservation zone by using various suitable methods such as connection to Heat Networks or fabric upgrades mitigating the impact on façade or wider heritage characteristics of the building.”

“There is a lack of detail in the Plan about the specific actions that will be taken to improve understanding of the WHS and its value. The consultation undertaken before the last Plan was adopted showed that there were significant gaps in the level of understanding. This has been repeated in the latest consultation and therefore it is not sufficient to state that “the management partners must continue to work together to spread the message...” If this is important, which we believe that it is, there needs to be a communication programme focussed on specific groups of stakeholders including businesses, residents and visitors.”

“Lots of words but not clear what you are going to do or trying to say.”



George IV Bridge in summer (© Neil Hanna)

# FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACTS



OLD AND NEW TOWNS  
OF EDINBURGH COORDINATOR  
- CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

Email: [worldheritage@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:worldheritage@edinburgh.gov.uk)

## KEY LINKS

Edinburgh World Heritage:  
[www.ewht.org.uk](http://www.ewht.org.uk)

UNESCO World Heritage Centre  
- World Heritage List: Old and  
New Towns of Edinburgh:  
[whc.unesco.org/en/list/728](http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/728)

Old and New Towns of Edinburgh WHS  
on the HES website:  
[http://www.historicenvironment.scot/  
old-and-new-towns-of-edinburgh](http://www.historicenvironment.scot/old-and-new-towns-of-edinburgh)

## OGL

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